

aside at the request of the scholars, that the teacher may read one of these beautiful stories from one of these beautiful picture books, instead of teaching the dear children the will of God. Thus we are training the youth to love *fiction* and a false way of salvation more than God's Word, and more than his Son, our only hope and Saviour.

I don't think I exaggerate (I will be happy to know it if I do), when I say we have more novels in our Sabbath School Libraries than can be found out of them.—They are the cheap kind, too. They cost but little, and are worth less. No!—they will cost the church of Christ much hard toil, many prayers and tears, and deep repentance, before these evils are turned away from us, and God's Word takes the place it occupied among *Protestants* in the days of the fathers, when the study of the Bible and faith in Jesus were the doctrines of the Church, and required of all candidates for membership.

Our officers and teachers suffer these books to go on their ways of corruption, with but little effort to stay their progress, and few words of warning. They seem rather to vie with each other as to who shall publish and scatter broad-cast most of this kind of juvenile reading-matter, and gain access to the largest number of depraved tastes. I do not mean this condemnation of juvenile books to be considered wholesale. There are some few we can commend to the reading of our schools; but the number is few. The chief difficulty with them all is, they are *baptized* with the name of religious books—books for Sunday reading—and they are taking the place of the Bible, and so corrupting the minds of our pupils, that the Bible—*our only real power for good among them*—cannot reach their minds and hearts.

Religion is too cheap in these latter days. It costs something to educate our children in worldly learning, and we are willing to toil and make any sacrifices, if we may accomplish our wishes in this matter. But we give too little attention to their religious education, and allow them to obtain their religious notions from any sources their tastes may choose. As teachers, too, we

choose the easy, cheap way. We do not study the Bible as we study other books.—We do not daily "search the Bible" for "the truth as it is in Jesus." Our pupils know this, and are influenced by our example. If our minds and hearts were thoroughly stored with the words and doctrines of the Bible, and we sat before our pupils every Sabbath under this influence, with an earnest, burning desire to impress them with the same word and doctrines, we could not fail in our mission of love.

We believe the Bible is our only basis of success in the work of evangelizing the world and saving souls. We know, too, that its doctrines are only understood and believed by those who, with much patient study and faithful prayer, "search the Scriptures." We do not *act upon* this common belief among all evangelical Christians, but apparently *seem to think* this book possesses all the powers of locomotion, voice, etc.—that it must go on missions of love among the people, and talk to them everywhere, and convince them of its Divine authenticity, their wicked natures, and the great provision made for them in the Gospel—and all this without human hands, feet, voice, or any other instrumentality. This is not God's plan. He has chosen the living voice, as well as the reading of the Word, as the medium of communicating His will, and in many instances, the channel of His Spirit, for the conversion of souls. The preaching of the Gospel is God's power for convicting sinners—that is, the *teaching* of His Word is this power. Instead of teaching this Word we are amusing the children with stories and pictures, and all sorts of devices to draw them to the Sabbath school, and when we get them there, we have our delusions to keep them. I do not condemn attractions in the arrangements and plans of the Sabbath school. I am one of the advocates of attractions in the systems for evangelizing the youth. I wish we had a thousand fold more of them judiciously devised. I object to these taking the place of the Bible, and leading, the minds of our youth from *saving truth* in Christ, as they are doing in too many instances. Our youth have no more reverence for the Bible than for the Dictionary, and not half so much as for one of the picture-books found in our Libraries. It is