

between which and the better class of historical romances and love tales little difference can be discerned. Many of the most popular writers of so-called religious stories for children, introduce into them but little more of the spiritual element than they do into their week-day tales. The strictly Sunday magazines and the great majority of religious journals print secular articles side by side with those on religious and ecclesiastical topics. And it must be assumed that parents in putting these publications into the hands of children, do not subject them to a dangerous strain upon conscience by prohibiting the reading of a portion of their contents. The problem is thus one of choice. And as latitude has greatly increased, wise choice is necessarily difficult. But it may be overcome by remembering that undue strictness is likely to work more harm than laxity, and by recognizing the fact that the spiritual and serious element in life is not to be found in theological treatises alone, but in all the higher forms of secular literature.

It is the insistence of many, we know, that to label a certain class of books as Sunday books is to make a distinction positively injurious to the young. They urge that a book unfit to be read on the Sabbath is injurious if read on other days, and that to set aside the more spiritual and serious books for Sunday reading is to increase frivolity during the rest of the week. There is some truth in this, and if the judgment of all communities and individuals were mature, the distinction would not be necessary. But the right use of the Sabbath depends upon an enlightened conscience, and as the degree of enlightenment differs in communities and individuals, they need moral training. Civil laws are created for the purpose of fixing a certain conception of conduct in the public mind, their highest value being reached when the habits of mind and life have become so well ordered by their observance that they are no longer restrictive. In like manner, the restriction of the Sabbatical law and other kindred enactments have for their purpose the training of the community to the conception of moral law, and that training must begin in the family. The father who by such training has developed into a thoughtful manhood, may well claim "not to be judged in respect of days." But the liberty to which he has attained may not safely be given to childhood and youth, which in their thoughtlessness and lack of spirituality, need a discipline with which he may dispense. Without distinction between their week-day and Sunday reading and engagements their conception of moral law would be blunted, and the value of the Sabbath as "a school-master to bring us to Christ" be wholly lost.—*New York Observer*.

#### FRENCH GENIUS FOR PROTESTANTISM.

An interesting article in a recent number of *Le Signal*, the religious daily of Paris discusses the character of French Protestantism, taking the stand that the genius of the French people is for this very thing. The writer appeals to history with the question whether there be in the world anything more noble, more estimable, more virile than the Protestantism of French history. It was by inward necessity that the French Reformation took place, and it was not because of the nature of things, but by an outward combination of circumstances that France did not then become a "greater Switzerland, with its Catholic cantons and its Protestant cantons, and a constitutional monarchy governing all, awaiting the time when the development of ideas should bring about logically a Republican form of government."

The writer appeals to facts in support of his contention, which, though novel, have in them nothing strange to those who remember the history of the Huguenots, "that reformed Protestantism has been the foundation of the true France, the firm and compact rock upon which her house would have been most solidly built. Whether we will own or deny it, modern France, progressive, liberal France, springs from nothing else. Who sustained the crown against the demagoguery of the League, and the French national political system against Italian and Spanish politics? Who conquered and saved the throne of the first Bourbon? Who protected it afterward against the house

of Austria? What might have prevented the Spanish war of succession? What philosophy would have ended with the Constituent Assembly and not have gone on to the Terror? What religion might have saved Gallicanism its repeated checks, from Philip the Fair to Father Hyacinthe, including Charles VII. and Bossuet?"

The writer goes on to show that the highest benefits to French science, arts, government, have been due to Protestants. "The fathers of French surgical science, of French agricultural science, of French physical science, of the French colonial system, its most inspired naval commander, its most creative artist, all were Protestants, and so were a long roll of leaders in the educational and industrial worlds; in French diplomacy, as well as the best known men of letters and of learning. From all these and many other instances he argues, and not ineffectually, that Protestantism is quite accordant with the genius of the French people. The article is written, of course, to stir up the sons of the Huguenots to appreciate their own importance in the development of France. We of a Protestant nation may carry the thought out to its logical sequence. Since the genius of France is for Protestantism, she can only fulfil her true destiny when she has become Protestant. And if now she is leader of the world in science, thought, in all that is ideal as contrasted with material good, how much more will she bless the world when once she has come into her own, and finds herself free to work according to her true nature.

#### HINTS FOR A CHRISTIAN HOME.

1. We may be quite sure that our will is likely to be crossed during the day; so let us prepare for it.
2. Every person in the house has an evil nature as well as ourselves, and therefore we are not to expect too much.
3. Look upon each member of the family as one for whom Christ died.
4. When inclined to give an angry answer, let us lift up our heart in prayer.
5. If from sickness, pain, or infirmity, we feel irritable, let us keep a very strict watch over ourselves.
6. Observe when others are suffering, and drop a word of kindness.
7. Watch for little opportunities of pleasing, and put little annoyances out of the way.
8. Take a cheerful view of everything, and encourage hope.
9. Speak kindly to dependents and servants, and praise them when you can.

#### THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

The following letter, handed us by the kindness of the Rev. R. P. Mackay speaks for itself, words cannot deepen the pathos of these appalling facts, children rescued at this time might be the instruments of mighty blessing in days to come. The great ingathering amongst the Telugus began in a time of famine may this prove a blessing in disguise.

INDORE, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1876.

MY DEAR MR. MACKAY:—

Col. Barr spoke to me of the famine that is already making itself felt here. Wheat is selling at two cents a pound, and north of us at two and a-half cents a pound; and yet we are just on the edge of it. What it will be when it has time to assert itself, it is hard to realize. He asked if we would be willing to take charge of the children that will in large numbers probably be deserted by their parents. To this I said that so far as we had means, we would do so, and that I would write to ask you how far you thought we should undertake this work. He has already sent us two boys, whom we are seeking to train as best we can. Will you kindly let me know, as soon as you can, what you as a committee think of the matter? To the south of us, they are dying in large numbers; and so one society in Bombay has taken up the work and has removed there, at least, one batch of fifty girls. Some of them died on the way, and all had, when they reached Bombay, to be fed with milk and that very sparingly, for several days. Last evening I went around some of our Christians about the time they were cooking their food, and was pained to find in some cases, how nearly to starvation they are. There will be much suffering before the next rains, even amongst them. The Ledingbams, with their new baby, and Misses Oliver and Ptolemy, reached here on Saturday, and we intend to have the Communion on Sabbath. I hope it may be a helpful service. It is still very hot through the day; but we have it quite cold at night, and so we shall soon probably have it cooler through the day too,—the cold season. Work is going on as usual.

Yours very sincerely,  
JOHN WILKIE.