

## THE HOME CIRCLE.

BY M.

## No. 5.—LITERATURE IN THE FAMILY.

Far more than is generally supposed of the happiness and prosperity of the household depends upon the character of its literature. The mind, like the body, needs nourishment, and is developed according to the quality of the aliment partaken. If the food we eat be scant or unwholesome, the body will soon manifest symptoms of decline. In like manner, if the mind be either starved or supplied from an impure source, the soul must eventually become deteriorated.

Hence it should be matter of the gravest inquiry with every household, what kind of literature he allows in his family. It is the duty of parents to provide for the moral as well as the physical requirements of their offspring. No man has a right to bring up his children in ignorance and superstition. By doing so, he not only wrongs his own family but society at large. Every man should endeavor to provide an ample supply of *wholesome* reading material for his household—such as elevate the mind and lift the soul to God. Children learn to read by being in the presence of books. The love of knowledge is thus engendered and increased in the young mind; and it is not only a powerful safeguard against vice and temptation, but a strong incentive to noble and good actions.

An observant writer has wisely said: "It has long been my opinion that one of the chief ways of making home happy, thriving and useful in its influence, is to supply it with books and papers. Having carefully observed and contrasted homes well furnished with reading matter, and homes where literature is unknown, I find that intelligence, family affection, thrift, economy, business habits, and joyous home-loving mark the homes with books; and bickering, wastefulness, general ignorance, and idle pleasure-seeking, characterize the others."

Another has added his testimony, derived from ripe experience, to the value of sound literature in his family. He says: "My boys never had to hang around a store, or a grog-shop, or a bar-room to learn what was going on in the world; consequently they never learned to drink grog nor waste their time. Many is the hint we've got on stock raising, in fruit and vegetable culture, and many is the poor bargain we've been saved from making, by reading a good, respectable, law-upholding, honest-dealing paper. We took care as to the quality of our papers. We took our church papers, too, and then we knew what was being done by the church, and where we'd better give when we had a little to spare; and our minister didn't have to talk himself hoarse explaining things which it was our business to know; we enjoyed the sermons more, and felt ourselves stirred up and more a part of the church for reading all about it; and the children had *Sabbath* reading, and did not find the *day* a weariness."