

**THE SUNDAY
SCHOOL GUIDE, AND
PARENT'S MANUAL**

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The Sunday School Guide, and Parent's Manual by A. B. Muzzey

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PARENT'S MANUAL.

Thomas Bowen
By A. B. MUZZEY,

AUTHOR OF 'THE YOUNG MAN'S FRIEND.'

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TO
THE REV. FREDERICK T. GRAY,
MINISTER OF THE PITTS STREET CHAPEL, BOSTON,
THE
EARLY FRIEND AND STEADFAST PATRON
OF THE
SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THIS COUNTRY,
This Volume
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

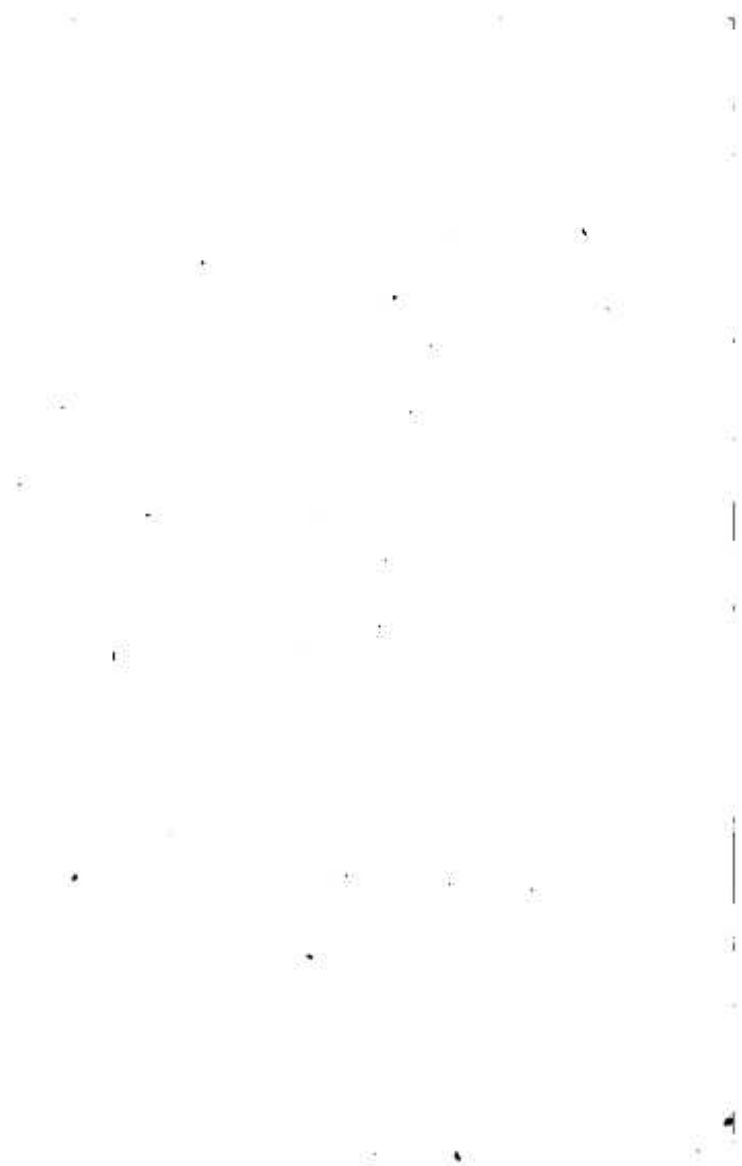


Figure 1. Relationship between the number of children and the number of parents. The top row shows the relationship between the number of children and the number of parents for all children and only children. The bottom row shows the relationship between the number of parents and the number of children for all children and only children. The shaded area represents the confidence interval.

P R E F A C E.

No one, who is not practically acquainted with the difficulties attending the moral and religious education of the young, and especially, with the complexity of the Sunday School system, can comprehend the embarrassments attending a work like the present.

It was my original purpose to prepare a small volume exclusively for the Sunday School Teacher. But it soon became evident, that to do this would expose me justly to the charge of leaving out of sight an essential feature of all sound, early religious instruction, that part of it which belongs to the Parent. And, furthermore, I found, that the directions given to the Teacher would apply, with little variation, to those divinely constituted instructors, the Parents of the children in our Schools. A deficiency on the part of the father, certainly one on that of the mother, in the discharge of their most sacred trust, can never be

supplied by the most faithful of other teachers. I have been anxious, therefore, to represent the duties of domestic and of public instruction in religion, not as two distinct systems, but as one and inseparable. Should a different impression be conveyed by any portion of this work, the reader may be assured none will regret it more deeply than myself.

Another difficulty has arisen from the novelty of the subject. The Sunday School is a recent institution. The field is, as yet, nearly untrodden. He, therefore, who writes on its culture, is not seldom perplexed from the want of sufficient experiments to test his theories. It is easy to speculate through the illimitable range of the plans and methods of religious instruction. But such has been the uniformity in the practice on this subject, that our opinions must be often mere theories.

Again, the Sunday School, to produce its best effects, must adapt itself to the wants of the times. If conducted precisely alike in all ages, it becomes spiritless, mechanical, and wholly inefficient. How should it be managed, to conform perfectly to the demands of the present period? I have felt, in reflecting on this point, as the painter must, who would embody in one view, and at one moment of time, the spirit of some epoch in Civil History, or the genius of a Warrior in some distinguished military exploit.

But a greater obstacle still lay in my course. Hardly a topic could be touched, on which there did not exist a Variety of Opinions. Among the most experienced and able Teachers, one would approve this method, and another the opposite, both alike confident, and both entitled, perhaps, to equal respect. Such being the position of the writer, he does not hope, perhaps he ought not to wish, that, of the thousands who may peruse this volume, there will be a single individual, who will think it wholly unexceptionable. One wish, however, he will here express, which is, that the errors of judgment it contains, may be attributed to any thing rather than improper motives. My earnest endeavor has been, that no pernicious sentiment might be found on its pages.

From the nature of the subject, it was found impossible to avoid occasional repetitions. But as a thought may sometimes derive new value from being placed in a new connexion, this fault will, I hope, be pardoned by the candid reader.

Important assistance has been derived from several authors, both on Literary, and on Moral and Religious Education. To prevent, however, swelling the size of a treatise I was anxious to place within the reach of all our Sunday School Teachers, and of every Parent, who felt the true interest in his children's salvation, I have not given credit by name to the writers, to whom I