

DAVID DANCED.

2 Sam. vi. 14.

How do you propose to enjoy yourselves? Young people must have some sort of enjoyment; to be sure they must, and all that hold out the contrary do not know young people's nature, or are of a morose disposition, and would have every one to be as unhappy as themselves. But you are not going to be led by such sort of people; nor do I say that you should.— You have a nature to be happy, and I do hope you will find the right means to gratify it. What think you of a dance? That, you say, is an innocent amusement, and so it may, for we learn from the Bible that David danced; we also learn from the same source that the daughter of Herodias danced. David danced before the Lord; Herodias' daughter danced before Herod; David danced before the Lord and shouted forth his praises; the daughter of Herodias danced before Herod, and demanded the head of John the Baptist in a charger: so, if there be no sin in a dance, it may not be far removed from sin. This depends very much on the company you keep. If, like David, you dance before the Lord, then no harm can come out of it; and if you are a Christian, when you dance, it must be before the Lord, for the words of Jesus are, "Lo, I am with you always." So, my dear young Christian, remember that, besides your partner in the dance, the Lord is also by your side. You do not see Him; He is nevertheless there, for He says so, and His word is true. But there is another also present that you may not see with your bodily eyes, that is the arch-Enemy of man. If in Job's days he went up with the sons of God to their meeting, it is not very likely that he will keep away from yours. The dancing damsel before Herod was led at his suggestion to break the Sixth Commandment; take care, in dancing before your partner, you be not led by the same evil counsellor to break another commandment of no less importance to your purity and peace of mind. Some have found it so to their sad experience; and what has been may be again. If you have no freedom to dance and enjoy yourself before the Lord, then you had much better stay away and not dance at all, especially

as your Master says, *Whatever ye do, do it unto the Lord.* To such as are not Christians I have a word to say. Not a Christian! who says I am not a Christian! Jesus Christ says so, my poor young friend, unless you are converted, unless you are born again. You may call yourself a Christian, and your neighbours may call you a Christian, but God and your conscience tell you a different tale. How long do you intend to remain as you are, pursuing pleasure and seeking happiness where it is not to be found? Even innocent amusements as they are called, such as dancing and singing do not satisfy you, and certainly indulgence in what is sinful cannot. Go to the dance if you will, Jesus is also with you there; that heart of love is yearning over you with a pity infinitely more profound than human sympathy ever knew. Look at the wounds and bruises of that human body perfect in its proportions, but marred in its members; hear those groans and that agonized cry; see you those tears, and look into the depths of that compassionate eye. "He was delivered for our offences." He points his finger to that crucified body as a proof of the sacrifice; and on earth, at the cross, they pointed at Him the finger of scorn, God pity you, my poor friend, if in unbelief you should now do the same.—[From a letter in the Wynd Journal.

OLD AGE WITHOUT RELIGION.

Alas! for him who grows old without growing wise, and to whom the future world does not set open her gates, when he is excluded by the present. The Lord deals so graciously with us in the decline of life, that it is a shame to turn a deaf ear to the lessons which he gives. The eye becomes dim, the ear dull, the tongue falters, the feet totter, all the senses refuse to do their office, and from every side resounds the call, "Set thine house in order, for the term of thy pilgrimage is at hand." The playmates of youth, the fellow-labourers of manhood, die away, and take the road before us. Old age is like some quiet chamber, in which disconnected from the visible world, we can prepare in silence for the world that is unseen.—*Tholuck.*