

EDITORIALS.

IS DANCING PROPER OR HEALTHFUL?

THE question, "Is dancing proper or healthful exercise," has been lately a subject of discussion in literary as well as social circles. It is claimed by many public teachers in the world, and more especially by religious preachers, that it is an amusement baneful alike to body and soul. Others maintain that it is harmless in itself and productive of good results. We think that both are right and both are wrong to some extent.

There is nothing morally evil in moving gracefully to the sound of sweet music, neither is it calculated to injure the body. On the contrary, a moderate amount of such exercise is good recreation, and has a beneficial effect upon both body and mind. But there are evils attending public dances which tend to make them detrimental spiritually and physically. These ought to be pointed out to and avoided by the Latter-day Saints, whose privilege it is to enjoy everything that is good, and whose duty it is to avoid everything that is evil.

One evil of public dances is that they are frequently gatherings of people of various moral character. The modest and prudent with the immodest and unwise. The innocent and confiding with the immoral and intriguing. And opportunities are afforded to the vile and unchaste to exercise an influence which is always to be deplored. The mingling together in the dance of a pure woman and a vicious debauchee, is an incongruity that shocks the sense of fitness and a wrong that ought not to be permitted.

Another evil is, the lateness of the hours to which dancing is usually extended. It is customary to begin the amusement about the proper time for it to be concluded. Young people are thus led to contract the bad habit of keeping late hours, and whether old or young, it is injurious to health to indulge in saltatory exercise in a heated atmosphere beyond midnight, and then emerge into the chilly air of early morn and go home to get half a night's rest.

This leads to the consideration of another evil attending such parties; that is, the unwholesome air which frequently pervades the hall where the dancers whirl around, the insensible and sometimes very perceptible perspiration and exhalation from the moving bodies poisoning the air in buildings not sufficiently ventilated.

Young people are apt to indulge immoderately in the dance. Many girls so delicate as to be unable to engage in domestic labor, too fragile to twirl a broom, to make a loaf or cook a meal, and who would faint at the idea of walking a couple of miles, will figure in every dance during an entire evening and far into the night, travelling an immense distance in the aggregate, and exhibiting an amount of vigor astonishing to those who know their habits and disabilities at home. This violent and prolonged exertion must be very harmful to such delicate organizations.

Another and serious evil of public dancing is the hugging fashion of later times, which has taken the place of the courteous touch and perhaps excessively dignified deportment of former days. The close embrace of the waltz and other so-called "round" dances, is recognized by all thoughtful and prudent people as a change for the worse. The postures which some couples assume are positively disgusting. A lady who would be grossly insulted if a male friend were to put his arm around her waist while sitting by her side, will permit a comparative stranger to embrace her in the waltz and will whirl around in his arms as though it was the correct thing to do. We consider this practice much to be deprecated, and altogether out of place in a ball room where respectable people congregate. No young lady who has a proper sense of self-respect and any regard for the good opinion of the wise and honorable, will go to the indelicate extreme or allow that close contact which is seen in the most popular dances of the period.

But all these evils and others that might be enumerated can be avoided, and dances can be so conducted as to promote social intercourse

without harm, grace of deportment without lascivious suggestions, healthful exercise without and pleasure. And therefore that sin of recreation which many religious people consider wicked and pernicious is permitted by the religion of the Latter-day Saints. It forms no essential part of that religion, but is recognized by it as admissible, and taken under its regulation. If dancing is wrong it ought not to be sustained by religion; if it is right, it ought to be under the purview of religious influence. By this means the evils which often attend it may be guarded against and prevented, to a very great extent, if not entirely.

It is for this reason that instructions are given by the authorities of this Church for the regulation of public dancing, requiring that it be conducted under the management of the Bishops in the various Wards; that moderation govern it; that round dancing be discouraged; that late hours be avoided; that decorum and good order be maintained; that no one under the influence of intoxicants be permitted to participate, etc. And it is on this account that "Mormon" dancing parties are opened and closed with prayer, the Divine blessing being invoked, so that all who engage in the entertainment may be reminded that they are under the eye of Omniscience, and that while the Almighty delights in the pleasure of His children, "He cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance."

This imposes no undue restraint upon young or old; it detracts nothing from true enjoyment; it spoils no strains of harmony; it prevents no proper indulgence; but it imparts a calm and pleasant and genial spirit; promotes sociability, fraternity and a desire for the happiness of all; and helps to bring about the object of the amusement, healthful recreation for the stimulation and benefit of the whole being.

As the season for dancing parties has now set in, it is to be hoped that the Latter-day Saints will take notice of the advice given to them on this subject, and so conduct themselves as to gain rational enjoyment without excess and without impropriety. By this means they will promote instead of injuring their bodily health, and when their fun is over will have nothing to repent of and nothing to regret. Those who conduct these parties should pay due attention to the proper ventilation of the halls used for the purpose, have them as free as possible from dust, which, inhaled into the lungs is very injurious, see that proper order is maintained, that late hours are avoided and that all things are done with propriety, and that the rights of all are sustained and protected.

And it would be quite as well for the people in the various settlements, that instead of continual dancing parties, more lectures, readings, concerts, dramatic performances and other intellectual entertainments be encouraged and patronized, by which information is blended with amusement, and fun is mingled with instruction. We conclude, however, that, indulged in with moderation, under proper control, in suitable places and at reasonable hours, dancing can be made a healthful recreation, harmonious with religion and beneficial to the individual and the community.

SECTARIAN FURY.

A crusade is being worked up against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by blinded sectarian bigots. The howl of fanaticism being sounded through the churches of the nation seems to have its principal seat in Salt Lake City. The desperate "Mormon"-haters who, according to the Ogden Baptist preacher's statement, have not enough power to raise a prayer meeting, are filled with the "green-eyed monster" at the success and influence of the "Mormon" Church. They would like to see it destroyed, root and branch, and thus exhibit the kind of spirit that inspires them. The Christian spirit is to manifest long suffering and love, and a desire to reclaim and redeem those who may be esteemed to be in error. The Satanic spirit is vengeful and malignant, seeking to crush and condemn those who differ from the parties embued with it. It is a simple matter to understand the source of the inspiration of those who, moved with unseemly hate, are

seeking to up and destroy by the most extreme measures, the social structure of this community. These cruel miscreants seem to care nothing for the severance of ties that have been formed under the sincerest convictions of right. They appear to lose sight of the fact that the furtherance of their schemes might produce an incalculable amount of human misery. All they care for is the attainment of their own selfishness and the punishment of the objects of their hatred.

The putting forward of the plea of the interests of common morality is a delusion and a snare, the Latter-day Saints being the most moral, pure and upright community in the country, without exception. Such a plea from the class professing belief in the Bible, comes with a sorry grace, the ostensible (not real) object of the crusade being the demolition of a similar system of marriage to that taught by the Good Book.

On the subject of the local religious crusaders in the present hounding on movement, the following, from the Omaha Bee, will be read with interest:

"A circular, signed by the Episcopal bishop, the Roman Catholic vicar-general, clergymen of different denominations, teachers and others of Salt Lake City, Utah, has been sent to ministers and others throughout the land, asking attention to the spread and growing power of Mormonism in the western territories, and the insufficiency of the United States law against polygamy to put an end to its evils. They therefore ask all who receive the circular to bring to the notice of their members of Congress these facts, to the end that they may be interested 'in securing for us at the approaching session of Congress, such legislation as will at once and forever put a stop to the further spread of polygamy.' They ask to have the anti-polygamy law of Congress so amended that the living together of parties—or cohabitation, to use a legal term—shall be the proof of bigamy or polygamy, instead of the ceremony of marriage because the latter is performed in secret within the walls of the Endowment House, in the presence of faithful Mormons only, and no one of these will bear testimony to the fact; that polygamy shall be a continuous crime, instead of being allowed (as now) to expire within three years, by a statute of limitation; that the woman shall be equally punishable with the men for this offense; that the accessories to the polygamous marriage shall be equally punishable with the principals; that the jury list may be increased to 400; and that adultery, seduction, lewd and lascivious cohabitation, and kindred offenses may be punishable as in the States and other Territories of the Union. They claim that the law as it now stands is practically a dead letter, because of its defects, only two persons having been convicted under it in the eighteen years it has been on the statute book. Mormonism is no longer confined to Utah, but already holds the balance of power in Idaho, and has gained a strong foothold in Wyoming, Arizona, and southern Colorado. It is not likely that the question will receive much attention from Congress. Politics and polygamy have been too much mixed up in times past to afford much hope for any more rapid solution of the question than that which time, education and the natural increase of the Gentile population will bring to its accomplishment."

We are slow to believe that a majority of members of the National Legislature will suffer themselves to be threatened, cajoled, or intimidated into the adoption of cruel, unjustifiable measures, that the whole country would be sure, in course of time, to deeply regret. The question takes the decided form of a religious crusade, to which no true statesman could ever lend himself.

THE RIGHTS OF CHURCH COURTS.

THE right of churches to enforce their discipline has recently been sustained by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in a lengthy and well-digested opinion. The case arose out of a dispute between Father Stack, a Catholic priest who had charge of a pastorate at Williamsport, Pa., and Bishop O'Hara, in whose diocese he labored. The Bishop removed him from the charge of the church and assigned him to no other position. Father

Stack sued his Bishop for damages, charging that the removal was illegal, in that it injured him in his profession and was without sufficient cause.

In the course of the case, it was shown in evidence that, according to the rules of the Catholic Church, the Bishop held this authority; that when a specific charge was made, the priest was entitled to a trial; but that the Bishop could summarily remove a priest in his diocese, and that the latter had the right of appeal to higher ecclesiastical authority.

The court ruled that where action is taken according to the established rules of a church, the civil courts must not interfere, when it is not a violation of the laws of the land. The court argued that in accepting the office, the priest made a compact to abide by the laws of the Church. He virtually agreed to abide by them and be governed according to them. Therefore, if he is removed from office in accordance with those rules and regulations, he has no proper ground of complaint and no remedy in a court of law. The Court held that every church, whether Catholic or Protestant, is free to deal with its members, officers, ministers, dignitaries, etc., in conformity to its own rules, and so long as these are regularly enforced, no civil court has any authority whatever to interfere with the authority, discipline, edicts and acts of a church court.

This is good common sense, and according to the spirit of the Constitution of the United States which forbids interference on the part of the State with the affairs of the Church. The point sustained should be clear to every reasonable mind. But the formal enunciation of it by a competent court of law is worthy of being placed on record and of publication for general benefit.

THE NUISANCE OF SMOKE.

SEVERAL eastern cities are taking into serious consideration the smoke nuisance. The use of coal in manufactures as well as for house fuel causes great inconvenience and damage. The clouds of smoke that arise obscure the sunlight and drop flakes of soot upon the public, while buildings are defaced, and their appearance is spoiled. Any one who has been in Paris and then taken a trip to London could not but be struck by the great contrast in the appearance of the two cities. In the French capital, where charcoal is used for firing, the white stone buildings preserve their purity and greet the eye pleasantly in the bright sunshine. In the British metropolis, where the coal smoke thickens the air, every building is smothered and looks dark and forbidding in comparison. One city shows like a bright fair maiden decked in her gayest robes, the other like a huge negro, clad in garments sombre and gloomy.

There are several places in America where the smoke from coal fires and furnaces has been made the subject of local legislation. Cincinnati has recently taken up the question and solved it by a short process. The nuisance became so great as to be almost unbearable, and the City Council found it necessary to do something to satisfy the public who were loudly complaining. So an ordinance was passed for the suppression of smoke. It imposes a heavy penalty on any one who causes smoke to arise in such quantity as to become a public nuisance.

It has been practically demonstrated that most of the smoke can be consumed without great difficulty. Steam engines of a very powerful kind are run by the Cincinnati Water Works. The superintendent says that eighty per cent. of the smoke from the furnaces is now consumed, and he expects to reduce it almost to nothing. Several establishments where engines are in use in that city have adopted a machine which stops the nuisance like a charm. The ordinance does not require the use of this machine or any other apparatus, but simply imposes a penalty on those who cause the nuisance, leaving them to make their own remedy. It has also been demonstrated that by putting coal in the furnaces and fires a little at a time, a lively fire will itself consume the smoke, so that but little will escape through the chimney, and that, therefore, much of the nuisance is caused by piling on coal in large quantities at once.

Salt Lake is beginning to suffer

in some degree from the effects of the smoke nuisance, and judging from the dense clouds which arise especially in the evening in the central part of the city, we are of the opinion that the time is not far distant when some municipal regulation will have to be adopted and enforced, here as elsewhere to abate it. But would it not be just as well for those whose business is such as to require the use of coal in large quantities, to look about for some remedy for excessive smoke, of their own volition, and thus avoid the necessity of declaring their works a public nuisance? We think so and throw out the suggestion in kindness.

[COMMUNICATED.]

"A SUNDAY TALK."

THE adoption of certain hours for meals, as a matter of social and domestic economy and comfort, is no doubt very fitting, and appears appropriate; but the practice is something more than a custom, and reflection shows it to be based upon the inherent needs of the physical organization, and it is further shown by experience that regularity is most productive of good results so far as eating to live, is concerned. Is there not something analogous to this in regard to the needs of the spirit? Divine revelation and commandments seem to favor this thought; and the Sabbath, (one day in seven), was no doubt intelligently ordered and set apart for this express and special purpose, not as rest from daily labor simply, nor altogether for social enjoyment, but in a direct sense and manner for the assemblies of the Saints, for the worship of God, for the inculcation of those spiritual truths which, when received and absorbed, minister to healthy and vigorous spiritual and religious life. Special blessings were promised to ancient Israel, providing they "kept holy—the Sabbath day;" and indifference as to meeting with the general congregation of the Saints, was deprecated by the prophet, in the counsel, "Forsoke not the assembling yourselves together, as the manner of some is;" and the old intimation, that "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," shows that the advantages and importance of this day (the Sabbath) and its services were well understood.

It is also further understood that a mixed diet best subserves the animal economy, so spiritual life is highest where the bill of fare is not stereotyped; the spirit of the gospel is a spirit of "liberty" in this sense there is spiritual stimulus in the singing of a good hymn, psalm, anthem; spiritual food in a well ordered inspirational discourse, spiritual life comes from the spring of devotion of a soulful prayer.

Most receive strength from partaking of the Holy Sacrament; others from personal testimony; a large congregation can simultaneously have "a feast of fat things," every one receiving their "portion of meat in due season." Then as from the general and public service many members of the church have special quorum and other opportunities; "the teacher on the block," the missionary of the "stake," the laborer in the Sabbath school; in many other directions men are able to find food, and to receive sustenance as they need!

However there are prerequisites to enjoyment in connection with things, and one desirable thing in connection with the enjoyment of a meal is, that the person partaking should have an appetite; with this everything falls, and in fact more or less repulsive to the senses. Now, is not this the case in spiritual matters? Are we not rectified to this thought by the "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled?" Have we not known those who had the run of a well-stocked larder, to become very dainty, even dyspeptic in their habits? Ways nibbling but never really eating, the stomach is naturally taxed until dyspepsia becomes confirmed in the system, and that which should tend to health creates sickness, and mayhap premature death.

Who has not had an experience such in all churches, the "Mormon Church not excepted? There is condition of spiritual dyspepsia, arising from the reception of truth in improper quantities, at improper seasons, improperly prepared persons, sometimes, and these diverse false conditions will bring spiritual