

a majority of our friends. We are of the opinion that even after meeting the demands of the customs officer, and paying carriage, the total cost will not be more than 3½ cents a volume. It may be slightly less; if so, so much the better for those of our friends who would like to take advantage of our adopting the role of amateur book importer. In our next number, however, we shall doubtless be able to give definite information on this point, and we will also be able to state what books we intend ordering. In the meantime, it will, perhaps, not be a bad idea to read what some of our friends have to say of their favourite books.

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THE BOOKS I LIKE TO READ, AND WHY.

WILL. HOWARD, Age 19. Party, Aug., '89.

Books are divided into two classes—namely, those that should be read and those that should not be read. The class of books that should be read are those that inspire the mind with noble thoughts, and, instead of training one in the art of sin, raise him, as it were, far above his own surroundings, and carry him to the land of the sublime and beautiful. The class of books that should not be read are those that degrade the mind, leading one down to the very dregs of vice and misery. My favourite authors are Dickens, Scott, Longfellow.

I like Dickens for his deep plots, common-place scenes, every-day characters, and his quaint humour.

The works of Dickens that I like best are: "Oliver Twist," "Bleak House," "Dombey and Son," and "Pickwick Papers." I admire "Oliver Twist" and "Bleak House," the one for its depth of plan and pathetic scenes; the other being the most admirable story of its kind ever written. "Dombey and Son" portrays the life and character of an eccentric old gentleman who, by his obstinate and unfatherly manner, unfeelingly drove his daughter from his roof.

The most delicious of humorous works is "Pickwick Papers." Its characters, true to life, yet so laughable, are admired by the world.

Of the works of Scott that I have read, I think "Ivanhoe," "Waverly," "Marmion," and "Lady of the Lake" are the best. "Ivanhoe" and "Waverly" I like for their well-described scenes, daring characters, and the historical incidents with which they abound. I think "Marmion" and "Lady of the Lake" are his two best poems. They contain some excellent thoughts and noble expressions. I admire them not only for their poetic merit as for the excellent way in which he describes and embellishes historic scenes and events.

Longfellow for his characters. One is never tired reading his "Evangeline," "The Hanging of the Crane," and "Psalm of Life." "Evangeline" often moves me to tears when reading of those soul stirring scenes, and the misery and wanderings of those simple-minded Arcadians. I love "The Hanging of the Crane" for its every-day scenes and incidents. "The Psalm of Life" guides the soul to noble actions and great accomplishments.

That Will. Howard has caught the spirit of the poems of which he speaks so enthusiastically is very evident. We should very much like to publish each, or a portion of each, but this is impossible, "Evangeline" being a poem of over 1,500 lines, whilst "The Hanging of the Crane" also consists of many verses. But we assure our friends they will be well repaid if they follow Will's example, and give a few hours to the enjoyment of these two poems. Few sermons could awaken a quicker response in the heart of man and boy than Will's third favourite, "A Psalm of Life," which we will print in full.

A PSALM OF LIFE.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust thou returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother
Seeing, may take heart again.

Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.

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THE KIND OF BOOKS I LIKE TO READ, AND WHY.

FRED. G. BENNET, Age 21. Party, Mar., '87.

A few years ago I had no desire for reading of any kind, but during the past five or six years I have acquired a fondness for good reading. When I say "good reading," I mean such books and papers that may be useful in daily life to the occupation in which I may be engaged. My reason for reading this kind of books is because the knowledge which I may get from them may, in the future, be a help over hard places, and make the business in which I may be a success; otherwise, it may prove a failure. Another class of books I like are those which illustrate the life of the British soldier, and give an outline of the enjoyment of army life at home, their thrilling and daring experiences abroad, the dangers they encounter, the hardships they endure, and last, though not the least, the gallantry they display on the field of battle.

Among other books I like to read are those which help to prepare the soul for eternity, that give good advice, and exert a good influence over the human mind.

I like to read these books because they contain something which is of a higher and of a nobler nature than of the reading which is found in a volume of cheap novels; because they fill the mind with good thoughts, and as a man thinks so will he speak; and because if a young man is known by the company he keeps, he will also be known by the books which he reads.

Fred's reasoning is logical and conclusive, and we would commend the last sentence in his essay to any who are encouraging a taste for the pernicious style of book of which we have spoken. Fred should derive much pleasure from reading the works of Rudyard Kipling, who stands at the head of those writers who have made Tommy Atkins their theme—"Tales from the Hills," being a series of particularly interesting stories of the life, ways and enjoyments of Tommy Atkins when serving his Queen and country in India.

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THE KIND OF BOOKS I LIKE TO READ, AND WHY.

ALFRED JOLLEY, Age 20. Party, June, '90.

There is no other book that I would exchange for the Bible. The Bible is the book I like best; in it we find words of comfort in times of trouble, and promises that no other books can give. The Bible is the best guide we have. In it we have all kinds of advice—advice to young men and women, also aged men and women, to kings, magistrates, husbands, wives, children, masters, servants, and people of every class. In it we have the lives of various kinds of men and women, some for us to imitate, others for us to shun. It is a lamp for us to see our way through this world, and lead us to the better if we will only follow its precepts.

Next to the Bible I like biographies of great and noble men—men who have lived to accomplish some great and noble end, such as John Wycliffe, David Livingstone, Christopher Columbus, and a great many others. I admire them because there is something noble and grand about them that is worthy of our imitation. It does us good to know the good others have done, and makes us resolve to try and follow in their footsteps.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime;
And departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

I also like reading about pioneers especially of America; it gives us an idea of the hardships and privations the early settlers of this continent had to endure in clearing the forests and making ready to sow their seed. But for these men we would not have our fine farms and orchards. We owe a great deal to these hardy men for their labour in preparing the land for us. Many of these men are dead and forgotten, but their work remains. But there are some men living in Ontario who have cleared farms for themselves: now they and their sons are living on them. We ought to feel thankful when we think of these men and how they had to labour for a time. Now we can come on a farm and start to work without an axe.

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We are very much pleased with this month's papers. There is the right ring about them; an enthusiastic appreciation of what is best, and a very hearty detestation of what is worthless and worse than worthless. We believe that the papers we have published will have a beneficial influence upon many of our lads, and that is just what we want—mutual improvement. We hope to see further additions to our number of contributors next month. Some boys are diffident about making their first attempt at writing, let us say, a paper—it does not sound so terrible as "essay"—but let them take our word for it, that, as in many things, the anticipation is worse than the reality.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt of contributions from A. E. Young, Samuel Relf, Fred Watkinson, Albert Green, and one which came to hand in an envelope postmarked "Port Albert," but to which the writer forgot to add his name.

It will be noticed that the topic selected for June has been postponed to July. We have done this that we might select for June the same topic that Miss Code has chosen for "Our Ready-Writer's Ring," so that in our next issue we shall have a splendid opportunity of comparing the views of our boys with those of our girls.

TOPICS.

The topics of the next two months are:

For { "The season of the year I like best,
June. } and why."

For { "My favourite animal or animals."
July. } Or,
July. } "How I like to spend my leisure hours."

NOTE.—ESSAYS ON TOPICS FOR JUNE MUST BE POSTED NOT LATER THAN MAY 20TH, THOSE ON TOPICS FOR JULY NOT LATER THAN JUNE 20TH.

The following instructions must be adhered to:—

Write on one side of the paper only.

Do not add anything except your name and address to the paper on which the essay is written. If you wish to write a letter or make any remarks do so on separate paper.

When no letter accompanies an essay, the manuscript will be carried through the mail at a rate of one cent for four ounces, provided the package is not sealed. The envelope should be endorsed "MS. only," and addressed "Editor UPS AND DOWNS, 214 Farley Avenue, Toronto."

Do not send two months' papers together.

A paper or essay must not contain more than 500 words. It need not necessarily reach this limit, but it must not exceed it.

For further particulars in connection with our Improvement Society we refer our friends to their copies of our issue of March.