

holding up its high standard until the name of Friends has come to be respected by all who know ought about them. As no individual is perfect in all respects, so no religious organization can be wholly so. In this testimony against the great extravagances of their age the early Friends adopted a form of dress, which afterwards became so peculiar as to be looked upon by many as a badge, and which is now fast passing away. I have been told that the requirement of a certain cut and color in regard to dress, together with some other externals of a like nature, have kept out and driven out young Friends who thoroughly believed in Friends' doctrines and principles, but who did not feel that they were required to make themselves conspicuous or peculiar by their dress or speech. As a Friend minister once said to me: "Those things have now lost their significance, as what they testified against no longer exists with the same meaning." And while those external things are passing away, we need not mourn their loss, for they are truly non-essential to religion. In speaking of those time-honored customs, I wish to say that no one can look with more respect and affection upon the plain dress of ancient Friends than myself, bringing up as it does the cherished memories of loved ones who were guides to us in early years. But I feel that in our present time, when scarcely a young Friend can be found who does conform to the plain style of dress, that it would be well to change the phrase in the query calling for "plainness of apparel" to "avoiding extravagance in dress." We all know that one can be extravagant while dressing the plainest, and I have had people of other denominations say to me that "however plainly Friends dress they save no money by it and are more thoughtful about their clothes than people who dress like others." One who uses judgment and taste in selecting and making a dress may practise true economy and at the same time clothe

themselves in such a way as not to be conspicuous among Christian workers of other denominations, for surely it is not by our dress, but by our lives, that we are to show whether or not we are Christians. This may seem foreign to the subject under consideration, but it has long been a concern on my mind, and in this expression of my views young Friends will understand that I would not have them hampered in any way in their social enjoyments and Christian work. But I have greatly feared that our young Friends in breaking away from what they may consider not only too severe but useless customs, may not have drawn with sufficient care and with a prayerful desire for light the line of distinction between the innocent, healthful pleasures and amusements in which we may feel and know that Christ is with us as much as in the performance of a religious duty, and those other amusements which gratify only the lower desires of our natures and which have no tendency to raise us higher or make us more worthy temples for the spirit of God to dwell in. I feel that dancing comes under this head, and I wish that every young person who has found or who thinks they would find enjoyment in it, would read the book entitled "Ester Ried," by Pansy, published at D. Lothrop & Co., 32 Franklin St., Boston, Mass. In the 25th chapter of this book will be found some thoughts on dancing, which I read years ago, and the impression they produced upon my mind has never been effaced.

The doctrines of Friends are as much needed in the world to day as they were two hundred years ago, but in a different way; then religion was half smothered by useless forms and ceremonies, which to many constituted all there was of religion. To-day inquiring minds are everywhere asking "is there such a thing as true religion, and if so, in what does it consist?" etc. Many of those inquirers have found the light for which they longed in the belief and teachings of