

sweet fruit of some Sunday-school library; and the picture rose before our mind of our own dear little scholars grown into men and women, and, possibly, deep in the plots of some future Mrs. Wood or Miss Braddon, echoing the lotos-eater's lullaby, and sighing, when urged to wholesome Sabbath work,—

— 'Ah, why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone!'

Just as an extended course of religious (!) fiction may prepare for this after dreaming away of life, so another feature of this lotos literature may pave the way to something else, and worse. On the pages of one of the magazines to which we made allusion just now, we noted what is called a 'Prize Acting Charade.' If this had appeared in the pages of a secular journal—such as the 'Family Herald' or the 'London Miscellany,'—we should have nothing to say about it in these columns; but appearing as it does in a serial entitled 'Kind Words: a Magazine for Young People,' published under the auspices of the London S. S. Union, we solemnly protest against what some, not knowing the Union, might term an insidious attempt to introduce private theatricals into the homes of our people. Let any one read the article in question—it may be found in 'Kind Words' for January of this year—and no discriminating reader will pronounce our epithet, 'private theatricals,' too strong. It is to all intents and purposes, 'a farce, in three scenes.' We have 'rules for arrangement of room and dress,' 'characters,' usual stage directions; and, at the close of the whole, are told what should be the 'position of characters' when the 'curtain falls.' If such charades (the word is a mere euphuism) were 'acted' in a Christian home (a most unlikely thing, we admit), there would be occasions of scandal in the Church; and no one would be greatly surprised if the young members of such a household became 'distinguished amateurs;' or, found in after life with theatre-going proclivities, and earnestly expostulated with by anxious friends, and solicited to devote themselves to usefulness in the service of Christ, should declare—

'Let us alone! . . .
We will return no more.'

--The Hive.



How to Improve the Average Attendance.

THE attendance at a Sunday-school is quite as likely to be affected by a public exhibit of its fluctuations, as are the contributions. When teachers and scholars find that commendatory notice is taken of their punctuality, and that tardiness or absence on their part is counted an injury to the school, they are more willing to make an effort at regularity and promptness than while they can come early or late, or not at all, without seeming to affect others.

The "Central Baptist Bible School," of Norwich, Conn., printed, at the opening of the present year, an attractive four-page circular, giving an abstract of the secretary's annual report in the department of attendance. The first page is occupied with the title; on the second page is shown the entire active membership of the school; the number of school sessions held; the average attendance; the ratio of average attendance to active membership; the number of teachers, and the ratio of their attendance; the largest and the smallest attendance, and their relative dates; also the names of such officers, teachers and scholars as were present every Sabbath during the year. The third page exhibits the names of all members of the school present forty Sabbaths during the year. On the fourth page are given, with a statement of the seasons of highest and lowest average, these timely admonitions:

"Remember! That a low percentage of attendance is brought about by the neglect or absence of the few, and not of the many.

"Remember! That by punctual and regular attendance, you reward your teacher, encourage your superintendent, and build up the school.

"Remember! When the weather is cold and stormy, and to stay at home seems natural, that your absence for a single