

to spend in the drawing-rooms of their esteemed friends, as time wasted and lost. And if any hints can be given for the elevation of a christian social life, they are certainly not superfluous.

It may be assumed that every man must go into society beyond his own family, and that he will find it convenient to meet society in the evening of the day. The extent to which men comply with the social usages of the times, depends on their mental constitutions and tastes. Those who are of a grave, studious, or domestic home-loving character, who are deeply impressed with the value of time and retirement, are reluctant to spend their evenings abroad. If they 'go out', it is to avoid offending their friends, or it is to please their daughters rather than themselves. Others of a more communicative, and perhaps more volatile disposition, or living, as so many young men do, far from their own families, go with zest to evening entertainments, and delight in the excitement of society. Extremes of course are to be shunned; but plainly it is no one's duty to be anti-social, or treat with coldness the sympathies and cordialities of his fellows and friends.

As to the public haunts of mere amusement—the theatre and public ball room—we regard them as simply out of the question. We know what may be said for each of these—but have no idea, that thoughtful Christians will be found within their precincts. It is not so broadly to be said, that the religious may not go to feasts and festivals in the houses of the worldly. The Corinthian believers were not forbidden to accept the invitations of their heathen neighbours, if they were disposed to do so, but were directed how to keep their consciences void of offence. One must not be conformed to this world, the fashion whereof passeth away; but to go out of the world, or stand entirely aloof from the general society around, were to follow John the Baptist rather than Christ. The former girded himself for his awakening rousing ministry by an ascetic and rigorous life; and preached repentance in the *wilderness*, having "his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." The latter, our Divine Master, preached repentance in the *world*, sitting at meat in the houses of Pharisees and Scribes, and even Publicans, going, when invited to marriage feasts, mixing in life, and partaking of the ordinary courtesies of men. Yet it does not follow that Christians may allow to themselves the very same liberty of intercourse with the world, as they read of in the public life of Christ. They have no security against injury, such as the Master had. No tendency to evil was in Christ—the Prince of this world had nothing in Him,—and he could mix in any company without soil or stain. So constituted was the man Christ Jesus, so fortified in moral and spiritual purity, that He could no more be sullied by contact with sinners, than the light of sun or moon is sullied by glancing on the corruptions and contaminations of this world. But we are not so, and it becomes us to enter into mixed society, always with guarded and jealous care over ourselves—and not to enter into scenes of worldly festivity and excitement at all, when we know that they are fitted to weaken our own piety and to strengthen the hands of the ungodly.

But how little profit or pleasure is really obtained from some of those entertainments, which are most carefully removed from the courses of the world, and attended by thoughtful Christian people! Of course in those circles, there is no desire to dance, or play cards, for these are not pleasures to sober minds and living souls. The love of dancing, indeed, in any circle, betrays a defective intellectualism, and a predominance of the sensuous over the cogitative and spiritual nature. The frivolity of a people is largely to be attributed to want of education, and poverty of ideas. The young man who left school a dunce, and has since that period acquired nothing more than a certain ease of manners, or the young lady, who reads nothing and is incompetent to sustain a sensible conversa-