

glad to be directed to such works as Kingsley's *Madam How and Lady Why*, Emile Souvestre's *Population of an old Pear Tree*, the splendid works of Hartvig, Figuier, or Michelet, or the beautiful S. P. C. K. series on British botany and zoology, wherein are described and illustrated every beast, bird, insect, plant, shell, and seaweed of the mother country, in a style that would gladden the heart of Gilbert White of Shelburne, whose own book should find a place here, as well as Ruskin's and Mrs. Marcett's *Tales and Talks on Political Economy*, Faraday's *Chemistry of a Candle* and Wilson's *Five Gateways of Knowledge*. Or if interested in history (as who is not?) how glad they would be to be told of Kingsley's *Hereward and Westward Ho*, Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* on Scotch or French History, Dickens' *Child's History of England*, many of the Waverley Series, all the works of Prescott and Parkman, Smiles, and Thos. Hughes, *Barnaby Rudge*, Thackeray's *Virginians*, Cowper's *Task*, Wordsworth's *White Doe of Rylstone*, Cooper's *Spy* and *Last of the Mohicans* — in which our forefathers defile before us in lengthened line, "each in his habit as he lived."

Nor must the work of former labourers in the educational field be overlooked. Such work as the *Evenings at Home* of Dr. Aiken, and his sister Mrs. Barbauld, and specimens of the good work done by Mrs. Trimmer and Jane Taylor and Dr. Day of *Sandford and Merton* fame, lose little of their intrinsic value as time flows on. As for the books, annuals, and magazines written expressly for youth, the teacher will not need to recommend them, because the scholar will find them out for himself, and they will probably form the bulk of the reading matter brought to the school to be read, as referred to above. Only let the fresh young mind get a thorough taste for reading like this; and it will turn away from the trash which now tempts it on each hand, and turn too, let us hope, from the low ideals of life, too common in ordinary politics, business, and society. And the opportunity to do the world this great service is in youth, while the heart and mind are still plastic and impressionable.

Again, as the great aim of education is to build up character, it is to be deplored that our sad religious differences practically shut out the Bible from our public schools. Our system is thus left a truncated cone — for surely the *moral* is the apex of the educational edifice. I can never feel that we did well in departing from the example of Britain in this respect. In the great school where in 1849 I entered as a pupil teacher of 14, the Bible lesson began every day's work, the day and Sunday-school were one and the same, and a simple exemption from the first lesson in the very rare case of any pupil whose friends desired

it, settled the whole matter. So it is yet in thousands of British schools, and so may it long be! For how can any one fail to perceive that one main cause of Britain's wondrous success in the last 150 years has been, that as a nation, she has held fast by the Bible; just as the opposite course in France has gone hand in hand with corresponding decadence? We, however, in the Maritime Provinces, as in Ontario, have seen fit to take a different course; so that a new struggling country has a threefold school machinery to support — day schools, Sunday-schools, and denominational colleges — while indulging too in that other costly luxury of a threefold government. The Bible, however, may surely stand first on the list of supplementary reading. May the day never dawn when we shall lose that best, safest, and tenderest guide of the human heart? Let sceptics say what they will, may we and ours never cease to retrace its peerless narrative, and listen to its priceless precepts? Even as literature — to take the lowest ground — we cannot afford to do without it. One of the most striking passages in the language is Isaac Taylor's *Dream of the Lost Bible*; where he describes how the world wakes up one morning and finds aghast all its Bibles blank paper, and then, on further search that all quotations, allusions, and references in other works are gone too — so that not merely such classics as Shakespeare, Milton, Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, Dryden, Pope, and Scott; but even such writers as Byron, Moore, and Burns are hopelessly marred and mutilated — till happily the faithful memory of the true hearted few serves to bring it back piecemeal, and men once more go on their way rejoicing. By all means let it stand first on the supplementary list, Apocrypha and all, what version you please — but left among us ever, for the need of every aching heart. Creeds may part us brothers, and their strife is not seemly, but are we not all striving each to make this bad world a little better? and if this be so, the final outcome must be the common weal, and even a stray wound got in the fray will heal, as the doctors say, 'by the first intention.'

The ethical apologue, then, the heroic example in poem, fiction or actual life; the gently insinuated moral lesson; the simple explanation of the wonders of nature, wherein the greatest has stooped now and then to the level of the lowliest; the spirit stirring march of national progress; the sacred Scriptures, spanning with rainbow arch the millenium of gloom and void that divides the older from the newer world — such is the bill of fare to be set before the youthful mind; and the fare would perhaps be the more relished for being dissociated somewhat from the set tasks and irksome restraint of school.