

the world broader and more beautiful if they are of the right kind.

The poets make us see much beauty in the world because they give symbolic form to the laws and truths of life.

There is no waste of time more harmful than the reading of trashy books. They fill the mind with decayed and poisonous mental garbage and when the mind is made a mental dumping ground it becomes too clogged to be useful. Reading that exercises the brain power clears it for splendid mental strength.

When a girl shows me her books I form a very nearly correct estimate of her character.

Women of literary fame and women prominent in other professions developed during their girlhood a clean, clear intellect. Retentive memory is developed by good reading and spoiled by trashy reading.

When Harriet Beecher Stowe was a little girl she was fond of reading, but they had few books, so she read "Ivanhoe" through seven times. I am sure this had a more wholesome effect on her life than a whole set of the Elsie books. When Lucretia Mott was a child, the description of the slave ships in her school books left such an impression on her mind that when she became a woman she was one of the most influential forces in the anti-slavery cause.

"What are you reading?" asked the father of Margaret Fuller one day.

"Shakespeare" answered little eight-year old Margaret.

When Margaret was fifteen she rose before five, walked an hour—then read

into a great woman—a woman with extraordinary power of expression, and extraordinary psychological powers but whose chief attraction was her universal sympathy.

The lives of these women emphasize the necessity of reading well, if woman would reach lasting influence.

The selection of reading matter for a girl should be made with tact. I wonder how many mistresses put a little bookcase full of helpful books in their maid's room. I find it is a great inducement to keep girls home evenings, and it often leads to the desire for a course at night school. I refer to the value of reading frequently because of its influence in the life of a girl. For this reason it is a pleasure to contribute to The Western Home Monthly, because the editor's ambition is to have this magazine such as every girl and boy may read from cover to cover with beneficial results. This is not true of many periodicals published for home circulation, girls need reading of a "nutritious" character along with good stories, books on science, physics, geology, history and biography. There is too much mechanical reading; reading for the story-getting—only husks that create mental indigestion.

We read out of proportion to our thinking. In order for one to have a feeling heart she must have a clear head. What a girl reads largely determines her intellectual culture and the character of her future. One good book may direct a whole life. More girls are killed from printed poison than from overwork.

In choosing reading matter select



Showing Red Cross Room. Gladstone, Man., when, during 12 afternoons from 2 to 6 p.m., the women of the community met to do quilting and in that time have completed 50 quilts

books on literature, philosophy and poetry. When only seventeen she wrote this to a friend: "I am studying Madame de Staël, Epictetus, Milton, Racine and the Castilian ballads, with great delight." Infinitely above "beans and dresses" was such intellectual work as this. Did she lose her opportunities for men company? Listen to this:

At nineteen she became acquainted with James Freeman Clark who said: "It is impossible for such a girl not to influence the mind of every person she meets. Her friendship is a gift of the gods. With what eagerness does she seek for knowledge! What reach, what grasp, what overflow of thought shines in her conversation. Men never talk idle commonplace talk with her; she can appreciate the best of their minds and hearts and they give it. She is fond of social life and no party is complete without her."

Then there was George Eliot's girlhood. What made her such a very great writer? Not wealthy parentage; not congenial surroundings. She had a generous, sympathetic heart for a foundation, and on this she built a great scholarship, reading during her girlhood until she grew broad in mind enough to think great thoughts. Shut up in the farm house, hungering for knowledge, she read and read those deep books that formed the foundation for her great literary life. She did this without neglecting her household duties, for the little motherless girl had a woman's responsibility. One of her hands was broader than the other from her work in butter and cheesemaking—yet these household duties combined with her love for good reading did not hinder her development

books that stimulate the brain, impart an appreciation of what is beautiful and of real worth, inspire to the higher purposes of life, by means of culture and refinement. Life is inexhaustible, and to those who live it well—they shall not lack in abundance.

It was Marie Antoinette who once said: "Oh! what a resource amid the casualties of life must there be in a highly cultivated mind."

France and French Women

La Rochefoucauld once said: "Everything happens in France." "The French people do not do things by halves," relates another historian, and French history is rich in similar references to France. They are true—the world knows it. We turn over the pages of history and are convinced that the women of France have always been extremely influential in affairs of the state. The biography of her women teaches important history. Men and women have worked together in France. When a man dies there his wife has become so interested in the business that she usually continues to manage it the same as did her husband.

Sarah Bernhardt says the patriotism of the French woman begins when she is born, and she herself said the supreme adventure of her life was when she acted before the brave men fresh from the trenches. She says it was the greatest spiritual experience she ever had because she went into that valley of war to speak with trembling lips to the men, in the words of the great poets, and it brought home to her a realization that all these men were demonstrating the magnificent

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