

## Family Circle.

TO SABBATH-SCHOOL TEACHERS.  
THE EXISTING EVIL.

It has been a long lamented evil that so many children of our Sabbath Schools, about the age of fourteen years, slip away from amongst us—shake off the good influence which hang about them—break through the restraints of discipline, which we had hoped had grown into the strong bonds of least of habit,—and escaping altogether from our control, go back and walk no more with us. Alas! they have been found, after the lapse of a short period, walking in the counsel of the ungodly; standing in the way of sinners, and ultimately sitting in the seat of the scornful. They have been found, indeed, in the most pestiferous dens of depravity, and sometimes even in the society of felons in the common jail. Many of the reasons which I have discovered working in the minds of elder scholars, have arisen directly or indirectly from the influence of unconverted teachers. Sabbath School teachers are models for the scholars; they narrowly examine their dress, they listen attentively to the subject of their gossip, thus imbibing the same spirit! The girls learn to adorn themselves in all the finery within their reach, while both boys and girls, elated by an ambition to be like their teachers, begin to assume the airs which they have detected in their model; and, thinking themselves of too much importance to remain any longer with children, they leave the school. We may see them, perhaps for a short time attend public worship; indeed, they seem to have come to the conclusion, that they have learned all that can be taught them in the Sabbath School and showing yet plainly by their conduct, that they have not learned the things that belong to their everlasting peace. And what is the reason of this? It is just because they have not learned the truth, as it is in Jesus. On the contrary, had they learned of Him—who was so meek and lowly of heart, they would exemplify in their conduct humility, gratitude and love: for the gospel is the only true bond of union. Having glanced at the cause of this evil, I will now consider what a Sabbath School Teacher ought to be. First, a Sabbath School teacher should know the way of peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,—should know it so well as to answer all questions. To the law and to the testimony, they should ever be able to answer in the way which our great Teacher adopted. It is written, what saith the Scriptures, Thus saith the Lord: "Let the Word of God dwell in them richly, in all wisdom. Let it be a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path. Let them make it the man of their counsel: For the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." A Sabbath School Teacher should commence his studies on the plains of Bethlehem, and study them amid the shades of Olivet and Gethsemane, and should then receive the finishing stroke at Calvary. There he should trace the deepening course of the Gospel, and then retiring to Patmos, contemplate the glorified Saviour, listen with attention to what the spirit saith unto the churches and comfort his heart with, "surely I come quickly." So shall he be a scribe which is instructed into the kingdom of heaven, and like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. A Sabbath School Teacher should be well acquainted with the Scriptures; for the holy Scriptures are intended to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. He should stand at the entrance of Eden, give utterance to the awful denunciations of the curse, and then show how Christ hath exhausted its terrors, being "made a curse for us." He should stand at the base of Sinai, sound its terrific thunders, speak of its uncompromising injunctions, dilate upon the impeccable purity of the law. He should be able to point out the predictions concerning the Messiah; and, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, should expound to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Jesus.—He should show convincing proof of the divinity of our Lord Jesus—from his miracles, from his sinless life, from the divine truth which proceeded from his lips. He should take unto himself the whole armor of God, that he, and the defenceless lambs committed to his care, may be able to withstand, in the evil day, even against the wiles of the devil. He should know nothing amongst men save Jesus Christ and him crucified—he is an eligible teacher. Then he will acquire an influence over his class, which will deepen from Sabbath to Sabbath. Then will they be glad as the Sabbath draws nigh. Their heart leaps for joy, when they hear his voice, and from their souls shall go up the exclamation, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things."—*Sabbath School Record.*

### MEANING OF THE WORD HUSBAND.

The English term "husband," is derived from the Anglo-Saxon words *hus* and *band*, which signify "the bond of the house," and it was anciently spelt "house bond," and continued to be spelt thus in some editions of the English Bible after the introduction of printing. A husband, then, is a house bond—the bond of a house—that which engirdles the family into the union of oneness of love. Wits and children, and "stranger within the gates," all their interests

and happiness are encircled in the "house bonds," embrace, the objects of his especial care. What a fine picture is this of a husband's duty and a family's privilege!

### THE CHILD PRAYING FOR HIS MOTHER.

A Gentleman was, some little time since called upon to visit a dying female. He quickly obeyed the call, and entering the humble cottage where she dwelt, he heard in an adjoining room an infant voice. He listened, and found it was the child of the poor dying woman, engaged in prayer. "O Lord, bless my poor mother," cried the little boy, "and prepare her to die. O God, I thank thee that I have been sent to a Sunday school, and there have been taught to read my Bible, and there learned that when my father and mother forsake me thou wilt take me up. This comforts me, now my poor mother is going to leave me. May it comfort her, and may she go to heaven, and may I go there too! O Jesus, pity my poor dear mother, and help me to say, 'Thy will be done.'" He ceased, and the visitor opening the door, approached the bedside of the poor woman. "Your child has been praying with you," said he; "I have listened to his prayer." "Yes," said she, making an effort to raise, "he is a dear child; thank God he has been sent to a Sunday School. I cannot read myself, but he can, and he has read the Bible to me; and I hope I have reason to bless God for it. Yes, I have learned from him that I am a sinner; I have learned from him of Jesus Christ; and I do, yes, I do, as a poor sinner, put my trust in him. I hope he will forgive me; I hope he has forgiven me. I am going to die; but I am not afraid. My dear child has been made the means of saving my soul. Oh! how thankful am I that he was sent to a Sunday School!"—Such was the hope, full of immortality, with which the sufferer awaited death; and thus, in the providence of God, this dear child, educated in a Sunday School, became the spiritual parent of his mother.—*From Dr Burns' Early Piety*

### A CHILD'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

Prayers are often answered at the present day. A Sunday Scholar in Yorkshire heard a minister say, that "prayerless persons would not go to heaven." It deeply impressed her mind.—When she returned home, she repeated it to her mother, and added, "Mother, you never pray." "I cannot pray," was the reply. "Yes, mother, you can pray," continued the little girl. "I tell you I cannot pray," answered the mother angrily. "Then, mother, I'll pray for you."—She knelt down and prayed, "Lord, forgive my mother, and save her from swearing. O Lord, forgive my father, and keep him from getting drunk." The father who was then at the tavern drinking, came home immediately, and finding his daughter in the act of praying for him and his wife, his mind was deeply impressed. This conduct of the little girl was the means of the hopeful conversion of both her parents.—*Ibid.*

### THE USE TO TAKE THE LADDER UP AFTER HIM.

In the year 1830, there lived a boy who spent all his Sabbaths in studying the Bible in which he felt the greatest interest. To be free from interruption, he would repair to the garret; and that no one might find him, he used to take the ladder up after him. This little boy loved Jesus Christ, and delighted to do his will. He had read those words of the Saviour, "And thou when thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to our Father in secret." He had no closet, but could only climb into a garret by means of a ladder and that he might study the Bible, and pray to God in secret, he took the ladder up after him. In 1831 this youth died; he climbed to heaven and he took the ladder up after him, for he could not be found. But I delight to think of that youth as now enjoying the presence of Jesus in a mansion where he needs no ladder; but, free from the least approach to interruption, can unite with angelic spirits in praise to the God of the Bible, and in adoring the love of that Saviour who died for all, that even a little child believing on him might inherit the kingdom of heaven.—*Ibid.*

### DR. BEATTIE AND HIS SON.

Dr. Beattie, a celebrated professor, philosopher, and poet, of Aberdeen, took the following method to instruct his son: "In the corner of a little garden," says he; "without informing any person of the circumstance, I wrote in the mould with my finger the three initial letters of his name, and sowing garden-cresses in the furrows covered up the seed, and smoothed the ground. Ten days after this he came running to me, and, with astonishment in his countenance, told me that his name was growing in the garden. I laughed at the report, and seemed inclined to disregard it, but he insisted on my going to see what had happened. 'Yes,' said I carelessly, on coming to the place, 'I see it is so; but what is there in this worth notice? is it not but mere chance?'—and I went away. He followed me, and taking hold of my coat, said with earnestness, 'It cannot have happened by chance, somebody must have contrived matters so as to produce it.' 'So you think,' said I, 'that what appears as the letters of your name cannot be by chance?' 'Yes,' said he with firmness, 'I

think so.' Look at yourself," I replied, "and consider your hands and fingers, your legs and feet, and other limbs; are they not regular in their appearance, and useful to you?" He said "they are." "Come you, then, hither," said I, "by chance?" "No," he answered, "that cannot be; something must have made me." "And who is that something?" I asked. He said, "I do not know." I had now gained the point I aimed at, and saw that his reason taught him, though he could not express it, that what begins to be must have a cause; and that what is formed with regularity must have an intelligent cause. I therefore told him the name of the Great Being who made him and all the world, concerning whose adorable nature I gave him such information as I thought he could in some measure comprehend. The lesson affected him greatly and he never forgot either it or the circumstances which introduced it."—*Anecdotes; The Young*

## Geographic and Historic.

### ORIENTAL SCENES.

#### MAHOMET AND HIS CREED.

*El Islam* signifies "resignation," and is the Moslem expression for the Mahometan faith: the exposition of its principles could not have found one more appropriate. I am not about to enter upon any dry theological discussions; but the whole character of Eastern life is so strongly impregnated by Islamism, that a glance at this faith and its extraordinary founder seems unavoidable.

The star-worship of old times was surely the most natural belief to which the wandering soul could cling. It first revealed itself in those unclouded climes where the host of heaven is ever visible. The planets especially, appeared to preside over earth's fluctuating fates; and to each was allotted some peculiar ministry by this lofty superstition. The Priests were astrologers; and when their influence had passed away, the book in which they read—its page the sky, its letters stars—remained still open, and was still devoutly gazed on. To this moment, an instinct of this faith lingers among the people of the Desert, who attribute the rising of the Nile to one, the falling of the miraculous drop that cures the plague, and blesses the year, to another, star; and their destiny to the combination of the host of heaven: and who can tell how often, and how deeply, the lonely wanderer has been cheered by the relief that these eyes of heaven were watching over his desert path? Nor is this superstition confined to the Oriental: all those who pass much of their lives under an open midnight sky admit its influence. The sailors who first ventured into the Pacific Ocean observed that a constellation, new to them, was shining over the softened sea, like the presence of Him who preached peace to the tempest-tossed. That constellation was in the form of a cross, and the mariners no longer marvelled that astrology obtained amongst our language-makers; and the expression of a "jovial disposition," a "saturnine" or "martial" look, describes those whom Eastern superstition, grafted on northern credulity, believed to be born under the "aspect" of those planets.

Sabism was the religion of the Arabians when Mahomet appeared. This religious science, that had been cultivated at Babylon, was carefully preserved by those who had nightly experience of its visions, and found utility realizing their abstract faith. If eternity was written in the empyrean, and incorruptibility in the stars, the former was also their harvest-giver; for the Arab proverb says, "Behold, fertility is in the clouds of the sky, not in the clods of the earth!" By the stars they steered their "ships of the desert" along the trackless wastes; and, by the position of the other planets, traced the movements of their own through spring and harvest.

Upon this star-worship was grafted a wild, vague mythology, that expressed itself in idols. This must have been a very complicated theology; for we find Mahomet, in one inconceivable, destroying three hundred and sixty of its stony saints, that had occupied the temple of the Caaba in peace till then. This temple was in existence before the Christian era, and contained the black stone that fell from heaven, on which Jacob dreamed.

Scattered among the Sabians were many Christians and Jews; the latter principally emigrants from Syria, when under the scourge of Titus the Avenge; the former, the converts of the Jacobite and Nestorian Bishops. The professors of these two creeds bore the name of "People of the Book," or of the Bible; and, if the Christians were tolerated, the Jews were even cherished, by the Arabs, who rejoiced to find, in the story of the Hebrew Patriarchs, the ancient origin of the fathers of their nation.—They respected Abraham as a just man, and one who dwelt in tents; but they adored Ishmael, whose life they found themselves imitating.

Then came Mahomet. He was of the tribe of Koreish, and the family of Hashem, the most illustrious of the Arabs. Princes of Mecca, and hereditary guardians of the Caaba. It is curious that the controversial Christians, themselves the followers of the poor fishermen, who were yet the ambassadors of God, endeavored to injure his cause by stating that he was of humble origin. Noble he was, and therefore less wonderful his rise; and his father, Abdallah, was

so popular, that two hundred and three virgins are said to have expired of despair on the day of his nuptials with Amina, a daughter of the noble race of the Sabians. Mahomet, the only issue of this marriage, at an early age found himself an orphan, and a ward of his avaricious uncles. The result of Arabian Chancery would argue them to be a civilized people even then; for on coming of age, he received five camels and a slave as his sole remnant of a noble inheritance. "In the lowly valley grow the mighty trees," says the Arab proverb; and in poverty that soul grew strong which was to influence the world. He first tried his hand at trade, wherein he prospered; and then he married Cadijah, the wealthiest widow in Mecca.

He had now time to look round on mankind, and to study his fellow countrymen. He found their prejudices and affections divided between the idolatrous faith of their forefathers; the doctrine of the Jews, so gratifying to their worldly pride; and the more spiritual creed of even the Arabian Christian, which invited them to self-denial in the present, by the promise of a glorious future.

Mahomet took the iron, and brass, and gold of these respective systems, and fused them into a bronze image of himself. He asserted, and the Eastern world at length believed, that he alone could reconcile the discrepancies, fulfil all the requisitions, and complete the scheme, of the world's divided faith. The Arab wanted but a leader, Mahomet wanted but to lead; and his was the energetic, self-loyal, indomitable spirit, that could do it effectually. For seven years he struggled through contempt, and jealousy, and danger, as resolutely as the swimmer who knows that he must reach the shore, or die.—His claim to divinity, and his warlike spirit, acted and re-acted on each other. Did his followers faint under the burning sunshine of the desert, "Hell is much hotter" was at once his sermon and his bulletin. Did the threats and the power of the unbelieving Koreischites induce even his devoted followers to remonstrate,—"If they should place the sun on my right hand, and the moon upon my left, they should not divert me from my course," was the vaunt of one who felt himself superior to fate, or the maker of his own.

When his assassination was determined on at Mecca, and each of the tribes devoted a sword to share his blood, he retired to the Desert with only one companion; but he was not then less the leader than when he unrolled his turban in another exigency, as the banner for ten thousand men. "We are but two," said Abubeker the companion of his flight, as they pursued, were approaching. "We are three," said Mahomet; "for God is with us." Just then a pigeon nestled at the door of the cave in which they were concealed, and the pursuers passed on unsuspectingly.

It was not enough for Mahomet that he escaped on this occasion: he had the bold assurance to date the triumph of his mission from that day; and all over the East, the *Hegira*, or "the Flight," is the glorious epoch from which the believer reckons time.

Medina received the Prophet as such, and is consecrated as the place of his burial, as Mecca of his birth. Thenceforth he and his creed triumphed together: the head that would not be converted fell upon the field of battle, and the curved sabre was the true effigy of the crescent.

The deceiving spirit, which wore the form of Mahomet, might perhaps have numbered itself among the victims of its imposture. A believer in metempsychosis might suspect that, in a less powerful form, it assumed the appearance of the Caliph Hakeem, and the prophet Mokanna; and Cromwell him might appear but another manifestation of the same spirit, adapted to the enlightened spiritual and political time in which he lived.

In the history of the world, however, there is no character that can bear comparison with that of Mahomet, for the daring and originality of his views, (however they might have altered or expanded with success,) or with the sustained, and almost superhuman energy with which he carried them out, in defiance, though apparently by the assistance, of God and man.

In two instances, especially, he displayed a reliance on himself or his destiny, inconceivable to ordinary minds. It was not only that he preached his divine mission in time of security, and promised Paradise in time of peace; but in the hour of battle, when all seemed lost, when death appeared inevitable, and when the soldier's courage was of no more avail; then started forth the power and the resources of the daring soul, and the impostor authoritatively called on God to send his angels to assist him; and—strange to say, these angels came—they came, in the shape of hope to his friends, and panic to his foes. The Prophet's life was saved, and his faith became immortal.

Again: in the more trying hour of illness decay, when the glow of battle and of bravery was over, and the light of the past was quenched in the darkening future, and his dissolution was close at hand, and kindred and believers had assembled round his carpet to see their Prophet die, he held out unflinchingly for his divine mission; his last act was to dictate the substance of a recent revelation from his friend the angel Gabriel; and his last words were, "God! I come to thee!"

TO BE CONTINUED.