

HEART MATTERS

NON SCHOLÆ SED VITÆ

Libraries of Hope Newsletter

“IF YOU WANT
YOUR CHILDREN
TO IMPROVE, LET
THEM OVERHEAR
THE NICE THINGS
YOU SAY ABOUT
THEM TO OTHERS.”

--HAIM GINOTT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

--Can you believe we are nearly halfway through the rotation schedule again? This month we celebrate a new nation, conceived in Liberty! This is the month to bring out the red, white and blue. I was sad to read of a recent poll that asked the question: Do you love America? My generation—the Baby Boomers—had the highest favorable percentage at 73%. Only 16% of the youngest Americans polled held her in a favorable light.

That’s a problem.

You might choose to study the Constitution or our form of government. Or continue to study the great men and women of that era, including Hamilton which a lot of our young people now know because of the musical. And how important it is to learn that great men can disagree. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson certainly did not see eye to eye. Did you know they died within a few hours of each other—on the 4th of July?

Our American topic ties into a study of the Holy Land because our early leaders believed, as Andrew Jackson stated, that our Bible “is the Rock upon which our Republic rests.” Here is a study of another people who were free under God. And you can’t study the Holy Land without understanding the neighbors in the Middle East.

It has amazed me that a group of people—the Jews—has retained their identity in a scattered and persecuted condition. The desire to return to their homeland has not lessened. There are lessons for us there.

In our Nature study, we now turn our attention to the creepy crawly creatures all around us. What a fascinating world.

And our Mother’s University topic is where this journey of heart education took a giant leap forward—when I discovered the Storytellers of the early



Art credit: Scene of the Narration of the Decameron by Salvatore Postiglione

(Announcements cont.) 20th century. I still believe if we could raise a generation of storytelling mothers and fathers, we could change the world for good.

-NEW MONTH 7 FORGOTTEN CLASSICS BOOKS:

Classic Lit for Young Readers:

This month's offering is Amy Steedman's retelling of the Arabian Nights. I know the stories contain gore...but I have been surprised at how these tales were so influential in the lives of many of the great lives I have studied. So I can't leave them out. I've wondered why they matter. Perhaps part of the answer is in the introduction to the Persian tales:

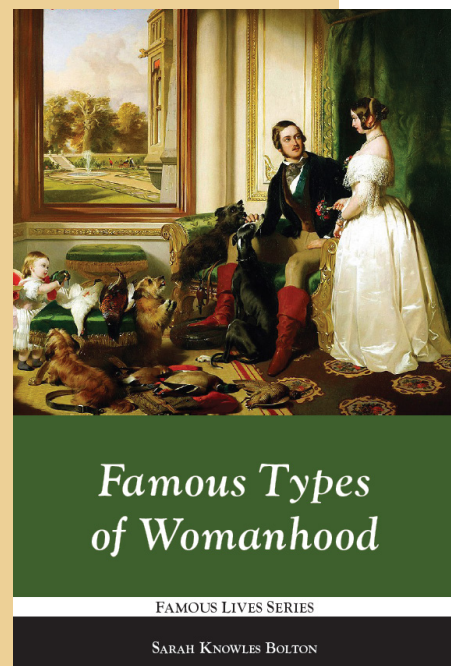
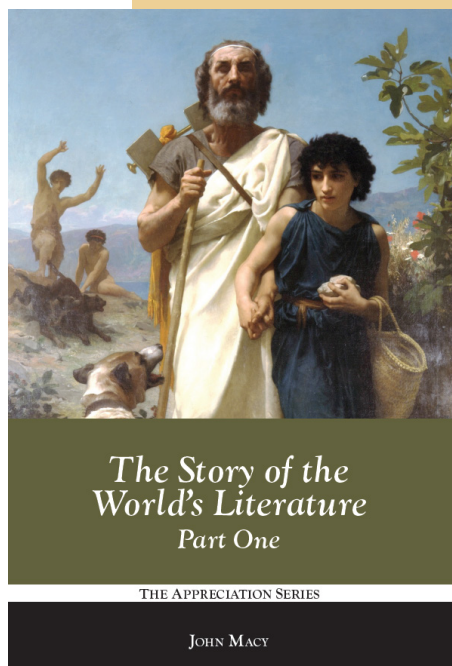
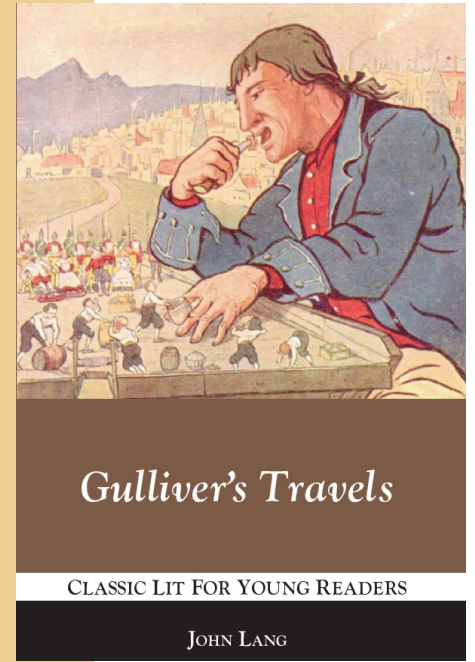
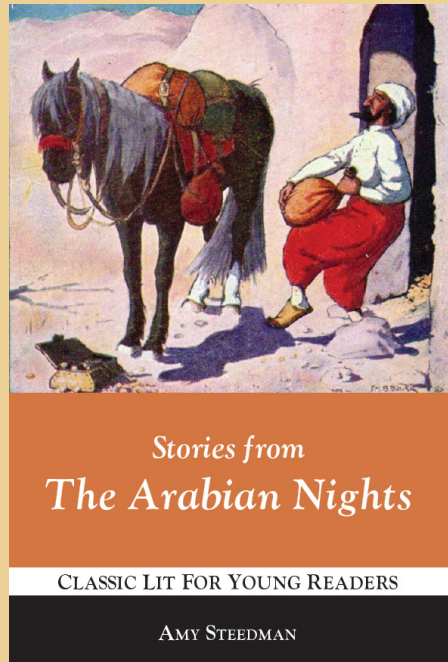
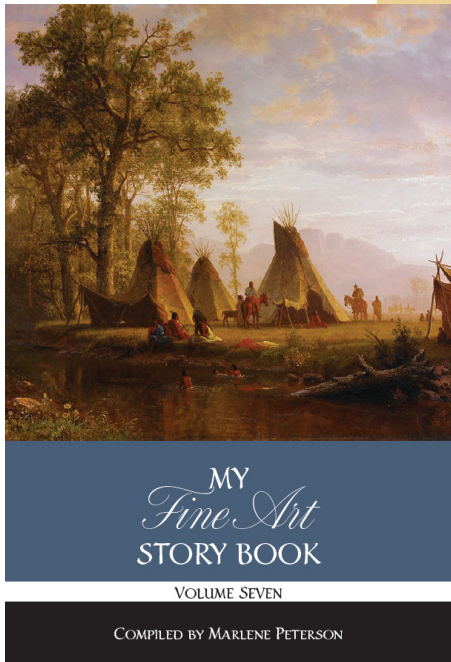
"Modern life in the West is too colourless, lacking in richness and warmth. To counteract this, and to develop and foster in children their natural love of rich colour and an appreciation of beautiful objects, there is no more effective method than to steep their imaginations in the best of Oriental literature."

The other book doesn't exactly fit with the Month 7 topic of Westward expansion, but it is about traveling to unknown lands and places. The book is the retelling of Gulliver's Travels by John Lang.

Appreciation Series: One of the previous volumes in the series took a look at the Story of English Literature. Another volume focused on American Literature. This volume is Part 1 of two volumes that takes in a whole of the world's literature. As the Appreciation Series is more of a launching point for a lifetime of study, I needed to find a book that would introduce the prominent writers from the entire world. I felt this one fit the ticket. The author is John Macy.

Sarah Bolton Famous Lives: We've been studying the lives of a lot of great men. It's time to give the ladies a chance to shine. This volume includes two books: Famous Leaders Among Women/Successful Women. There are a lot of names you may not recognize, but their stories are always fascinating.

(Announcements cont.) My Fine Art Story Book: This month offers a look at a few famous artists who captured the world of the Native American in the 19th century. There is also a focus on the art of Winslow Homer and other 19th century American artists.



--If you want to be sure you haven't missed anything in the most recent librariesofhope.com site, come watch this ['live' tour](#). I haven't found anyone who hasn't learned something they didn't know. Sometimes things are hiding there in plain sight.

--One of the things I share in the LOH tour is where to find the guides if you are using My Book House or Junior Classics in the rotation schedule. If you scroll to the bottom of the rotation page at librariesofhope.com, you will see a button for My Book House and one for Junior Classics. You can print these guides out, but note that all the volumes in My Book House are linked online at the end of the document. If you click on the titles of any of the books, it will open up to the digital copy in Internet Archive.

These are great grab and read options!

--Also notice in the footer is a link to a complete listing of all the books that were used to comprise the Forgotten Classics family Library. I drew from 761 books in all—and you will find 299 complete books in the library.

(Announcements cont.) --Each month we invite special guests to speak to us in the MOI Community. To go along with our Storytelling topic, Patti Rockus who has written several books on telling stories with rocks, will be our teacher in February. I am confident you will love her.

--My daughter is reading a book that a member of this group recommended--[*The Ogresse and the Orphan*](#). In the book, bad things start happening in a community when the library of old books is burned down.

We were chatting this morning, and I started thinking more about why reading old books matters. And my thoughts connected me to what Dr. Gordon Neufeld taught--that the young searches for something to attach to, and then grows to be like that to which it has attached.

He said many of the problems our society is facing are because we are attaching our preschoolers to other preschoolers who don't know any better than they do, rather than to older and wiser adults.

What if we only read the books written by our modern peers? And what if our modern peers have not taken the time to study the writings of those who came before? Isn't that like a preschooler attaching to his preschool peers?

It serves society well when preschoolers first attach to older and wise adults. And then they can take on their peers. Reading old books is like hanging out with older and wiser adults.

What I have found is that many of the writings that have been preserved through the ages reveal an uncommon wisdom, refinement and nobility. The writers for children in the Golden Age of Children's Literature--1880 to 1920s--have a depth to them I don't see in current books.

I feel like they think higher thoughts than we do. That there is a dignity and refinement in them that has largely been lost in today's world. Won't we see further, as Newton suggested, by standing on the shoulders of giants than hanging out with our preschool peers? As we spend time thinking their nobler thoughts and observing their higher ways, do we not expect to become more like them?

I feel like the gift these particular children's writers gave us is they opened the door to the riches of the past. Like Donna Nielsen taught in her class last week, if you want to understand anything, always start with a children's book.

The Forgotten Classics Family Library provides that kind of gateway for you.

--I just had a conversation with my daughter and it has triggered a lot of thoughts. I have been thinking a lot

Art credit: Mother's Joy by Ferdinand Georg Waldmuller





Art credit: Le Guirlande dese Champs by Virginia Demont-Breton

(*Announcements cont.*) about love the last few days. If near-death experiences can be trusted, I have been fascinated with the message so many who experienced it brought back with them--that the only thing that really matters in this life is Love.

What if our final exam question is simply: Who and what did you love?

And if you carry the definition of love to what John Muir Laws suggested, that love is sustained attention, it might come down to what did you pay attention to the most?

Jesus said it this way: Where your treasure is, there is your heart also.

And what if the answer comes from sitting down and watching a review of our life and seeing for ourselves how we spent our time and seeing what we thought about all day long.

So my daughter and I were talking about that, and she mentioned that in college she wrote a paper on how the opposite of Love is not Hate; it is Fear and one of these two emotions drives our actions. And now that has gotten me thinking even more.

I keep seeing questions about how to do WEH. What does it look like?

I would say the more important question to answer is: Is Fear or Love driving you?

Are you making decisions out of fear of what others will think of you, fear of falling 'behind', fear that you are going to ruin your children, fear they aren't going to get into college and get a good job, fear that you aren't good or enough or smart enough or organized enough to teach your own children, fear that you are doing it 'wrong'...

(Announcements cont.) What would it look like to replace that fear with Love? Because I have a feeling, if you can replace Fear with Love, everything is going to work out just fine.

Really.

--I was just glancing through the upcoming book for Month 7 in the Appreciation Series and found something interesting about Poetry, which we've been talking about all month.

In the Mother's Learning Library poetry book, it is suggested that one way to develop a love of poetry is to create your own personal anthology of favorite poems, which I started doing a few years ago. At our last MOI meeting, we were to bring a favorite poem. I had a super hard time picking one. I love them all!

Well, what I learned is that The Anthology was begun by the Greek poet Meleager in the 1st Century BC. He collected favorite poems from 40 poets and he called his collection The Garland--a wreath of flowers--which is what anthology means.

It had quite a history as it traveled through the ages.

It said that the value of the Anthology cannot be overestimated. It preserved many poems which, without it, would have perished. "Not only are the thousands of single flowers exquisite," the collection as a whole covers the entire range of feeling and experiences of the Greek race, from its "early morning vigor to its twilight decadence." Who knows? Maybe your anthology will preserve more of who you are to those who come long after you than anything else you may write about yourself. And maybe you will preserve some poet's work that would have been swept into the dustpan of history otherwise.

Have you started your Anthology?

--I was just going through my personal anthology of poetry, looking for a favorite poem to share with my MOI



Art credit: A Walk by the River by Alfred Glendening, Jr.



Art credit: Sommarang by Fanny Brate

(Announcements cont.) group tonight. I'm having a hard time deciding which one! Maybe it will be this one:

Your task, to build a better world, God said;
I answered, How?
This world is such a large, vast place,
So complicated now,
And I so small and useless am,
There's nothing I can do.
But God in all His wisdom said,
Just build a better you.

By the very popular poet, Anonymous.

--New podcast: Jimmy Stand-by

A new podcast has just been posted. If you have been through *Catch the Vision*, you have heard me talk about Margaret Eggleston, a storyteller who has been a huge influence on my life.

Well, I refer to a story she tells of a little boy and part of the story mentions another story of *Little Jimmy Stand By*. I have wondered for years what the rest of the story was, and didn't really hope to find it. But it sort of 'dropped' in my lap yesterday. [Here it is!](#)

--"I sincerely believe that for the child and for the parent seeking to guide him, it isn't half so important to know as to feel. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow. The years of childhood are the time to prepare the soil. Once the emotions have been aroused--a sense of the beautiful, the excitement of the new and the unknown, of sympathy, pity, admiration or love--then we wish for knowledge about the object of our emotional response. Once found, it has lasting meaning. It is more important to pave the way for the child to want to know than to put him on a diet of facts he is not ready to assimilate." -From *A Sense of Wonder* by Rachel Carlson