

But now the youth's library is filled with books of large type and tasteful vignette, and lids ridged and flowered and scrolled and columned and starred with all the fascinations of book-bindery. There is now danger that what is called "milk for babes" shall become nothing but chalk and water. Many of the Sabbath-schools are doing much to foster a taste for trashy literature. In some of these libraries you find sentimental love-yarns; biographies of generals who were very brave and good examples in some respects—when they were sober; fairy stories in which the fairies had very low morals; accounts of boys and girls who never lived—books in which there is no more religion than in *Don Quixote* or *Gulliver's Travels*. We have been wondering why some religious society did not publish a nice little edition of *Baron Munchausen*, with a moral at the end showing our dear little people the danger of tying their horses to the top of a church-steeple.

On Sunday night your child does not want to go to bed. He cries when compelled to go, and looks under the bed for some of the religious hobgoblins that come out of the Sunday-school library. Religious spooks are just as bad as any other kind of spooks. A child is just as afraid of Floras, Pomonas, sylphs, oreads, and fairies, as of ghosts. The poor little darling in the blue sack goes home with a book thinking she has heaven under her arm, and before she gets through reading the story of love and adventure feels so strange that she thinks she must be getting lots of religion.

In the choice of our children's books let us not mistake slops for simplicity, nor insult our children's tastes by disquisitions about "footsy-tootsies," or keep informing them of the historical fact—which they learned a great while ago—that "Mary had a little lamb," or assemble the youngsters in coroner's jury to clear up the mystery as to "Who killed Cock Robin?" If a child has no common sense at seven years of age, it never will have.

Have at least one book in your library in which all the good children did not die. My early impression from Sunday-school books was that religion was very unhealthy. It seemed a terrible distemper that killed every boy and girl that it touched. If I found myself some day better than common, I corrected the mistake, for fear I should die, although it was the general opinion that I was not in much danger from over-sanctity. But I do believe that children may have religion and yet live through it. A strong mustard-plaster and a teaspoonful of ipecac will do marvels. Timothy lived to grow up, and we are credibly informed that little Samuel woke. Indeed, the best boys I ever saw occasionally upset things and got boisterous and had the fidgets. The goody-goody kind of children make nanby-pamby men. I should not be surprised to find that a colt which does not frisk becomes a horse that will not draw. It is not religion that makes that boy sit by the stove while his brothers are out snow-balling; but the "dumps." The boy who has no fire in his nature may, after he has grown up, have animation enough to grease a wagon-wheel, but he will not own the wagon nor have money enough to buy the grease. The best boy I ever knew before he