

DEACON RISING'S DANCING SCHOOL

There are some people so honest, single-minded and sincere, that we seem to feel that they are the Nathanaels of our generation. We all love to meet such men. We feel that it would be hard for temptation to fasten upon them; and if ever the wind blows dust on them it soon blows it off again. Such a man was Mr. Simplemind, well known in all our region as one who found it hard to do wrong, and equally hard to imagine it in others. He was a home man, but on one occasion he was called to go on urgent business for a friend to the village of Suppleham, some two hundred miles from home. His business took him at once to the house of Deacon Rising, of whom he had heard often, and whose society he expected to enjoy much. The deacon lived in a new, jaunty-looking house, evidently smarting up, and determined not to be left behind in paint or furniture. It was indeed quite stylish, "with all the modern improvements." Mr. Simplemind arrived just before tea, and of course, was invited to all the hospitalities of the table. As soon as the tea was over the Bible was brought for family worship. The two young ladies, the daughters, and very pretty they were, said they must be excused in order to dress, and so they were not at prayers. Mr. Simplemind looked disappointed. A short chapter, selected for its shortness, evidently, and a short, hurried prayer, were soon over.

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Simplemind. "I presume your daughters are dressing for company, and I fear if I accept your kind invitation to stay with you, I shall be in the way."

"Oh, not at all. We are not to have company. My daughters are only dressing to attend the dancing school."

"The dancing school! Why, Deacon Rising!"

"You seem to be surprised, sir. Well, we did hesitate some about it, but all the young people were going, and we didn't want to be rigid."

"All the young people are going! Why, there must be some very hard ones, unless your place is very remarkable."

"I don't mean all, but all the first families. We took special care that none but moral and respectable young people were admitted."

"I see. Then dancing schools are such places that the immoral and the not respectable are likely to go, and so likely that you have to take 'special care' to guard against it. You don't any such pains when you open a new prayer meeting or Sunday school, do you? May I be permitted to ask if Christian parents are doing right to send or allow their children to go to amusements or places to which it is so natural for the wicked to go that you have to take special care to keep them out?"

"Now, my good sir, let us be candid—"

"Well, I feel sure I want to be, and have been afraid you would think me too candid."

"What harm does it do for my children to go to a dancing school with good moral companions? They are particular not to keep late hours."

"Late hours, then, are the natural consequences of the thing, or else they would not have to be 'particular.' You don't have to make this remark about any religious meeting or gathering. I never heard such a thing said about any charitable gathering in my life."

"Now, Mr. Simplemind," said Mrs. Rising,

"don't the Bible say that there is 'a time for all things,' and 'a time?'"

"Truly, madam, the Bible says there is 'a time to dance,' and a time to 'pull down,' and 'a time to kill,' but I have never yet pulled down my house, or killed anybody, because there is an opportunity for doing such things. You surely don't understand that text to teach us to tear down the house, or character, or influence, or to kill body or soul?"

"Well, but did not David dance before the Lord?"

"Yes, and danced with all his might, but that was religious worship. You don't mean to say that your daughters go to dancing school for religious worship, do you? If they do, then we should ask a question or two whether, under the light of the gospel, this is the best method of worship? But I know you don't pretend to place it on that ground."

"Well, sir," said Deacon Rising, "we live in peculiar times. Our religion has suffered because we have been rigid, and thought to be morose. I don't think we should make men hate religion by being sour and crabbed."

"Certainly not. But, my dear sir, is that your motive in sending your children to the school? Was it a religious duty, a desire to honor Christ, that led you to do it? I feel certain it was not."

"Now, really, Mr. Simplemind, you carry things too far. Pray, what hurt does it do for my children to go to this dancing school?"

"The very question I have been wanting you to ask; and I will be very brief and plain in my reply. It does hurt in these ways:

"(a) You were chosen to be deacon of an orthodox church, because your brethren thought that in character, in example and influence, they could safely point their families to you as a model. They thought you to be a simple, humble Christian—one who would not strive to gain both worlds. By this act you have fallen in their regard, in your influence, in your weight of Christian character, I have no doubt.

"(b) I have also no doubt that the whole church feels the influence. Are not your prayer meetings very thin, and cold, and formal? Don't you find you can not hold up your head, and speak and pray as you once did? Religion must be very low before you could do such a thing.

"(c) Your minister, I am bold to say, was amazed and grieved when he heard of it. He is now. He mourns in secret places. And if he were asked by you he would tell you so. I happen to know him to be a most excellent man; but don't it begin to be whispered about that he is 'dull,' 'is not popular,' 'is not up to the times,' and it would be well for your people to have 'a more popular man?' And depend on it, Deacon, they will look to you to lead off in this dance. Their instincts teach them that an officer in the church who patronizes the dancing school will not long be true to his faithful minister.

"(d) You have brethren in the church who are grieved I have no doubt. Have you not some conscientious Christians who do not allow their children to go to the dancing school? Their children want to go—would be delighted to go—perhaps beg to go and urge that Deacon Rising's children go, and these parents are tried. They seem severe. But they gave their children to Christ in infancy, and they dare not let them go on the devil's ground. You grieve all these exceedingly.

"(e) You hurt your own children. There must be some limits to the thing. You know

that if you put guns into the hands of boys, they will fire them off. If you give a child a taste for dancing, and the power to dance, she will inevitably want to go to places of amusement, where there is opportunity for display, and where the company is not 'very select,' or 'moral,' and where they do keep late hours.'

"(f) Your children will have new and strong ties fastening them to the world, and drawing them away from Christ. Anything that unfits one for the trying duties of life, and for the self-denial of a Christian, is a wrong done to the child. And pray, Deacon, what possible cross does the community see your Christian family take up? You have no theater and no horse races here, and you do not patronize them. But if I understand Christ, we are to take up some cross daily, something that will be felt and seen as a cross which they see you take up for Christ?

"(g) If your children are Christians, the wrong is hardly less to them. If they are Christ's He dwells with them. Suppose He should call in here in person tonight, and propose to talk with your children, would you take Him to the dancing school to introduce Him? Or, would you ask Him 'just to stay outside, while you went in and called them out?' Oh, Deacon! Deacon! I fear you are hurting yourself, hurting your family, grieving your fellow-Christians, wearing down your minister, and grieving the Holy Spirit, in conforming to the world. The Master says, 'Be not conformed to the world.'"

Alas! Mr. Simplemind was sad! Deacon Rising was sad! And I am sad! Reader, are we all foolish in being sad?—Rev. John Todd, in Congregationalist.

MARRIED

Gough-Hoyt

At the Reformed Baptist parsonage, Marysville, N. B., on Wednesday, June 17th, Herbert Gough and Maude Hoyt, both of Upper Hainesville, were united in marriage by Rev. L. T. Sabine.

The ceremony was witnessed by immediate relatives of the contracting parties.

After the service the wedding party motored to the bride's home, where a dainty supper was served, and the bride was the recipient of a number of useful presents.

Mr. and Mrs. Gough will reside in Upper Hainesville, where they both are very popular.

At the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Graham, of Ashland, Carleton Co., N. B., Mrs. Nettie Seeley was united in marriage to Mr. Frank Clark on Thursday, June 11th, at 8 o'clock p. m. The ceremony was performed by Rev. H. S. Dow in the presence of the immediate relatives and friends of the family of the bride. Their many friends wish them much happiness and God's blessing.

UNITED STATES

The National W. C. T. U. recently made a special investigation of the Keeley Institutes. The results are announced as follows: "We cannot find 100 alcoholic patients in the entire list, whereas the average rate of patients for the Keeley cures, prior to prohibition, according to their own figures, was more than 8,000 patients per year, in addition to those at hundreds of other institutions.