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How To Read

What To Read

In order to cultivate the mind it is necessary to read, but one must read with a purpose. Random reading will not produce the results most desirable. In order to cultivate the mind to the greatest possible extent a man or woman must be a student always and discriminate in the books they read. In regard to this matter a recent issue of the Oregonian contained the following excerpt which merits the serious consideration of all readers, young and old:

It is to be feared that the worship of Shakespeare, Milton, Gibbon and their compeers has done much harm in checking the reading habit. People in general cannot enjoy these authors. To read them is a task unless the mind has been prepared for it by long training in the appreciation of style, sublime thought and intricate argument. Here and there an exceptional person is born to read such authors with pleasure, but not the common man. If he reads at all it must be something else. Still, when he asks for advice about buying books he is told to begin with *The Decline and Fall* and

follow that up with *Paradise Lost*. Now this is a calamity. He ought to be told to begin with some author of his own generation who is aglow with the ideas of the times.

Literature is a living thing. Each generation produces its own books, just as each spring produces its own flowers. The blossoms of this May are not so beautiful, perhaps, as those of the Mays which Dante saw on the hills of Florence, but they are our own, and we must take the best of them. For everybody but exceptional persons the rule ought to be to begin by reading living authors and gradually work back to the past. How much about living writers is taught in the schools? What do pupils, or teachers, either, know about the men who are thinking the thoughts of our day and, therefore, moulding the world for the future?

The beneficiary is never the one who complains of the cost of life insurance.

It is almost as bad to support a friend for office as it is to run yourself.

You never learn what church some men belong to until their funerals occur.