

# HEART MATTERS

NON SCHOLÆ SED VITÆ

*Libraries of Hope Newsletter*

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## MONTHLY TOPIC

AFRICA:

--(From a member of the group): **The last month** has been all things Africa! We started reading the book *The One and Only Ivan* at the end of March. That book lead us to studying the Congo. Last week I started playing the audiobook *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* during a short drive. My kids started begging to listen every time we get in the car. We’re almost done with the story and are LOVING it.

We are loving the children’s books in Libraries of Hope as well as the African stories in our Junior Classics collection. This month we’ve added African poems and foods. Yesterday, my husband, who’s been working from home since the initial Covid lockdowns, asked me to get the kids out of the house for the day.

“I THINK WE  
HAVEN’T BEGUN TO  
REALIZE THE POWER  
IN OUR VOICES.”



Art credit: A Family of Elephants by E.M. Heims

(Monthly Topic cont.) We went to the local zoo and spent some time with African animals. We saw: elephants, white rhinos, lions, cheetahs, baboons, and more.

This afternoon we are attempting shadow silhouette watercolors.

I am not fighting my kids on participating!

It's taken a year for me to learn I need to participate in activities like notebooking and anything artistic if I want participation with minimal whining!

Thank you. I learn so much from Marlene and the rest of you who share your experiences!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN:

--I'm reading a fascinating book published in 1955 by Jim Bishop, *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*. Last year I read another of his books, *The Day Christ Died*. I really appreciated his fresh perspectives.

I keep saying we are living in the great day of the harvest. We simply pull a book off the shelf and digest it. But look what went into the writing of this single book!

Bishop started his research 25 years before the writing of his book! He created 25 notebooks labeled 7 A.M. Friday, 8 A.M. Friday, etc. through 7 A.M. Saturday. In addition, he kept one marked "Lincoln and Family," one labeled "The Conspirators," one called "Washington-Era" and one marked "Bibliography." He wrote: "This must be of small interest to any reader except to point out that, after years of reading and making notes, I found that I had as many as three or four versions -- each at variance with the others -- of what had happened in any ONE hour." (!!!!!) "Two years



"In the best books, great men talk to us, give us their most precious thoughts, and pour their souls into ours."

--William Ellery Channing

Art credit: Lesende Frau by Paul Barthel

ago, when I intensified the research and started to read seven million words of government documents, the pieces of the puzzle began to orient themselves...

"Still I do not believe that this book presents all the facts, nor anywhere near all of the facts..."

Do you wonder why it is challenging to get at the 'facts' of history? All we can hope to do is awaken an interest in the study of it in our children and let them spend a lifetime exploring and discovering. And the most important lessons have little to do with the 'facts' anyway.

By the way, the anniversary of his death is in a few days -- April 15. That is a fact.

(The book is available on [Internet Archive](#) if you don't mind reading digitally.)

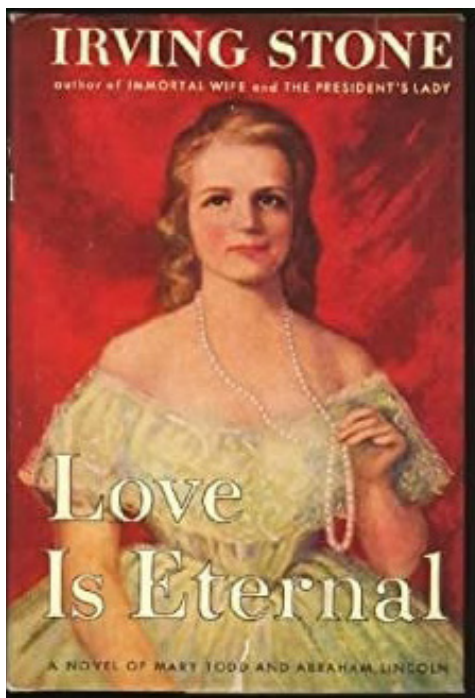
--I finished *The Day Lincoln Was Shot* last night. A couple of interesting things I noted: In MASB 4, I shared a dream Washington had not long before he died that gave

him the sense he didn't have much time left. Lincoln had the same experience -- a dream he couldn't shake that certainly proved to be true. Also interesting that he was shot on Good Friday.

The book has piqued an interest to learn more about his wife, Mary. She is always portrayed as such a horrible person who would fly off into tempers. I stopped to linger over this passage, that talks about her beratings of just about everyone:

"One tradesman reached a point where he complained to Mr. Lincoln. The President is said to have eyed him sadly, put a strong hand on his shoulder, and said, 'You ought to be able to stand, for fifteen minutes, what I have stood for fifteen years.' This was in the early years, and once, at home in Springfield, her nagging reached a point where legend says that Lincoln lost control, laid violent hands on her, shoved her out of the front door, and said, 'You make the house intolerable! D\*\* you, get out!'

(continued on next page)



(Monthly Topic cont.) After that, he surrendered. Never again did he fight for reason. He did things against his will because they would please her. When he was in his office, and heard the first far-off peal of thunder, he ran from behind his desk to her side, because he knew that she would be terrified...

“As she grew older, her rages became more violent, more enduring, and with them came dark hallucinations... She had terrifying dreams and often, when she awakened crying, he would hear her and get out of his bed and hurry to her and put his arms around her and comfort her. A friend asked what he thought of marriage, and Lincoln said quietly: “My father always said, when you make a bad bargain, hug it the tighter.”

Both Abraham and Mary suffered severe depression and weathered storms few of us can fathom. I want to know more of that, so my next book of choice is Irving Stone’s *Love is Eternal*.

Love is Eternal is the inscription he engraved on Mary’s wedding ring.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

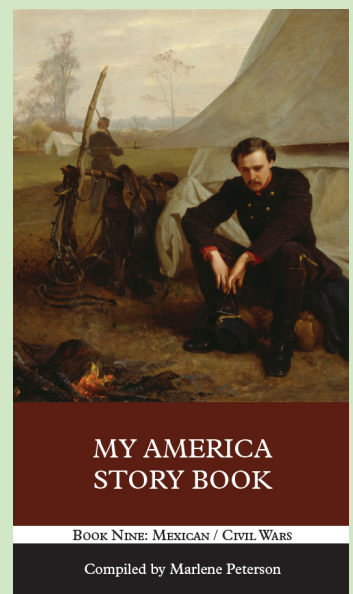
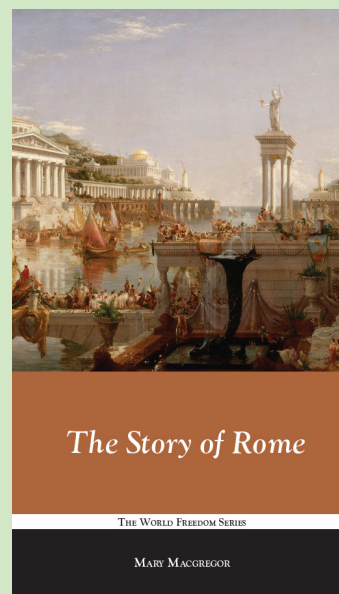
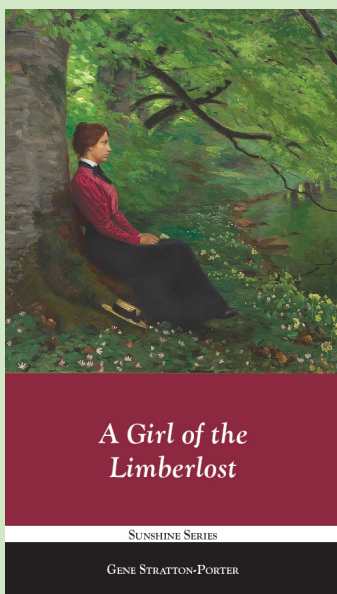
--The new Month 9 books are now in the [store](#).

We’ve added another Gene Stratton-Porter book -- *A Girl of the Limberlost* -- to the Sunshine Series. Referring to this book, the author wrote: “The book can, and does, present a hundred pictures that will draw any reader in closer touch with nature and the Almighty, my primal object in each line I write.”

We’ll visit Cousins in Argentina, Brazil and Portugal. Portugal??? What does that have to do with South America, you might ask? If you don’t know the answer, as you study Brazil, the connection will become clear.

*The Story of Rome* by Mary MacGregor is this month’s selection in the World Freedom Series. No, it isn’t directly tied into our Month 9 topic. I couldn’t find a good book on South America. But there is much to learn about the study of Rome and I guess you would say Rome’s later history of the Catholic church certainly ties into the story of South America.

Finally, My America Story Book takes a look at our War with Mexico, which gave us territories including Texas, Utah and California and also we’ll look at key figures in the Civil War.



## MARLENE'S MUSINGS

--From a 1916 book on storytelling:

“And how much capable mothers might derive from Wordsworth’s poetry for the spiritual nurture of their children. Capable mothers are, alas! comparatively few; but forces are now at work which are increasing the number of such mothers, and will continue to increase it more and more as the ideals of true womanhood are more and more realized and exalted.”

--Hiram D. Corson, *The Voice and Spiritual Education*

--I posted a quote by someone named Hiram Colson who wrote a book called *The Voice and Spiritual Education* in 1896. I was curious about the book, and found some real gems!

“Perhaps the greatest danger...in the future, will be the great increase of knowledge...with the increase of knowledge the temptation will correspondingly increase to make the greatest possible amount of it...the leading aim...”

“To give the student the fullest command of his faculties should certainly be the prime object, to which the acquisition of knowledge should be subservient; but this object seems to be more and more lost sight of, while to cram his mind to the utmost, with vague, indefinite knowledge...”

“...the word ‘education’ means ‘a drawing out.’ Sometimes a teacher, after presenting this etymology, proceeds to present what he considers the best methods of ramming in!

“There are schools, and their patrons think them excellent, which out-herod Herod in the slaughter of the Innocents. Sad, indeed, is it that the young are so debarred, as they are, by the tasks imposed upon them, from all sweet and quickening ‘impressions before the letter.’” [Amen to that!]

In the final chapter, he makes the case that all educational opportunities must be opened to women. “These things will do more for civilization, in the highest sense of the word, that is, the spiritual sense, than all other agencies combined...”

“A true manhood and a true womanhood cannot be reached except through the mutual influence of the sexes upon each other...” [Yes! We need dads!]

Ruskin wrote, “You cannot think that the buckling on of the knight’s armor by his lady’s hand was a mere caprice of romantic fashion. It is the type of an eternal truth -- that the soul’s armor is never well set to the heart unless a woman’s hand has braced it...”

He mentions the fear that if women were educated as well as the men, she would lose her femininity. “She may, indeed have less of mere femininity, but, in its stead, she will certainly have more womanliness, in the best sense of the word (by virtue of which SHE IS A SPECIALLY COMMISSIONED REGENERATING POWER IN THE WORLD.)”

The great Italian patriot, Giuseppe Mazzini, ‘the prophet and spiritual hero of his nation,’ wrote in 1858: “Seek in women not merely a comfort, but a force, an inspiration, the redoubling of your intellectual and moral faculties. Cancel from your mind every idea of superiority over her. You have none whatever...”

“Are two notes of the same musical chord unequal or of different nature? Man and woman are the two notes



Art credit: *The Lesson* by Emanuel Phillips Fox

(*Marlene's Musings cont.*) without which the Human chord is impossible. They fulfill different functions in Humanity, but these functions are equally sacred, equally manifestations of that Thought of God which He has made the soul of the universe...

“The men whose intellectual and, more especially, spiritual gifts to the world, have been the greatest, and most quickening, have oftener, no doubt, been more indebted, for those gifts, to their mothers than to their fathers.”

In Shakespeare's earliest play, *Love's Labor Lost*, Shakespeare expresses his own opinion of the peculiar power of women:

From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:  
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;  
They are the books, the arts, the academes,  
That show, contain, and nourish all the world.

The writer concludes his book with this thought regarding Shakespeare: “It was his mother, I like to think, who initiated him into the mysteries of the spirit.”

And how does she do that? As the title of the book suggests, I think we haven't begun to realize the power in our voices.

--**The purpose of My America Story Book** is to “give enjoyment and to awaken interest” rather than “to instruct in details and tell everything.”

Some of you are listening to My America Story Book every day and creating notebook pages with the fine art images we provide. Others of you are choosing a few stories a month, according to the ages of your children. Some of you read the stories aloud, yourself, to your children. Others listen to the recordings I have provided. Some of you have children who are reading the books for themselves. Some of you are going through it just for yourself.

There is no one way to do My America Story Book.

For those of you who haven't heard about it yet, please visit [myamericastorybook.com](http://myamericastorybook.com). It's free unless you want to buy a hard copy of the book or have us send you the images.

I can tell you that my love for America has deepened to new levels as I have immersed myself in these stories in order to choose the ones I include in the storybook each month. I feel like I am in the company of giants every single day and they give me hope and courage and determination to do something with the gifts they have given to us.

In the fall, I will introduce My World Story Book and am already gathering the stories of interesting and inspiring lives from around the world. It is my favorite thing to do.



Art credit: Mother and Child by Peter Ilsted

## WEH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

### AFRICA/EGYPT:

Here is another fun resource for Africa this month. There are videos of read-aloud picture books, dances, music, food, and I like there are suggestions on how to help families in the countries.

[https://www.localpassportfamily.com/category/africa?fbclid=IwAR0cTW6bTP4MkT\\_Ydc65NzPaDIUhU88szU-nz\\_jj9Dg1cSwQ3cPHEmIzVDg](https://www.localpassportfamily.com/category/africa?fbclid=IwAR0cTW6bTP4MkT_Ydc65NzPaDIUhU88szU-nz_jj9Dg1cSwQ3cPHEmIzVDg)

The ancient art of making papyrus: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBdVhvo2UUM>



“KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED  
UNDER COMPULSION  
OBTAINS NO HOLD  
ON THE MIND.”

--Plato

Art credit: The Stern Teacher  
by Theophile Emmanuel Duverger

## WEH IN ACTION

--Last night I got home after my littles (9 & 11) had already been sent to bed. My 9-year-old called down to me that his sister was reading Aesop's Fables to him. (I loved that!) Then, when I got upstairs it seemed she had stopped reading, so I was telling them it was time to go to bed. My daughter said, "Wait! I want to write these down!" She had gone to her room to get a notebook so she could write down some of the morals found after each story! It made my heart happy!

--I wanted to share a discovery that my 9-year-old son found. We were going through his music flash cards and he was reading where the end of the stems touch, not the note. I told him that's not how you read a note. I kept repeating myself until I decided to stop talking and listen to what he had to say. He found that the end of the stem touched or told you what the note was. We found it true for all the notes except these three. These three, the stem goes through it. These three

have a pattern as well, though. They all have a double line with them. (I don't know how else to explain it.) So amazing!

My son looks at the world differently and I usually fault him for it. However, I have learned this year that the way he looks at the world is beautiful and he can see many patterns that I never have noticed before. We can learn much from kids like him if we try to see life through their point of view and not

“THE VERY GREATEST THINGS -- GREAT THOUGHTS, DISCOVERIES, INVENTIONS -- HAVE USUALLY BEEN NURTURED IN HARDSHIP, OFTEN PONDERED OVER IN SORROW, AND AT LENGTH ESTABLISHED IN DIFFICULTY.”

--Samuel Smiles

Art credit: Woman, Why Weepst Thou by Fritz von Uhde



(WEH in Action cont.) force them to our ways.

--If you have a middle school age boy...go order [this book](#) now!! My son cannot get enough of it. He is so inspired by the brave men, shocked over the merciless acts of Germany in WW1 (killing innocent citizens in Belgium to get to Paris, the sinking of the Lusitania), and disheartened that he doesn't see strong political leaders today like what he saw in President Wilson's speech entering into WW1 or Lincoln's speech repenting of America's national sin of slavery. His heart is 100% being reached by this book.



“Happy hearts and happy faces  
Happy play in grassy places--  
That was how, in ancient ages  
Children grew to kings and  
sages.”

--Robert Louis Stevenson

Art credit: Head of an Italian Boy by Carl Bloch

## MOI MINUTE

*“In the earth’s economy, the richest person is the one who has the most money, but in heaven’s economy, the richest person is the one with the greatest capacity for light.” --Marlene Peterson*

**We’re changing the world... One heart at a time... Beginning with your own.**

Instead of being told what to do and exactly how to do it, we organized Mothers of Influence so that the next steps could grow outward from our hearts together. God always works from the inside outward.

There’s no right or wrong way to MOI; you only need to gather with other mothers and start cultivating your heart. Bonnie just spontaneously organized a Marco Polo group focused on reading the Delphian Course. Tracy has been helping mothers virtually and in-person dive deep into the Catch the Vision challenge. Shannon, Lori, and Lindsey gather women online to talk about the Mother’s University together. Kari and Emily have a side chat with friends from their in-person MOI to share their thoughts on the Life-Giving Home. And there are a hundred other mothers -- some on the map and some not -- who are gathering a few friends into their homes each month to nurturing their hearts together.

Even if you can’t find someone to share your enthusiasm with, you can still cultivate your own personality and let it spill over everywhere. That’s encircling reach! Just like we’re collectively drawn to the sheer force of Marlene’s goodness we can have a store inside of ourselves that is just waiting to come out at the right time -- even in little ways. At every opportunity, use art, music, poetry, and stories to spark desire -- every now and then, it’s bound to light a fire.

It’s small and simple -- these aren’t huge, fancy things -- just women gathering and learning new ways to add light to the best they already have.

Love, Marley

