

HEART MATTERS

NON SCHOLÆ SED VITÆ

Libraries of Hope Newsletter



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“...YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT MESS TO START RE-BUILDING.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In line with one of this month’s topic choices, a new podcast is now available where I share a wonderful book with you to help you teach your child-ren about our wonderful neighbors to the East in China. The author--a teacher--wrote it for students in the 4th to 8th grades, but I suggest reading for yourself first to gain your own understanding. Look for [Podcast #195](#): The Pageant of Chinese History.

--Here are the four new books in our store for Month 2:

My World Story Book continues to offer stories from Arthur Mee’s 1000 Heroes. This month, learn about men and women from Spain and Holland.

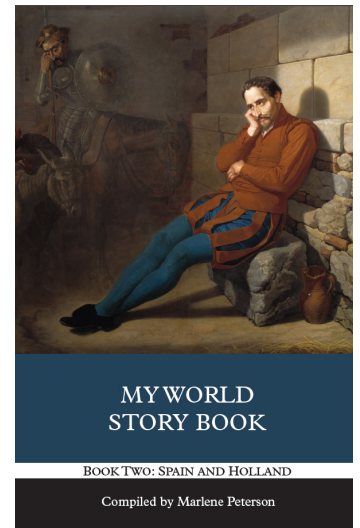
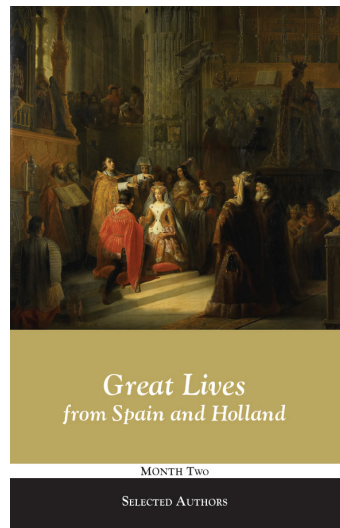
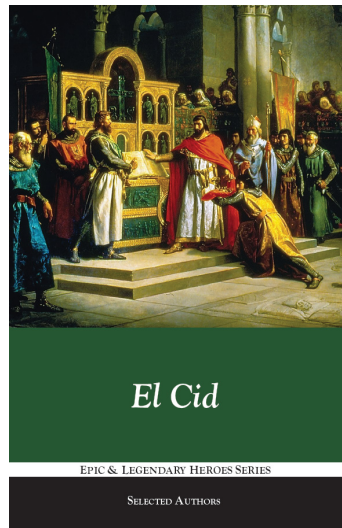
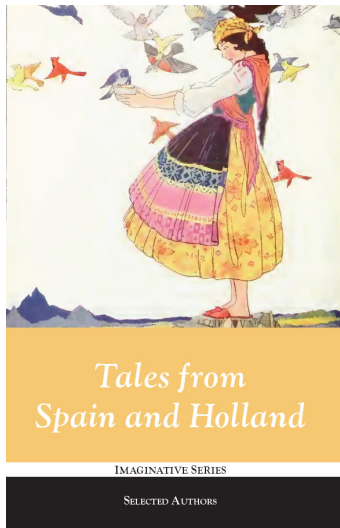
Great Lives--revised by Rotation. There weren’t a lot of lives in the original series from Holland and Spain--especially from Spain --so I added stories from Charles Morris’ Historical Tales from Spain.

Imaginative Tales--Folk and Fairy tales from Holland and Spain from a variety of books.

Epic and Legendary Heroes: El Cid,



(Announcements cont.) of course! The great legendary hero of Spain who fought for the Christians and then fought for the Muslims and then established a kingdom where they lived side by side together, which obviously didn't last. I have wondered why it has been so difficult to find Art and Imaginative tales and Music from Spain to share with you—I think it's because they spent all their energies driving the Moors out of Spain, who were evidently more cultured and civilized than they were at the time, and then when they finally drove them out, they were too busy looking everywhere for gold. Spain has raised lots of questions in my own mind that I'm still learning lessons about. Part of the challenge is that Spain was hated for so long, it's difficult to find positive things to read about her in the stories, especially in the literature from the era I draw from. It just means digging a little deeper...which I fully want to do. After all, Spain did give the world the incomparable Cervantes. And he is a true gift!



MARLENE'S MUSINGS

--I am loving the pictures and ideas you are sharing from your Month 1 studies! If you remember to add hashtags, i.e., #wehmonth1 or #wehscandinavia, in the future, people in the group can easily search for ideas.

It may just look like fun to cook food and make crafts, but what you are doing is creating pleasant associations and familiarity with these countries, necessary for planting a desire to want to learn more. Depth of understanding will come with time as you keep layering.

If you listened to the China podcast I posted a couple of days ago, the author talked about how we are like one big family who has been separated for years and we are now having a big family reunion where each family is sharing their stories. Why does that matter? Because 'to know you is to love you' and we need that as our world is shrinking. But maybe even more important is that we can learn lessons from each other moving forward so that maybe, just maybe, we can create that world seen by sages and prophets--a world of harmony and love with no poor amongst us.

It likely can't happen in one generation. But we can certainly be part of the foundation and a simple craft may be part of the stones we build with. By small and simple means....

--I had to laugh at myself. I was just given a dose of my own medicine.

As part of my harp therapy training, my teacher gave me a LONG list of books to read, well, rather to choose from. There are more books than I could ever hope to get through, even though I want to read them all! In each Module, there is 1 or 2 that we are required to read, and then we choose from the list.

After looking through the list and feeling overwhelmed, guess what I actually asked my teacher the next morning? "So..... are there a few books that really stand out in your mind that I should start with from the list?"

And guess what she said! "You are going to be drawn to different books than me. As you read the books I suggested,

(Marlene's Musings cont.) they are going to spark interest in other books. Just follow where your heart leads you.”

It sounded vaguely familiar...

--I have been thinking on a comment made by a member of this group who said WEH is so hard to do because it is so confusing. I've had numerous people offer to help me 'systemize' it so that it's easier to manage. One member told me all her friends were giving up and just going back to curriculum because they just can't get it.

I understand.

It can feel confusing because I can't lay out the steps for you. In fact, I can't even teach it directly. Matters of the heart can never be taught directly.

This morning as I was thinking about it, the thought came that this is like renovating a house. In the beginning, you have to knock out walls and pull up the rugs and everything is a mess. And you have to bring in new materials and supplies. But you have to go through that mess to start re-building.

If you are in that 'messy' phase, think of it that way. The mess won't be there forever, but it's a necessary step. A little here, and a little there you will start to build something new and hopefully, in the end, it will look just like your dream home.



Art credit: A Spring Day by Friedrich Kallmorgen

Don't give up. Just keep moving forward.

--In going through Arthur Mee's 1000 Heroes looking for stories for future volumes of My World Story Book, I found myself stopping to ponder this little thought from the story of King Edward of England:

“He was like the English people of that time in having no answer to give to the difficulties of the present. He had not the capacity of foresight to devise a policy of his own, and he knew it. He turned to what was within his power. If he could not direct the nation's destinies, if he could not help his people in their present distress, he might leave behind him a legacy of HOPE to support them in the dark days to come.

“This dreamer saw them coming and thought if he could not transform the national life nor perceive how it was to be remoulded, yet when men's hearts should fail them he would give them some HOPE, some consolation to which they might turn in their days of need.”

(continued on next page)

(*Marlene's Musings cont.*) I think that struck a responsive chord because those were the feelings in my own heart when Libraries of HOPE was created. If your families gain nothing else from what I offer, my greatest desire is that the books and stories will have planted HOPE in your hearts. Because as long as there is hope, we will keep moving forward. And if we keep moving forward, eventually spring will come because Spring ALWAYS follows winter.

--Today I had my first full day of training towards certification as a harp therapist and I copied these gems from my teacher that very much apply to our work here in WEH:

"This is a journey of heart and soul.

"Perfection and freedom from challenges are not the goals here...

"Healing does not take place in the fast lane.

"We have to fill ourselves before we can help another.

"You are there to make a beautiful sound. The rest just happens.

"You are there to soothe, comfort and bring joy.

"The greatest healing force on the planet is LOVE with all its healing arms.

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak." --William Congreve

"Just when the butterfly thought the world was over, he became a butterfly.

"We can freak ourselves out with fear--pause, breathe, live in the moment." In fact, she said taking 3 mindful breaths in the middle of anything--in an argument or in a moment of fear or anxiety--will work wonders.

She defines music as organized sounds and silences, and often the silences play the more important role. These are the breaths. I see them also as the white spaces between the lines that Mr. Rogers talked about.

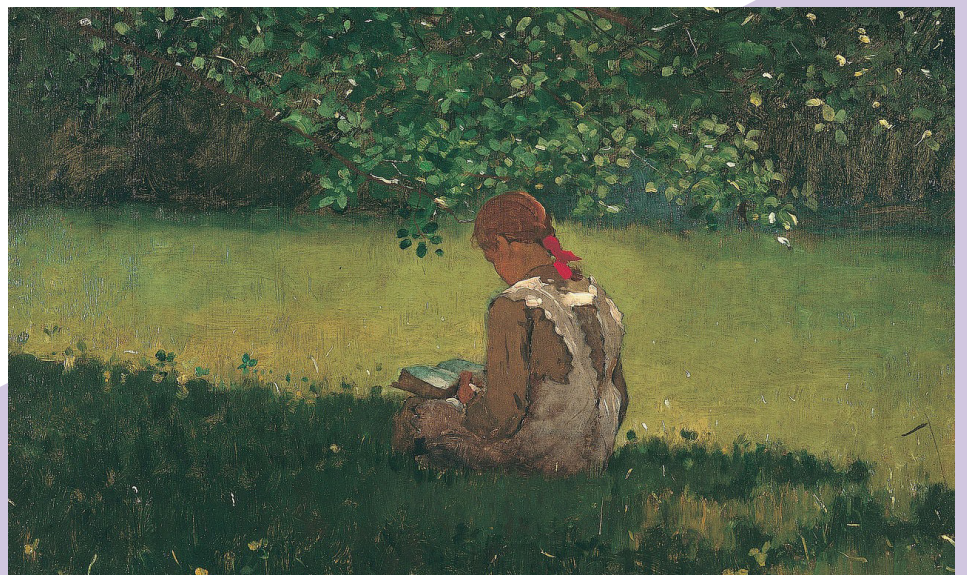
"Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?" — Henry David Thoreau

It made me wonder at the miracle that could take place if, in those moments when we breathe, we look deep into, not just through, our children's eyes.

"The best books will prove solace in solitude, joy amid sorrow, wealth in poverty, and gladness even in life's darkest gloom. Such a pure, refined, and cultivated taste will be a possession which the world cannot give nor take away."

--C.E. Sargent

Art credit: Reading by the Brook by Winslow Homer





“NOTHING IS SMALL TO
THE MIND OF AN ORIGINAL
OBSERVER.”

--From the story of Erasmus Darwin,
grandfather of Charles

Art credit: Der Vlinders by Allebe

WEH IN ACTION

--**First time for us joining** the rotation! I've been dipping my toes into Well-Educated Heart for three years now. We enjoyed listening to the audio of Christopher Columbus and reading poems about him. We are excited to learn about the stars he used to navigate and using a compass. I made a notebook page and my 6-year-old son said, "I want to do that too mom!" He was not satisfied with his first attempt and asked for assistance. I encouraged him to do it again, that it would be easier the 2nd time and he would learn more by doing it on his own...he even got creative and added some of his own details! #notebooking #wehmonth1

P.S. I've learned more by doing than by thinking...I'm going to keep applying layer by layer.

--**Japan Week!** Note: The only thing I planned in advance was the books, origami and the candy. Everything else just falls into place. The Enrichment section is your friend! My daughter goes to public school, so I sent things in her lunch box so she could feel like she was participating. She also brought Origami to school which was a huge hit with the kids there!

Mon- Made Hibachi Chicken and Fried Rice, listened to traditional Japanese music, did Origami, read some poems from Little Pictures of Japan. Glued a "stamp" in our passports.

Tue- Drew Japan's flag in our passports, went to the Asian market to buy Yakisoba noodles, Pocky sticks, Hi-Chews, and Sweet Rice Cake. Read "A Pair of Red Clogs." Watched a video on bento lunches for kids and made our own cheapo version.

Wed- Made Tamagoyaki. Read from "Fairy Tales told in Japan."

Thu- Made Miso Soup. Went on a hike.

Fri- Glued in pictures in our passports. (Next week we will only do the stamp and flag and call it good. Sometimes our grand ideas don't go over as well with kids - just cut back or try something else).

--**Yesterday, my 7th-grade** daughter who is dyslexic and was a late convert to reading, was telling us all about how rough a place the Australian colony was. I put one of Marlene's Australia Middle School suggested reads on her tablet and said I encourage you to read this by the end of the month. I wasn't sure she would. For our morning time I have been reading a couple Australian folktales and we looked at some pictures of Australian birds yesterday. We also watched The Man From Snowy River for family movie night last week. She has been devouring that book (hooray for Internet Archive having a listening feature!) and yesterday was telling us all about how tough life was

(WEH in Action cont.) in the Australian colony. I was so impressed with how much she knew! Then, last night during family scripture study, someone brought up Corrie Ten Boom and Poland. We talked about being imprisoned. Again, she began telling us so many things about the people who were relocated to the Russian Steppe in Siberia, which she had learned from her reading during Month 10.

I could have taught her all about Australia and Russia and she would only have retained a fraction of what she has learned through heart-based learning and living books.

This truly is a beautiful way to learn—and it WORKS!!!

--**This has been something** I'm trying to remind myself this school year as we transition to a fully immersed WEH lifestyle for our home school. It's a belief I have had in principle, but something I haven't been living out very well with my children. In past years, I have let the anxiety of gaps, being on track/at grade level, and the general

feeling that we are accomplishing something (think to-do lists, moving through curricula, and other visible markers of academic progress) lead my day to day homeschool planning. This year I've decided to let go and let God. It takes more faith than I feel I have, and some days I feel like I'm stepping into the dark, but I'm not giving up!! I believe the fruits that will grow from sowing heart seeds and nurturing my children's soils will be abundant, delicious and beautiful. It may feel slower. It may seem unproductive and inefficient. It may seem a lost cause to many and sometimes myself. It may go against cultural norms and I may be misunderstood. I'm ok with that. Greatness is not usually built from following norms and doing what the masses are doing. And in a world where men's hearts are failing them and sorrow abounds, we are seeking joy and light and truth. So if you're feeling scared to let some things go so you can add better things in, you are not alone!! But I hope you'll join in tending hearts and slow growing trees as much or as little as you can!

--**Yesterday we learned** about Viking long boats. The kids made Lego long boats while I finished up Leif the Lucky by Eric YouTube. We enjoyed our nature walk. Today we learned about long houses, then made some with frosting and pretzels. I read about vikings. We listened to Elfwyns Saga on Youtube.

--**We are loving learning** about India. We learned about Menhi and made "Henna Hand" cookies. The kids did puzzles while I read from "Gandhi, fighter without a sword." They chose what animals in India they want to learn more about.

--**We are learning about** India. We read an Indian folk tale about an elephant and then made a fun elephant craft. I used food coloring to dye salt so we could make rangoli (while I read Ghandi: Fighter Without a Sword.) We also wrote about Gond Painting (we did the art yesterday) and put it in our notebooks.

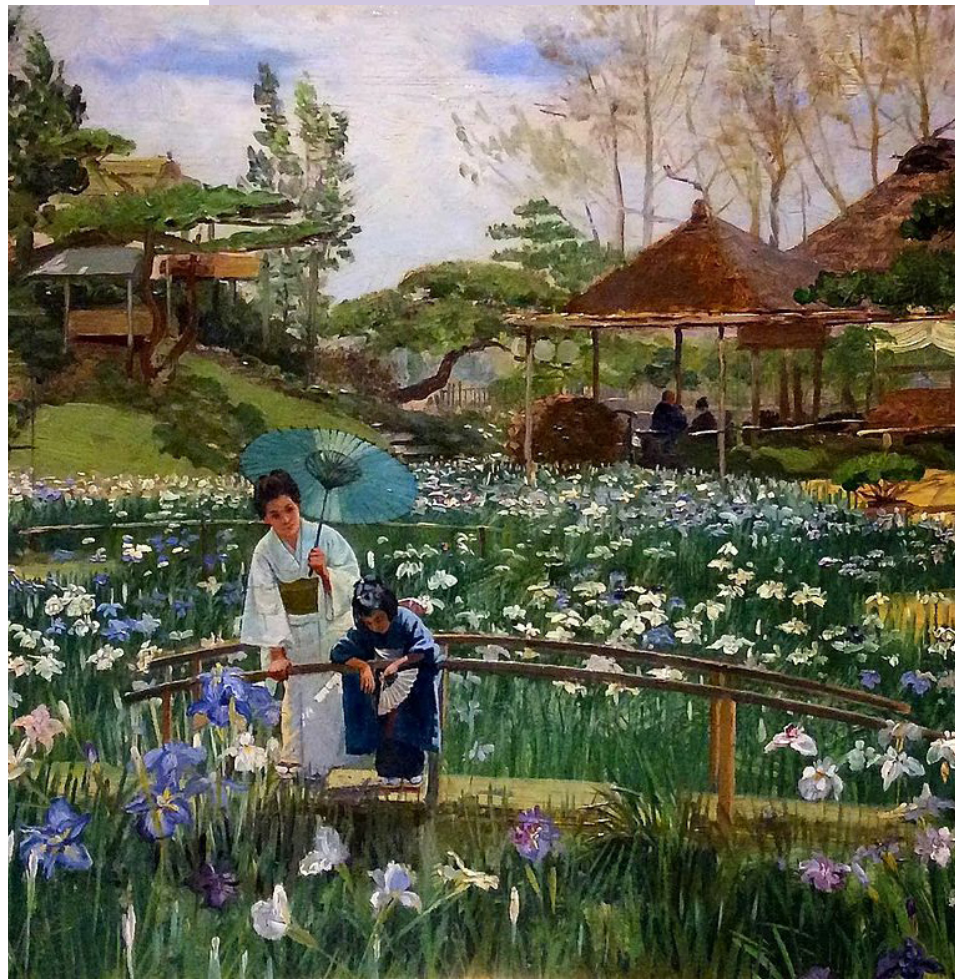
--**I have been thinking** about what it means to be part of Mother's of Influence and how to "catch the



WHEN A FLOWER
DOESN'T BLOOM,
YOU FIX THE
ENVIRONMENT IN
WHICH IT GROWS,
NOT THE FLOWER.”

--Alexander Den Heijer

Art credit: The Iris Flowers of Hori Kiri, Tokio
by Theodore Wores



(*WEH in Action cont.*) vision.”

This week I was helping my 11-year-old son with an assignment he had on forgiveness. He was having a hard time connecting to the topic, despite having a few prompts and quotes he could copy and use. It was brought to my memory the story of the Amish people who forgave the shooter who had so tragically killed their children in a one-room school house in rural Pennsylvania about 15 years ago. I shared with him what I remembered, and looked up more information to give some specific examples of forgiveness. In doing this, I found an article written 10 years after it happened that shared what had transpired between the Amish people and the mother of the shooter. As I shared examples, I wept. My son teared up. And my other son, who was working on something completely different, listened intently and responded softly, “Mom, that is so beautiful.”

It really was! It lead me to spend time pondering the stories they shared and sparked in me a desire to know more. I have spent time thinking on this situation, and about connection. In the hours after the tragedy, the Amish people immediately went to find the mother of the shooter and let her know they forgave her son and they didn't hold any grudges against her or her husband. When it was time for this man's funeral, the Amish showed up and stood together to block out the media. The mother, reached out and extended an invitation to the Amish community to come to a picnic at her home, which has turned into an annual event. This mother has also stepped in to care for one of the girls who was permanently handicapped because of the incident, rocking and singing to the little girl who lives this way because of the choices of her son.

Both sides continue to love and serve--cleaning house for each other in times of need, or dropping off Christmas cards and singing Christmas carols. Tragedy for all--and yet so much love and friendship! Neither side could have ever imagined the connection they would form, but now they can't imagine life without it.

In contemplating this story, it actually lead to a conversation about a topic we were studying in the rotation that week, which lead to talking about the times in history where people have pushed others out and trampled on their freedoms and what it looks like to forgive and to ask forgiveness.

(WEH in Action cont.) One thing lead to another and we found ourselves discussing Asia, and listening to music--where we discovered an instrument we had never seen. It was fascinating and magical! Everyone became so excited to study Asia next week, despite having other plans originally. It was just one spark that lead to another and then another--and the whole experience was full of feeling and emotion, learning and growth--connection.

Yes, connection.

I think that is so much what having a well-educated heart is about. Connection. Connection within topics--our connection to them, our connection with our children. We begin to change as we connect these learning opportunities to other things and I have seen how it sparks in us an excitement to recognize truths, to remember, and to apply them to our life in ways that help us desire to become better.

But this connection is not just with information. God wants us to take our tragedies and triumphs, and share them with others in ways that will bring us closer together. He longs to use our talents and abilities to bless others. For me, THIS is one reason Mother's of Influence has become so important for me. Seeing others make their own connections inspires me to find connections within my own home and life experiences.

It may feel we can do this alone--the truth is you can! You can focus solely on educating your heart and worrying about your own sphere. But it is when we form meaningful bonds with one another that has made the most difference to me. The unexpected friendships and sweet connections are so special. I really do believe God is using us to link arms, one with another, as we stand together--Mothers of Influence, Daughters of God--to spread goodness and light as we honor our divine roles and help our children better see who they are.

Just as was shared in the story about the Amish-- I could never have imagined the connections that could form with my children or with other Mother's who are striving to catch the vision, but now I can't imagine life without it.

WEH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

Why Read Classic Children's Literature--Free course from Hillsdale College ([YouTube](#))

Pakistani girl saved by "Little Women" ([Article](#))

What Charlotte Mason taught about not coming between the book and the child ([YouTube](#))



**"THE MORE SLOWLY
TREES GROW AT FIRST,
THE SOUNDER THEY ARE
AT THE CORE, AND I THINK
THE SAME IS TRUE OF
HUMAN BEINGS."**

--Henry David Thoreau

Art credit: The Great Beech at Vallo
by Hans Ole Brasen

MOI MINUTE

Are you ready to join the September Catch the Vision Challenge Group? You'll be amazed at the effect such a small and simple effort can have on your heart and understanding.

Here's how it works:

- Get your hands on a copy of the WEH Catch the Vision Reference Library - there are downloads or physical copies at the link below.
- Read anything you like - try to read something everyday. (Really! You don't have to go in order - in fact, it's more fun to just let your heart guide you that day)
- Come back to this thread as often as you can and share something you discovered ... what touched your heart?

That's it! There's no ahead or behind, no schedule to follow. You decide what you're able to do each day and how often you can share.

Learn more about the Catch the Vision challenge and find the books and handy tracking list at these links:

<https://www.weleducatedheart.com/web-reference.html>

<https://www.weleducatedheart.com/.../ctvchecklist.pdf>

From the writings of Charlotte Mason:

“IN THE WORDS OF A WISE TEACHER OF MEN, ‘THE WOMAN RECEIVES FROM THE SPIRIT OF GOD HIMSELF THE INTUITIONS INTO THE CHILD’S CHARACTER, THE CAPACITY OF APPRECIATING ITS STRENGTH AND ITS WEAKNESS, THE FACULTY OF CALLING FORTH THE ONE AND SUSTAINING THE OTHER, IN WHICH LIES THE MYSTERY OF EDUCATION, APART FROM WHICH ALL ITS RULES AND MEASURES ARE UTTERLY VAIN AND INEFFECTUAL.’”

Art credit: Mother with Child by Leon Perrault

