

My Library  
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[A school assignment graded 90 at the top of the first page. Teacher's comments are in italics. Those written in the margins are in brackets those written above the line are inserted as superscripts. The teacher inserted parentheses around or underlined words that required correction. Both Elmer and the teacher wrote in pencil. This essay is in the collection of the Goshen Historical Society]

The subject of my composition is My Library but if I confined it simply to my own library I should not have much to say.

I have a small library of my own and some of the books which it contains I should still keep even though my library were ever so large. Among my books are such ones as Uncle Tom's Cabin which as you all know is intensely interesting and pictures so clearly the southern life of that time. This book will never be put aside by coming generations. Tom Brown's Schooldays and Tom Browns at Oxford are also books which are interesting to every school-boy. Many of Tom's experiences are our own. I also have one of Oliver Optics books. Fighting for the Right which is located in the south at the time of the Civil War.

[written along the side of the page: #use "too" or "besides" to avoid repeating "also" which you have used twice in the last of the preceding paragraph]

My library (also)<sup>#too</sup> includes two of J. Fenimore Coopers books "The Pioneers" and "The Prairie" and among others I have a Wood's Natural History and a set of Chamber's Encyclopedia, the last names receives the least attention though I occasionally find something that I do not know and so have to consult+ (them) <sup>it</sup> the books named do not comprise all of my library but they are the most interesting part.

[in margin: #refers to "chance" which is singular number. + Refers to encyclopedia]

Now I will tell you what I should like for a library. I like to read and can read almost anything for the sake of reading, but of course I have my choice when I can get (# them <sup>it</sup>) [1 punc.]

The first thing I should have is a fair size say fifty volumes but I should not wish this to be the permanent size. I like a change and should enjoy adding from time to time such books as seemed to be the most interesting

And now as to variety I should not want them all of ↑ kind. I should have only part of them novels and those of the better class. The cheaper ones are not true enough to life to suit me. A novel which contains a love story is all right if it is not stretched to far. [1 spelling]

One of the classes of books which interests me most ~~are~~ <sup>is</sup> adventure stories [1 the subject is "one" sing. no.] specially those located in distant places. I like them both for the story and for the work <sup>word?</sup> Pictures which I get of foreign or distant places.

One of the most interesting books of this class which I have read is "Michael Strogoff" by Jules Verne. This book I consider far ahead of some of his book like "A Trip to Moon" "Twenty-thousand Leagues Under the Sea". In this particular book you seem to be traveling along with the principle <sup>principal</sup> [1 sp. principle is always a noun] actor or hero, and seeing and experiencing all the scene through which he passes, the wild Russian frontier, the traveling bands of gypsies and herders, the flight from the Russian police all ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> vividly pictured. [1 sp. "all" represents a plural idea here]

I also like books of travel and history I have always had a desire to travel and see something of the world. Perhaps I am restless whatever the season, such books interest me. I once partly read through Stanley's book of his explorations in Africa, and I also once began Ridpath's History of the World, but it was so great an undertaking that I gave it up, though the histories of such countries as Egypt and Persia and other Asiatic countries I found very interesting.

My library should also be regularly supplied with several of the standard magazines, for no library of today is complete without them. No reader of today is fully abreast of the times unless he or she keeps track of what is going on both at home and abroad, and there is no way in which it can be better done than by reading current magazines.

Of the particular books that I should wish in my library there are so many to choose from that it would be hard to say what they might be until they were chosen. The books of Henry Oliver Optic, Trowbridge, Jules Verne and others have interested boys in the past and probably will continue to do so. Other books like Uncle Tom's Cabin, Green Mountiain Boys, Cudjies Leave, and Boots and Saddles, cannot be beat *(surpassed)*

This is my idea of the way in which I should like to (have) <sup>get together a</sup> ~~my~~ library and someday perhaps I shall carry it out, in part, through I am afraid I shall never get it quite to the point where it would exactly suit me. [punc.]