

had before?' Yes, truly, but all that is for the sake of the shop. You would fain sell canvas as well as coals, and crockery as well as iron. You know nothing of your own faculties or circumstances; you fancy that, among your damp flat fields of clay, you can have as quick art-fancy as the Frenchman among his bronzed vines, or the Italian under his volcanic cliffs;—that art may be learned as book keeping is, and when learned will give you more books to keep. You care for pictures, absolutely, no more than for the bills posted on your dead walls. You do not know what pictures you have (by repute) in the country, nor whether they are false or true, nor whether they are taken care of or not; in foreign countries, you calmly see the noblest existing pictures in the world rotting in abandoned wreck, and if you heard that all the Titians in Europe were made sand-bags to-morrow on the Austrian forts, it would not trouble you so much as the chance of a brace or two of game less in your own bag in a day's shooting. That is your national love of art."

Evidently we are in a bad way; and it is much the same with literature. Here is the testimony:

"I say we have despised literature. What do we, as a nation, care about books. How much do you think we spend altogether on our libraries, pub-

lic or private, as compared with what we spend on our horses? If a man spends lavishly on his library, you call him mad—a bibliomaniac. But you never call any one a horse-maniac, though men ruin themselves every day by their horses, and you do not hear of men ruining themselves by their books. Or to go lower still, how much do you think the contents of the bookshelves of the United Kingdom, public and private, would fetch, as compared with the contents of its wine cellars? The very cheapness of literature is making even wise people forget that if a book is worth reading it is worth buying. No book is worth anything that is not worth much; nor is it serviceable, until it has been read, and re-read, and loved, and loved again; and marked so that you can refer to the passages you want in it, as a soldier can seize the weapon he needs in an armoury, or a housewife bring the spice she needs from her store. We call ourselves a rich nation, and we are filthy and foolish enough to thumb each other's books out of circulating libraries."

Let us hope that these accusations are only partially true; and at any rate let us all do our own part—however small it may be—to wipe off so grave a reproach from our people by fostering to the utmost the cause of literature and art.

A WIDER BOTANY FOR HIGH SCHOOLS.

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BY far the greater number of the pupils of High Schools do not continue their studies beyond the primary examination. It is wise, therefore, to arrange that the character of the instruction up to this stage should have direct practical bearings so far as these can be attained without sacrificing general educational values.

Now botany is treated in our high schools for the most part only as a pure science and as a discipline for the intellectual faculties. We neglect the means which the material affords for the cultivation of taste and feelings and we ignore the applications of the study to the facts and processes of agriculture and horticulture.