

RELIGION AND DANCING.—A Christian brother writes us that he lives in a dancing community; that Christians in married life are in the habit of attending dancing parties, to enjoy the entertainment and the conversation, and console themselves in the line of conscience by saying, "We do not join in the dance." Our brother, grieved in view of the evils of such dancing parties, asks, "May a Christian attend a convivial party where dancing is introduced?"

Our answer may be inferred from our belief in the following facts:

1. No Christian can enjoy God's presence in a dancing party.
2. No Christian can ask God to be with him there.
3. No Christian parent can reasonably pray that God would bless his children in their attendance.
4. Living Christians can have no sympathy with the spirit of such assemblies.
5. No sort of Christian except the back-slidden or dead, can enjoy them.
6. The experience of ages has shown that the influence of the convivial dancing parties is hostile to real piety, being hostile to a proper realization of eternity and of our relation to God.

Selections.

CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE.—Cyprian was a native of Carthage. He was by education a heathen, and was eminent as a philosopher of the epicurean school. He was chosen professor of rhetoric and logic in his native city, and won the admiration of his students, as well by the elegance of his manners, and the luxury of his mode of life, as by the principles of his philosophy, and the practice of elocution. Believing that the chief end of man was to gratify his appetites, and that he was created for pleasure alone, his life was a succession of feasting and parades. About the year two hundred, and forty-six, his attention was arrested by the preaching of a Christian minister named Cæcilius. He studied the Scriptures with great care, and convinced that in Christ alone was life eternal, he was baptized.

He now sold his estates, distributing his wealth among the poor, clothed himself in plain attire, and gave himself to the ministry of the Gospel, and in the year two hundred and forty-eight he was elected bishop of Carthage. His ministry was characterized by great zeal. As he had when a teacher of polite learning, so now as a Christian pastor, he excited in the minds of his hearers the warmest enthusiasm, and very many were added to the Church.

He had only labored two years, when the persecution under Decius Trajanus broke out. Cyprian was immediately proscribed, and the Pagan populace repeatedly demanded his death with furious outcries of "Cyprian to the beasts, Cyprian to the lions." He withdrew for a period into a place of concealment. But while he thus withdrew for a season, he neither denied his faith, nor forgot his flock. He maintained a constant and affectionate correspondence with his people. In these pastoral epistles he shows most clearly how much he longed for them all in the Lord, and that though absent in the body, he was yet present with them in spirit.

The persecution grew gradually more severe until the Gothic war, in which Decius lost his life. During the calm which followed this event, Cyprian returned to Carthage in two hundred and fifty-one. He was now busily employed not only in the ordinary duties of his office, but in the expulsion of false doctrine, and in the administration of discipline. He was opposed by a party in his own flock, on account of his maintenance of discipline in the cases of those who had apostatized, and now sought re-admission to the church. He was also engaged in a controversy with Stephen, the Bishop of Rome, in which he earnestly opposed the arrogant assumptions of the Roman prelate, maintaining the independency of other bishops, and denying the claim of the Roman bishop to be considered as "Episcopus episcoporum,"—the Bishop of bishops.

A terrible plague now broke out in Carthage, while famine and pestilence were spreading their ravages over the whole Roman Empire. As usual, these calamities were laid to the blame of the Christians. The heathen religion was everywhere declining, and when, notwithstanding an imperial edict, great numbers refused to sacrifice to the gods, new persecutions arose, and the fury of the populace fell upon the Christians, with more than its wonted virulence.

The Emperor Valerian, thinking to destroy Christianity by removing its teachers, ordered all the governors of the various provinces to summon the bishops before their tribunals. Cyprian was brought before the pro-consul Aspasius, when he witnessed a good pro-

cession, refusing to conform to the religion of the Empire, maintaining that "he knew no God but the one true God, who created heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein." To the question, "Dost thou persist in this resolution?" he answered, "A good resolution grounded on the knowledge of God is unchangeable." Upon this the pro-consul sentenced him to banishment.

Curubis was the place of his exile, and from thence he frequently and affectionately wrote to his flock, strengthening them in God. He also sent them a large sum of money taken from his own income, for the relief of the suffering. His exile only made him dearer than ever to his people, and thus increased his influence. In the place of his banishment, too, a little church soon gathered round him, so that his exile was overruled for the furtherance of the gospel. The ministers of Christ were now by an imperial edict condemned to death. Cyprian was recalled to receive his final sentence. At the beginning of the Decian persecution, he had withdrawn, because he believed it to be for the interests of Christ's cause, but now, no entreaties of friends could induce him to decline making a public confession of his faith in Christ. On the night preceding his execution, his people thronged around the house in which their beloved pastor was confined, and he spent the greater part of the night in ministering to their spiritual wants for the last time. When he renewed his testimony in the presence of the pro-consul, he received the sentence of death as an enemy to the Roman gods, and to the sacred laws. To this he replied, "God be thanked." They were his last words. He was immediately afterwards beheaded. Thus on the 14th of September, A. D., 258, did this excellent bishop triumph over death, and enter into his longed-for glory.

Cyprian stands foremost among the Latin Fathers of the Third century for the eloquence and pathos, as well as the elegance of his writings.—*New York Observer.*

THE FREEDOM OF THE GOSPEL.—If I were to come as an accredited agent to you from the upper sanctuary with a letter of invitation to you, with your name and address on it, you would not doubt your warrant to accept it. Well, here is the Bible,—your invitation to come to Christ. It does not bear your name and address, but it says, "Whosoever,"—that takes you in, it says "all,"—that takes you in; it says "if any,"—that takes you in. What can be surer and freer than that?—*Chalmers.*

Literary Notices.

THE CANADIAN CRUSOES. New York: C. S. Francis & Co., 252 Broadway. For sale by Lindsay and Blackiston, No. 25 South, Sixth street, Philadelphia.

Mrs. Trail, the fair authoress of this work, is the wife of an emigrant officer, long resident in Canada, and well fitted by observation and talent to write an instructive volume. Some years ago she published one anonymously, entitled "The Backwoods of Canada," which passed through many editions. "The Crusoes" is intended for the young, and sets forth in graphic style the difficulties and dangers of a wilderness life—the loss of children in the forests—their wanderings, means of support, with the thrilling interest which such events are calculated to awaken.

HOME SCENES AND HEART STUDIES. By Grace Aguilar. New York: D. D. Appleton & Co. For sale at Henderson's, 5th and Arch Streets, Philadelphia.

With maternal affection the mother of Grace has gathered up the scattered fragments of her daughter's writings; the present volume closes the series. It contains nineteen distinct stories, and it is pleasant now that she has gone, to see a spirit of womanly piety and gentleness pervading them all.

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF CHEMISTRY.—For the use of Colleges and Schools. By B. Silliman, Jr. M.A., M. D., Professor of Yale College. Philadelphia, H. C. Peck & Theo. Bliss.

A scientific work which has reached its twenty-fifth edition requires no commendation. It may be proper to state that in its present form it is much enlarged, having been re-written and variously improved. There are upwards of four hundred wood cut illustrations to aid the learner in comprehending the first principles of a science that enters so largely into the pleasures, comforts and conveniences of life.

THE FADED HOPE. By Mrs. L. H. Sigourney. New York: Carter & Brothers. For sale by Mr. Martien 145 Chestnut St., Philadelphia.

The poetess of Hartford, like other mothers in Israel, has had her hopes and fears, her joys and sorrows. With stricken feelings but submissive spirit, she has given a sweet description of the infant days, opening years, and closing hours of a beloved son. Though

cut down at the age of nineteen, the time, and care and toil devoted to his moral and intellectual culture were not lost. He may long live in this simple memorial of a mother's love, to interest and influence the hearts of others.

THE BIBLE COMPANION; designed for the assistance of Bible Classes, Families, and young Students of the Scriptures. With an introduction by the Rev. S. H. Tyng, D. D., New York: Carter & Brothers, Philadelphia: W. S. Martien.

This small volume contains a condensed analysis of all the books of Scripture, the subjects on which they treat, and the most important parallel passages which serve to illustrate and elucidate the respective parts. Several chapters are devoted to a consideration of the Bible. Its Antiquity excellence, Inspiration, Design, and authenticity, are presented with clearness and order. The history of its translation, rules for its profitable reading, with geographical, topographical, and other brief notices of persons, services, and things, form a compendium of invaluable instruction for such as desire to obtain a knowledge of those Scriptures which make wise unto salvation.

THE PASTOR IN HIS CLOSET; or a help to the Devotions of the Clergy. By the Rev. John Armstrong, Vicar of Tidenham. Philadelphia: H. Hooker, 8th and Chestnut Sts.

It requires great watchfulness on the part of a Christian minister, lest the regular discharge of public duties should lead him to overlook or under-estimate the all-important work of cultivating his own heart. Few clergymen will peruse the devotional services of this manual of prayer without feeling ever and anon, that its confessions, fears and deprecations, resolutions, entreaties and desires, are admirably suited to his own heart, and well befitting his own sinful lips. What a race of spiritual men should we be if we could measureably attain the elevated standard which is here so earnestly craved.

Correspondence.

SONGS OF THE CHURCH.

No. 25.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

"AWAKE thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give Thee light.—Ephesians 5. 14.

O slumbering soul awake,
The Spirit loudly calls;
Arise renew'd and break
The chain thy soul enthral's.

O son of death arise,
Thy Saviour bids thee live.
Press onward for the prize,
The prize which Christ shall give.

Fold not thine arms to sleep,
And ask no more delay.
But with contrition deep
Arise and watch and pray.

O weary soul awake,
Soon on this dreary night.
Eternal day will break,
"And Christ shall give Thee light." W. B.

No. 26.

"Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but, we know, that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."—1 John 3. 2.

And can it be exalted King,
That underneath thy downy wing,
Shall be our 'biding place;
That where Thou art in glory bright,
With angels we shall walk in white,
And see thee face to face?

And can it be our souls shall rest,
Among the spirits pure and blest
That gather round Thy throne;
Unpained by grief, unstain'd with sin,
To join the enraptur'd Seraphim,
And make their song our own.

We know not in what glory drest,
We then shall stand among the blest,
With Him who came to save,
"But this we know," that we shall wake,
Like Him whose gracious word shall break
The silence of the grave.

We know that when this house of clay,
Shall from our spirits pass away,
A nobler one shall rise,
With no decay, with no defect,
But like its mighty Architect,
Eternal in the Skies.*

* 11 Cor. v. 1.

W. B.

ERRATUM. In the last No. of the Church Times, Songs of the Church, No. 24, First stanza eighth line, for Now, read None.