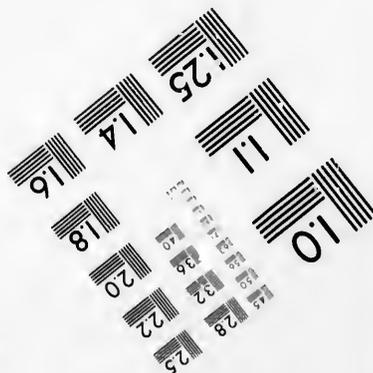
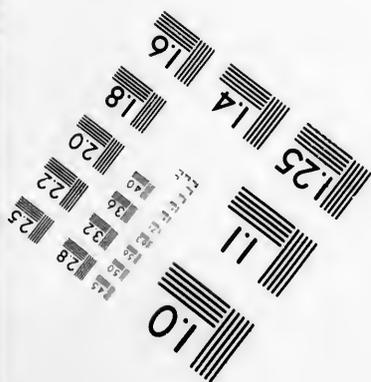
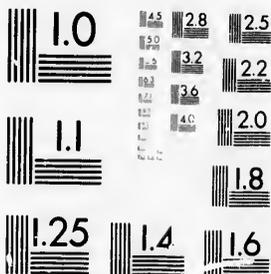


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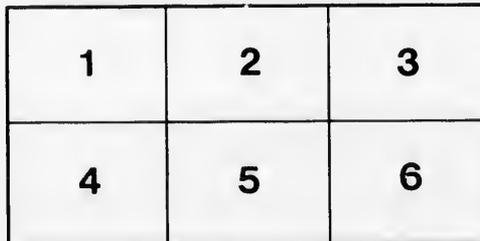
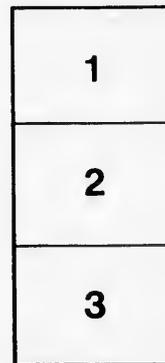
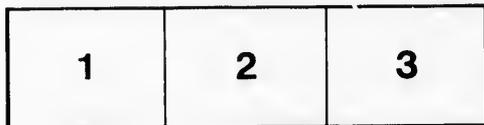
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A PRACTICAL DISCUSSION

OF

The Parlor Dance

The Theatre

The Cards

BY THE REV.

H. J. Crossley

Author of "PRACTICAL TALKS," etc.

"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in
all things."—2 TIM. ii. 7.

TORONTO :

WILLIAM BRIGGS

MONTREAL : C. W. COATES.

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A Request.

I WANT to kindly request every reader of this book to remember, that thoughts, *read in cold type*, may make a vastly different impression to that which would be made by *hearing* the same thoughts expressed in *kind tones* from a *loving heart*.

There is more in the way a thing is *said* or *read*, than there is in what is *uttered* or *written*. For example :

A father had sent his son to college, and a few weeks later received a letter from him. Being unable to read, he took the letter to a gruff butcher, who, with harsh voice, read : "*Dear father, I am very sick, send me some money. Your son John.*"

The letter, as read, angered the father, and in a rage he said : "I'll not send him a cent, when he writes me such a letter as that."

Later on in the day, his wife persuaded him to

A Request.

have the baker read the letter; as, perhaps, the butcher had not read it correctly.

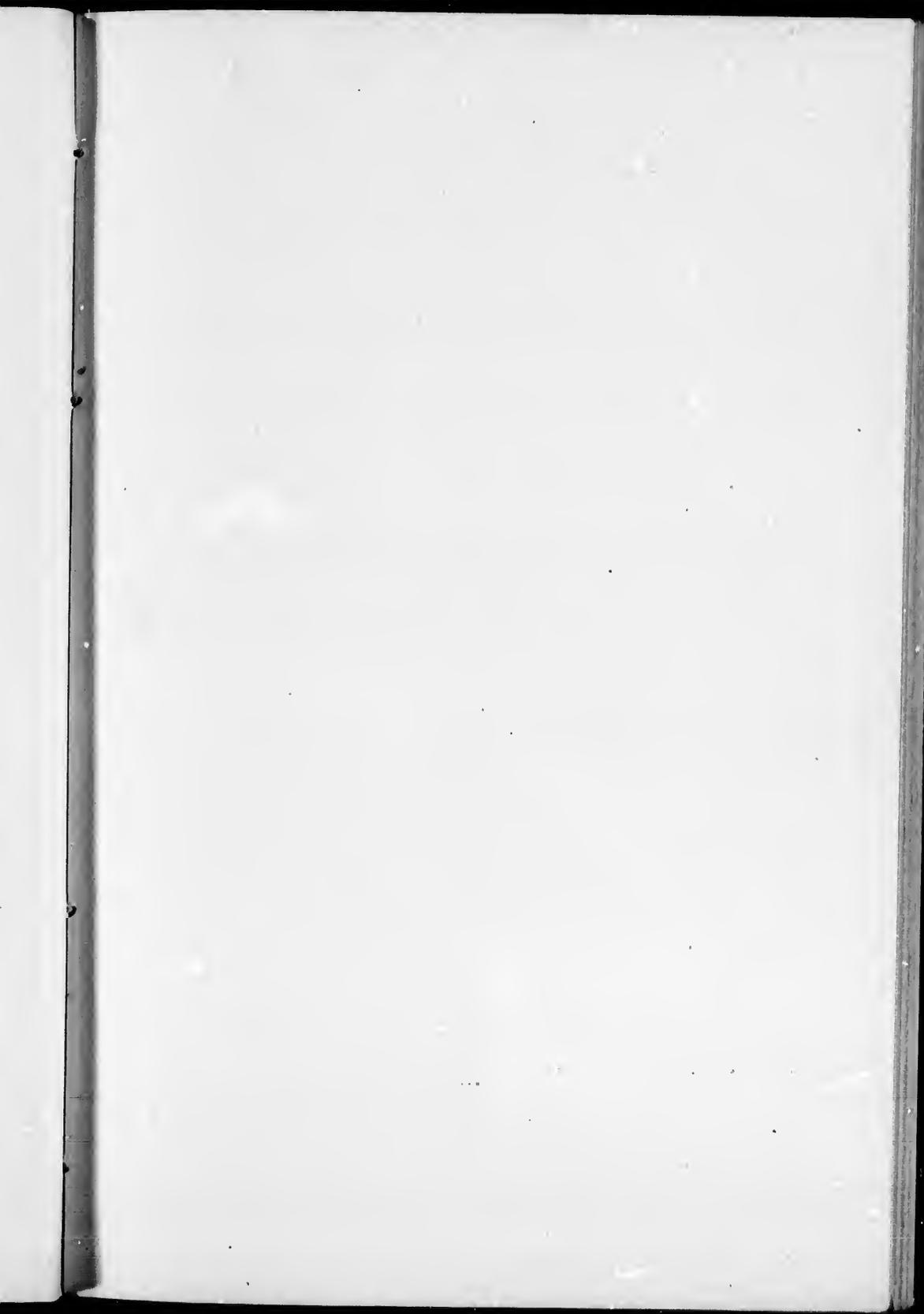
The baker, who was a kind-hearted and loving man, read it in tender, sympathetic tones: "Dear father, I am very sick, send me some money. Your son John."

Tears now came into the father's eyes, and with deep emotion he said, "*The dear* boy, he shall have every dollar he wants, when he writes to his father in that way."

Beloved, read these addresses, not with *harsh tones* and *ensorious thoughts*; but, with *kind voice* and *loving spirit*; being assured that my motto in these addresses, as in all others, is:

"SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE."

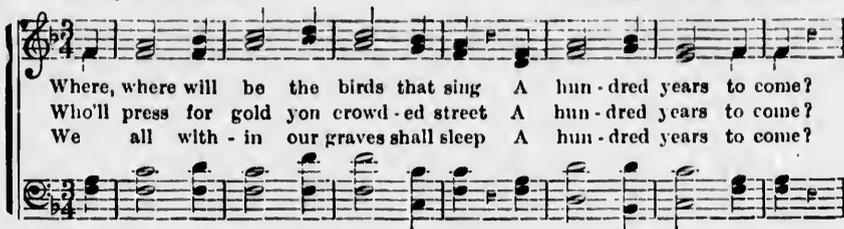
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A HUNDRED YEARS TO COME.

Words by W. C. BROWN.

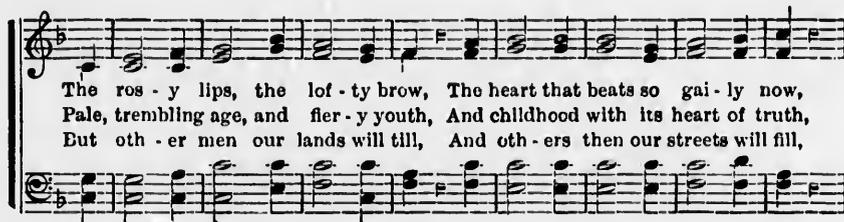
Melody by H. T. CROSSLEY.



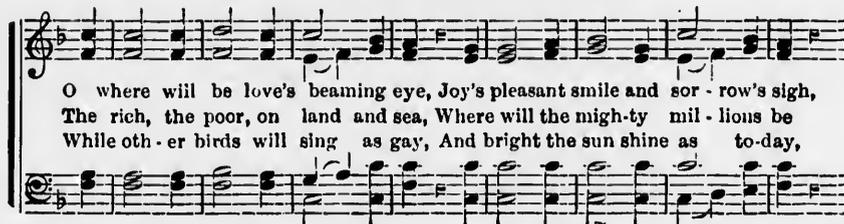
Where, where will be the birds that sing A hun-dred years to come?
Who'll press for gold yon crowd-ed street A hun-dred years to come?
We all with-in our graves shall sleep A hun-dred years to come?



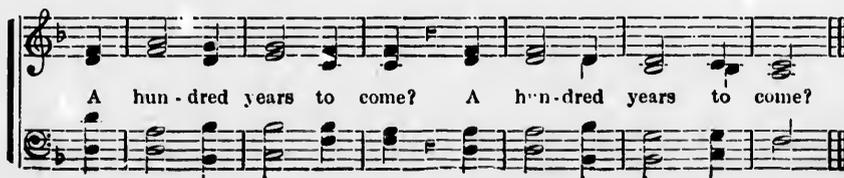
The flow'rs that now in beau-ty spring, A hun-dred years to come?
Who'll tread this church with will-ing feet A hun-dred years to come?
No liv-ing soul for us will weep A hun-dred years to come;



The ros-y lips, the lof-ty brow, The heart that beats so gai-ly now,
Pale, trembling age, and fier-y youth, And childhood with its heart of truth,
But oth-er men our lands will till, And oth-ers then our streets will fill,



O where will be love's beaming eye, Joy's pleasant smile and sor-row's sigh,
The rich, the poor, on land and sea, Where will the migh-ty mil-lions be
While oth-er birds will sing as gay, And bright the sun shine as to-day,



A hun-dred years to come? A hun-dred years to come?

The Parlor Dance.

—:1:—

Precept : Isa. xlvii. 7. Proverb : Prov. xxviii. 13.

Promise : Psa. xcvi. 11. Prayer : Col. i. 9, 10.

I N speaking about the parlor dance, I will, at the start, confess that I danced for years; hence I claim that I know what I am talking about. I began when I was so small that the ladies, in swinging, used to lift me off my feet. They enjoyed it, and I thought it was fun. I gave up dancing years later, at the same time that I gave up those sickish kissing plays.

Let me say that I shall not speak a word about *public* hops, charity balls, and assemblies, as no person should hesitate for a moment to score these out; but I shall refer only to the parlor dance, that many fine people, and even certain church members, in this late day, still defend, or say they see no objection to.

I need hardly say that I shall indulge in no extravagant utterances, neither shall I say a word that would cause the most modest and refined to blush. As a gentleman, I speak to ladies and gentlemen.

I believe that most people, who read this chapter, will admit that I treat the question logically, kindly and fairly; and so, in their better judgment, will agree with me, whether they intend to dance or not.

The Scripture text that expresses my desire and prayer is, "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." (2 Tim. ii. 7.)

There are several *excuses*—I will not say reasons—assigned for the parlor dance.

First excuse: "People must have amusement and recreation." Certainly, but look at the dancers next morning, and you will conclude dancing is not *recreation*, but *dissipation*. Dancing is a physical, mental, moral and spiritual dissipation. There are many unobjectionable amusements that give true recreation.

Second excuse: "People might better dance than do worse. They might better dance than slander others, or have kissing plays." Yes, but if you stop dancing, you do not have to do worse. Can you not keep from slandering your neighbor in some other way? Kissing plays among adults are things of the past, or are only found among the most illiterate and uncultured. Let us also taboo the dance.

Third excuse: "Dancing is an accomplishment." Indeed! Webster says, "An accomplishment is an elegance of mind or manners." Does dancing develop

mind? Nay, it prevents many from seeing how little mind they have, and the necessity of acquiring true accomplishments. Stop your ears so that you cannot hear the music, and people dancing look like lunatics. By the way, lunatics in asylums, and out of them too, are especially fond of dancing. Cicero declared, "No man in his senses will dance." Dancing is a sort of subterfuge for those who lack mind.

Fourth excuse: "If I don't dance, I cannot pass in society." What society? There is society, and there is *society*. The best society does not dance. Instead of demeaning yourself by running after a certain worldly "upper ten" society, that is at the top for a similar reason that froth is, show yourself to be of such intellectual, social and moral worth, that even the so-called "upper ten" will *rise* in their ideal of life, and *aspire* to pass in your society.

The best society consists of the earnest, active Christian men and women in our several churches.

I know a mother who said, "If I do not have my daughters dance and go out in society that dances, they will not get married." Let me say, she had seven daughters, and at my last information she had five of them on her hands yet. When a man wants a wife, though a dancer himself, he does not prefer the partners with whom he has danced; but he is apt to have

sense enough to seek to get a partner for life at the church prayer-meeting, or young people's society.

Fifth excuse: "All my associates, and the people I visit, dance." Then let me assure you that you have a grand opportunity, instead of being led by others, to show your independence of mind and strength of character; and, by so doing you will rise even in their esteem, and certainly will have the favor of God.

Sixth excuse: "When I hear music my feet begin to move." That is all right, so do mine. Let your feet move, keeping time, that is natural; but that has nothing to do with encircling a lady's waist with your arm, or having a gentleman's arm encircling your waist.

Seventh excuse: "I dance, and my conscience does not condemn me." So much the worse for you, when the spirit of Christ and His Word show that you are wrong. Your perverted conscience is not your guide. Paul says, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Rom. viii. 9.)

Eighth excuse: "If we do not dance or play cards, what shall we do when spending an evening?" That is a serious question with some persons, for they do not appear to know enough to do much else. I would answer them seriously and most respectfully—get more brains. A vacant mind leads to the ruin of

many. Those who have the fewest brains are most enamored with the "light fantastic."

Let me say, that in social gatherings, one of the important things is to disperse not later than ten or eleven o'clock. Not to do so is unreasonable, absurd and dissipating. Let the host or hostess invite the guests from eight to ten or eleven, as desired; and, in any case, you, as a guest, should have sense enough to start for home not later than eleven o'clock.

What with instrumental and vocal music, animated conversation, games of skill, if desired, and suitable readings, if convenient, the evening may be intelligently and profitably spent, if people have even ordinary accomplishments. I have often seen this done.

Ninth excuse: "Our church and clergymen are not opposed to dancing." You are certainly mistaken. Your church is not a congregation, but a great body or association. The particular congregation where you attend church, and your misinformed, worldly or patronizing clergyman may disgrace your Church and its ministry by sanctioning the dance; but let me ask you to follow the teaching and example of the many great and good, who are worthy representatives of your Church, who are most pronounced against the dance.

Tenth excuse: Some say, "The modern dance has

the sanction of Scripture." Let us see. We will first read of the religious dances of the Bible:

1. Exodus xv. 20, 21: "And *Miriam*, the prophetess, and all the *women*, went out with timbrels and dances."

2. Judges xi. 34: "And *Jephthah* came to Mizpeh, and his *daughter* came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances."

3. 1 Samuel xviii. 6: "The *women* came out singing and dancing, to meet King *Saul*."

4. 2 Samuel vi. 14: "And *David* danced before the Lord." "Modern dancers dance before the devil."

5. Psalms cxlix. 3: "Praise his name in the dance."

Do you notice that this religious dancing is altogether unlike our modern dances? It was (1) outdoors; (2) in the daytime; (3) spontaneous; not prescribed; (4) skipping or tripping, as children, expressive of religious joy; (5) women and men separate, and not men and women in each others' arms, as in the modern dance. (6) The religious dance of the Bible was a natural expression of religious joy and praise to God, to celebrate the victories of the Lord and of Israel—the modern dance is but a means of personal carnal amusement and worldly pleasure. (7) The re-

ligious dance of the Bible is no more like our modern dance, than the sacrament in church is like a drunken carousal in a bar-room.

Let us now refer to the Bible accounts of dancing by the irreligious :

1. Idolatrous Israel: Exodus xxxii. 19: "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing." These were church members that either never had been godly, or had backslidden.

2. Degenerate Amalekites: 1 Samuel xxx. 16: "Behold, they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking and dancing." These were adults that were wicked and reprobate, and who were opposed to the Church, and enemies of God.

3. Short-lived worldlings: Job xxi. 11-14: "They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. . . . They spend their days in wealth. . . . Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." These were careless young people, of worldly parents, who turned away from God, desiring neither to know Him nor His ways.

4. Herodias, the lewd daughter of an adulterous mother: Matthew xiv. 6-11: "The daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod," etc.

This is a sample of the ballet dance by low girls, to please base and depraved men.

It is evident that the characters referred to in these four passages strikingly represent the several classes of persons who dance in our day. This consideration should certainly turn every Christian moralist and respectable person from even the thought of dancing.

But I think I hear one ask, "Does not the Bible speak about 'A time to dance'?" This phrase simply means a time when people dance; but gives no sanction to dancing, any more than to hate or to kill, for Solomon adds, "A time to kill, a time to hate." (Ecc. iii. 3-8.) Moreover, the dancing here referred to is not a set promiscuous dance, but it is simply a spontaneous skipping, frisking and leaping, such as joyous children and young people innocently indulge in. Those who quote this passage to try to uphold modern dancing, are related to the hotel-keeper who took Mr. Hunter to task for denouncing the liquor traffic, and sought to vindicate his ruinous business by loudly and confidently asking, "*Does not the Bible say that we are to try the spirits?*"

Does one seriously suggest, "When the prodigal returned there was music and dancing?" (Luke xv. 25.) The prodigal's return and reception illustrate the conversion of a sinner. Can any person, not

insane, imagine such folly and wickedness, as for parents to get up a modern parlor dance to celebrate the conversion to Christ of their wayward son, for whom they had long prayed? The idea is preposterous.

Eleventh excuse: If the Church opposes dancing, the young people and others will be kept from becoming members. Not so. If they are converted, this restriction will be no barrier; and if they are not Christians, honorable persons would not be hypocrites and come in though the fence were thrown down.

Moreover, it is evident that the churches that are most opposed to the dance are the most aggressive, and have the largest numbers of youth and adults join their membership. Let us, as Churches, ministers and Christians, be true to Christ, and success will be ours. God honors those who honor Him.

We thus see that all the excuses assigned for dancing are paltry, frivolous, illogical and unchristian.

I shall now discuss five questions, and leave the responsibility with you of deciding and adopting the wisest and best course. "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."

First question: *What effect will it have upon your influence if you dance?* This is an important question to saint and sinner, as each is equally responsible for his or her influence.

Are you a professing Christian? Then, if you dance, your influence for evil will be twofold. First, your religious profession will seem *ridiculous* to many. If you danced with a person this week, and next week spoke to that one about becoming a Christian, you would be laughed at, and ironically asked, "*When did you get good?*" Dancing professors, however, do not speak to others about becoming Christians. Will you dance, and so seal your lips? This one reason should be sufficient to induce every sincere Christian to say, "I will never dance."

Second, your practice will give an excuse to others to dance. They will try to silence their consciences by saying, "If it is no harm for So-and-so to dance, it is no harm for me." And the higher you stand in society or the Church, the greater and more widespread for evil will be your influence. No dancer can *truthfully* say, "The dance never injured me," because it at least injured his or her influence for good. Will you, by your example or teaching, encourage others to do that about which they have conscientious scruples? If so, Paul declares, "You become a stumbling-block," "Ye sin against the brethren," "Ye sin against Christ." (1 Cor. viii. 9-12.)

Even though you could, with good conscience, dance, yet knowing the thought and conscience of so

many others about it, you should say concerning the dance as Paul did about meat offered to idols : " If to dance make my brother to offend, or stumble, I will not dance while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to stumble." (1 Cor. viii. 13.)

Are you not a Church member, and still unconverted? Let me say, you have no license to dance that a Christian has not. You are personally responsible for your influence for evil or good. If you dance, will you not, by your social influence, hinder others from yielding to Christ, and also induce some weak or half-hearted Christians to dance, and thus violate their consciences, stumble and backslide, as many others have done ?

The sin of causing one weak believer to stumble is so great that Christ teaches that you might better be " drowned in the depths of the sea," with a millstone about your neck, than be guilty of such a crime. (Mark ix. 42.) In view of your influence, you may well vow not to dance, and pray, " Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God." (Psa. li. 14.)

Second question : Will a true-hearted Christian want to dance? The best and most spiritually-minded members in the English, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and other Churches say that they have no desire whatever to dance,

The votaries of the dance, when converted to Christ, not only abandon dancing, but lose all their love for it.

Many unconverted and worldly professors cannot understand this. Have you not heard of "the expulsive power of a new affection?" This is the secret of the change. Beloved, know by experience this new affection, "the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart," and the desire for dancing will be gone.

Though you may not be a Christian, you may partly understand how this can be. Suppose that Queen Victoria were to adopt a bootblack as her son, would he, after wearing royal apparel, eating at her table, riding in her carriage, enjoying her company and that of princes, seriously ask, "Would it be any harm for me to blacken boots on the street a little?" Such work would be beneath his dignity. So, when a person becomes "a true Christian, a child of the King," there is a much greater change than for a bootblack to be adopted by Queen Victoria, and shall he ask, "Would it be any harm for me to dance?" or "Will I have to give up dancing?"

Think what it is to be a Christian: knowing the pardon of God, His adoption, fellowship, love and grace, and will you ask, "Would it be wrong for me to dance?" Nay, rather you will feel it beneath your dignity to dance, as you sing,

“I'm a child of the King,
New songs do now my lips employ,
And dances my glad heart for joy.”

The Lord takes the dance out of our *heels* and puts it in our *hearts*.

Do you say, “I know Church members that dance”? Yes, but let me ask, “Would you desire such to pray for and comfort you when dying, or to point out the way of salvation if you were seeking the Lord?”

I think I hear one say, “Well, I *profess* to be a Christian, and I dance, and, I confess, I like it.” Let me ask, “Can you truthfully look up into the face of Christ and like Peter affirm: ‘Lord, *Thou knowest that I love thee.*’” (John xxi. 17.)

Worldly professors may, like backslidden Israel, have a perverted taste, and so turn from the heavenly manna and ask for “the *leeks*, the *onions* and *garlick*” of Egypt (Num. xi. 4-6), while some may even try to mix the leeks and onions with the heavenly manna.

Do you think such worldly professors would feel at home and content in heaven with no dancing, cards, or theatre? The out-and-out Christian has a purer appetite, which loathes leeks and delights in manna.

The question is not, “Will a *church member* or *professing Christian* want to dance?” but, “Will a *true CHRISTIAN* want to dance?” Know that you

are a consecrated Christian, for then only can you answer the proposed question from experience.

If your heart is filled with love to Christ, I would be willing to give you a written license to dance all you want to, and stand responsible for you at the judgment bar of God.

The meaning of "Christian" is, one like Christ. Your feelings would recoil from even imagining Christ to have taken part in a parlor dance in the home of Martha and Mary. If you, then, are like Christ, and so deserving the name of Christian, should you not recoil from the practice of dancing?

Let us know the superior joys of a Christian experience and life, so shall we "for joy" give up the dance as good riddance, and not think it to be a sacrifice; and we will also feel pity for those who still seek in vain for satisfaction at this broken cistern.

Third question: Is it in accordance with true propriety for a lady and gentleman to dance together? Do you tritely say, "To the pure all things are pure"? Let me say, this passage is often quoted by Satan, and also by the impure and ignorant to seek to defend sinful practices; but, I assure you, it is not applicable to the question of dancing. Moreover, I shall not speak or even think of *purity* or *impurity*, but only of *propriety* and *impropriety*.

Consider what I say: Suppose I am at a parlor dance with the most *élite*, and, while others are waltzing—allow the supposition—I in a *promenade* or *standing at the window*, put my arm around a fair lady's waist, just as other gentlemen *in the dance* have their arms encircling other ladies; you know that any lady would indignantly resent such an ungentlemanly liberty as an insult, and her big brother, husband or father, if resent, would feel like firing me out of the window. How is this? If it is in accordance with propriety to take such a liberty in the dance, it is equally so in a *promenade* or *standing at the window*, under the same gaslight, and before the same company; but, if it is an impropriety in a *promenade* or *standing at the window*, it is *much more* so in the dance, when you consider the fascination of the music, the motion of the body, the clasp of hands, and the more intimate and prolonged embrace. Is not that putting the matter fairly?

Every lady will say, "You would not as a gentleman take such a liberty in a *promenade*, and I would not be considered a lady if I permitted it." Then can any gentleman or lady consistently take or permit similar liberties in the dance? Persons try to excuse this impropriety in the dance by saying the liberty is necessary in the dance but not in the *promenade*.

That confession should cause us to consider the dance itself to be unnecessary and wrong.

Ladies of fine maidenly modesty and sensitive womanly delicacy, *that have never danced*, instinctively recoil from the intimate attitude assumed in the "waltz" or "ripple."

A gentleman, seeing the round dance for the first time, said: "If I should see a man offering to dance with my wife in that way, I would horsewhip him."

Consider the attitude of the "ripple." The man places his hand upon the lady's waist, her left hand rests upon his right shoulder or arm, the man's left hand holds the woman's right hand as both their arms are extended, and in this position they dart and circle through the room. A few years ago, I looked for some moments at a so-called fashionable dance. There were nineteen couples on the floor dancing the "ripple," and seventeen couples out of the nineteen had their breasts literally throbbing against each other. What *lady* but would be ashamed to have her *picture* taken with a gentleman in the attitude of the ripple or waltz? Why then not be ashamed of the attitude?

There is no impropriety for a gentleman to put his arm around a lady's waist, providing he has the right to do so; but the right should only be allowed to a

husband with his wife, a brother with his sister, a son with his mother, a father with his daughter, a gentleman with his affianced, and other near and intimate *relations*; but, beyond this, no matter if ladies and gentlemen are as pure as angels, they cannot without *impropriety* allow or take such a liberty in the dance any more than they can out of it. Remember, I am not speaking about impurity, but only about *impropriety*.

Do you ask, "Have you any objections to the square dances, or ladies dancing together, or husband dancing with his wife, or a brother with his sister?" Such a question is unnecessary, as people care little for that kind of dancing.

One has said: "As alcohol is the spirit of beverages, so sex is the spirit of the dance; take it away, and let the sexes dance separately, and dancing would go out of fashion very soon and become *nil*."

There is no *impropriety* or objection in the peculiar step, or keeping time to music, or in the dance itself, any more than in walking; but the *impropriety* is in the liberty allowed and taken in the dance.

The pleasure, attraction and fascination are not in the dance itself, or men would enjoy dancing together, women would enjoy a dance with women, and the square dance would be as popular as the round dance.

We all know such is not the case. Why? There is but one reason you can assign.

Most men would as soon eat an egg without salt as dance with a man. Few ladies find pleasure in dancing with ladies. The square dance is seldom danced and little enjoyed. There are really no square dances now; they all have the corners rounded off. The round dance is all the rage. Why all this?

If the pleasure were in the dance, a man would as soon waltz with one lady as another, providing she were a good dancer. But we know that this is not the case. Why? Some men say, "I would as soon dance with a broom-stick as with Miss So-and-so; there is no magnetism in her."

If the fascination were in the dance itself, sisters, as a rule, would enjoy dancing with their brothers, and wives with their husbands, as with other gentlemen. Such, we know, is not the case. Why? A refined and fashionable lady, with all innocence, said to me in presence of her husband: "Sisters and wives do not enjoy dancing with their brothers and husbands as with other gentlemen, because there is not the same affinity between them." I asked, "Should that affinity be enjoyed?" The next day this excellent lady apologized to me, and said, "I am ashamed of the admission I made yesterday, as to why wives

and sisters, as a rule, prefer to dance with other men rather than with their own husbands and brothers."

I do not imagine that the many refined, virtuous and artless wives and young ladies that dance, are aware of the real secret of the fascination and pleasure of the promiscuous dance. If they would carefully analyze and think over this question, they too would be ashamed that they had been dancers, and would not permit such an impropriety again.

If ladies knew the coarse remarks sometimes made about them by young men with whom they had danced, they would blush. A prominent gentleman in London, after attending a dance in one of the best homes, with the select of so-called fashionable society, said to his sister, "No more dancing for us." She, in surprise, asked, "Why?" He answered, "When so-called gentlemen make such low remarks about other pure ladies, they will speak similarly about my sister." That was their last dance.

No wonder that so many husbands and brothers object to their wives and sisters dancing with other gentlemen; though others, being yet blinded by a slavish custom, allow liberties in the dance that they would be enraged at if allowed by their wives or sisters sitting on the sofa or standing in the parlor.

When you consider the subject, do you not wonder

that the dance, *as it exists*, is tolerated by respectable people? Will you not discountenance it?

Score out all the round dances for men and women where liberties are prescribed, that, *out of the dance*, no woman dare allow, or man take, without forfeiting the title lady or gentleman, and dancing will soon be abandoned by all classes.

The only *excuse* assigned for allowing such liberties in the dance, is that "it is customary." That is an excuse, but it is no *reason*. Some are glad that it is customary, while many ladies simply permit the liberty because it is customary, lest they would be considered prudes. I appeal to you not to be blinded or influenced by the trite and ignorant excuse, "it is customary." That chestnut is too old for use.

Where and how did the custom originate? Who first dared to prescribe such liberties in the dance? The popular round dances of the present day have been invented by lewd dancing-masters in Germany, Paris, Vienna and Toronto.

What right has any man or set of men to introduce into decent society a custom in the dance that would *outrage* our sense of propriety out of the dance?

Let me give a quotation from Rev. Dr. Pierson's book: "The waltz was born December 20th, 1787—first seen in a Vienna theatre, the progeny of a licen-

tious stage and its consort, the ballet. This amorous, gyratory hugging was, for a time, thought to be too shockingly indecent to be tolerated anywhere else. It found its way into houses of doubtful repute, and more slowly into German society. Even Paris, for a time, resisted its licentious libertinism, and not till the present century did it get sanction in Paris; then, of course, it became the fashion everywhere, for Paris sets fashion's clock in all lands." Will you be a blind slave to such a gross fashion or custom?

As I have thus presented the subject, many dancers have said to me, "I had not considered the subject that way, but you are right, and I will never dance again."

I appeal to every true lady and gentleman, Christian and unconverted, that would not allow or take similar liberties out of the dance, to forever turn away from the amusement that prescribes such improprieties. I think I hear you say, "I will." Adopt President Edwards' rule: "I am fully resolved, with God's help, never again to do that of which I doubt the propriety, unless I equally doubt the propriety or expediency of *not* doing it."

Fourth question: Is there any harm or sin in dancing? Consider what I say.

1. Suppose that Mr. Hunter and myself, with the

Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist and Methodist ministers, and the leading members of the various Churches, were to have a very select parlor dance, at the manse, rectory or parsonage, what would you think and say? I know you would condemn us as ministers, and we might as well give up our work as pastors and evangelists, unless we confessed and repented of the wrong. Do you answer, "But you are ministers"? Yes, but God has one law of *right* for ministers and laymen, Christians and unconverted; hence, in condemning us as ministers for dancing, you condemn the dance as wrong for everybody, saved and unsaved, yourself included.

2. The most devoted and intelligent Christians *in all the Churches* consider the dance to be wrong. Are they mistaken? Who are the professing Christians that favor the dance? They are the namby-pamby, goody-goody Christians; the lukewarm and back-slidden; those who desire to be thought broad and liberal-minded; those who act on worldly policy, hoping to get a certain class into the Church; those who lack moral backbone, and those who are ignorant about even the attitude permitted in the dance, but think it must be proper because their children and certain respectable people dance.

3. The unconverted do not respect *as Christians*

the Church members that dance. At a dance one asked another, "Are you a Christian?" He answered, "No, are you?" "Yes." With sarcasm he said, "What then are you doing here?" If you, as a Church member, were at a dancing party, and one asked another about you, "Does not So-and-so profess to be a Christian?" the sarcastic reply would be given, "*O yes.*" Do you want to be an "*O yes*" Christian?

4. The rules of every evangelical Church, *in their spirit*, forbid dancing. This is true of the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and other Churches, but especially so of the English or Protestant Episcopal Church. When confirmed each one is required to promise: "To renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of this wicked world, and all the deceitful lusts of the flesh." Therefore, any person that has been confirmed and dances, breaks his or her *solemn confirmation vow*? Will you do this?

5. I consider dancing to be wrong, as it prevents so very many from becoming Christians. Very often people ask us, "Will I have to give up dancing?" Thus they trifle with their salvation, and barter Christ as certainly as did Judas.

6. Dancing must be wrong, as it has destroyed the religious fervor of Christians formerly devoted, and

has led many to a backslidden life. Dancing and devotion no more mix than water and oil.

7. Dancing is evidently wrong, as it tends to drown and destroy serious and religious convictions. How often have I seen this true with the unconverted. Do not dance away your Christ-implemented impressions.

8. Those most enamored with the dance, when truly converted to Christ, abandon the dance as evil.

9. The dance is contrary to the spirit of Christ and Christianity. Could you imagine Christ dancing, or sanctioning the dance, if He were in your place? Should you then, as His representative, do so? Will we want to dance if we can truthfully say, "We have the mind of Christ"? (1 Cor. ii. 16.)

10. The Gospel and Bible precepts, *in spirit*, are opposed to the modern dance. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thess. v. 22.)

11. The most devoted, intelligent and successful ministers, in all the Churches, have been and are very pronounced against dancing:

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon said: "When I hear of a modern dance, I have an uncomfortable feeling about the throat, as I recall that a dance cost the head of the preacher, John the Baptist."

Rev. Dr. Albert Barnes forcibly said: "No child dances into heaven, but many a one dances into hell."

Rev. Dr. A. T. Pierson affirms: "The modern round dance is to me specially abhorrent. It is an iniquity and a snare."

Rev. Dr. Talmage says: "The round dance is administrative of evil, and ought to be driven out of all respectable circles."

Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby declared: "Three-fourths of the abandoned girls of New York were ruined by dancing."

12. The most noted evangelists in the churches speak out against the social dance.

Rev. D. L. Moody, in the city of London, declared in my hearing: "I would as leave go out into the street and eat mud as to dance."

Rev. E. P. Hammond said, in St. Catharines: "As Christians, we must draw the line somewhere; we should certainly draw it so as to exclude dancing."

Rev. S. P. Jones, with more truth than poetry, says: "Dancing is hugging set to music."

Rev. J. E. Hunter, my companion, says: "God have mercy on the mother that has no more sense than to send her pure daughter to a dancing school."

Rev. Dr. Geo. F. Pentecost affirms: "I do not hesitate to say that the modern society dance is essentially immodest. No woman, married or single, can participate in the dance and retain the firm, keen,

clear, pure edge of her modesty—I do not say chastity, but modesty. That you dance, shows that the keen, sensitive edge of maidenly modesty and womanly delicacy has already gone. That you blush when I speak of it, only shows that there is a resurrection of the blushes that the modern dance has killed, and sent long ago to their graves.”

Rev. B. Fay Mills, the noted Presbyterian evangelist, thus clearly puts it: “You would not allow any minister to sit by the side of your wife or daughter in the attitude men assume in the round dance. If a minister would do such a thing you would stop him in a rage.”

13. The social dance is evidently wrong, as the various representative Churches unite in condemning it.

The Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops, in council assembled, wrote: “We consider it our duty to warn our people against those amusements which may easily become to them an occasion to sin, and especially against the fashionable dances at present carried on, which are so revolting to every feeling of delicacy and propriety, and are fraught with the greatest danger to morals.”

The Presbyterian Church gives no uncertain sound. Some of her members and a few of her ministers may be found, who ignorantly or presumptuously disgrace

this conservative Church, by speaking favorably of the parlor dance; but hear the unanimous decision of a Presbyterian Synod, which is given as a sample of the action of many other Synods of this honored Church: "There is a line of distinction between harmless and sinful amusements, and it is sometimes difficult to draw that line; but, in regard to dancing, there is no such difficulty. It is the most giddy and thoughtless practice the world has to offer her votaries. Therefore, resolved, that the practice of dancing, and of giving or attending private or public parties, or of educating children in the art of dancing by Christians, is clearly forbidden in the spirit of the Gospel, condemned by our confession of faith, and by the decisions of our highest church councils, and in violation of the covenant relations entered into by everyone who connects himself with the Church of Christ."

The great and historic Protestant Episcopal, or English Church, is very pronounced against the dance. Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont, wrote: "Dancing is chargeable with indulgence of personal vanity and display, and the premature incitement of the passions, and endangers health, while its incongruity with Christian principles is so manifest that no ingenuity can make it consistent with the covenant of baptism."

Bishop Coxe, of Western New York, in a pastoral

letter, said: "The dances, too commonly tolerated in our times, are so disgraceful and so irreconcilable with the Gospel of Christ, that I feel it my duty to warn my flock that those who run with the world in these things presume not to come to the holy table. Classes preparing for confirmation are informed that I will not lay hands knowingly on anyone who is not prepared to renounce such things, with other abominations of the world, the flesh and the devil."

Bishop Cobb, of Alabama: "The idea that the Episcopal Church favors dancing has floated much trash down upon her."

The Methodist Church, which is the largest and most rapidly increasing Protestant Church on this continent, by her General and Annual Conferences, pastoral addresses and pulpit utterances, is outspoken against the promiscuous dance. If a Methodist minister could be found who favored the dance, even the most worldly would think he needed to be converted.

The Baptist Church is also so well known to be pronounced against the dance, that we do not need to cite utterances from that large and spiritually minded Church. No wonder that all true Baptists renounce the dance, when John the Baptist, after whom their denomination is named, was beheaded through a dance.

Let us, as Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Congre-

gationalists, Episcopalians, Methodists and Baptists, be true to Christ and His Word, so shall we be loyal to our respective Churches.

14. It is wrong to dance, as it lessens a person's influence for good. A young lady, standing high in society, was invited and urged to attend a dance. She replied, "Senator, I cannot do it, I am a Christian; I never do anything that will lessen my influence over my Sunday School class." The senator answered, "I honor you; if there were more Christians like you, more men like myself would become Christians."

Though dancing, with all its adjuncts, were no more harm to you than for Paul to eat meat offered to idols, yet if you, by your practice or precept, encourage dancing, and so embolden one to sin by doing that about which he or she has a doubt, according to Paul's logic, "you sin against Christ." (1 Cor. viii. 12.)

15. Many have regretted, while living and dying, that they had encouraged the dance by their example. No Christians ever expressed a regret that they had not danced. View the dance in the light of eternity.

16. The modern dance licenses liberties that, out of the dance, are considered insulting and immoral.

17. The social dance is evidently wrong, as it is the secret of much home infelicity, and many divorces.

18. I believe the dance to be wrong, because it was born in shame, and though it seeks hard to be introduced into our parlors, and tries to pass in society that is intelligent, pure and good, it is evidently most at home in ball rooms, beer gardens and dance houses, among the ignorant, degraded and impious. We should certainly seek things whose origin, character, history and associations are more respectable and reputable.

19. The dance is undoubtedly wrong, as it has led to the moral and eternal ruin of so many.

The chief of police of New York testifies that "three-fourths of the abandoned girls of that city say that they were led to ruin by dancing."

Let me give you the appalling statement that I have often seen quoted, made by the leading Roman Catholic Bishop of New York: "It is ascertained in the confessional that nineteen out of twenty who confess to have fallen from virtue, ascribe their first and subsequent downward steps to the dance." He is not speaking of lewd women, as these do not go to the confessional, but he refers to the wives, mothers and sisters from respectable homes, whose fall, in the majority of cases, no one knew about except the guilty parties, God and their father confessors.

No one can doubt the truth of the Bishop's start-

ling statement, for priests do not lie about the confessional, and people do not dare to tell what is false in the confessional. Any person that reads this noted Bishop's utterance, and therefore must believe it, whether he wants to or not, and yet says there is no harm in the modern dance, must either be a fool or a villain; a fool, that he knows not the value of virtue, or a villain that he cares not that it be outraged.

Fifth question: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" I want each one to ask this question for himself or herself, with reference to the dance.

Paul asked this question on the way to Damascus. He had been conscientious before, yet in great error, but now his eyes were opened.

Have you, as a professing Christian, been hitherto sincere, and yet favored the parlor dance? Have you asked the Lord about it? Will you do so now? Those who dance seldom if ever pray about it.

Can you participate in a dance and then, when you think of your Saviour, yourself and your influence, say, like Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." If you cannot, then keep away from such places. Do not think that you have been a hypocrite, or give up your hope in Christ; but thank God for the additional light you have received, give up the dance, and, like Paul, get the scales off your eyes obtain forgiveness

for the past, consecrate yourself to Christ and become a useful Christian.

Are you still unconverted? Remember that the Lord has not only your highest good, but also your greatest pleasure at heart. Do you ask, "Can't we have any fun?" Yes, lots of it. "He giveth us all things richly to enjoy." Christianity endorses every pure, intelligent amusement. The true Christian has superior pleasures to the worldling.

Some persons try to stipulate with the Lord, and so make certain reservations. Do not thus trifle with your salvation, but say, "Lord, I want to become a Christian on Thine own conditions, and then live as Thou shalt direct. Thy will be done."

I have often urged those who have tried to defend and cling to the dance, to lay the question of the dance aside for the time being, yield to Christ, and afterwards ask, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" This has been done, and the dance has then been gladly given up without a sacrifice, as their desires were changed. Give yourself to Christ's *first*, and then settle the dance.

Many refuse Christ and His salvation for the expected pleasures of the dance. I pity them. It will not give the dancer much consolation in the lost world to reflect, "I'm in hell, but I enjoyed the

dance for twenty years." Do not think it a sacrifice to give up the dance or anything that Christ requires.

One, just converted, asked: "Should I give up the dance?" I replied: "Ask the Lord Jesus about it; and if He direct you to give it up, He will give you, according to His promise, one hundred-fold more pleasure in its abandonment than you have ever had in its participation." The Lord's counsel was obeyed, the dance was given up as good riddance, the hundred-fold was received and a bright hope of "life everlasting." Christ only asks us to give up that which will detract from our real good and highest pleasure.

Who would not be a whole-hearted Christian? The Lord Jesus needs you. Hark, He calls you. Cheerfully accept Him to be your Saviour, Exemplar, Teacher and Lord for all the future. Let your chief ambition be "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

I appeal to Christians in every Church not to dance or do anything else that may injure your own spiritual life, and will certainly be a stumbling-block to some, or lessen your influence over others for good.

I appeal to every lady and gentleman, notwithstanding that many who should know better are blinded and carried away by the custom, to discountenance the dance, because it prescribes and permits

liberties and improprieties that, out of the dance, would not be tolerated by respectable people.

I appeal to the unconverted, that you do not allow the dance or anything else to keep you for another day from Christ, lest you be like the lady who, in the dance, swooned in her partner's arms, and, being carried to the window, regained consciousness only long enough to wail out the words, "I have danced my body into the grave and my soul into hell," when with a gasp she expired. One hour in perdition will make the dance look very small.

I appeal to you who are wealthy, and to you who are leaders in so-called fashionable society, to stop and think that there is something much better and more satisfying for you than dancing and other worldly pleasures. Will you not aspire to give your influence to create a higher and nobler ideal of life in fashionable circles?

I appeal to all young Christians, and especially to those converted in our meetings, and those who are members of the Epworth League, King's Sons and Daughters, and Christian Endeavor Societies, to firmly and cheerfully renounce the dance, as also kindly denounce it, and show that you have a source of joy that is more satisfying, and an ideal in life that is worthy of your high calling as the children of God.

An English Church young lady was dressing to go to a dance. As she held the emblem of the King's Daughters in her hand, thinking which would be the most suitable place to fasten it, new and unexpected thoughts began to course through her mind, and she said to herself, "Is it suitable for me to wear this at a dance; can I dance in His name? I certainly should not attend a dance. I will not go." Beloved, wear your emblems, and put aside the dance.

I appeal to every minister of the glorious gospel of Christ, for the honor of your Church, for the good of the young people and parents committed to your charge, and for the glory of our Saviour and King, that you utter no uncertain sound as to this social and fashionable vice that is so persistently endeavoring to find sanction among the members of our Churches.

I appeal to you as parents and adults generally not to allow dancing in your homes, or countenance it in your children or friends: and so avoid regrets. In a revival meeting conducted by my brother, a young lady became anxious, and returning home, told her mother she desired to become a Christian and join the Church. Her mother said: "You are young yet, and have just begun to pass in society. If you became a Christian and joined the Church, you could not

The Parlor Dance.

attend the dancing and card parties this winter. There is time enough for you to think of these things. You had better not go to the meetings any more."

The fatal advice was taken. Only a few weeks passed away, when typhoid fever arrested the daughter. My brother was sent for, but found her delirious, and thus unconscious of her state, she lingered in delirium for weeks, and then died, leaving her mother in inexpressible anguish.

At the funeral the mother wrung her hands and tore her hair, as she cried out again and again: "*Is there any hope for my darling? If she is lost, it is my fault. O my sin, my sin.*"

Years have passed, yet that mother has never since known a happy day, but lives in inexpressible sadness and remorse.

Beloved, learn from her sad and bitter experience not to countenance the dance or that which may keep your own children, friends and others from becoming Christians, lest, if not in this world, yet in the world to come, you may see yourself responsible for the eternal loss of others, and find eternity too short to breathe out your anguish of spirit and remorse of soul.

I appeal to every worldling by the shortness of time, the importance of life, the certainty of death,

and the momentousness of eternity, to forever turn away from the dance.

When Napoleon with his troops invaded Moscow in 1812, the inhabitants deserted the city. The French officers and soldiers decided to have a grand festive evening and dances in the upper-room of a magnificent palace that had been deserted. The *elite* of France were there, both men and women. The dance began. That night the city was set on fire. As the flames swept from street to street, the excited dancers viewed the grand sight with great delight. By-and-by the building next to the palace was on fire, and they, thinking it time to escape, were preparing to do so, when Carnot, a young officer, in his foolhardiness, cried, as he waved his jewelled hand above his head, "One dance more, and defiance to the flames!" His words seemed to electrify the company, and many gleefully reiterated, "One dance more, and defiance to the flames!" With a fresh inspiration another dance began; and, as the music and the dance proceeded, the enthusiasm increased. But hark! What is that voice they hear? "Fly, fly, for your life. The fire has reached the magazine." For a moment they all stood transfixed with horror, and wildly stared at one another, but the next moment, before one of the company had time to escape, the powder magazine

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exploded, the palace fell in ruins, and all of those dancing men and women were suddenly ushered into eternity. We are surprised at their criminal folly and neglect, but remember that they knew not of the existence of the magazine which caused their death.

Beloved, *you know* that *life* is short, that *eternity* will soon dawn upon you; that *heaven* and *hell* are realities, and that *voices* divine and human warn and invite you. Will you be more foolhardy than were the victims of the Moscow disaster, and bid *defiance* to God and eternal disaster, as you go on with the dance and other carnal pleasures, while you neglect to seek the salvation of yourself and others till death unexpectedly overtakes you, and you are lost eternally?

I appeal to one and all by the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for you, and now lives to love you with His great heart of infinite love, to so yield yourself to Him without reserve, that you can truly say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ."

The Theatre.

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Precept : 1 Cor. xv. 33, 34.

Praise : Ps. xvi. 11.

Promise : 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

Prayer : Ps. li. 12, 13.

MANY excuses are made to justify attending the theatre. Thus we hear people say :

(1) "I only go for a treat occasionally." One said this to Rowland Hill, and he replied, "What would you think of the taste of a person who excused himself for eating *carrion* on the ground that he did it only occasionally for a treat?"

(2) "I discriminate, and go to none but the best." Yes, but remember, as most people do not discriminate between a low play and a "high opera," if you go to *any* you will be called a theatre-goer, and considered as favoring the theatre in general. Total abstinence is the only safe rule for each of us.

(3) "I am not a Church member, and do not *pro-
fess* to be a Christian." Our obligations are divine, and do not grow out of our professions or Church membership. It is wrong for any one to do that

which is not right. What is not right is wrong. It is never right for anybody to do wrong.

(4) "My conscience does not condemn me." I am sorry for you. Your conscience, like a clock or watch, is not your guide unless properly set and regulated. Ask yourself: "Does the spirit of the Bible condemn me?" The Bible is our rule.

The greatest men in all ages denounced the theatre:

Tertullian says, "Stage plays are pomps of the devil, which we renounced at baptism."

Augustine called theatres "cages of uncleanness and public schools of debauchery."

Solon prohibited plays as pernicious to morals.

Plato said, "Plays raise the passions and are dangerous to morality."

Macaulay said, "The theatre is the seminary of vice." Shall we sanction or patronize such an academy?

Wilberforce declared, "Decorum and modesty retire, and riot and lewdness are invited."

A committee of the British Parliament, after investigating the theatre question, reported, "The only way to reform the theatre is to burn it down."

The leading ministers in all denominations are opposed to the theatre:

Dr. Cuyler, that grand Presbyterian divine, says, "If you patronize the theatre you become morally responsible for it. The first peril of the stage is to purity of character. Your eyes and ears are windows and doors to the heart. What enters once never goes out. A converted actor once pointed me to a play-house in which he used to perform, and said, 'Behind those curtains lies Sodom.' Another peril of the theatre arises from the fascination it too often engenders. I know that the theatre has sent thousands to perdition. Do you feel like taking the risk?"

Spurgeon said, "Pass by the theatre with averted gaze; the house of the strange woman is there."

Beecher, whom men have ever regarded as liberal, forcibly said: "If you would pervert the taste, go to the theatre. If you would imbibe false views, go to the theatre. If you would efface as speedily as possible all qualms of conscience, go to the theatre. If you would put yourself irreconcilably against the *spirit* of virtue and religion, go to the theatre."

Joseph Cook says, "When it is converted, I will go to the theatre, and not till then."

Bishop Vincent, in speaking about going to the theatre, says, "*Better not.*"

Let us endorse all the e views, and act upon them, though some may set their own ideas or the opinions

of some preacher that is inferior in intellect and piety against them.

Actors and theatre managers speak against the stage :

Macready said, "None of my children will ever, with my consent, enter a theatre, or have visiting connections with actors or actresses."

Booth declared, "I never permit my wife or daughter to attend the theatre without first ascertaining the character of the play."

Mr. Palmer, the Madison Square manager, says, "The bulk of the performances on the stage are degrading and pernicious."

Let me assign a few reasons why you, even if unconverted, should renounce the theatre.

1. You should live up to the same standard that you prescribe for ministers and other consistent Christians, though you yourself are not a Christian, for God enjoins you to be a Christian and act as one.

2. If you handle dead coals, though they may not burn, they will *smut* your hands. If you attend the theatre, it will at least *smut* you.

3. The theatre is a dissipation. There is in it a fascination and intoxication to the carnal mind and

depraved nature, which fosters a carrion appetite and leads downward.

4. It is a school that induces carelessness, irreligion, irreverence and immorality. The theatre is responsible, by its bills and plays, for leading people to lewdness, adultery and murders.

5. The life behind the stage is usually low and immoral. Gough said, "I, as a young man, became so enamored with the play that I joined a theatre company, but was so disappointed and disgusted by the tinsel and immorality behind the stage that I abandoned the profession."

6. Hardly one troupe in a year that visits a town or city of less than ten thousand inhabitants presents anything worth seeing, even to lovers of the theatre. Those who go to such plays clearly show that they never witnessed any first-class acting, or they would be *disgusted* with such shows.

7. If a person were applying for a situation, and the testimonials from his former employers contained the statement, "He is a regular attendant upon the theatre, an excellent card-player and an accomplished dancer," such testimony, instead of being a recommendation, would prove an effectual barrier to any position of trust and responsibility. Why is this?

8. The pleasure afforded by the theatre is unhealthy

and short-lived. A lady said : " The theatre affords me a threefold pleasure—anticipating the play, witnessing it, and then recalling it." A Quaker replied, " What pleasure will it afford thee when thee comes to die ? "

9. It may keep you from becoming a Christian. Many think more of the theatre than they do of Christ. How is it with you? Instead of asking, " Will I have to give up the theatre ? " ask and *know* by experience the answer to the question, " What must I do to be saved ? "

10. Your Heavenly Father has superior pleasures and something better for you. Leave the husks that satisfy not, and act on the resolve: " I will arise and go to my Father ; " so shall you find a gracious welcome, pardon, satisfaction and joy.

Consider a few additional reasons why Christians especially should not attend or favor the theatre.

11. Because its spirit and tendency are directly opposed to Christianity, and because it greatly retards the spread and power of the Gospel. The theatre is Satan's church, and so is no place for a member of the Church of Christ.

12. Because of the general character of the plays. The show-bills should disgust any decent or high-minded

person. As the bills are so suggestive of blood and thunder, immorality, crime, rubbish, twaddle and nudity, what must the plays be? Do not go to see.

13. Because of the character required in the actors and actresses generally. If a lawyer, doctor, teacher or minister is immoral, or if a woman, in other walks of life, is known to be other than chaste, that one is less popular, if not disqualified. This rule fails in its application to the stage. Immorality in an actor or actress is no disqualification.

You cannot imagine actors and actresses as devoted Christians, though *some of them* are pure men and women.

14. Because of the character of the *regular* attendants. While *many* who are highly moral, and a *few* professing Christians, go to certain theatres occasionally, the *frequent, regular* attendants are the riff-raff, immoral, profane, gamblers, till-tappers, sporting characters, spendthrifts, careless, sceptics, "cod-fish aristocracy," and "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Where morals are the lowest, theatres thrive best; as, for instance, in Paris and Chicago.

15. Because when actors and theatre-goers are converted they receive a new and spiritual appetite, and so lose relish for, and turn away from, the stage. How often have we seen this the case. A lady, just con-

verted, said to Mr. Moody: "The Lord has saved me; but, though you disapprove of the theatre, I do not see any harm in it, and I purpose going to certain plays." Weeks after, she said: "Mr. Moody, I went to the theatre with my husband, but everything seemed so changed I did not enjoy it, but felt out of place and uncomfortable, and so left after the first act."

16. It looks very inconsistent. I can partly understand how those, who are not Christians, and so know nothing of spiritual life and joy, may become interested, fascinated and enamored with the glitter and glare of the theatre, and so many things that appeal to the eye and fleshly nature; but a devoted Christian turns away from such husks, and feeds upon bread others know not of. (Rom. viii. 5.)

17. Because many people are so anxious to find an excuse by which to silence their consciences, so that they may go to the theatre. This is evident from the weight and importance they attach to the utterances or practice of *one* minister or church member who favors the theatre, though a hundred others, equally good and intelligent, to say the least, renounce and denounce it.

Are you a professed Christian? Allow me, as your friend, to kindly ask you a number of questions, and

then let me answer them as I might suppose you as a Christian to do.

1. Are all plays and operas alike bad? No, they may be compared as bad, worse, worst. I could *imagine* a good play, but to find one, not objectionable in itself or its adjuncts, I would not know where to go.

2. Is there any good in attending the theatre? The one who thinks to find good at the theatre is a near relation to him who seeks for a needle in a haystack.

3. How would you like to see your sister, daughter or wife a theatre performer? Will you, then, encourage the stage for other women? In China or Japan women are not allowed to appear on the stage.

4. What is the general fruit of the theatre? If good, let us patronize and preach it; but if evil, let us entirely abandon and denounce it.

5. Cannot Christians purify the character of the theatre by attending it? As well think to purify the effluvium of a sewer or cesspool by pouring rose-water into it.

6. "Cannot the theatre be elevated or converted?" It is 2,500 years of age now, and so is too old. Its character is fixed, and is getting worse and worse. It would die if elevated. Certain actors and theatre managers have proven this to be true. The only way to convert the theatre is to kill it.

7. Is not the attitude of the various Churches and best Christian people *generally* against the theatre? Most assuredly yes. Let us side with them.

8. If you entirely renounce the theatre, will you lose anything in morals, spiritual life, Christian influence or real pleasure? Most certainly not. Then at once and forever turn away from the theatre, and do not think it a sacrifice to do so, but good riddance.

9. Do you ask, "Is it right or wrong to go to see *this* play or hear *that* opera?" You should take a broader view, and ask, "What is the influence of the theatre in general, and shall I lend my example to any degree to perpetuate and extend the power of that which is recognized as one of Satan's churches?" This one question carefully and prayerfully considered will cause every intelligent and consecrated Christian to forever turn away from the theatre.

10. Have you any doubt about it being right to attend the theatre? If so, and you go, you commit sin by yielding to a disposition to disobey God. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. xiv. 23.)

11. Can you imagine Christ, your Exemplar, going to the theatre? Then what business have you there, as His representative?

12. Could you imagine a theatre opened with prayer by your pastor, and closed by the benediction?

You say, "Such a thing would seem sacrilege." This should settle the question for you.

13. Would you be *ashamed* to die at a theatre? An acquaintance of mine fell dead on the street, and his friends were very anxious to keep it a secret that he was returning from a theatre. If Jesus were to come to claim His own, you would hardly want Him to find you at a theatre. "Watch, therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matt. xxiv. 42.)

14. As we think of eternity, had we not better entirely keep from the theatre? Apelles, the great Grecian artist, while painting an important picture, was asked, "Why are you so very careful of every stroke?" He replied, "I paint for eternity." Beloved, we are artists too. We are not only forming our own characters, but influencing by our actions and words the character, life and eternal destiny of others.

In view of our individual responsibility, let us be careful that all our opinions, words and acts are right in the sight of God, as each one feels and says: "*I am painting for eternity.*"

The Cards.

—: III:—

Promise : 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

Prayer : Gal. i. 3, 4.

Precept : Matt. v. 29, 30.

Praise : Isa. lxi. 10.

MANY blunders are made with reference to games. Some ignorantly confound or jumble together cards, dice and other games of chance with chess, checkers, curling, croquet, cricket, carpet balls, baseball, football, lawn tennis and similar games of skill and dexterity, and condemn them all.

Under proper environment and for a limited time games of skill and dexterity are innocent recreations, and are as pure and healthy to mind and body as study and business, because recreation is a regular and legitimate department of life. All games of chance should, however, be scored out and discarded by saint and sinner, young and old, always and everywhere.

Others artlessly blunder in contrasting "cards" and "nations." The games are similar, the only difference being in the pictures on the cards. Do not be deceived.

Consider the *excuses made* for card-playing :

1. One says, "There is no harm in a game of cards, if you stop at that, and especially if played at home." Yes, there is. Why does it not stop there? Because it is evil. Can you pray, even at home, for God to bless you in the game? Romaine, being asked by a lady to play cards, proposed to pray for God's blessing upon them while playing. The lady looked surprised, and put the cards aside. Remember that is doubtful, and consequently sinful for *you*, upon which you cannot ask God's blessing. (1 Thess. v. 18.)

2. Another says, "If you oppose card-playing, you will keep people out of the Church." You will not keep anyone out that is worthy to be a church-member. Think on the other side. If we favor card-playing we will certainly keep people out of the kingdom of Christ and heaven.

3. Some think it necessary to have cards or dancing, in order to spend the evening when guests are present. It is a reflection upon the intelligence of your guests and yourself to say this.

Evening parties are often too long. Let me say it is an absurd and stupid custom for guests to stay till twelve, one or two o'clock. Let the host invite guests from eight to ten o'clock, or from nine to eleven, and all will enjoy the evening

better. If no time is mentioned by the host, let the guests have enough sense to say good-night not later than eleven o'clock. You set the example.

4. Many blunder in simply asking: "What is the harm?" Have more sense and ask: "What is the good?" and follow only after the good and the excellent.

5. Do you say: "Our church and minister do not forbid card-playing." Unless you can say the spirit of the Bible and Christ do not forbid it, do not thus try to soothe or pervert your conscience, but say: "I must obey God rather than man."

A lady said, "Give me one passage from the Bible that is plainly against card-playing and dancing, and I will turn from them." "Do all to the glory of God" was given, and the practices were forever abandoned.

6. Many say, "I make no profession, and am not a church member." That is no excuse, for God has but one law of right and wrong for saint and sinner.

7. Persons sometimes try to defend card-playing as a means of keeping their sons, brothers or husbands at home. I know a prominent church member who did this, and now his son is a confirmed gambler on a river steamer. If you play cards at home, you educate yourself and others to play away from home, and thus become more liable victims of temptation.

In a court of law a witness was called, when one

answered, "There are fourteen reasons why he cannot be present: First, he is dead; second, he—." The judge interrupted him, "Never mind the other reasons, as that one is sufficient." So, I will mention several reasons why we should consider card-playing to be wrong, any one of which is a sufficient reason to induce a person that wants to do right, to let cards alone.

1. Card-playing, being a game of chance, gives a wrong ideal of how to succeed in life, and tends to make persons depend upon so-called "*luck*," rather than upon ability and honest work.

2. Cards have a bad name, being *gamblers' tools*, and cannot consistently be publicly defended by any pastor, evangelist, Sunday-school teacher or superintendent, or by you or myself.

3. It is, to say the least, a questionable amusement. Very few, if any, ask seriously, "Is there any harm in curling, checkers, bicycling, skating or croquet; but so many Christians, as also the unconverted, and especially serious inquirers, ask, "Is there any harm in card-playing?" thus showing that it is a doubtful game. Give yourself "the benefit of the doubt," and keep from cards and other questionable things; for Jesus teaches, "He that doubteth is condemned;" and Paul declares, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

4. Card-playing leads many to ruin for time and

eternity. As Jesus teaches us to judge things "by their fruit," we must certainly judge card-playing to be wrong. Dr. Talmage says, "When I consider that cards have led to the eternal ruin of so many young men and others, I would as soon go out to the graveyard and say, 'Come and let us have a game of skulls,' as to say, 'Let us have a game of cards.'"

5. The perfect love of God expels not only the purpose but also the desire to play cards. Half-hearted Christians, who play cards, are like the Israelites in the wilderness, who wished for the "leeks and the onions of Egypt."

6. You cannot play cards without gambling. What is gambling? One says, "Gambling is playing for money or other stakes." That is too crude a definition. Gambling is seeking to win by *chance* without earning. The *spirit of gambling* is as much in seeking to win the game by chance without earning it as if money were at stake.

Card-playing is a game of chance. Though skill is required in playing certain games of cards, the element of chance comes in to such a large degree that players depend more upon their chances of getting "good hands" than upon skill. How often card-players say, "I can't do anything this time." Why? They did not chance to get a good hand. When beaten in play-

ing cards a person does not say, as with games of pure skill, "I played poorly," or "You are a better player than I am;" but he says "I had bad luck," or, "I did not get half a dozen good hands during the evening." As card-players depend so largely upon chance, the game is properly called a game of chance; therefore, when a person plays cards, either for the *game* or for *money*, he is seeking to win by chance without earning, and so gambles for the *game* or for the *stake*. Such is not the case with chess, checkers, curling, quoits, and other games of skill and dexterity. Those who win in those games do so, not by chance, but by skilful playing. Why is it that persons, when playing for money and other stakes, usually do so with cards? It is because the transition, from gambling for the game to gambling for money, is quite easily and naturally made. Persons seldom play chess, checkers, curling and the like for money; and, when they do so, it is an outrage on these games, as they are games of skill; but it is no outrage on *cards* to play for money or other stakes, but only an additional disgrace to the players.

Let each one, whether a Christian or not, believing that gambling is wrong, reason thus:

First premise: Persons in playing cards seek to win the game by chance without earning it.

Second premise : Seeking to win by chance without earning has in it the spirit of gambling, though it be only for the game.

Conclusion : Card-playing, though it be but for the game, has in it the spirit of gambling, and therefore is wrong. I am therefore resolved to discard and discountenance card-playing.

In adopting this resolution, do not feel that you are making any sacrifice, but that to do otherwise would be to sacrifice principle and personal worth.

7. Card-playing stands in the way of so many becoming Christians. How often do people ask : "Will I have to give up cards to become a Christian?" At the Cross soldiers gambled for Christ's *coat* ; but now persons trifle with salvation and barter Christ for the cards. Let each one say : "Cards or no cards, *Christ for me.*"

8. Card-playing leads many to become backsliders. A backslidden Methodist local preacher from the old land was playing cards with others in New York, when Barbara Heck seized the cards, threw them into the fire, and said : "Philip Embury, you must preach to us, or we shall all go to hell together, and God will require our blood at your hands." The Holy Spirit used her words to lead him to repentance and renewed consecration. He preached the first Methodist ser-

mon in America. He also built the first Methodist church on this continent in 1776, and became its successful pastor. I have frequently been in old John Street Church, New York, that now stands on the original site. A suitable tablet to the memory of Philip Embury and Barbara Heck is placed to the right of the pulpit. From the events narrated, Methodism took root on this continent, and now thousands of ministers and millions of members delight to be called Methodists.

Let all the card-playing backslidden Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians and Congregationalists, burn their cards, repent of all sin, and like Philip Embury and Barbara Heck become workers together with Christ to spread His Gospel, and millions more as a result will soon know the joyful sound. Winning others to Christ is better than card-playing.

Let me kindly ask you a few questions :

1. Are you ever bothered about playing or selling cards? A bookseller in Belleville, a few weeks after his conversion, told us: "I was bothered about the cards I had in stock, and so burned them, about twenty dollars' worth. In less than a week I sold more Bibles than I had done for months before." It pays better to sell Bibles than cards.

2. Do you ask: "What about billiards?" I may

say, the game is purely one of skill, and, in itself, is as innocent as croquet or cricket; but as a billiard table is too expensive for private homes, it is usually found in connection with hotels or public billiard rooms; hence, while it might be lawful to play billiards if the environment were always healthy; yet, knowing that the associations are *usually* not so, I would strongly advise all to consider billiards as "*not expedient*," and let them entirely alone even in private houses. Moreover, when persons play in billiard rooms, they pay a certain amount for the use of the table, and then, usually, play as to which one will pay this amount; hence they gamble for this small stake at the first, if not for the drinks or a larger sum. A billiard room is a curse in any community. Sad stories have been told us, by converted billiard players or sorrowful fathers of wayward sons, of the loss of money, character and reputation, and the spirit of idleness, gambling and dissipation resulting from playing billiards.

In view of what I have said, though billiards come under the head of games of skill, yet certainly, whether we are Christians or not, we should keep from the game because it is injurious, if not to ourselves, undoubtedly to our influence over others.

3. Are those who play cards noted for their spiritu-

ality and active Christian work? Assuredly not. I would recommend, instead of whist and progressive euchre, a game which is easily learned and is most fascinating. It may be popularly called *Progressive Christian Work*. You can play it at home or at church, on the street or in the shop, on Sunday or week-day. Pray, plan and practise to be faithful.

4. Will you be the loser in any way if you do not play cards? Will you if you do? You are perfectly aware that games of chance have a peculiar and dangerous fascination for those who indulge in them; hence, let me urge you not to trifle with cards, lest, like so many others, the habit may absorb you, and injure you physically, mentally and spiritually.

One said to me, "When I was converted I put up every bar, and put a peg in, and so have been kept, but my brother fell away, as he left one of the bars down." Fasten up every bar and be faithful.

5. Is card-playing a suitable game for men and women of culture, refinement and morality. Did you know that in three States of the American Union it has been decided in the courts of law that all persons known to play progressive euchre, under any circumstances, are liable to be arraigned before the courts and punished for gambling? Such is the case. Can persons, therefore, who wish to be considered respect-

able ladies and gentlemen play progressive euchre in their parlors and other places? If you do so you are, even according to law, a *gambler*. Such is not a very comforting or edifying thought.

6. If you play cards, what effect will it have upon your influence for good? If Mr. Hunter and myself played cards, and it were known, we might close our evangelistic work. So, if it is known that you play cards, you may keep your lips closed from witnessing for Christ and doing direct personal work.

Ask, "What may be the effect of my example upon the unconverted, the Christians, the Church, and those of my own household—my husband, brother or children?" and in view of your responsibility say, "I will in no way favor card-playing."

7. Can you, in playing cards, carry out the following precept, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him?" (Col. iii. 17.) Do not evade this question, but be honest with God and yourself.

A pronounced sceptic, being for a few days in a town where we were, attended our meetings, was genuinely converted, and subsequently became a member of "The King's Sons." Some months later, while at a friend's house with others, spending an evening, cards were introduced. Having been a card-player, he

sat down and took a hand with the rest. During the game, while waiting his turn to play, his eyes fell upon the small silver cross attached to his watch-chain bearing the initials "I.H.N.," and the thought came, "Can I play cards in His Name?" Laying down his cards, he said, "Excuse me, friends, I cannot play any more." They answered, "What is the matter?" He replied, "I have not played before since my conversion, and had not thought anything about it being right or wrong till the sight of this emblem of 'The King's Sons' suggested the question, 'Can I play cards in His Name?' I do not wish to give you any lecture, but must ask you to excuse me from playing."

While *one* smiled, the others said, "We honor you as a Christian for your decision." The game ceased, and a delightful evening was spent *intelligently*.

Have similar courage, in every place and society, to decline to play cards, and kindly and firmly stick to your resolution, so will you be commended and honored by the best Christians in all the Churches, by the men and women of highest moral principle, by your own heart, and by Him of Whom you can say, "*Whose I am and Whom I serve.*"

8. As cards have injured or wrecked so many, is it not wise and safe to renounce them? Dr. Holland

said, "I have this moment ringing in my ears the dying injunction of my father's early friend, 'Keep your son from cards. Over them I have murdered time and lost heaven.'"

A young man, whose name I need not mention, just through college, was invited to a social evening gathering. Here for the first time he learned to handle cards. This was in 1884. He played in private parlors for a few weeks, and then began to visit public gambling houses. Here he won. His parents felt disgraced. The intoxication of gambling was so upon him that he sailed for Europe, and there operated as a professional gambler in the various large cities. For nine years he heard no word from home.

One day in 1893 a young fellow challenged him to play till one was "broke." From morning till evening the game went on. The young man lost \$14,000. It was all he had. Rising from the table, without a word, he walked out. A moment later the report of a revolver startled them. In telling the sad story, the professional gambler said, "I with an attendant rushed out. There lay my young opponent, a pistol beside him. As I bent over him to loosen his collar, some letters and a photograph fell from his pocket. As I picked up the picture, I saw looking into my face *the eyes of my own mother*. Then I recognized in the

features of the dead *my younger brother*, whom I had not seen since I left home. The letters bore his name. I was my brother's murderer."

The awful sorrow dethroned the mother's reason, and she is to-day in an insane asylum. No wonder that the remorseful son and brother renounced his sinful life, and is now seeking to make restitution by acting as a Christian missionary among victims of card-playing and the gaming habit.

Are you a card-player? Burn your "deck" to-day, and forever give up the game. Have you never played cards? Thank God, and continue to live in blissful ignorance of gamblers' tools.

I appeal to every Christian and unconverted person to say, "I will forever renounce cards, lest I be injured by them, or lest I start or encourage some one else, perhaps my own brother or loved one, on the way that leads to ruin."

I would also strongly suggest that, among your circle of friends, you form what is called a Round-robin, scoring out dancing, theatre-going, card-playing and liquor-drinking. To make the form, take a large sheet of unruled paper, and upon it draw two concentric circles, with diameters of about three inches and seven and a half inches respectively. Then draw lines from one circle to the other, making thirty-two or

sixty-four equal spaces for the autographs. In the inner circle write the following :

“Believing it to be conducive to personal piety, Christian influence, and the glory of God, to abstain from the dance, the theatre, the cards, and intoxicating drinks, we, by signing this circle, promise, by God’s grace, to renounce these things ourselves, and to encourage others to do likewise.” You might also write around the outer circle suitable Scripture passages.

The form being thus made, talk the question over with your acquaintances, and sign the circle with them.

Let the members of each Christian Endeavor Society, Epworth League, and Society of King’s Sons and Daughters, form a circle.

The consecrated Christian ladies, married and single, of the various churches in a village, town or community, may unite to form one great and influential circle.

It would be well also for the intelligent young men and women to form a separate circle.

In closing, let me ask everyone who reads these pages to say, “In the name of Christ, and trusting in His grace, I shall henceforth renounce the dance, the theatre, the cards, and intoxicating drink.”

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TO YOUNG CONVERTS,
OLDER CHRISTIANS AND THE UNCONVERTED.

BY THE REV. H. T. CROSSLEY.

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