

save what is necessary to enable them to pass a coming examination.

Third on the list I would place *Histories and Travels*, for it is chiefly through them that we are enabled to profit by the mistakes and inexperience of other people. Through *History* we are able to study the cause of the growth and decay of nations, the value of different forms of government in different circumstances and times; and of the general changes which have advanced the greater part of the world from a barbarous to a highly civilized state. This knowledge will enable us better to discharge our duties as citizens, to understand affairs of state, and to give a more intelligent vote if we have one. From *Travels* we should learn the manners and customs of people in other parts of the world, their peculiarities and the cause of these, their political institutions, their works of art, and, in fact, everything pertaining to them.

Fourth will come *Poetry*, chiefly valuable for its refining influences, for its turning our minds from merely practical work and material things, to higher, nobler, and more ideal thoughts and actions, and for its power as a cultivator of the imagination. Commence with the best poets, and when you have read all their works it will be time to take those which have attained but second-rate fame. Begin with *Shakspeare*, the "Immortal Bard of Avon;" and if a stranger to his writings, you will have before you a work which will give you matter for study for a long time, and matter, too, which will well, richly repay your study. If you are already acquainted with his works, you will find that every new reading discloses fresh beauties and new ideas, and makes you wonder more and more at the universality of his genius. From *Shakspeare* you can pass to *Milton*, and from *Milton* to others hardly less inspired, drink-

ing deeply of poetic truths and gaining an acquaintance with the choicest and most elegant English.

Next come *Biographies*, which are useful as enabling us to study the lives of great and good men, the ways in which they gained success, the nobility of their character, and their trials and struggles, in order that when we are weary we may gain strength from the record of their triumphs.

Last, but not altogether least, come works of *Fiction*. A paper was read last year before the *Wentworth Teachers' Association*, and was printed in the *EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY*, in which the writer strongly advised young teachers not to read novels. I hope, therefore, I may be pardoned if I spend a few moments in explaining why I give them a place in a teacher's reading. Novel-reading has become so general that a large number of books of absolutely worthless character have been written, and are, I am sorry to say, read by a great many. This fact has caused many people to denounce the reading of all works of fiction, not only as a waste of time, but as likely to injure one in mind and morals. This would depend altogether on the sort of novels read. The chief objection, however, which the writer of the article referred to advanced, was, that a work the size of an average novel would take too much of a teacher's time from study. Now, I hold quite a contrary opinion. A teacher who has a moderately-sized school comes home after a fair day's work and commences studying. Can he study all evening, go back the next day and do another good day's work, and continue doing so? I believe not; at least the majority cannot. The work at night being so much like that during the day, his mind becomes weary, and he either gives up studying and goes wandering aimlessly round the section; or he continues his studying, his