

their shelves and the Presbyterian Sabbath Schools would have gone elsewhere for their reading. In like manner when teachers and office-bearers in our Sabbath Schools are engaged in selecting books, they cannot avoid "Stories;" but if they cannot, let it be their earnest endeavour to give adequate predominance to historical works, narratives, memoirs, and works illustrative of the Bible. And as regards "Stories" we think that they should at any rate come up to the standard laid down by Dr. Schenck in the letter referred to above:—They must teach sound religious principles; they must contain positive Bible truth, and such truth as if embraced and acted on would save the soul; the incidents should be such as occur in real life; there should be no silly "love-making" in them.

We are delighted to see symptoms of reaction against the prevailing taste of the day for fiction. Let us foster this healthy reaction as much as we can, and lead the children to read what is not merely harmless, but what is positively instructive. The teachers can do much to form and elevate the tastes of the children; and ministers and elders can do much to influence teachers in the right direction. In this matter example is emphatically better than precept. When Sabbath School Libraries were first got up the books were probably too dry and matter of fact; but now we have gone fearfully to the other extreme. A healthy middle course must be sought and secured. Wild fiction, morbid necrologies, must be avoided at all hazards; they are evil and only evil continually in their influence on children. We must be careful also to avoid *childish* books for children. It is surprising to find how early in life a well trained child can read a good and thoughtful book.

After all, the Bible is the best Child's Book; and in our attempts to select reading for the young let us lead them constantly to the Bible—its histories, biographies, parables, poems, and songs, and letters. As it is the Basis in all our oral lessons, so should it be the basis, the centre, of our Libraries. Around this central sun let the "planets" cluster. Let them reflect its brightness and bask in its warmth.

While we thankfully acknowledge the great blessing of having a cheap and good literature within reach of the children of the church let us take care that the good and not the bad shall really find its way into our children's hands. Parents and teachers must themselves read the books which they would make the means of instructing their children in religious truth and in views of life. Or, the books should come recommended by competent and trustworthy judges. Hence the desirableness of carrying out the plan proposed by the Synod, of publishing in the *Record* the names of books that could be confidently recommended for Sabbath School Libraries.

Unmixed good and absolute purity cannot be expected in this world, but this does not make it the less necessary to be vigilant in preventing the extension of evil in the minds of the young. Books and papers are *teachers*, and we may expect that the young will bear the impress of their schools and schoolmasters.

---

### HOW TO REPLENISH THE CHURCH'S EXCHEQUER.

This is a question which many readers of the *Record* ask. There is evident need of such queries. The following experiment was tried last summer, and so far as it was carried out in good faith produced good results. A young man went round among his neighbours to get them to promise the proceeds of the first day's fishing towards the schemes of the Church.—Several promised, and when the proper season arrived they went out. Soon they compassed a multitude of fishes. One of them especially was remarkably successful; but true to his word gave all: while others either gave none, or only a part. At the end of the season those who robbed God gained nothing thereby, whilst he who gave all was abundantly blessed. These facts are suggestive,—1. Could not other fishermen follow the example of this generous young man. This plan, if tried at all, should be honestly carried out, not in a mercenary spirit as if to purchase success for the rest of the time; but from a sense of duty and