

I believe that the world would have been finally cursed long ago, had not God provided for the succession of the race through infancy and through childhood. Had the saving influence of children been withheld, the human soul would have petrified long since; and the last man, wrapped up in some avenging incrustation of Gomorrah salt, would lie a human fossil in some early ancient grave, never to be upturned until some future creature would turn over his bones and wonder what manner of ape he was. Take away the holy influence of a child from a wicked world and the abomination of desolation would be complete.

It is beautiful to be reminded that our Saviour came as a child, and continued a child in all lovingness and innocence up to the end of His wondrous life, for the worldliness that chills the warm, young heart, and closes up its open door; and hardens and stiffens the generous nature into suspicious, watchful, covetous manhood, Jesus was not marred nor deformed by any of it; He carried the glorious beauty of the child-nature up through His whole growth, and displayed man perfected, not degraded, by this highest grandeur of development.

Another part of the constituency which Sabbath School teachers have, are those of riper years than children—I mean those that are in the May month of life, when their frames glow with the freshest energies, and their hearts beat with the highest hopes, and their vigor is unworn and unwasted by the world's cares, by the world's business, or by the world's pleasures. Professor Masson, in his beautiful memoir of John Keats, suggests as a fact to be remembered that one-half of the human race is always under the age of twenty-one. Twenty-one!—a very critical period—a period when the intellect is proud, and the passions strong, and the restraints few. The restraints few, because such an one has passed the years of forced obedience to parental authority. A child soon learns to spurn the laws of the nursery, and a young man begins to feel somewhat similarly towards the laws of the household. It is a period of revolution within him; he feels himself a walking republic, of which he is himself the president, and he will have no more monarchical government from the family king. What a grand thing it is to bring such an one to acknowledge God as the heavenly Father, and Christ as the elder Brother, and the Holy Spirit as the indwelling Comforter! "A person converted in youth," says John Angell James, "is like the sun rising on a summer's morning to shine through the long, bright day; but a person converted late in life is like the evening star—a lovely object of Christian contemplation, but not appearing till the day is closing, and then but for a little while."

Now, these Sabbath School classes that I have named or suggested, the primary and the senior, with intermediate added, form the bulk of the constituency the Sabbath School teachers have to teach and train, "that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace."