

A Treatise of Daunes eBook

A Treatise of Daunes

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A Treatise Of Daunes, wherein it is shewed, that they are as it were accessories and dependants (or thynges annexed) to whoredome: where also by the way is touched and proued, that *Playes are ioyned and knit togeather in a rancke or rowe with them.*

I. Thessal. 5.

Let eurie one possesse his vessel in holines and honor.

Anno 1581.

A Treatise of Daunes, in which is shewed, that daunes bee intisementes to whoredome, and that the abuse of playes ought not to be among Christians.

I Doubt not, but that some, into whose handes this little treatise shall come, will thinke me to be at greate leasure, that haue enterprised largely to leuie out and handle this argument: which to their seeming is not otherwise of great importaunce. For be it that daunes were allowed or condemned, or els yet they were putt in the rowe of thinges indifferent men might easily iudge according to their opinion, that that should not bring great profit or hurt to our christian common wealth, seeing that ther are diuers pointes of greater weight and consequence, which trouble the spirits of manye learned men, & make afraide the consciences of the weake and simple ones: which poyntes haue verye much nede to be opened and made plaine, rather then to trouble a mans selfe to write agaynst playes and daunes. Furthermore men should be in very great forwardnes, if euerie thinge were so well reformed, that they were come euen unto daunes, that is to say, that all that which is corrupted, and those abuses which beare the sway among Christians were so cut off, and this so sick a body againe so wel restored to his soundnes and health, that there should remayne nothing els but to debate the question of leaping skippings and daunes.

Ther will be found an other manner & sort of people, who will make no accompte at all to mocke at this matter: as indeede the world is ful of mockers, and men without Godlines, without God, and without religion. Now as concerninge these persons, they deserue no manner of aunswere at al, because they do as soone scoffe at the principall pointes of christian religion, and that which directly concerneth the seruice of God, as matters of lesse weight and importaunce. Wherefore I not much regarding or caringe for the iudgement of such iudges, will let them runne to the water with the bridle uppon their head, or in their necke, as they say. But as touchinge the first, because they bee not altogether malicious and obstinate, I hope, that ha= uing aunswared their obiections, and declared the reasons which haue moued, yea rather driuen me forward or inforsed mee to descipher and sett out this matter, they will iudge my labour not to haue bene altogether unprofitable.

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It is then in the first place to bee wished and desired, that troubles beyng pacified, and all dissentions repressed, and put out, the spirits and consciences of men, should be assured and thorowly perswaded of that which appertaineth to their saluation. And indeede our Lorde hath stirred and raised up so perfect an age in al sciences & know= ledge, in which so many learned men, and of excellent learning and knowledge, haue so blessedly and diligently imployed them= selues to teach us the order and maner to liue well, some after one sort and fashion, and some after an other, that those which be not yet satisfied, can not, or ought not, to lay the fault in any but in themselues.

Next all good men ought to wishe and desire that those which put their hande to (this is to say trauaile for) the reformation of maners, should do it with such good argumentes, that there shoulde remayne, or be left, but euen a very litle to be corrected and amended. And yet this wish & desire should not let or hinder the trauaile of such as do indeuor to pull up by the rootes such herbes as be hurtful to the field of the Lord, be they neuer so small and little: and I do, or which thing I labour to do in this little boke according to the talente & graces which are geuen me from aboue.

Adde also that if any do deeply & seasonably consider this matter, I hope he shal not finde it so barren and of little edification, that it ought to be dispised or troden under foote: for many men of quality (yea euen in the company of notable personages) of name and authority, make no conscience to demaunde and aske whether it be yll done to daunce, demaunding also a formall or playne parcell and text of Scripture, by which it may appeare that daunces be prohibited and forbidden, otherwise they think not that they do euill in daunsing. Some others goe further and alledging or rather indeede abusing some peece of the Scripture, where it appeareth that the faithfull haue leaped and daunsed: they thinke verily that they haue founde the beane in the cake, as though this were a proper couerture & cloke to couer the infection and filthines of their daunces.

Seyng then that many be foulie & grosely deceaued in this behalfe, and that possible for want of beyng sufficiently instructed and informed or taught touching this matter, I haue bene so much the more willing to ease them in this question, by how much I hope to profit in common, that is, to do good to the greatest multitude, as also being willing hereby to satisfy some which haue earnestly and instantly required it at my handes.

Now to answeare them which demaund and aske a playne peece or text of Scripture in which daunces should be forbidden, let them know that there be many wicked and euill thinges which are not euidently and playnly expressed in the Scripture, to be forbidden, notwithstanding they bee of the same kynd and nature, or else dependences of some thynges which are therein expressed, and under which they ought to be comprehended, or els when the contrary of these things is praised and commended, we are sufficiently taught and instructed to cast them away, as things condemned by the holy Ghost, because ther is one & the selfe same reason in contrary things.

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I will place, & put in the order or rowe of the first, playes and daunes: I meane such playes as by which man draweth or getteth to hymselfe, his neighboures money. It is true that wee fynd not in the Scripture these words. Thou shalt not play, but wee find indeede these wordes. Thou shalt not steale: Now that to gayne or get an other mans money at play shoulde not be a most manifest & plaine thievery: none of sound iudgement will denie it. For hee which hath wonne or gotten it, by what title or right can he say, that such money is his: Verily when we get or win the money, or the goods of our brother, it must be with the sweate of our face or browe, & that our labour bringe him some profite, that is to be profitable unto him: and euen as we receaue his money or good: so must hee thorow our diligence and trauaile receaue some profite. But when a man hath gotten his money by the hazard or chaunce, as a man would say, of play, I pray you what commoditie and profite commeth to him thereby: we must then conclude, that this is a kind of theft: which although it be not playnly expressed in the holie scripture, yet neuertheles it ought to bee referred to the eight commaundement, in which it is sayd, Thou shalt not steale.

The like is of daunes which wee may put in the first & second row or order. For although wee haue not any playne and expresse forbidding, where it should be sayd, Thou shalt not daunce, yet we haue a formall and plaine commaundement, Thou shalt not commit adultery, or whoredome: to which the daunes ought to be referred. [Sidenote: A definition of daunes.] Now if one would aske me what daunes were: I wil answeare, that considering the sway which they haue at this day amongst us Cristians, they bee nothing else but impudent, shameles, and dissolute gestures, by which the lust of the flesh is awaked, stirred by, and inflamed, as wel in men as in women. [Sidenote: Deut. 22. Titus. 2.] Bat if honesty, modesty, and sobernes, be required in appaile, & adorning of mens selues, as we see that it is commended and commaunded in Deuteronomie, & seing that S. Paule also in his epistle to Titus, willeth that there should be among us a sober and holy countenance, singularly and specially in women, which ordinarily be very curious in their garmentes, it is certayne and sure, that there is some poyson or venym hidden under the grasse. [Sidenote: I. Pet. 3.] And because it is so, S. Peter in his first canonically or generall epistle, forbiddeth that women should appeare, shew, and sett out themselues by theyr apparayle and neatnes. Add that in many other places of the sayd holy scripture, the diuersity and difference in attire and garmentes, is condemned, as prouoking to whoredome, and slipperines, by more stronge reason the dissolute and lewde gestures, which be practised by the proper and owne members of a mans bodye, ought to be cutt of, and banished from among christians. [Sidenote: Jud. 23.] And S. Jude exhorteth us, to haue, yea and that in

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hatred the garment which is defiled by the flesh, meaning under this figure & manner of speech, all inticementes & allurements which might draw us to any pollution, uncleannes, and fylthynes: what ought we to iudge in the excellency (as a man would say) value and estimation of the flesh itselfe, which is so polluted and defyled, that it bringeth forth, and setteth out the pollution and filthines thereof, by villanous and dishonest gestures. [Sidenote: Ephe. 4. 29. Colos. 3.] And when S. Paule in his epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, forbiddeth us all corrupt, infected, and filthy speech, or woordes, is there not at the least as much, or as greate occasion: [Sidenote: The eies.] yea more or greater to condemne dissolute and lewd gestures: for as concerning dishonest and unmeete woordes, they be gathered or receaued with our eares onely, but as for villanous & dishonest gestures, they be so many obiects, or thinges set before our eyes, as if one shoulde set before us a painted table, in which all villany infection, and filthines should be liuely pourtraited and set out. [Sidenote: Mat. 5.] Now that the sighte of all our senses is it which hath most force & strength to make us incline to uncleannes and filthynes, I will haue none other iudge but our Lord himselfe, when he hath uttered and spoken with his mouth, that hee which hath cast his eye uppon his neighbours wife, for to couet, desyre, and with her is already a whoremonger in his hart: [Sidenote: 1 John. 2.] behold also wherefore S. John in his first canonically or generall epistle, putteth or ioyneth with the concupiscence or lust of the flesh, the concupiscence & lust of the eyes. finally when S. Paule placeth or putteth sobernes, modestie, and temperaunce among the effects and fruites which the grace of God ought to bring forth in us, doth hee not sufficiently forbid all dissolutenes, lightnes, outrages, and disorders, as wel in our manners as in our gestures, & other manner of doings.

But for as much as all the former argumentes are founded and grounded upon that definition of daunses, which I haue before geuen and made, and that some men might deny it me, we must answere that which they haue bene accustomed to object against it. First of al I haue heard of some which denye daunses to be shamelesse and dissolute gestures, because that when they daunse, they do it not, but for a recreation of themselues and bodily exercise, yea that they use it as a certayne thing, which of itselfe is neither good nor euill. But let such people be answered after this manner, that is to say, that their affection cannot so chaunge the nature of the thing, that it doth not alwaies kepe and hold fast, his proper or owne name. We see that if one enter or goe into a Brothel house, or Stewes, yea without affection or mind to commit whoredome ther, yet neuerthelesse the place shal not cease or leaue of to be called a stewes, or Brothell house. Likewise let them say, that in daunsing they haue not any shamelesse or vilanous mynde, & affection, which notwithstanding, may not well, easily, or lightly be beleueed, yet so it is, yet daunses cease not to be called shamelesse gestures.

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But what: The question is not onely of their persons, but of a thing, which ought not to be in any use among Christians. And moreeuer this is not all, to haue respect or regard onely of a mans owne selfe, but we must loke also to our neighbours, who is he which dare assure or warrant him selfe & others, that when he daunseth, or after that he hath daunsed he hath not prevoked & stirred up the lust of the flesh in some one of the standers by: But yet it is so, the effect & sute declareth it, because that the daughter and sister of the County or Earle of A. was so enamoured or rauished with the loue of a very simple and base gentleman whom she had seene daunce in the courte, and it printed so wel, that is, toke such deepe impression and roote in her hart, and understanding, that against the will of Father and Mother, parentes and friends shee married him. Now let us come to the poynt or matter, what prouoked this young gentlewoman beyng rych, wise, learned, fayre, & of good countenance to loue a base man, of litle discretion, unlearned, cockbrained, yea, which with great payne or much adoe knoweth to write his owne name, and besyde, or moreouer very deformed in face & countenance, if not to daunce onely, and to see in him some small experience & skill to runne at the ringe:

Men will say, that shee shewed not hir wifedome, in that shee chose her husbände for daunsing onely: but what is that the flesh doth not intise and allure, with his snares & baytes: For albeit ther is so much difference betweene the two parties, as betweene fayre gold and leade, yea so much indeed yet by her wifedome shee kept him backe, or made him to refrayne from striking, fighting, slaying, and casting the house out at the windowes, as we say, for the least flee, which came before his eies: yet so it is, that he obtayned and got her by the meane abouesayde: notwithstanding if ther fell out no worse by daunsing, this were somewhat to be supported, or borne withall.

But now if he reply, and say hee careth not or regardeth not, what other men think, seyng hee hath no maner of euil or naughty meaninge in himselfe. I answere, that here we see an offense geuen, and the very bond of loue broken and violated.

For put the case, or graunt that daunsing were put & reckoned among things indifferent, in respect and consideration of it selfe, is it meete or dutifull that for an indifferent and light thing, a man should geue an occasion of falling or stumbling to his neighbour: But so farr of is it, that daunses should bee put in the rome and number of thinges indifferent, that euery one ought to make an accompt of them, and to holde them altogeather wicked, and unlawful: in so much that I send all them againe back to their owne consciences, which say, that in daunsing they haue not any impudent & shamelesse affection. For the thing beyng so vilanous, and so infected of his own nature, as daunsing is, it is impossible, that he which useth it, should not bee infected, neither more nor lesse: then it is impossible to touch any filthines, and not to bee once uncleane, infected, and defyled.

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[Sidenote: The beginning of daunces.] And that it is so, let us somewhat, or a little serch and seeke out the beginning of daunces, and we shal fynd that men cannot geue them a better nor more apt and proper definition, then that which hath bene brought heretofore. For if wee would in this matter refer our selues to them, which haue written of the antiquities, as well of the Grecians as of the Romans, yea, and that to some Poets, wee shall fynd how that daunces haue taken their begynning, from Pagans and Heathen men, which haue then first used them, when they did sacrifice to their Gods. For beeing plunged into very thick, & as it were palpable dark nesses, after that they had forged and advised Gods according to their owne fantasy, they thought and supposed that they should bee delighted and pleased, with the selfe same delightes and pleasures, wherein, or wherewith they delighted themselues.

Whereupon wee neede not doubt hereof, but that it was the deuill which did guide and leade them, whom al superstition, false religion, and erronious doctrine pleaseth, aboue all thinges, speciallye when such a toy and trifle is accompanied with al wantonnesse and villanie. Now that such manner of doing, that is to say, custome of Pagans and heathen men, hath bene followed and practiced, by the children of Israel, after that hauing sacrificed to the golden calf; they gaue themselues to play, the scripture assureth us thereof, in the ii. chapter of Exodus.

Afterward men began to daunce in open playes, spectacles, and shewes, from which notwithstanding the people were driuen, prohibited, and forbidden, for feare lest they should be constrained there to behold and see, an dishonest, and unseemly thinge, for their fere or kynd. Afterwarde when in a small space of tyme all honesty and shame did begin, to vanish and weare away, then mens daughters and women were admitted and receaued to daunces: and yet withall it is true, that this was a part by themselues, and in priuie places.

Finally a short time after, men haue so far disordered themselues, and broken the bondes and limits of honesty, that men & women haue daunced togeather, or as wee would say, in mingle mangle, and namely and specially in feastes and banquets, in so much that we see, that this wicked and ungodlye custome, hath stretched forth it selfe euen unto us, and hath yet, or already the sway at this daye, more then euer it had.

Beholde the beginnunge of daunces, togeather with their fruits and properties, which if they be well considered, and deeply waighed by sound and rype understandinge, it will not, or shall not bee thought straunge & maruailous, that I condemne them, hauing indeede on my syde as well the authority of the doctors of the Church, as of the fathers which were found or present at certayne auncient, and olde counsels.

[Sidenote: Augustine against Petilian cap. 6.] Saint Augustine in his booke agaynst Petilian, speaketh in this manner: The Byshops haue always accustomed to represses and beate downe vayne and wanton daunces: but there are at this day some, which

are found in daunses, yea, and they themselues daunse with women, so farre of is it, that they reproue, correct, or amend such a greate vice.

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[Sidenote: Augustine uppon the 32. psa.] And uppon the thirtie and two psalme, he condemneth also, or lykewyse the daunces which be had or used on the Sondaies or Lordes dayes.

[Sidenote: Chrisos. in the 26 homily upon Gen.] Saint John Chrisostome in the fiftie & sixt homily uppon the booke of Genesis, intreatinge or speaking of the mariage of Jacob, doth very much condemne daunsescalling them diuillish.

[Sidenote: Chrisos. in the 48. homily upon Gen.] [Sidenote: Chrisos. in 14. chap. of S. Mat.] The like is founde in the fourty and eighte Homily. And upon the fourteenth chapter of Saint Mathew, speakinge of the daunsynge of Salome, the Daughter of Herodias, hee sayth, that when a wanton daunsynge is hadde, or used, the Deuill, daunseth by and by, or altogeather.

[Sidenote: In the 53. cannon.] In the counsell of Laodicea, which was holden in the yeare 368. ther was a cannon made, in these proper tearmes, or wordes. It must be not admitted that the Christians, which either goe or come to mariages, leape or daunse, but that chastlye & soberly they sup or dyne, and as it is seemly and conuenient for christians. Likewise in the yeare 676. there was holden & kept the sixt councill of Constantinople, where daunses were forbidden, principally to women as greatly hurtfull.

[Sidenote: In the canon 22.] The third councel of Toletum, condemneth the peruerse and wicked custome of suche people which occupied themselues in vile and infected daunses: and aboue all uppon the Sondayes, and holy dayes when they should haue employed themselues in the seruice of God.

[Sidenote: Article 23.] According to these Canons, there was made by the estates lately holden at Orleans, in the young age or minority of Charles the 9. an article, in which, amongst other thinges all iudges are forbidden to permit or suffer any publicke daunses, uppon the sondayes, and other solonme holy dayes.

But in the first place it were to be desired, and wished, that this ordinance might be straitly obserued and kept. Secondlye, that it were more generall, that is to say, that it did wholly and altogeather forbidd daunses, as wicked and unlawful thinges: for if we be Christians indeede, we ought not to suffer, that some pore and blinde Pagans should surmount and ouercome us in honesty & modesty. We fynd that amongst the Romains, they which were ouermuch geuen to daunsinge, caried, or bare with them so greate a note or marke of infamy, & sklauder, that they oftentimes accounted and esteemed them unworthy to exercise or haue a publicke and honorable office: as appeareth by the censure, punishment, and correction, of Domitian, who, for thys only cause, cast out of the Senate a citizen of Rome, as unmeete, and unworthy of such a degree of honor. Saluit in his Oration against Catilina, speaking of a certaine woman, named Sempronia, sayeth that shee could daunse more delicately and fynely, then did appertaine to an honest and good woman. Cicero much reprocheth and upbraydeth,

yea and constantly objecteth, to Gabinius the studying and practisinge of daunces, as an infamous thing. He both like in his Philippickes agaynst Antonius, and in the oration of Durena, he sayth that a sober man neuer daunseth, neither a part or priuily, neyther in an honest & moderate banquet, unlesse perhaps hee be unwyse, or out of his wit.

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[Sidenote: Dauners are folish & senseles persons.] Varro writeth, that Scipio was wont to say, that there was no difference at all betweene a furious, outrageous, or mad man and a daunser, sauing that this man, that is to say, the daunser was then onely mad when he daunsed, and the other was so all his life long. From thence commeth the Latine prouerbe, that dauners play the fooles, or wantons, but it is with measure.

Here wee euidently and playnly see, in what estimation and regard daunses were among Pagans and infidels, which trulye could not iudge otherwise therof, I speake of them which had the best and more sound iudgement, and which were able to weigh and consider, as well the daunses themselues, as their so pretious frutes, and excellent effectes. For if it be, yet after feastes and banquets, men commonly set, or geue themselues to daunse, and after that men be full of wyne and good meates, they bee then prouoked & pricked forward, by the prickes of the flesh, to what end serue such manner of gestures, if not, to make manifest & set out their intemperency. Now if men would refer it, or bringe it to bodily exercise, this would be very folishly done. For the body of her owne health, requireth not to be so shaken, tossed, and as a man woulde say, hunted after meate, for feare to hinder digestion, as the Phisition placed it amonge their rules of diet. Moreouer seeing yet men may exercise themselues in many other maners and sortes of exercises, hee, as mee thinketh openly sheweth, yet he hath not modesty, nor temperance, nor his health it selfe in estimation, yet is, he esteemeth & regardeth not. &c. which choseth daunsing for his exercise. Daunses then were neuer heretofore otherwise accounted of, nether be at this present otherwise thought of, then mere vilany, & a most certaine, plaine, and evident testimony of the filthines & intemperancy of them which delighted themselues therin. Now, that so it is, the Prouerbe sayeth, De la panse, vient la Danse: from the panch commeth the daunce: [Sidenote: Math. 14. Mark. 6] And if we durst ioine therto whoredom their elder daughter, we shal find that she followeth after immediately. which thing we shall easily fynd, if we consider the most ordinary & common effectes of daunsing. what was the cause that Herode so lightly promised, to that goodlye daunser Salome, the daughter of Herodias, euen the one halfe of his Realme, and kingdome, but that by her vilanous, and shameles daunsing, shee had stirred up and set on fyre his concupiscence and lust who was already a villanous adulterer, and infamous whoremonger, so that the delighte and pleasure which he take therin, provoked him to be willing to make so excessiue and unmeasurable a recompence: Moreouer let us marke more narrowly in Genesis, that which is written of Dina the daughter of Jacob, and we shall find that daunses were partly the cause of her rauishing, or deflouring. For albeit, that in that place, there is no expresse mention made of daunses, yet

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so it is, that when it is sayde, that Dina went to see the daughters of the countrey or land, there is some appearance and likelihod that the daughters had this custome, to assemble themselues togeather in daunse, and that to the end, that in shewing the nimblenes of their body, their bewty, and wery conceyts, they might bee coveted and desyred of young men, as indeede Dina was by Sichem. And in this our tyme and age, do not men daily see many such thinges, which daunses bring with them: The example by mee heretofore brought forth and alleged, ought to serue for an example to all great lords, to withdraw their daughters from such baites. But setting all the rest aside, do wee not see that duncing hath cost, this holy man, and great prophet of God so deare, that it hath taken away from him the head from aboue his shoulders.

By the way or meane of daunsing, the children of Israell, were willing to geue honour to an ydole, to a calfe of Gold, to a dead thing, and which they themselues had molten & framed after the imitation & manner of Pagans, which in such a sort & fashion serued their gods. Bee not these things sufficient to make a man flie daunses, & to prouoke a christian man to haue them in abomination, & to abhore them as things which haue ordinarilye, and commonlye serued to idolatry, and haue prouoked to whoredome, and haue chaunged and altered many daughters of good house and stocke, from the loue and fauour of their parentes, and finally haue caused infinite murthers: murthers I say, for in all the 3 peeces of Scripture before alledged, we euer fynd ther the death of some. In the daunse before Herod the death of John Baptist. In the rape or rauishing of Dina, Sichem, his father, & all his sobiectes, died there. In the worshipping of the golden calfe, where the children of Israel daunsed and leaped so nimblie, cherefully, & merily, before that their belly was full, there died then aboute three thousande in recompence of their ioy and gladnes. If then we would consider the issues, and effectes, which come from daunses, & the fayre or goodly fruites which they bring forth, we would neuer thinke, but that the heares would stand upright upon our very heades when the question is of daunsing.

It remaineth now to answeare them, who would serue themselues with certaine parcels and peeces of the scripture, in which mention is made, that the faithfull people haue daunsed. [Sidenote: Exo. 15 20.] First they alledge that which is written in Exodus, that Mary the prophetesse, the sister of Aaron, who after that God had ouerwhelmed and drowned Pharao & his army in the red sea, toke a taberet in hir hand, & being attended, or waited upon by other women, song with them a songe to the lord: as also Moses, and the children of Israel song another.

The like is founde in the booke of Samuel, after that Dauid had slaine Goliath, that many women came out of all the townes of Israel singing and daunsing before King Saule, with tabours, rebeckes, and other instrumentes of harmonie, or musicke.

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But when these which loue to leape and daunse, seeing there is here spoken not only of daunses, but also of taberets and other musicall instrumentes, do thinke that they are already in the hall of leapinge or skipping, and do daunse according to the note and measures that the Minstrels and Pipers wil sound or play to them: inferringe that the holy scripture before alleged maketh for them, and that by it daunses are approued, they are indeede fouly deceaued and very farre of from their reckoninge, because that reckoning without the host, it was meete for them to reckon twyse.

For it is most certaine that there is as much difference betweene their daunses, and those which holy men haue used, as there is betwene mariage and fornication. I meane betweene chastity & whoredome. And euen as it is no maner of way permitted or suffered to committe whoredome, so our daunses and the usage of them may not be allowed nor receiued. But to cut it short, that is to say, to be short, wee can not gather that any appearaunce or shew of euil, or any signe of watonnes or dissolutenes, was euer found in the daunses of holy men, but altogether contrariwise, they therein behaued themselues with such honor, fear, and reuerence towards God, the whole matter it selfe beyng accompanied, with so great honesty and sobernesse, as nothinge more. And in which mens deede 3. pointes are to be considered and marked, which can not be at any hand found in the Prophane and wicked daunses of our tyme.

First the occasions which thrust them forward to do it, was such a great ioy which they had conceaued of the fauoure which God had shewed to them, that they coulde not conceale, or kepe hidden, but needes must manifest it, & let it abroad, by all the meanes and wayes that they could inuent or deuise. [Sidenote: Psal. 68.] Which thinge also Dauid declareth in the sixty and eight psalme, saying, the Lord hath geuen an argument, occasion or matter unto the women, who also haue song accordingly: It was then a solomne (as a man would say) or publicke thanks geuing, which they rendred, or gaue unto God, singing or setting forth him to be the author of their deliuerance. What fellowship, agreement, or likenes, can there bee, between the daunce of these holy fathers, and these which wee behold nowe at this day among christians. Is it a question when men daunce to acknowledge or confesse the graces & goodnesses of God, to thanke him therefore, reioicing themselues in him: When the lusty and fyne man should holde a young damosel, or a woman by the hand, and keeping his measures he shal remoue himselfe, whirle about, & shake his legges alofte (which the dauners call crosse capring) for pleasure, doth not she in the meane while make a good threede, playing at the Moris on her behalfe: but I pray you: what can ther by there of God, of his worde, of of honestye in such folishnes: I holde my tounge, that is, I speake nothing of their wordes, amorous deuises, or deuises of loue, wanton communications or speeches or markes only knowen to the Ladye, or Gentlewoman. It is true, that a man will say to me, that he must reioyce and be mery, which thing also I graunt, but yet not with a worldly, dissolute, and leuse ioy.

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The seconde pointe is, that euen as the people of Israell were instructed in the seruice of God by very many cerimonies, and outward manners or fashions, so when they would honor him, and geue him some duety which they did owe, they did not content themselues to do it with the harte, and with the mouth, but by and by they added, and ioyned there withall some outwarde gestures, to witnes that, which was within. Euen unto this present or hetherto we haue founde very little affinitye or agreement betweene the daunces of the auncient patriarches, and of good and religious people, and these, which we use at this present, or in these dayes.

It is certaine and true, that the daunsers of our tyme would very fayne make themselues equall with them, and be in the selfe same degree of honor: sauing notwithstanding, that they content not them selues to haue a shameles and villanous harte, but they will also discouer and lay open their own shame & villany, by dissolute gestures.

The third and last poynt sheweth us the fashion of the nations or people of the East, the outward gestures, and custome receaued among them, contrary herein to the westerne people. The reason is because euery nation hath alwayes some proper and particuler inclination, which another hath not. Moreouer those which draw nigh unto the East and South, are by reason of the heate, mor easie to moue themselues, and consequently to make or shew gestures, then they are which be in the East, or North who by reason of the cold be more heauy & weighty: From whence it commeth, that the Italian in his communications or speeches, but especially if he speake with an affection or good hart, interminglenth and useth so many gestures, that if an English man should see him a farre of, not hearing his words, would iudge him out of his wit or els playing some comedy upon a scaffold.

Let a man on the other side beholde an Almain or Germain in the Pulpit, and hee would thinke him benumbed, and impotent, or lame in all his members or partes, of his bodie.

And to confirme this, lett us beholde and call to remembraunce, how the auncient Romaines were remoued farr from the opinion and mind of the Greks. These, that is the Greekes, esteemed daunsing verye much, and all these which knew howe to helpe and comfort themselues with an instrument of musicke. The other, that is the Romaines made very small account of both daunsyngs, and lesse of the daunsers themselues. Here appeareth the difference of Climates, and of such as dwell under those climates. From thence it commeth that the people of the East partes did breake and rent in peeces their garmentes when they had understanding of euil newes. Wherefore they did lye weltering and tumblinge upon the ground, put on sackcloth, put on ashes, or dust upon their heads, yea then, when they pretended to shew some repentance, and to manifest or set out an inward greefe: all which thinges would bee founde, and thought rediculous,

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foolish, and to bee laughed at amonge nations & peoples, on this side of them: And if that women should take tabourets in their handes, as we read that the women of Israel haue done: would not men thinke that they were out of their witt: which notwithstanding was not found in thought straung among the Israelites, because this was the custome of the nation and people. It is true, that a man may also referr the tabourets & other instrumentes of musicke to the ceremonies of Moyses law: which ceremonies haue bene abolished at the comming of Jesus Christ, in so much that at this day where we are under the Gospell, wee must use the same more soberly, and sparingly, & with greater modesty: but all that, hath nothinge common with the daunces of this present time or age.

These three poyntes being dispatched we fynd and see cleerely, what affinity & agreement there is, betweene these twoo maners of daunces. [Sidenote: 2. Sam. 6.] Our dauncers do yet further alledge an other parcel or peece of the scripture written in the booke of the Kinges, where it is said, that Dauid leaped and daunced before the Arke of the Lord. [Sidenote: Mark this you that folowe daunsing scholes.] But so far of is it, that this serueth them to mayntayne their daunces, that I would not wish to haue a more proper, fitt, playne, and agreeable place to confute them. For if Dauid hath had a like affection in his daunse, as they haue in theirs, that is to say, to please the gentlewoman and Ladies, as our dauncers endeour, studye & deuise to please their minions and flattering dames, Michol his wife, had neuer mocked him. He might then haue daunced more pleasantly, and after a fashion more agreeable to the flesh: and for trueth, hee might haue done it beyng light or nimble by nature, and able or meete to do al thinges.

But the answeare which he made his wife Michol, very well declareth, that hee pretended or purposed no other thinge but to set out by outward gestures, the greatnes of the ioy which he had conceaued in his harte, because of the presence of God. This was (sayd he) before the Lord which I haue done in this behalfe: it appeareth by this aunswere, that his affection was not in or on the world, and that he cared not much for the iudgement of Michol, and of all other worldlings, because he would not please them, nor satisfy or feede their fine and goodly eyes, by his daunsing. Wherefore we must conclude that Dauid condemneth the worldlines of his wife, and such other as shee: yea in that that shee was punished by barrennes, which followed theruppon. It is an evident argument, that God approued or allowed the doing and saying of the Prophet.

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[Sidenote: Note you that delight in your art of daunsing] Now if al they, which make daunsinge their god, would imprint this in their hart and understanding, they should receaue & use the same, rather to their condemnation, then to be so much without aforehead, that is to say, shameles, that they woulde abuse the scripture, to couer their uncleannes & infection. For this is a most detestable & abhominable sacriledge, to make the unspeakeable truth of God to serue our wicked and most shamefull affections. Adde thereunto that he will greeuously & sharply punish all such scoffers, and prodigall persons which do so much prophane the maiesty and excellency of his name, and that diuinity, which is contayned and expressed in the holy scriptures.

[Sidenote: Isa. 5.20.] Moreouer, when we so disguise and chaunge the nature of thinges that we call good euil, and the euil good, we ought to assure our selues of the curse of God, pronounced by the prophet Isaiah, saynge: cursed (sayth he) be they, which say that euil is good, and that good is euil, which put darknes for light, and light for darknes, which geue sowre thinges for sweete, and sweete for sower & bytter.

[Sidenote: Daunes not indifferent.] But I demaund or aske now, whether they which allow daunes, and place them among indifferent things, do not call good euil, and euil good: and by consequent do not inflame and kindle the wrath of God upon them themselues, and al their fautors or fauourers.

All which thinges beyng considered, I hope that diuers knowing what euil, and mischief there is in daunes, will giue them ouer and cast them away, thinking or supposing, that in that, that thei haue retained & faoured them, euen unto this present, they haue rather done it thorowe ignoraunce, than thorowe stubbornesse or selfe will. But as concerning others, whiche will preseuer and continue in their dissolutnes and loosenesse, the Lord withdraw and plucke them therefrom, when it pleaseth him, least they incurre or runne headlong into his wrath and vengeance, which hangeth ouer their heads, for that they haue obstinatelie and stubburnlie gainesaide and withstood, so manifest & plaine a truth. * * *

Prayse be to *god*.

[Stamp: Lambeth Palace Library]