

The Evils of the Modern Pleasure Dance

A Sermon preached by the Rev. R. Hobbs, in the Colborne Street Methodist Church, Brantford, on Sunday evening, March 1st, 1891.

TEXT.—Ecc. III Chapter and a part of the fourth verse, "And a time to dance."

IT is only fair to say that as far as this Church is concerned, I do not know that there exists any particular need for my preaching on the evils of the modern pleasure dance, as to the best of my knowledge, we have not a single dancer on the roll of its membership. I think it is well understood that no modern pleasure dancer can retain membership in a church of which I am pastor, any longer than it takes to administer the discipline of the Church, and for the following good reasons: First, to be true and faithful to my ordination vows, I must faithfully administer the discipline of the Church. Secondly, I do not want, my brethren, to be embarrassed at the May district meeting, when some one of them will be called upon to answer in the affirmative the following question: "Has he duly observed and enforced our discipline?" Thirdly, the highest and best interests of the church, demand that all of its members acting out of harmony with its purpose and mission, should be disciplined. This is clearly taught both by Christ and His Apostles. And, fourthly, I believe that the very best results will be secured to the delinquent member by the faithful and loving enforcement of the rules of the Church, "all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in His written word." So said John Wesley, and so do we believe. But let us ever remember that there is a preventive side to the Gospel of Christ, as well as a remedy proposed for all human ills. And if, perchance, there are none in this church to be saved from this modern, successful snare of the devil—the pleasure dance—there are multitudes in danger of being entrapped, for the dancing-master has come to town. And we want, in the name of God and humanity, to prevent them from being allured, trapped and damned, by the fascinating pleasure dance. So that on the ground that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, I, as a Christian minister, feel called upon to sound an alarm in God's holy mountain, as I see the deadly sword of the modern pleasure dance, coming upon this land. In deciding to preach a sermon on the evils of the modern pleasure dance, came the all important matter of selecting a suitable text. And I wondered what our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ would take as a text if He were on the earth to-day and confronted, as we are, with the evils of the modern pleasure dance, and it occurred to me that He would preach from the doom of "a corrupt tree," or from the text, "Whosoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Or if St. Paul were to preach on my present subject, I fancy he would take the following as a text: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." "For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." Or if the Apostle James were to preach on this subject, I think his text would be: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God." But for good reasons, my mind has settled upon the text first