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## Extract From a Lecture on a 'Young Man's Books.'

(By Rev. James Stalker, D.D.,

Sometimes I think that reading is a kind of disease. In this age of popular education many possess the power of reading without knowing how to use it; and, making use of it to excess and without method, they do themselves more harm than good.

There is real danger of so over-loading the mind with the thoughts of others that it will have no thoughts of its own; and

Everyone should try to have a specialty in his reading. However many may be the subjects about which he knows something, let there be one about which he knows everything. Let him be pointed out as the man who knows such-and-such a subject. Such a specialty is like a well, dug on one's property; it is always filling; the streamlets and runnels all find their way into it; till at last it becomes a fountain of living water, spreading freshness over the whole landscape.

The second class of books consists of those which minister to delight. Books of

of last century. But, by the bounty of Heaven there have appeared in our literature, names of the greatest note which have put an entirely different complexion on the subject. The advice that ought to be given now to the young is not to abstain altogether, but to read only the best. If authors like Scott, Thackeray, Dickens, and George Eliot are read, there will be formed a taste for which inferior and worthless productions of this class will have no attraction. And with these names it is a pleasure to associate the members of the Scottish School of our own day—men and women who are doing a great work for their fellow-creatures by elevating the standard in this branch of literature.

The third class of books consists of those which minister to aspiration. I have mentioned books of one class which deal with the actual; and of another which deal with the ideal; but the books of this third class deal with what is at the same time both actual and ideal. This is the character of morality and religion. Morality is actual—man has a moral nature—but, at the same time, it is ideal, for man has to aim at a perfection which he has not attained. Religion, too, is actual—man knows intuitively that God exists.

Of course the supreme book in this department is the Bible. Some may think that it ought hardly to be mentioned in the same breath with other books; but one advantage of doing so is that the opportunity is afforded of saying that it should be read like other books. When you read an ordinary book, you do not read a few lines only at a time, but you read the book through from end to end. So the books of the Bible ought to be read. The practice—of reading a chapter once or twice a day is, indeed, an invaluable one: but, in addition, you would now and then—say, in the quietness of a Sabbath evening—read an entire book at a stretch, it would give you a new conception of the Bible: you would find that each book is a great discussion of a great subject; and the single chapters and verses would assume entirely new shapes in the light of the whole.—Y. M. C. A. Bee-Hive.



THE REV. DR. STALKER, A GREAT FRIEND OF Y.M.C.A.'S.

we cannot be too reminded that the most valuable service which the thoughts of others can do, is to make us think our own. One thought struck out of the substance of our own mind, is worth ten imbibed from the minds of others.

Books are of three kinds. The first class of books are those which minister to instruction. These deal with the actual. They inform us of the facts of the world in which we live. They are apt to be dry; yet they are indispensable; and our reading will not do us much good unless it includes a fair proportion of them. He is a happy man who has trained himself to read literature of this kind without fatigue.

Such books are the foundation stones of culture. Foundation stones are solid and massive; they may be without form or comeliness.

the class first mentioned deal with the actual, but these deal with the ideal. They do not supply facts about the world in which we live, but create an ideal world into which they transport the delighted reader. They are productions of the imagination; and the imagination is a faculty by which man takes the actual world to pieces and reconstructs it on a plan of his own, expanding here, contracting there, and embellishing everywhere.

I have said that the poets hold the keys of this romantic world; but in our day the novelists may still more truly be said to do so; for fiction is by far the most popular form of literature. It used to be a question with serious and Christian people whether books of this kind should be read at all; and at this no one will wonder who knows anything of the fiction

## Buonasera, and How he was Won.

(By H. B. Gibbud, Springfield, Mass.)

It was when I was Superintendent of the Florence Mission in New York.

It was customary for me, just before the service, to stand at the door and invite the passers-by into the meeting. As I stood there one night, I saw an Italian coming down the street. My first thought was, there is no use asking him in, probably he cannot speak English. On second thought I made up my mind to ask him, anyway.

I only knew one word in Italian, that was 'Buonasera,' which means 'Good-evening.' I have found out if we use what we have, God will give us more. So when he came up I said 'Buonasera,' he said 'Buonasera,' and grasped my extended hand, and began to jabber away at a great rate in Italian. I could not understand.