

TAKE TIME TO READ.

Pause, O youth or maiden, before you accustom your lips to this fatal formula: "I have no time to read." You have all the time which, for you, exists, and it is abundant. What are you doing with it—with your leisure? Mainly gossiping. Our modern malady is gregariousness. We must be in company chattering.

We are becoming in this matter very like the Athenians, but worse. Asked if he has read a book, a man usually says, "No, I have no time for books, but I have read a review of it in *The Literary Ragbag*. Now, what is a review in *The Literary Ragbag*? It is not a criticism. It contains a photograph of the author, a description of his "early struggles," an estimate of his income, an account of his home, wife, dogs and cats, and a comment on his favorite amusements. Why has every one time to read all these futilities about the writers of books, while not one person in a thousand has time to read the books of the writers?

No more time is needed to read masterpieces than to read the last new novel. It is not time, but "the mind to it," that is lacking. Do not dawdle and put off, but begin upon something good at once. I may freely admit that the study of Bacon and Mill requires seclusion and earnest application, but many good books, say Boswell's "Life of Johnson," or the Doctor's own "Lives of the Poets," are at least as easy reading as the new novel, and much more diverting than most new novels. You make acquaintance with such wits and charming characters as you do not, unless you are very fortunate, meet every day.—*Andrew Lang.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S DYING CONFIDENCE.

Dr. McAll, of Manchester, eminent in piety as well as talents, rested on the same simple truth, and expressed himself in almost the same words as the Highland lad. Shortly before his death, he was asked by Mr. Fletcher, of Manchester, if the gospel he had preached to others now occupied his thoughts, and was dear to his heart. "Yes," he said, with a smile, "its very core; I cannot now trouble myself with its envelopements." On another occasion he addressed, with much delicacy, his medical men, and said, "Gentlemen, I am no fanatic; rather I have been too much of a specialist; and I wish to say this—I am a great sinner; but my trust is in Jesus Christ, and what he has done and suffered for sinners. Upon this, as the foundation of my hope, I can confidently rely, now that I am sinking into eternity."

BE ORIGINAL.

Nothing does more toward making a man a leader among men than being original. Many who are given credit for being scholars have only absorbed the thoughts of others, and have few opinions of their own. The student who places all stress upon memory, and in recitations depends entirely upon recalling what the author says, only develops the one power instead of all. Even what the student calls bluffing, though not to be commended when resorted to as a result of indolence, has far better results in bringing out original thought and cultivating this side of the student's nature than is generally given credit.

It is a common fault of young writers to have a lack of confidence in their own thoughts, always fearing that they might

say something that would not be in agreement with what had already been written by another. If this sentiment were always to rule, there would be no such thing as progress. It is only that which is original with the individual that adds to the fund already acquired; and the man that can only repeat the thoughts of others contributes nothing to the world. Development should be the first purpose of education, and not absorption.—*Otterbein Agis.*

TRAVELLING BACKWARD.

The country wagon was filled, and the small boy of the party had ensconced himself contentedly in the back of the vehicle, with his brown feet hanging out over the dusty road. By and by the others began to comment on various objects of interest as they came into view—the new house on the hill, the apple orchard all in bloom, and a tiny lake in a meadow. The small boy grew discontented.

"I don't see any of the nice things till we've gone past 'em," he complained.

Yet many persons travel through life in that way, always facing backward. For the things that are coming, they have neither faith nor ambition; for the things that are present, they have little interest and scant praise; some past joy, grief, or regret holds them fast. There are no days like the old days, no blessings like those that have been left behind, and all the pleasantness of the road is lost until it is receding in the distance. Facing backward may not be a matter of deliberate choice, but it certainly is a matter of habit. Since we needs must journey forward, the only wise and comfortable method is to face the way we are going, and enjoy as we may what pleasantness it brings.—*Epsworth Herald.*

THE MOTHER'S HAND.

Your mother, who rocked and lulled the family brood until they took wing for other nests and never appreciated what you had done and suffered for them, will yet be rewarded. Your hand was well favored when you were young, and it was a beautiful hand, so well-rounded, so graceful that many admired and eulogized it, but hard work calloused it, and twisted it, and self-sacrificing toil for others paled it, and many household griefs thinned it, and the ring which went on only with a push at the marriage altar now is too large, and falls off, and again and again you have lost it. Poor hand! Weary hand! Worn-out hand! But God will reconstruct it, re-animate it, re-adorn it, and all heaven will know the story of that hand. What fallen ones it lifted up! What tears it wiped away! What wounds it bandaged! What lighthouses it kindled! What storm-tossed ships it brought into the pearl-beached harbor! Roll on, everlasting rest, for all the toiling and misunderstood and suffering and weary children of God, and know right well that to join your hand, at last emancipated from the struggle, will be the soft hand, the gentle hand, the triumphant hand of him who wipeth away all tears from all faces.—*Dr. Talmage.*

The non-observant man goes through the forest and sees no firewood. Some observant men go through the forest and see nothing but firewood.

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them."

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HOW TO TELL.

"Pleasure is not life's business." Certainly not. But man cannot work all the time. He requires recreation. His Creator intended he should have it. With some persons, however, a very perplexing question is: "What amusement is permissible?" Possibly the following statement may help to solve the problem. Any pastime is legitimate, Christian, which makes

- (1) The body more healthy;
- (2) The mind wiser;
- (3) The heart happier;
- (4) The soul purer, more Christ-like.

For well may it be said, that no amusement, pastime, recreation is harmless, which brings reproach on the holy name of God; which does despite to our higher, better natures; which hinders the kingdom of Jesus from marching on to the conquest of the world.—*Albert C. Applegarth, Ph.D.*

J. Hudson Taylor tells of a young Christian who had received Christ as his Saviour, but who said to the missionary that he would wait until he learned more about him before making a public confession. "Well," said Mr. Taylor, "I have a question to ask you. When you light a candle, do you light it to make the candle more comfortable?" "Certainly not," said he; "but in order that it may give more light." When it is half burnt down, do you expect that it will become useful?" "No, as soon as I light it." "Very well," he said, "go thou and do likewise; begin at once."

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