

books! How the mind swelled with the new ideas it drank in! How I spelled away at the hard words, conquering in my zeal whole hosts of difficulties in the art of reading! and, better than all, kindling a thirst for reading and knowledge that lured me on till I had mastered a course at college.

I do not mean to deny the need of school instruction, but the training of the school room will be robbed of half its usefulness, and multiplied greatly in its results, if children are provided with books which will interest and instruct them.

If you are too poor to buy books, set your children upon earning them for themselves. Give your boys some vacant corner of a field where they can raise a few bushels of corn, or allow them wages for any extra labour they may perform. Their work will be lightened and their souls enlarged by the efforts. So let the girls be permitted to earn a penny now and then, and when you go to town buy them good books. Better every way is such expenditure of the little sums your children will get than that of buying a sheep or a calf, or any so-called prudent investments, which engages them thus early in the mad chase for riches which makes the world so hard and selfish.—*Michigan Journal of Education.*

### 3. GOOD BOOKS A SUPPLANTER OF EVIL HABITS.

Create a taste in youth for good books, and the pleasures of literature will supply the place of those grosser pleasures that lead astray the unthinking. It is the will made strong by cultivation that enables a man to resist the cravings of those appetites whose indulgence brings death. The ignorant man must of necessity be a man of narrow views and strong prejudices; and even in questions which involve great moral principles he is quite as likely to be wrong as right. The safe man in society is the man who is competent to do his own thinking.

### 4. GOOD AND BAD BOOKS.

A flood of books, newspapers, writings of all sorts, good and bad, is spreading over the whole land, and young and old will read them. We cannot stop that, it is God's ordinance. It is more; it is God's grace and mercy that we have a free press—liberty for every man, that if he has any of God's truth to tell, he may tell it out boldly, in books or otherwise. A blessing from God! one which we should reverence for God knows it was dearly bought. Before our forefathers could buy it for us, many an honoured man left house and home to die in the battle field or on the scaffold, fighting and witnessing for the right of every man to whom God's word comes to speak God's word openly to his countrymen.

A blessing, and an awful one! for the same gate which lets in good lets in evil. The law dare not silence bad books. It dare not root up the tares lest it root up the wheat also. The men who died to buy us liberty knew that it was better to let in a thousand bad books than to shut out one good one; for a grain of God's truth will ever outweigh a ton of the devil's lies. We cannot then silence evil books, but we can turn away our eyes from them; we can take care that what we read, and what we let others read, shall be good and wholesome.

Now, if ever, we are bound to remember that books are words, and that words come either from Christ or the devil; now, if ever, are we bound to put holy and wise books, both religious and worldly, into the hands of all around us, and if, poor souls! they must needs eat of fruit of the tree of knowledge they may also eat of the fruit of the tree of life; and now, if ever, are we bound to pray to Christ the word of God, that He will raise up among us wise and holy writers, and give them words and utterance to speak to the hearts of all the message of God's covenant, and that He may confound the devil and his lies, and all that swarm of vile writers who are filling the land with trash, filth, blasphemy and covetousness; with books which teach men that our wise forefathers, who built our churches and founded our Constitution, were but ignorant knaves and fanatics, and that selfish money-making and godless licentiousness are the only true wisdom; and so turn the Divine power of words and the inestimable blessing of a free press into the devil's engine, and not Christ's the word of God. But their words shall be brought to naught.—*Kingsley.*

### 5. WHAT BOOKS SHOULD FORM A SCHOOL LIBRARY.

Every school should be furnished with a Library which should include,—

1. Books on schools and school systems, for the use of school officers and parents; and on the theory and practice of teaching, for the professional instruction of teachers.
2. Books of reference, for the use principally of teachers.
3. Books for circulation among the pupils.

4. Books for circulation among the parents and inhabitants of the District or neighbourhood.

In the arrangement and furniture of a school house, provision should be made for the Library.—*Barnard's School Architecture.*

### 6. BOOKS THAT DIE—A BOOK THAT LIVES.

The tables of literary mortality show the following appalling facts in regard to the chances of an author to secure literary fame:—Out of 1,000 published books, 600 never pay the cost of printing, etc.; 200 just pay expenses; 100 return a slight profit; and only 100 show a substantial gain. Of these 1,000 books, 650 are forgotten by the end of the year, and 150 more at the end of three years; only 50 survive seven years publicity. Of the 50,000 publications put forth in the seventeenth century, hardly more than 59 have a great reputation, and are reprinted. Of the 50,000 works published in the eighteenth century, posterity has hardly preserved more than were rescued from oblivion in the seventeenth century. Men have been writing books these three thousand years, and there are hardly more than five hundred writers, throughout the globe, who have survived the ravages of time and the forgetfulness of man. The vanity of young authors—though there are exceptions—is proverbial. Every year a thousand writers imagine that they have something to say which the world ought to hear. They hurry into print, and ask men to listen to the new oracle. But the great world goes on its way, and pays no more heed to their modest request than the ox in the fable to the fly on his horn. Only the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.—*Sunday School Teachers' Magazine.*

### 7. AFFECTION FOR BOOKS.

Books have been, at various times, the torment and delight of every one of us. I doubt if there lives a person, at all acquainted with them, who has not sometimes been obliged to treat with respect and attention books that he was almost irresistibly inclined to throw through the window; and he knows nothing of one of the sweetest pleasures of life, who has never felt real affection for a book.

Next to sweet human converse, is the company of good books. They were the friends of our childhood; long before we could read, we wandered in imagination with "Little Goody Two Shoes," watered with our tears the leafy pall of "The Babes in the Wood," and listened with round, wondering eyes, but undoubting faith, to the wonderful adventures of "Jack the Giant Killer," and "Dame Hubbard's Remarkable Dog." In those days we learned from "Nursery Hymns," and "Watt's Divine Songs for Children," through the sweet medium of mother's voice, those hymns, which, as they were the first learned, will be the last forgotten. And with the words we always remember the books, with the dog-eared leaves, and the "appropriate illustration" at the head of each hymn.

With added years came love of other books. "Jack the Giant Killer" was succeeded by "Blue Beard;" "Robin Hood" and "Robinson Crusoe" became the heroes of our dreams; history and the rudiments of science opened new paths of pleasure for our youthful feet; and "Proverbial Philosophy" and "The Lady of the Lake" lured us into the flowery fields of poetry.

These, in turn, made way for others; and so these many books, like kind, unwearied friends, have led us on from infancy to manhood and womanhood. Every year has given us new friends to love, and new love for some of the old ones, till now, when we ask ourselves what books are to us, we find the answer must be a long one—they are more than we can tell.

They are the unwearied instructors of our ignorance. Blessings on the books that have given us, from year to year, a deeper appreciation of those "treasures of knowledge," of which we can hope to gain but a glimpse in this world. Blessings on those that have been cheer to our loneliness, rest to our weariness; and a double blessing on those that have deepened our longings for the true and the beautiful, or strengthened our hearts for the battle of life.

It is an old saying, that "a man is known by the company he keeps." Companions are sure revealers of character. It is true of these silent companions. We regard with pity, that has a spice of contempt in it, those whose constant companions are the shadowy heroes and heroines of "yellow covered literature;" we instinctively hold our breath, and tread softly, with one who reads only solid, instructive works. Commend us to one whose library, however small it be, holds companions for a many-sided nature, but the soiled pages and tarnished gilding show that the best are most loved.

Some books are soulless, others seem like caskets in which the author has imprisoned part of his soul. One feels, on laying them down, that he has been holding communion with a noble nature, and has been made better, by a subtle magnetism, which is no part of the book, yet breathes from it, like the perfume from the rose. No books have more of this delightful aroma than John Ruskin's.