

Reading is to the mind an activity very similar to what motion or exercise secures to the body. Health and vigour to the human frame are secured and sustained by exercise. Health and morals in the mind are fostered and established by good literature.

Literature may be subdivided into two distinct branches. First is the literature of knowledge whose employment is to instruct. It communicates with or trains the intellect. Second is the literature of power whose office is an appeal to motives. It arouses sympathy, delight, detestation or anger. The literature of knowledge includes all selections whose main aim is the information to be imparted, beginning for the little children with nature and industrial stories and ending with text-books on science, grammar, etc., for the advanced pupils. The literature of power comprises written discourses whose chief endeavour is the development of the mental processes which result in the formation of high ideals of character, commencing for the primary grades with stories on the cardinal and complementary virtues and closing with history and fiction for the children of maturer growth.

There are few habits formed during school days that wield a greater and more abiding influence upon a child's character than that of memorizing good poetry. Rhyme and rhythm have great effect upon the mental processes in young children. This practice of memorization, continued through school life, tends to provide food for reflection and intellectual enjoyment during later years as well as aiding considerably in the acquisition of an extensive vocabulary so necessary to complete culture. Expressive language crystallized into poetry remains intact in the memory much more distinctly than the same forceful remarks in prose. Nor should the custom of committing good prose to memory be omitted. The great Ruskin, whose marvellous literary productions surpass in vocabulary and elegance of diction any writer of late date, traced all his greatness to the selections from Holy Writ learned at his mother's knee.

There are two conspicuous indications of the unfolding intellect which should greatly concern teachers in all grades of schools—one referring to language, the other belonging to literature. The growth of power in using correct and graceful English, and the increase of ability to appreciate the beauty and the charm of the best reading produced by our authors. Neither should the stimulation of the imagination, especially of the very little pupils, be neglected. The fairy tale has a place beside the stories of rectitude and fortitude. "A man is known by the company he keeps"—a man's company is shown by the language he uses. The language a man uses is largely influenced by his choice of reading, so if we desire a high standard of future citizenship we must see to it that from earliest school days the little children are partakers of the incalculable benefits of literature of the highest worth.

"The true university of these days is a collection of books."—*Carlyle*.