

in the social scale, by all classes in life, has indeed encroached, to a lamentable and unseemly extent, upon that interest parents formerly took in their children's Christian training. Consequently there is very little time for gatherings round the mother's knee, and even less of what the poet Burns describes as the "father's admonition due."

I have not to go back farther than to my own childhood, to the time when a very different state of things prevailed.

Then, those classes who were in what are called comfortable circumstances, spent much time with their children, and even those who were not so well off, were less ambitious to appear so, and were more satisfied with their children remaining in a recognized inferior, but then more honourable status than now. This afforded much more time for aiding weekly school instruction in religious subjects. There was more faith in another existence when mere worldly distinctions would be entirely effaced and poverty in this life would have its recompense.

But *now*, it is the attainment of the tangible possibilities of this life which is the main object of all classes, and there is but little value for what is regarded as, at least, uncertain, undefined, and, if the saddest truth be told, little desired, or, at the best, capable of being deferred for that "more convenient season" which seldom comes.

But I do not say that now a consciousness of duty towards their children's spiritual welfare is entirely effaced, but that parents are too willing to depute that duty to the Sunday School. There-