

prurient curiosity. The Arch-priestess of Free Love some years ago had recourse to similar means of stimulating the circulation of her journal in New York, and she also professed to be sounding a "tocsin" which was to break the moral slumbers of mankind. There is bitterness enough as it is between classes, and the whole of Christendom is already full enough of the volcanic elements of social war. It is hardly the part of a Christian Church to add either to the rancour or to the peril.

THE return of the season for balls has furnished a religious contemporary with an occasion for a sweeping anathema on dancing. "Girls, don't dance! You cannot do it without breaking your altar vow to renounce the world and the devil. It has ruined thousands, soul and body, and many a man and woman can trace their downfall to the day when first they indulged in the dance. Holy, consecrated Christian ministers, faithful, devoted Christian workers never dance." It is a lower style of preaching to tell a girl that, if she could only hear what the young men say of her when the dance is over, she would indignantly refuse to let their arms encircle her again. There may be such blackguards, but we do not happen ever to have met with them, and we cannot help thinking that our respected contemporary must in some previous state of its existence have strayed into a Casino. Nor is there much more force in the argument that some girls have traced their downfall to dancing: some girls have traced their downfall to night services and camp meetings; while no girl, we believe, was ever known to trace her downfall simply to her own weakness. Human life would come to an end if everything were to be relinquished which to the ill-disposed and foolish ever had been or might be an occasion of sin. That "holy, consecrated ministers" should dance, nobody will be profane enough to suggest. But the question is whether youths and maidens who dance will break any Christian vow. The pleasure of dancing is one of the things which it is easy to feel and difficult to explain; but it seems to be a part of human nature. In all climes and ages the spirits of youth have found a vent through it; and a vent of some sort the spirits of youth must be allowed to find: if they were to be pent up worse things might follow. We sincerely applaud, however, this and every attempt on the part of those who, like our contemporary, profess ascetic Christianity to make their conduct square with their professions. The glaring discrepancy between the actual and the ideal presented in the lives of Christian nominally belonging to the ascetic school, has, we suspect, done more than any scientific or critical difficulties to turn the world away from Christianity. But then we can hardly stop at dancing. All pleasures except religious pleasures, and all occupations except religious occupations, or such as are absolutely necessary to subsistence, must be renounced at the same time. We must cease to think of anything but saving ourselves out of the world and fleeing from the wrath to come. This is an ideal which has never been realized by anybody except the Trappists. The ideal of unascetic Christianity, on the other hand, is approximately realized by all who, while they engage in the lawful business of the world, and use its innocent pleasures, show in all the relations of life the Christian temper, preserve the purity of their affections, remember that the world, though it is their dwelling-place, passes away, and continue to value above its wealth or honour the graces of the soul. Those who condemn dancing altogether are of course disqualified for preaching against excess, and warning girls against the late hours and the constant dissipation which do really demoralize as well as cause the flower of youth to fade before its time.

THOSE who take the lower ground and do not profess asceticism are at liberty to say a word in favour of moderation with regard to the dinner parties of the elders as well as with regard to the dancing parties of the young. Nothing can be more conducive to good fellowship and the pleasant interchange of ideas than a dinner party well assorted. But then social intercourse ought to be the first object: the dinner party ought not to be a feed. Barbarians come together to eat: they look for a dinner of twenty courses or a fat sheep's tail. Gourmands have the same gross object; but, to do society justice, there are not many gourmands among us. The dinner ought of course to be well cooked and set out with taste; but it ought not to be heavy or expensive. Expense has the fatal effect of limiting society, of which in this country we have far too little; for while handsome houses multiply in Toronto, the inhabitants of many might, we suspect, except that the men meet in their places of business, as well be living apart on a prairie. Another consequence of expense are large parties, which enable us to get through the list of those to whom we owe dinners more cheaply and to save trouble and anxiety to the tortured hostess. But a party of twenty is not society, any more than the same number of people eating in the same room at a restaurant. There is no general conversation; there are only ten dialogues, painfully kept up for an hour and a half or

two hours, by as many couples, whose topics are perhaps exhausted in a few minutes. The length of large dinners is also wearisome in the last degree. Only one thing is worse, and that is the social battue in which a lady kills her whole visiting list at once, and which is miscalled a kettledrum. The real kettledrum was a meeting of a few people in the afternoon for tea, talk, reading and music; and was a very pleasant institution, fully as pleasant perhaps as a dinner. The hideous thing which has usurped the name is an evening crush with all its horrors physical and mental—the crowd, the heat, the want of seats, the din of unmeaning talk—transferred to the afternoon. It is not only not hospitality, but an insult to the very name. Fashion can neither be set at defiance by any one nor changed all at once: but there are in every social circle people who can exert some influence, and it is to be hoped that it will be exerted against large parties and heavy dinners.

THE second instalment of the "Greville Memoirs" was expected in England with an interest inferior only to that with which the world has long been expecting the Memoirs of Talleyrand. Suddenly it has come. It comprehends the period from 1837 to 1852; that is, from the decline of the Whig Government of Lord Melbourne to the formation of the Coalition Government of Lord Aberdeen. Those who looked for great revelations, political or personal, will be disappointed. In the case of a despotic government, the councils of which are secret, and where a great part is played by personal influence and court intrigue, there is a good deal to be revealed by those who are behind the scenes, and we learn from St. Simon what we could not have learned from any archives or gazettes. But a parliamentary government has no backstairs; all that is most important takes place in public; and, though the Cabinet sits in private, the result of its deliberations is soon known. The gossip of society about the interior of the Government is soon superseded or belied by actual events. There can be no great unveiling where hardly anything is veiled. Comparatively little therefore is recorded by Greville which is not recorded in the "Annual Register." But as the events and characters already familiar pass once more before us, we listen to the running commentary of a well-informed, independent, shrewd and generally just observer. Perhaps there can hardly be a better criticism on the volume than that which the Diarist has himself bequeathed. "You will find the greater part political, not often narrative; mostly allusions and comments on passing events, the details of which were not notorious and accessible; some miscellanies of a different description; personal, social, official; you will find public characters freely, flippantly perhaps, and frequently very severely dealt with; in some cases you will be surprised to see my opinion of certain men, some of whom, in many respects, I may perhaps think differently of now. Gibbon said of certain Pagan philosophers that their lives were spent in the pursuit of truth and the practice of virtue. I cannot boast of having passed my life in the practice of virtue; but I may venture to say that I have always pursued truth; and you will see evidence of the efforts I have made to get at it, and to sum up conflicting statements of facts with a sort of judicial impartiality." Greville was a thorough man of the world, of the turf, and apparently, like his class generally, loose on some points of morality; but he was a man of sense and honour; his curiosity, which he styles the search for truth, was strong, and he had very good means of gratifying it, especially with regard to the doings and councils of the Whigs, with whom he was personally intimate, while he was not so intimate with the Tories, a circumstance which does not disturb his impartiality. To spare the feelings of the living, certain passages, the editor tells us, have been withheld; yet some of the sons will wince. Lord Derby, for example, will scarcely be pleased by finding his father depicted as roistering and rollicking at Newmarket among blacklegs, betting-men and loose characters of every description, with a plain and, as we believe, well-founded intimation that the Earl's own character on the turf was far from meriting the epithets "high-minded" and "chivalrous." Perhaps the most novel disclosures are those which have reference to the Court, particularly in its relations with the Ministers. The picture of the Queen's early intercourse with Lord Melbourne, which we give in another column, could hardly have come from any other pen.

WHEN Leti, the historian, was one day attending a levee of Charles the Second the King said to him, "Leti, I hear that you are writing the History of the Court of England." "Sir, I have for some time been preparing materials for such a history." "Take care that your work gives no offence," said the Prince. Leti replied: "Sir, I will do what I can, but if a man were as wise as Solomon he would scarcely be able to avoid giving offence." "Why, then," rejoined the King, "be as wise as Solomon: write proverbs, not historic."