

OPPOSITE CHARACTERS.

It is very instructive, often, to observe the fitness of opposite qualities for different circumstances. A person who appears to great disadvantage in one place, acquires himself to his honor in another. Perhaps no two sisters were more unlike than Martha and Mary of Bethany. The former was a stirring, bustling, resolute, and perhaps irritable woman. The latter was moderate, quiet, diffident, and amiable. When Jesus visited them at their home, both welcomed him with glad hearts. Martha was inclined to prepare the meal, while Mary was more inclined to talk with her Lord. But the former became weary and irritated about her housework, while the latter sat meek and lovely at the feet of Jesus. How greatly to her disadvantage did Martha appear, when she yielded to the leading elements of her character, and rushed into the presence of Christ, saying, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her, therefore, that she help me!"—"Passionate woman!" we are ready to exclaim; and, as we turn away to Mary, she seems more lovely than ever.

But now behold them in different circumstances. At a later period, their brother Lazarus died, and the Savior visited them in their sorrow. Martha was calm, and went out to meet Jesus as he approached the house. She was so composed that she could converse about her deceased brother, and thus appeared well. The elements of her character fitted her to pass through such scenes more calmly than Mary. Even without grace, such elements enable a person to meet bereavement better than their opposites. But Mary was too much overwhelmed with grief to leave the house. She did not make her appearance till Christ sent for her, and then she could only say, prostrating herself at his feet,—“Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.” Her gentle spirit was well nigh crushed under the sorrow. We can almost see the workings of an unreconciled feeling in her heart. Martha exhibits much more Christian fortitude and submission to the severe dispensation. And Christ appears to have recognized this difference of character. For to Martha he discoursed for her comfort; but to Mary he brought a fountain of tears. As he looked upon her at his feet, convulsed with agony, he had no words suited to her. He stood speechless, and “wept” Martha found consolation in his words—Mary in his tears.—*Congregationalist.*

HOW TO READ WITH PROFIT.

For the sake of those who are not greatly accustomed to systematic reading, we make some suggestions as to the best mode of reading, so as to gain the highest advantage from the books you peruse.

1. Ascertain the aim of the author.—You will thus know what to expect from his book, and may save much time, which might otherwise be spent in looking for what you could not find. An attentive reading of the title page, preface, and table of contents, will enable you to judge pretty accurately what the author is about. Some facts, too, which float only among

intelligent men, will aid you greatly in these matters.

2. Read *wakefully and attentively*, and with a determination to comprehend thoroughly the book you are perusing. Read neither credulously nor skeptically, but candidly, endeavoring to go to the root of the matter, if possible. One hour of such reading is worth a week of the superficial reading which is so common.

3. Read with a *good dictionary at your elbow*, and consult it freely whenever you meet a word you are not sure you understand. Webster and Worcester are the best in general use. We use Webster.—Never pass an important word without mastering its meaning in the work you are reading. In this way you will gain a good stock of words for your own use, while you are learning the meaning of the book you are reading.

4. After reading a chapter, close the book and try to recall, and state briefly in your own language, the substance of the chapter, in the order the author pursues. This is one of the most profitable exercises. It will show you just how much you have gained by reading. If you cannot do this, just read the chapter again. The second reading will probably do you some good. The first reading has been of little use to you, if you are unable to state what the main thoughts are.

5. If the book is your own—but not, if it is a borrowed one—you may mark with a pencil the most important thoughts. You will thus remember them more easily, and can refer to them more readily.

Adopting these suggestions, you will read slowly, but what you read will become yours. It will stir up your own thoughts and probably develop your mental power as healthfully as any other discipline you can have.—*Ohio Farmer.*

EDUCATION OF YOUNG LADIES.

Where are your daughters from six to sixteen? Pent up in unventilated school-rooms—their minds surcharged with studies—the light trash of the day floating through their giddy heads—stimulating to mental and physical precocity—their tongues taught to lisp a little German or French of no comparative use to them—to say nothing of their want of exercise, prone position, confined muscles and ill-adapted apparel, still more obnoxious to health.

We would be the first to urge a complete education, but never at the expense of physical development and health.—These are so imperfectly attended to that when school days are over, and the subject of marriage is alluded to, the exclamation on all hands is—and with a little more emphasis by those older than herself—why she is too young—her health is delicate—has neuralgia—spine complaint, and knows nothing of house-keeping.

We do not stand here to criticize present habits, or systems of education, or devise betters but we have presented to you a young graduate to show you how imperfectly she is prepared to be a help-mate meet for a young man desirous of early establishing a home for future enjoyment. With all her education and accomplishments, her ignorance and inca-

capacity to fill her new sphere will be a constant source of regret to herself and husband. We will merely add, that had one-half of these ten years been devoted exclusively to mental endowments, while the other half included other objects preparing for the great duties of life and living, her education would have been more complete in the aggregate—the intellectual developments and acquirements more moral and useful. *Dr. Kelley.*

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