

California Department.

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Dancing.

FORTY-TWO REASONS WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD NOT ENGAGE IN IT.

BY PROF. J. DURHAM.

- 1. It leads to expense in dress, to late hours, to the neglect of moral and intellectual culture, and to various evil practices. 2. Dancing brings its votaries in contact with promiscuous company and impure atmosphere. 3. It mars social intercourse and unfits the mind for real, useful, substantial enjoyment. 4. Dancing unfits the mind for serious reflection and prayer. 5. The most wise, considerate, judicious and devoutly pious, in all ages, have looked upon dancing, as an amusement, not only as useless, but of decided evil tendency. 6. Those who delight in the ball-room or dancing parties are generally fond of the wine-cup, novel-reading, and the card-table. 7. Dancing is a favorite amusement of the savage nations, and usually forms a very important part in the worship of heathens gods. 8. Social home dances, are advocated by some Christians, are but the stepping-stone to the public ball-room and theatre—the top round of the ladder that leads down to the pit. 9. Dancing-masters and dancing-mistresses are generally of low standing in society, not even welcome at the homes of their pupils as guests. 10. The freedom between the sexes in certain kinds of dancing is exceedingly immodest, as admitted by those who engage in it, and often results in the most serious and pernicious consequences. 11. Dancing is a most useless art. 12. The evils flowing from dancing, and from inspiring children with the dancing mania, may be summed up in pride, folly, irreligion, and excessive love of pleasure, and finally in a loss of the soul.

- 13. Dancing, as now practiced by the sexes as an amusement is contrary to Scripture, and those who introduce it into the Church are "diseased members," and should be healed or amputated, and thus save the body. 14. No instance of dancing is found upon record in the Bible, in which the two sexes are engaged in the exercise, either as an act of worship, or amusement. 15. There are no instances on record of social dancing for amusement, except that of the vain fellows devoid of shame, or the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety and ended in destruction; and of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod, and the murder of John the Baptist. 16. The preparation for the dance is an outward adorning, not of good works, but of costly apparel; all this display is not of a meek and quiet spirit, but of pride and tumultuous vanity. 17. No Christian can attend such places without receiving spots from the world, and the Apostle James says, "Keep yourself unspotted from the world." 18. The Scripture gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness. If dancing pertains to life and godliness, something must be given that authorizes it. Where is it? 19. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by him." (Col. 3:17). This demands the glory of God as the object, as well as the authority of Christ, for what we do. Does dancing do this? 20. Those who practice dancing do not think of appealing to Scripture for authority. If they will dance, therefore, in the absence of authority, either direct or indirect, the sooner they are given over to the world, the sooner will the Church be rid of their pernicious example, and they cease to practice deception on the world.

- 21. Christians are commanded to "let their light so shine that others seeing their good works, may glorify our Father in heaven." Has the dancing of Christians ever converted a soul to Christ? Rather has their light been turned to darkness, and no church has ever succeeded where it has not disciplined against it. 22. The Bible contains a revelation of the wrath of God against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness, and the apostle says, "They that do these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Dancers do all these things. 23. True gentility and etiquette are found in the Church, and not in the ball-room. The most accomplished lady and gentleman in the world are those who have been educated in the Church of Christ. Their manners spring from a pure heart. 24. If dancing is not as great an evil as the evils that other Christians do, then it is bad; and for the same reason stealing is in harmony with the principles of Christianity, because it is not as bad as murder. Where did Christ or his apostles license us to anything bad? "To be carnally minded is death (spiritual), but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." 25. Dancing causes brethren of strong, as well as weak, consciences to offend; hence, it ought not to be indulged in. "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. (1. Cor. 8:12.)" "Then said he unto the disciples, 'It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.'" (Luke 17:1-2.) 26. Dancing is not a healthful exercise. Much disease and many deaths follow the excitement, heated rooms, thin clothing, long-continued exercise, drinks, untimely eating, and improper excitement. So physicians say. Where men and women are left free to act in accordance with the true principles of Christianity, they have healthy bodies and clear consciences. 27. We are to "glorify God in our bodies and spirit, which are his." Has any Christian ever been known to glorify God by dancing? 28. Among the works of the flesh named by the apostle Paul (Gal. 5:19-20) is reveling. Reveling is noisy mirth; and has been so re-

- garded by the best authority, both prose writers and poets, in all ages. Byron says: "There was a sound of revelry by night, And Belgium's capital had gathered there her beauty and her chivalry. And bright the lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men, \* \* \* \* \* On with the dance! let joy be unconfin'd." Paul has said that "they who do such things cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The Church may retain them for policy (?) 29. Dancing is idolatry. And an idol to which dancing Christians (?) are closely bound, or they would not indulge in it. Read McKnight's translation 1 Cor. x:7: "Neither be ye idolators as were some of them; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to dance.'" In King James' translation the word "play" occurs, but if you will turn to Exodus xxxii, you will find that it was "dance." The apostle says nothing about the golden calf, but speaks of dancing and calls it idolatry. 30. Dancing is contrary to the spirit and genius of Christianity, and those who engage in it should remember that, "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap; he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. 6:7-8. 31. It is a love for the world, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 Jno. 2:15. 32. A good brother, perhaps a preacher, says the scripture does not prohibit dancing. It says "Thou shalt not dance," just as much as it says "Thou shalt not play cards," "Thou shalt not run horses," or "Thou shalt not play billiards." 33. Those who are not professors of Christianity do not consider the ball room a suitable place for a Christian professor. 34. The morals of every community decrease in the same ratio that dancing increases. 35. Many young men, who are fond of the dance, will not consent for their sisters to attend, because they say it is not a proper place for them. Why? 36. There are many men, who, in their young days, were great lovers of the dance, but when they wished to select a companion for life said they would not have a dancer. Why?