

the trees in summer, or at home among friends, closing at an early hour, are to be commended as not only harmless, but positively useful. But all-night parties and balls set at naught every rational principle ; they are condemned before they get half way up to moral consideration. They dissipate, not recreate ; they destroy the body, they do not revive it ; they are a satire on amusement. Amusement should revive those faculties which regular work leaves dormant ; and not tax those powers which are overworked."

Solomon, then, does not prohibit pleasure, but excess of pleasure—the abuse of what is in itself innocent, and as a matter of course all pleasures that are untimely—that tend directly or indirectly to the development of the mere animal nature—that take their rise in sinful passions, or, lead to sin.

This teaching is in full accord with the spirit of Christianity. The bible nowhere rebukes nor prohibits innocent amusements. It does not say it is wrong to laugh, and, although different interpretations may be given of the inspired penman's words, it does not say that it is wrong to dance. I am not now passing any opinion on the more fashionable amusements of the day, but simply stating what every Bible reader knows, that the religion of Jesus Christ, so far from being a melancholy, gloomy, repulsive thing, is a cheerful, happy experience ; that so far from demanding seclusion from society, it recognises the necessity of active commerce between man and man, and the fullest enjoyment of all that this fair world affords and that our Heavenly Father