

ket the thousands upon thousands of trashy books which are passed to the general public annually is proof enough of the mental status of our people, and, look at the matter as leniently as one may, stands as an indictment against our readers.

Why any person should wish to spend time and money on books which offer nothing worth while, which degrade and undermine the moral fabric rather than strengthen and upbuild it, is a question away beyond us. Read books that deal with real subjects—not that which is unreal, non-existent and sentimental. The test of a good book lies in the impression it makes on the mind and how lasting is that impression. When a book gives its reader a good thought which continues to abide in the mind, then we may conclude that the book is of value.

We learn from many things in life—mainly from what we read and what we are told. Those with whom we may converse, who may tell us much of value, will not always be at hand when we wish to consult them, but there is the ever-handly volume to which we may turn at any time and learn the things which we seek to know. In our judgment a well-read man is not the one who has read the greatest number of books, but he who has read the best books and retained the fine thoughts and ideas thus acquired. Such a person is, indeed, well-read. Of a certain class of books it can truly be said that the more one may read the worse off he will be. This may be proved by the fact that there is nothing worth remembering, hence no effort is put forth to retain what we have read—we forget it all as soon as possible. The more of such that we read the more we forget. Soon we make a business of forgetting and find we have lost the mental powers to remember the things which are of value to us. Habits are all mental and it is easy to acquire the habit of forgetting, and such a habit cannot but weaken the mind.

Every phase of human thought is somewhere to be found in a book—everything, we declare, from trigonometry to travel. Did it ever occur to the reader that he can sit down with a good book and within a few hours make a tour of the world? That where the descriptive power of the writer is equal to what it should be his reader will feel that he is seeing just what the writer saw? That his sensations will be almost as real as though he were making said tour, and—he will forget that he is merely a reader? Such a book, by such a writer, is worth thousands of the volumes devoted first and last to the abnormal tastes and cravings of effete and jaded so-called society “big-bugs,” etc. Choose good books and then read them, making an effort to retain the things they teach.