

In conclusion, admitting that the evils we have enumerated are overdrawn, (which, however, we do not admit), still, is it wise that the Sabbath-schools should furnish these books, at least except under some restriction similar to what we have suggested? Whatever opinion may be entertained in regard to the question now before us, there is scarcely a division of sentiment that the proportion of these books now in the schools exceeds all proper bounds, and many very objectionable books, without being challenged, have been thrown into our schools and are being read to the injury of our children. The investigation of the subject however, brings us up against what has seemed hitherto an impenetrable barrier.

#### WHAT SHALL WE DO?

Hardly any other books can be obtained, and if they could the children would not read them. We believe the solution of the problem as given above will meet the case. In this great world of truth there are many more excellent books than any child will ever be able to read, and it seems unfortunate to supply them with what is, in many cases, nothing better than mental trash. In Great Britain, among the Sabbath-school workers of our church, great attention has been turned for some years past to this subject, and many truly excellent works, deeply interesting and instructive, are being published by our book-room. The titles of the books and characteristic notes are published from month to month in the *Sunday-school Magazine*, and we may well follow the example of our fathers and brethren at home on this subject. Let us then select for our schools books which, while well written and pleasantly illustrated, shall also be food for their minds, on which they may become strong,—mentally, morally, and religiously,—and then they will be able to do successful service in the great battle of life.

A. A.

---

CRITICAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE.—What, then, is the critical study of the Old Testament and the New? It is the scientific, philosophical, manly study of a series of books which, as any Christian man believes, nay, knows, are of the very first importance to the world. And does any Christian man really say that he means to get along with any thing less than the scientific, philosophical, manly study of the books? Does he really mean to take his opinion of them at second hand,—and at second hand, perhaps, from very questionable or very ill-educated teachers? If a man really means that he knows more and better than is taught in the Sermon on the Mount, or that he can come nearer God than the Saviour brings him in the fourteenth chapter of John, that is one thing. That man may, with a certain consistency, excuse himself from careful and adequate study of the Bible; but even in that consistency there is a lamentable confession: "I know very little of the Bible; therefore I do not want to know any more." But not to inquire into the duty or the choice of that man,—for other men, for men who have found Jesus Christ to be their living help, and the Holy Spirit the true leader of life,—is it a natural or consistent thing for them to say, that they are satisfied with a Sunday-school knowledge of our indifferent version of the Bible, and that they will not attempt to extend that knowledge by a systematic or a critical study of it in the original? To say the very least, have such men the right to pronounce, *a priori*, that such study must be functional, formal, and dull?