

an address, a list of one hundred of what he considered the best books—the word books being extended in some cases to mean authors. The list included religion, law, morals, science, philosophy and literature, and at the head of it stood the Bible. A few weeks afterward, on request, John Ruskin made out a list of the one hundred best books, but of Mr. Lubbock's list about all that he retained was the Bible. Mr. Gladstone bore a hand later and so did several other public men. All these lists varied greatly. But they all retained the Bible. They all made selections from old and long-tried literature. Not one of them took any current book or any book that had been on the market less than twenty years.

Now these lists taken together are much more interesting than any one of them taken separately and furnish some invaluable lessons.

The first and most obvious of these lessons is—the variety of men's tastes in books as in everything else. No man must expect to lay down a list which any other man shall accept without challenge. Every man should use his own taste and make the selections which are most valuable to him. Just as no man may coerce our labor or our vote, so no man ought to expect to force us in the matter of what books we shall read. It is, however, our duty to yield to advice in this as in other matters.

The next obvious lesson is that men of all callings and professions agree in recommending the Bible. They all, whether scientists, statesmen, art critics or literary men, put that in the list, and put it first. *That* they do so ought to be argument sufficient for any young person. The Bible is a history, almost a series of biographies. It is a good deal like Plutarch. It is somewhat like Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. But it is a great deal richer and more profitable than they are, because it embraces more character and ranges over more time and places. It includes more phases of history and gives us life under varied inspiration and pressure. The finest achievements men have made in morals and religion are in it. There is in it much of action, little of speculation. When we say it contains the story of Joseph, the life of