

If such things are so, then "Wherewithal shall a young man [or woman] cleanse his [or her] way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word." Having already set before your readers the saying of Cicero, a noted heathen, that "no one dances unless he is either drunk or mad," I would now lay before them the very careful, searching, and concise summing up of scripture on the subject, by the celebrated Christian scholar, Dr. Eadie, who has lately gone to his rest, who says that "from a collection of all the passages of scripture in reference to dancing it may be inferred: (1) That dancing was a religious act both in true and also in idol worship; (2) that it was practised exclusively on joyful occasions, such as national festivals or great victories; (3) that it was performed on such great occasions only by one of the sexes; (4) that it was performed usually in the day time, in the open air, in highways, fields, and groves; (5) that men who perverted dancing from a sacred use to purposes of amusement were deemed infamous; (6) that no instances of dancing are found upon record in the Bible in which the two sexes united in the exercise either as an act of worship or amusement; (7) that there are no instances upon record in the Bible of social dancing for amusement, except that of the 'vain fellows' void of shame alluded to by Michal; of the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety and destruction, and of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod and the murder of John the Baptist." DELTA.

RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION.

MR. EDITOR,—Will you excuse my asking you, or any of your readers, to explain how it comes to pass that among so many professing Christians, what may be called "religious conversation" is comparatively so rare, and when it is entered upon is generally so unnatural and uninteresting as to be speedily put a stop to. I say nothing about "worldly" companies, for with them such a thing may be all right and proper. But what about those made up exclusively of "professors" of religion, and in a good number of cases of leading persons in the Church, sometimes even clergymen? There may be a good deal of ecclesiastical gossip going among these, but is it not a fact that anything like frank, natural, easy and interested talk, about what professedly to them is the most important of all matters, is comparatively rare, and that the person who introduces conversation of the kind is generally voted a very ignorant or a very awkward individual? To refer to, and talk about, the Lord Jesus Christ in the same easy, pleasant, cordial fashion in which any of the prominent persons of the day are referred to and praised or blamed, would generally be thought very *outré*! Yet why should it? To every believer, that Lord Jesus is far more real and far more interesting in every way than all the prominent men and women in the world. Yet let any one talk of Him at an evening party of professed Christians, in this happy, loving, easy, natural fashion I speak of, or let him exult in the coming glory, and speculate with glowing interest on the intense happiness to be enjoyed in beholding His face in righteousness, and being satisfied when awaking in His likeness, and what a look of blank horror, would overspread many faces! how a portentous silence would ensue, and how the poor man, if he were not hustled out of the room as a maniac, would be sure to have all the talking to himself, while his monologue would be regarded as one of the greatest possible outrages on good taste and good manners! Why all this? I'm sure I don't know. I could not explain it when I was a boy, though I often wondered at it, and now when I am a man it is as much a mystery as ever. When a man "talks religion," it would seem as if he thought it necessary to throw on a strange sanctimonious air, affect a *falsetto* tone of voice, and, after making a dreadfully unsuccessful plunge or two, get back as fast as possible to secular subjects and to what our good forefathers were in the habit of calling "carnal conversation."

I don't look upon myself as a prig, or a maw-worm, or a Pharisee, and, so far as I know, my friends and acquaintance don't regard me either as a humbug, a hypocrite, or so ungodly as to be a spiritual swine before whom no religious pearls are to be thrown. I mix in religious circles; I grow daily more interested in the things connected with life and salvation; the thought of being some of these days with Christ, safe and blessed for evermore, makes my heart throb

sometimes in such a fashion that in the very exuberance of my feelings I am ready to say to some of my fellow church members, "Won't it be splendid!" But I know if I were doing so I would at once be pitted as a maniac or sneered at as a weak enthusiast, though the very same persons would think it the most natural thing in the world for me to give vent to my feelings in some such fashion if about to leave for Europe on a summer's trip, or about to have my earthly ambition crowned in the fullest and most satisfactory manner. Why should this be? Mind you, I am not in favour of lugging religion into conversation by the head and shoulders, in a strange, awkward, unnatural, Chaddband fashion. All that sort of thing I hate as cordially as any one possibly can. But what I wonder at is, that when professing Christians meet socially, it should so often be that religion is instinctively tabooed, unless there be some heresy on the carpet, or some congregation being rent to pieces over the election of a minister or the introduction of an organ. Surely Christ, and Paul, and heaven, and life eternal, might come in sometimes as naturally and as properly to be talked about, discussed and rejoiced in as the British elections, Bismarck's Church laws, or the Pope's last encyclical, to say nothing of Sir John Macdonald's last joke, Mr. George Brown's attempted assassination, or Bengough's latest cartoon. How is it? I want to know. I may be very stupid. If I am, say so; but at the same time explain. A CHURCH MEMBER.

REV. MR. HAMMOND'S VISIT TO CHATHAM.

MR. EDITOR,—Some very bitter letters have appeared in THE PRESBYTERIAN lately regarding the revival work of Rev. E. P. Hammond. I have no intention to enter into controversy with these men on this matter, but simply to give a few plain facts regarding the result of the revival which took place in Chatham more than a year ago.

1. There was evidently at that time a great quickening among those who were looked upon and justly regarded as the beloved people of God. They became more active and energetic in their endeavours to save the lost and perishing, and wrestled more earnestly with God in prayer for the gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They were led to take a more open and decided stand for Christ, and the same spirit shews itself to this day.

2. There was evidently a deep work of conviction going on, during the revival, in the hearts of those who never gave evidence of love to Christ, who were careless and openly rebellious in the sight of God. I give you no names to substantiate this point, but I tell you there are many in Chatham to-day adorning their profession by consistent, godly lives, who never before entered a church door, but sneered at religion and those who professed it. Some of the hardest cases in town were brought to Christ and are with Him yet. The most moving scenes I ever beheld in my life were witnessed in the inquiry meetings, where the slain of the Lord were on every hand, in the midst of calm, quiet, personal dealing with sinners. There was no excitement there except anxious sinners weeping, earnestly desirous of being led to Jesus. And this work is going on yet, which is another blessed result of the merciful visitation of God.

3. When an opportunity was given to those who had been brought to Christ, to identify themselves with the different churches, they exercised their own judgment and went where they felt inclined to go. About one hundred and three joined my congregation, and took their place at the Lord's table in the beginning of May. Besides these about fifty of the Sabbath school children professed conversion, whose ages ranged from eight to fourteen. Now, of the former, only two have been brought under discipline and expelled from the church for drunkenness, a habit which they indulged in before they professed conversion. The remainder are faithful so far as I know, and I have watched them very closely. Of the children in my congregation, who professed conversion at that time, I have seen nothing in their conduct inconsistent with Christian character. There are very few indeed over fifteen years of age who are not in full fellowship with the Church. In short all the congregations of the town were blessed, and so far as the permanency of the work is concerned, I believe they are in the same position as my own.

Chatham, April 9th.

JOHN R. BATTISBY.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

AFRICA.

Another re-inforcement for the important independent mission entering Central Africa by way of the Livingstone or Congo River has been sent out from London. The Livingstone Inland Mission was founded in the year 1877 and is undenominational. There are already nine Europeans on its staff at Stanley Pool, on the Livingstone, 300 miles from the Coast, and five more have just sailed. All the missionaries connected with the mission have been trained in East London Mission Institute, which is under the direction of Mr. H. Grattan Guinness, who also bears an important relation to the mission. The new missionaries include an architect, engineer, and surveyor, Mr. Adam MacColl, who is the leader of the party, a carpenter and joiner, a printer, and a blacksmith. The party will touch at Teneriffe, and take donkeys for the journey up the river, and employ Krumen as carriers. The expenses of the journey are estimated at about \$7,000. Provisions enough for twelve months will be taken, so that, if the natives should refuse to furnish anything, the party will not suffer. The directors of the London Missionary Society have formally approved the plans of the missionaries at Ujiji, which embrace the establishment of a station at Urambo, Mirambo's capital, by Dr. Southon; a settlement on the western shore of Lake Tanganyika, at Uguha; and the formation of a central station at some suitable place on the eastern shore. Last October the Rev. W. Griffith and Messrs. Hutley and Hore made a trip to the western shore in the new vessel, "Calabash." They explored the country in the neighbourhood of Cape Mtowa, with the purpose of selecting a site for a station. Messengers came to them from the Chief of Ruanda, telling them to choose a place where they liked. The message was: "If you want to live at Mtowa, good. If you want to live at Ruanda, good. If you want to go over there—a populous district north of Mtowa—go." The natives of the villages on the north coast of Mtowa, many of whom had never seen white men before, received the missionaries kindly. The country between Mtowa and Ruanda is described as beautiful. The rounded hills, the numerous clear mountain streams, abounding in tropical wealth, and the trees, with rich foliage, "make up a scenery which is seldom equalled in any land or clime." The missionaries chose Mtowa for the new station, and employed natives, who were very willing to work, to help them erect a temporary house. The missionaries propose to call the mission Plymouth Rock. While Mr. Griffith and his party were on the western shore, Dr. Southon was in Urambo, Mirambo's kingdom, erecting a house for the proposed station. Mirambo has been on very friendly terms with Dr. Southon, supplying him with food and materials for the house, and making use of the doctor's medical and mechanical skill in return. The king watches the work going on with great interest, and appears to be very intelligent. Dr. Southon observed the Sabbath very strictly, as he had done at the Lake, always putting on clean, white clothes; and he was delighted to see Mirambo appear on Sabbath morning in a new suit of clothes, which he laid away the next day. The Wangwana at the Lake had copied Dr. Southon in this respect, and others of the same tribe, at other places, seeing the good effect this observance had on their fellows, fell into the same habit of putting on a different dress and refraining from work on the Sabbath. Mr. Hore regards the outlook of the station at Ujiji as very hopeful. Many difficulties have been overcome. The Wajiji chiefs are very friendly and the Arabs are less hostile. He concludes with the following hopeful words: "If Stanley and Cameron opened this country, it was by a door which required re-opening for every entry; our mission has taken that door away, and we await to welcome and assist all true-hearted men who would enter with good intent. This may read rather romantic, but no one will ever, perhaps, properly know of the plots and schemes, not excepting personal dangers, we have encountered, and, I trust, overcome by patient, smiling, obstinacy. One begins to breathe a little freely and look around with some rejoicing and satisfaction, on the fact of three mission stations here in Central Africa."

A LIFE of carnal ease, a death of stupor and an eternity of horror, are closely allied. In the matter of converting a human soul to God all human power is reduced to zero.—J. W. Alexander.