

cing. But I believe as well that as an amusement it is destructive to health. The Ball room may be a gay scene and sometimes a gorgeous one ; and there may be found concentrated in such a place the very quintessence of the refined and the elegant. Art is made to out-vie nature, and nature herself is rifled of its choicest and rarest riches to impart zest and brilliancy and splendour to the fete ; but the ball room is often the pathway to the sick room ; and the bounding waltz, and the romping reel but hasten the oncoming of that fell disease which wastes our beauty like a moth and dries up our strength like a potsherd. It requires no profound research to account for this fact, and it might be profitable to expatiate on the connection which ties dancing as an amusement, and disease together ; but perhaps it is sufficient that the fact be indicated to direct the attention of the youth before me, for sure I am that could the histories of our balls be written simply with respect to their bearing on health they would resemble Ezekiel's roll which was written within and on the backside and whose contents were mourning, lamentation and woe.

There is one other source of pleasure, (I cannot call it amusement) which I feel constrained to specify mainly for its bearing on the subject of health. I refer to impurity—to the common breach of the seventh Commandment. If it be the tendency of immorality generally to weaken and waste and destroy, verily such is the tendency of this pleasure. Now you must bear with me when I proclaim fornication as the youngman's sin. It is the *young man's crowning sin*. It is the sin which finishes the portrait of the rake, it is the climax and the concentration of all that constitutes a fast liver, a man about town, a *roue*—as the French have it, and which brands such a man as a moral pestilence. Ambition may be the crime of unsanctified manhood, and gripping avarice the sin of old age, and to gratify the ambition and nurse the avarice may be the business and the delight of the poor fools together ; but the sin of impurity cleaves to the young as really and as lamentably as ambition and avarice to manhood and age. Now I waive all reference to the effects of this sin whether on the intellectual or the emotional parts of our nature, or how it converts the understanding into a receptacle of vile thoughts and the heart into a receptacle of vile affections. I waive the fact that it defiles the eye