

For he dwells where the willow and grave are
unknown,
And is fed by the Lamb in the midst of the
throne.

Windsor Mills, P. Q.

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Novel-Reading.

I CHARGE YOU, in the first place, to stand aloof from all books that give false pictures of human life. Life is neither a tragedy nor a farce. Men are not all either knaves or heroes. Women are neither angels nor furies. And yet, if you depended upon much of the literature of the day, you would get the idea that life, instead of being something earnest, something practical, is a fitful and fantastic and extravagant thing. How poorly prepared are that young man and woman for the duties of to-day who spent last night wading through brilliant passages descriptive of magnificent knavery and wickedness. The man will be looking all day long for his heroine in the tin shop, by the forge, in the factory, in the counting-room, and he will not find her, and he will be dissatisfied. A man who gives himself up to the indiscriminate reading of novels, will be nerveless, inane, and a nuisance. He will be fit neither for the store, for the shop, nor the field. A woman who gives herself up to the indiscriminate reading of novels will be unfitted for the duties of wife, mother, sister, daughter. There she is, hair dishevelled, countenance vacant, cheeks pale, hands trembling, bursting into tears at midnight over the fate of some unfortunate lover; in the day-time, when she ought to be busy, staring by the half-hour at nothing; biting her finger-nails into the quick. The carpet that was plain before, will be plainer, after, through a romance, all night long having wandered in tessellated halls of castles. And your industrious companion will be more unattractive than ever, now that you have walked in the romance through parks with plumed princesses, or lounged in the arbor with the polished desperado. Oh, these confirmed novel-readers! They are unfitted for this life, which is a tremendous discipline. They know not how to go through the furnaces

of trial through which they must pass, and they are unfitted for a world where everything we gain we achieve by hard, long-continuing and exhaustive work.

Again: abstain from all those books which, while they have some good things about them, have also *an admixture of evil*. You have read books that had the two elements in them, the good and the bad. Which stuck to you? The bad! The heart of most people is like a sieve, which lets the small particles of gold fall through, but keeps the great cinders. Once in a while there is a mind like a loadstone, which, plunged amid steel and brass filings, gathers up the steel and repels the brass. But it is generally just the opposite. If you attempt to plunge through a hedge of burrs to get one blackberry, you will get more burrs than blackberries. You cannot afford to read a bad book, however good you are. You say, "The influence is insignificant." I tell you that the scratch of a pin has sometimes produced the lockjaw. Alas, if through curiosity, as many do, you pry into an evil book, your curiosity is as dangerous as that of the man who should take a torch into a gun-powder mill merely to see whether it really would blow up or not. Only this last week, in a menagerie in New York, a man put his hand through the bars of a black leopard's cage. The animal's hide looked so sleek and bright and beautiful. He just stroked it once. The monster seized him, and he drew forth a hand torn and mangled and bleeding. Oh, touch not evil, even with the faintest stroke. Though it may be glossy and beautiful, touch it not, lest you pull forth your soul torn and bleeding under the clutch of the black leopard.—*Talmage*.

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Childless Churches.

THERE is a great difference between the churches into which one looks now-a-days in respect to the number of children and young people who are seen in the pews at preaching and prayer-meeting services. In some congregations the absence of the young is so marked that a visitor would naturally say, on looking around at a

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