

words, it develops the character. Especially is this true in the younger minds.

Then it is a very important subject for students and young people in general to consider, what shall I read? There are few people who never read—I mean those who can lay claim to being educated, though it is a lamentable fact many read a very small part of what they should, for no one can be full and strong intellectually without bringing himself into intimacy with standard literature. Reading of low books not only fails to build up and develop, but it tears down what may have been builded up by good literature.

* * *

Charles F. Dean: Good literature is indeed an important factor in the civilization of man. It broadens his views, strengthens his understanding, cultivates his genius, enlarges his thinking powers, and raises his social and moral standard. It is one of the most important parts of his education, and it is as essential to the intelligent mind as food is to the body.

Since the society of the day depends largely upon literature, why not have good literature? Why not impress upon the minds of our young people who are inclined towards trashy novels, frivolous love stories, detective tales that keep the mind in a highly excited pitch until the fair lady is rescued and the villain punished, that their time could be much better employed in the perusal of some standard work or the reading of some good magazine?

You say that what is called good literature does not interest you,—it seems dull and spiritless to you, in fact you really fall asleep over it; but this is the result of the fact that you have been corrupting your mind with the base and intoxicating literature which is found in

dime novels. You will find that if you cultivate the habit by reading good literature, even if it does not entertain you at first, you will soon be able to understand it. Then you will be able really to enjoy it; and on picking up that novel which had seemed so intensely interesting not long ago, you will wonder how it even entertained your mind with its exaggerated absurdities.

When you read good literature you should read it carefully and try to understand it thoroughly, for one book read carefully and thoroughly understood is better than one hundred read and not understood.

* * *

Sol Gordon: During all the time which has passed from the dark ages up to the present time, there has been nothing to which the civilized world can look upon with more pride than its advancement in good literature.

Good literature is a standard, we might say, by which to judge the good and evil which is done in this world. The good which good literature does is comparable to nothing. If good literature were read a little more and the low classes of novels abolished, we should have less crime in this great world, but five and ten-cent novels are a curse to a path that is good and noble to one that is disgraceful.

Many young men who start out in their various paths of life are too often led astray by low and trashy novels, while, if instead of reading these stories of crime, they had read some good author's works, their whole life would have been changed. Good books often raise one's drooping spirits, and when you are lonely and disheartened a good book will make your frown turn to a smile, while if you read some blood-and-thunder story you would surely have been tempted to do wrong.