

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."  
—ECCLES. 12:1

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

Voice of the Reformed Baptist Y. P. A.

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### "HEAD OF CHRIST"

Probably no painting of Jesus has won its way into the hearts of Christian people as Sallman's "Head of Christ."

Most pictures of Jesus present Him as being effeminate and soft, with little about Him to command the respect and admiration of a strong man. But Jesus was a man among men, one who slept out of doors, drove the money-changers from the temple, and could hold the attention of a crowd with His commanding eye and manly bearing.

Sallman had tried several times to put on canvas his ideal conception of Christ, but had failed.

During the period that Sallman was illustrating for the **Covenant Companion**, a youth periodical, he approached one deadline for a cover painting with nothing on his drawing board. The night before his deadline he went to bed discouraged, but after falling into a fitful sleep he dreamed that he saw Jesus as a MAN. He arose immediately, about two a. m., and climbed to his studio. There, during the early hours of the morning, he transferred to canvas the likeness of the person he had seen in his dream. In the picture Jesus has His eyes uplifted as though He had "steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." His face is gentle, yet strong; tender, yet masculine.

That painting was the original "Head of Christ," reproductions of which now hang in thousands of homes and churches.

Today Walter E. Sallman is in full time Christian service, utilizing his talent for the glory of God, and unable to keep up with the demand for religious paintings and drawings.

### THE "WHY" AND "WHY NOT" OF POPULAR RECREATIONS—DANCING

Olive A. Smith

The wisest woman the writer ever knew, from the spiritual standpoint, often said, "The only good reason for refusing to do what people ask of you is that you have something better to do."

What better test can be applied to participation in any form of amusement which the world wants of modern youth? To dance or not to dance, that is the question. The lilting rhythms of the ballroom are ever with us. Traditional answers to their insistence are not enough. We must reason it out. Why, or why not?

Is dancing a fitting amusement for the Christian? Either you have or have not announced to the world that the ruling passion of your life is to be Christian. If you have so announced yourself, have you anything "better to do" than to dance? Let us analyze the matter.

Advocates of the dance have a strong case in history. Dancing, they aver, has always been a constituent part of religious rites and ceremonies. Primitive peoples danced before their altars and around the statues of their gods. The early Greeks congregated in their marketplaces for dancing. Moses and Miriam danced to their songs of triumph. David was a dancer. Aristotle ranked dancing with poetry. Although there is no biblical record as proof, it is thought that the primitive Christians danced at their religious meetings.

Later, however, it became evident that savage nations manifested the greatest inter-

est in the dance. War and religion were the chief sources of dance inspiration. Heckers', "Epidemics of the Middle Ages," gives complete and graphic accounts of the historical—and hysterical—dancing mania, with its insane orgies and pagan practices.

So runs the history of dancing, down to the present day when it stands as one of the recognized social amusements. And back to our original query we turn. Why dance? Why not dance? Has a young Christian anything "better to do" than to indulge in this popular amusement? Granted that it represents rhythmic beauty, cultivates physical grace and charm, are the surroundings, the atmosphere, the acquired tastes of the dance hall conducive to the best development of the truly Christian life? Is the joy of the modern dance the joy of which the Master spoke when He promised that the joy of His followers might be complete? Does dancing make one more worshipful, more devoted to the highest and best ideals for individual and civic life? Does the habitual dancer have ever before him, or her, the question, "What would Jesus have me do?"

The modern world of religion is greatly confused. Under pressure of the insistence of a "social gospel," for the betterment of human conditions, every principle of the personal religious life suffers the threat of extinction. Everything connected with personal Christian experience is dubbed "theology." So the question of amusements has, to many, become a mere matter of social expediency. We drift with tide. And the tide is strong for exploration of the physical, the animal, the material. We choose to forget that denizens of the underworld still testify that the dance hall, or its environment, started them toward their present status. We choose to close our eyes to the fact that the dancer soon loses interest in all things connected with personal religious experience—prayer, worship, the daily and hourly adventures with faith and spiritual guidance which open up new vistas of glory during these trying days of uncertainty. We choose to ignore, as "old stuff," the matter of Christian example, ignoring also the modern psychological slant, which, if utilized, might prove, in the most unobtrusive way, that we have something better to do than to dance away life's precious hours.

A standard encyclopedia gives us a bit of "old stuff" on this question. "As a social amusement, dancing cannot be recommended by the lovers of virtue and true culture. Though a healthful exercise when performed in the open air and at proper hours, it is too often practised under circumstances highly unfavorable to physical and moral health. By many, this objection will be regarded as a relic of Puritanism, but the united voice of all large-minded lovers of their race cannot be overruled by the assertions of those who would enjoy the present at the expense of the future."

Ah, there is the vital thought! "At the expense of the future." Christianity must either meet an untried and unknown future, or admit its inadequacy for the task which Jesus laid upon it. There is no room for half-heartedness, world-servility, the type of profession which is "all things to all men," regardless of principle, or personal assignment of Christian activity. We need a consecrated, wholehearted

youth, which, as a unit has "something better to do" than to fritter away time, thought, talent and energy on hectic amusement. We need Christian youth who are terribly in earnest about the realization of their Saviour's prayer, "Thy kingdom come." In these strange days "future" is a big word. The future demands a Christianity far, far ahead of the Christianity of the past or the present. And what of the personal future? To return for a moment to the idea of personal Christianity, are you building for the best personal future when you become a dance hall addict? Are you helping to make everyday life a more spiritual, rather than a more sensuous and material adventure? Are you feeding your faith in the sacred unity of all life, so that a change would mean as little as it meant to Emerson when he met a friend's announcement that the world was coming to an end with the calm reply, "Well, never mind, we can do without it?"

All unsought, the beautiful melodies of the dance hall come to us, but we need not go to them unless we have "nothing better to do." And there are many, many wonderful, vital, challenging things to do! Let us be up and at them, building for the personal and social future for which the great of all ages have striven, and for which the Master of life perished on a Roman cross.—Selected.

### AIM HIGH

"There are two rules which all young people ought to follow in planning their future lives. First, have something definite to strive for; secondly, let that something be a high and worthy object of pursuit. The higher and better the motive, the nobler and more truly successful in the end will be the life. There is one motive which will ennoble, uplift and crown with glory the most humble soul which adopts it. That motive is to be a true, thorough, life-long Christian. No ideal can be higher than this; no ambition offers wider possibilities of attainment. It is a motive which acts as the rudder of the soul, not only for time, but for eternity."—The Ohio Messenger—Selected.

### DO IT NOW

"Do it now!" This motto, in plain, big white letters on a black background, stares at me always from my desk. It has saved me many a time from the evils of procrastination. Faithfulness—tomorrow—is so easy; but the only faithfulness that counts is faithfulness today. Take up the hardest tasks first. Postpone play till work is done. Make a beginning though you have only a minute. These are all good rules for the despatch of business.—Dr. Amos R. Wells.

In the darkest night of the year,  
When the stars are all gone out.

Courage is better than fear,

And faith is stronger than doubt.

And fierce though the fiends may fight,

And long though the angels hide,

We know that Truth and Right

Have the universe on their side;

And that somewhere beyond the stars,

Is a life that is truer than fate;

When the night shall unlatch the bars

We shall see Him, and we can wait.

—Washington Gladden