

haps to envy? Observe, we do not say that all who go to the ball-room are guilty of all or any of these faults; we judge no man; we speak only of the tendency of the place and the scene to develop these evil feelings. We ask whether the character most admired there would be that of a saint? whether one renewed in the image of God would find his spiritual life strengthened and his conformity to Christ increased by constant attendance? whether, for instance, the guest who returns from the gay and pleasant scene to his home, is in that frame of mind which best fits him for communion with God? whether, in short, the frequenting of such scenes does not tend rather to that conformity to the world which is forbidden, than to that transforming and renewing of the mind which is enjoined in our text? You see, then, dear friends, why it is that we abstain from, and advise abstinence from such amusements; they must invariably throw hindrances in the way of our spiritual life. We do not insist that you shall adopt our, or any man's opinion, in these matters; we ask you to use your own judgment; try *honestly* the effect of these amusements upon your own spiritual life; and if you be really renewed in the spirit of your mind, you will find that they are hurtful, that their atmosphere is injurious to the new life which you desire to strengthen and cherish. Believe us, brethren, there may be just as much of the world in a room where the guests sit with their Bibles in their hands as in the theatre or in the ball-room. Observe, we put not these things upon a level; there is this clear difference between them—that the one *must* be, the other *may* be, worldly.”

#### SPEAKING TO STRANGERS.

Not long since, *Zion's Herald* says, a stranger entered a small country church alone. Surrounded by entire strangers, with no look of welcome. The minister, from the text “He that spared not His own Son,” etc., dwelt at length upon the willingness of God to bestow every needed blessing, on the constant presence and sympathy of Jesus in all our varied experiences. The sacred communion was administered: no invitation

was given to members of other churches to unite with them in the Supper of our Lord. Earnestly the minister prayed for the members of his church and congregation, while the stranger felt alone and forgotten; but the Comforter suggested the passage, “And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.” This same stranger entered a large church in the city a few months previous; it was then, too, communion. A cordial invitation was given to all who loved Jesus to join in this commemoration of His love and death. In passing out, the minister, with bright smile, said, “Always glad to welcome new faces here; this table brings all nearer to Jesus, therefore near to each other.” These words went to his heart. And think you they will ever be forgotten? Was this good man any less the perfect gentleman because he did not wait to be introduced? Some ministers have the habit of always praying for the stranger, who goes out with his heart made stronger by that prayer.

Now the thought suggests itself. Shall we always be wholly governed by the cold law of etiquette, and never speak one word of cheer to the stranger? If we love Jesus, and together celebrate His dying love, can we be called wholly strangers to each other? I think not. We have had much the same experience; we have felt the sweetness of pardoning love; we cherish His presence in our hearts; then, surely, we are not strangers to one another. Speak, then, to the stranger within your gates, if only a word. It may be he has come with a heart cast down by sorrow and trial; may be he has come with a heart burdened with sin, desiring to seek Jesus, and perhaps one kind word from you would lighten the sorrow, or lift the heart up to the sinless One. Try it, dear friend, and if your heart is full of love to Jesus, those words will not be in vain.

PITHY WORDS FROM THE SCOTTISH CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE. — Many persons who appear to repent, are like sailors who throw their goods overboard in a storm, and wish for them again in a calm.—*Mead.*

I am not afraid to die; I have had