

should not, but I do want to make a plea for good literature. Seek to have a supply of good literature always on hand, that you may not be tempted to take up anything light or trashy. Right here I want to say that parents are often to blame if their children read poor literature, because they, either through indifference or false economy, fail to furnish the child with the proper literature, and he obtains the poor, since it is cheaper and more easily obtained.

Many persons have a prejudice against all works of fiction, or novels as they term them all. This prejudice is entirely unfounded, but arises, I judge, from the fact, that all cheap, trashy reading matter comes under this head. In the stories of our best novelists and writers there is nothing injurious or unrefined. It is by the overdrawn sensational novels and stories of inferior writers that harm is done. It is the bloody tales of adventure and crime that oftenest poisons the mind, and starts often our brightest lads into paths of wickedness and sin. Many works of fiction have aided materially in bringing about great reforms. I can cite no better example of this fact than Harriet Beecher Stowe's immortal "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Many a strong, stern man has broken down and wept like a child as she told in language more forcible and affecting than we ever find in a mere chronicle of facts, of the injustice and inhumanity of slavery.

Reading the better class of literature does not create in us a desire for the poorer. It creates, rather, an apathy for the poor and a yet greater desire for the good.

Be assured a good novel is not harmful, and a good historical romance is a positive factor of culture. I value highly the historical romances of Scott, Bulwer, and Wallace. They have an historical value, and give an insight into the true life and customs of people and events they describe, not always to be found in purely historical writings.

Of course our tastes differ, but I have found books of science and philosophy interesting as well as instructive. Many of these books are written in language sufficiently popular and untechnical, to be easily understood by a person of moderate information. To me there is nothing so fraught with interest as the study of nature and nature's laws. I have spent many happy moments in this study.

In closing, let me say, there is so much good literature that there is no excuse for reading worse than worthless trash that floods our country. Acquire a taste for good literature. Fight without compromise, the desire for trashy literature. Remember this—that reading, from which you derive no benefit, that does not awaken within you pure and noble thoughts, that does not lead you to a higher and better life, is waste of valuable time. The books one reads are an index to one's character.

JOSEPH LOWNES.

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## MUSIC.

Read by Willard Yeo at a meeting of the N. Y. Young Friends' Association.

Early history of the Society of Friends teaches us that severe simplicity was strictly observed by its members, who then believed that there was too much that was good and noble in life to justify engaging in any of the so called light pastimes; such as the study of music, the playing upon musical instruments, acting in plays, etc. All these were associated with things worldly, and not intended for the advancement of the spiritual being. We note, however, that the singing of psalms was recognized as a part of devotional worship in some of the meetings, in the days of early Quakerism.

Says Robert Barclay, in his "Apology": "We confess this to be a part of God's worship, and very sweet and refreshing, when it proceeds from a true sense of God's love in the heart, and arises from the divine influence of