

THE MAD INTOXICATION OF DANCING

The author of the Prize Tract on Dancing, relates the following, as illustrative of the seducing and destructive tendencies of this, so called amusement.

"I was once called, says an aged pastor, to visit a young lady who was said to be *in despair*. She had, at some time previous, been serious, and had, it was hoped, resolutely set her face Zionward. In an evil hour, some of her former associates hit on her to accompany them to a ball. She refused to go. The occasion, the company, the parade and gayety, were all utterly dissonant from her present feelings. With characteristic levity and thoughtfulness, they employed persuasion and ridicule; and finally so far prevailed, that with a desperate effort to shake off her convictions and regain her former security, she exclaimed, '*Well, I will go, if I am damned for it.*' God took her at her word. The blessed Spirit immediately withdrew his influences, and instead of the anxious sigh, and longing desire to be freed from the body of sin and death, succeeded, by turns, the calmness, and the horrors of despair.

The wretched victim knew that the Spirit had taken his final leave: no compunctions for sin, no tears of penitence", no inquiries after God, no eager seeking of the place where Christians love to meet, now occupied the tedious hours. Instead of the bloom and freshness of health, there came the paleness and haggardness of decay. The wan and sunken cheek, the ghastly glaring eye, the emaciated limb; the sure precursors of approaching dissolution, were there. The caresses of friends, the suggestions of affection, were all unheeded. The consolations of piety, the last resource of the miserable, were to her but the bitterness of death. In this state of mind, I was called to visit her. When I entered the room, and beheld her pale and

emaciated, and reflected that the ravages of her form *without* but faintly shadowed forth the wreck and desolation *within*, I was almost overpowered.

Never had I conceived so vivid an idea of the woe and misery of those who have 'quenched the spirit.'

I proposed prayer. The word threw her into an agony. She utterly refused. No entreaties of friends, no arguments drawn from the love of God, or from the fulness and freeness of atoning blood, could prevail to shake her resolution. I left her without being able to find a single avenue to her heart, or to dart one ray of comfort into the dark bosom, which, to all human views was soon to be enveloped in the blackness of darkness forever. Never shall I forget the dreadful expression of that ghastly countenance, the tones of that despairing voice. The impression is as vivid as though it had been but yesterday. O, that all the young, gay, thoughtless ones, who stifle the convictions of conscience, and repress the rising sigh, and *dance* along the brink of utter reprobation and despair, would read, and lay to heart the warning. O, that every parent would ponder the awful results of cherishing a passion in the youthful bosom, which may be used by Satan and wicked associates, so fearfully to ruin the soul!"

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