

himself to come here. The strong man armed keeps his goods in peace."

The beauty of it was that inside Rahab's house all were saved. "Come in, dear mother," said she. Who among us could bear the thought of our mother being lost? It breaks our hearts to think of such a thing. My mother lost? Oh, no, that must not be! And your father lost? Oh, have you an unconverted father? I beseech you give no slumber to your eyelids till you have done all you can to set before him the way of peace, and have pleaded for him before God with sighs and tears. And then she said, "come in, dear brothers and sisters." I delight in Rahab for loving her household. You have brothers and sisters who are not under the scarlet line yet; pray to God to bring them in, that all your house may be dedicated to the Most High, and, without exception, all may dwell beneath the blessed blood-red token which infallibly preserves.

I leave this to notice that there are other things besides family prayer which should be like the scarlet line in the house. For instance, there should be in every Christian house a scarlet line, put up in the selecting of the *company* that is kept. The Christian should carefully select his friends and associates. "He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." As for the drunkard, and the swearer, and those who use unchaste language, let them be what they may, they cannot visit within our doors: we will not tolerate them. If we are masters of our household, we try to find our children friends, whom we should like to be their companions in eternity. Some parents introduce their children to young men and young woman, who happen to be "very respectable," as they say, who are wordly and ungodly, and thus they do much to ruin them. It should not be so. Hang the scarlet line over the door, and if they do

not love that scarlet line, religious conversation will make the place too hot for them before long. If you talk much of Jesus, the frivolous will consider that they have notice to quit.

A Christian man's house should have a scarlet line over its *reading*. I confess to great sorrow whenever I see a Christian man's house, commonly laid about for the use of the girls, that dreadful rubbishing yellow stuff which pollutes every railway bookstall—much of it downright ungodliness, and the best of it abominable nonsense, the reading of which is a sheer waste of time. When there are thousands of good and interesting books to be read, it seems a pity that Christian people should give their time to reading which cannot profit them. Let the asses have their thistles, I never grudge them; and so I will not say that worldlings should not read such books; they suit them, let them have them. I have never murmured at a farmer, when I have seen him going along with his great mash of all manner of garbage to give to his hogs; so long as he did not give me a basin of it for dinner, I was satisfied to let the swine have their food; and there are a great many romances, and a vast mass of literature, which it is vain to deny to ungodly people, for it is after their nature; but as for us, let us have none of it. I should as soon expect to see the archangel Gabriel feeding out of a hog's trough, as to see one who is a joint-heir with Christ, finding his pleasure in books that are half lewd and the other half absurd. Hang a scarlet line over your library door as well as everywhere else.

So with all *amusements*. There are some amusements that we cannot say are absolutely bad in themselves; but they lead to evil. They go up to the edge of the precipice; and there are many who only need to get so far, and they are sure to plunge over. Besides,