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Life on High Levels: Familiar Talks on the Conduct of Life (Part One)

Margaret E. Sangster

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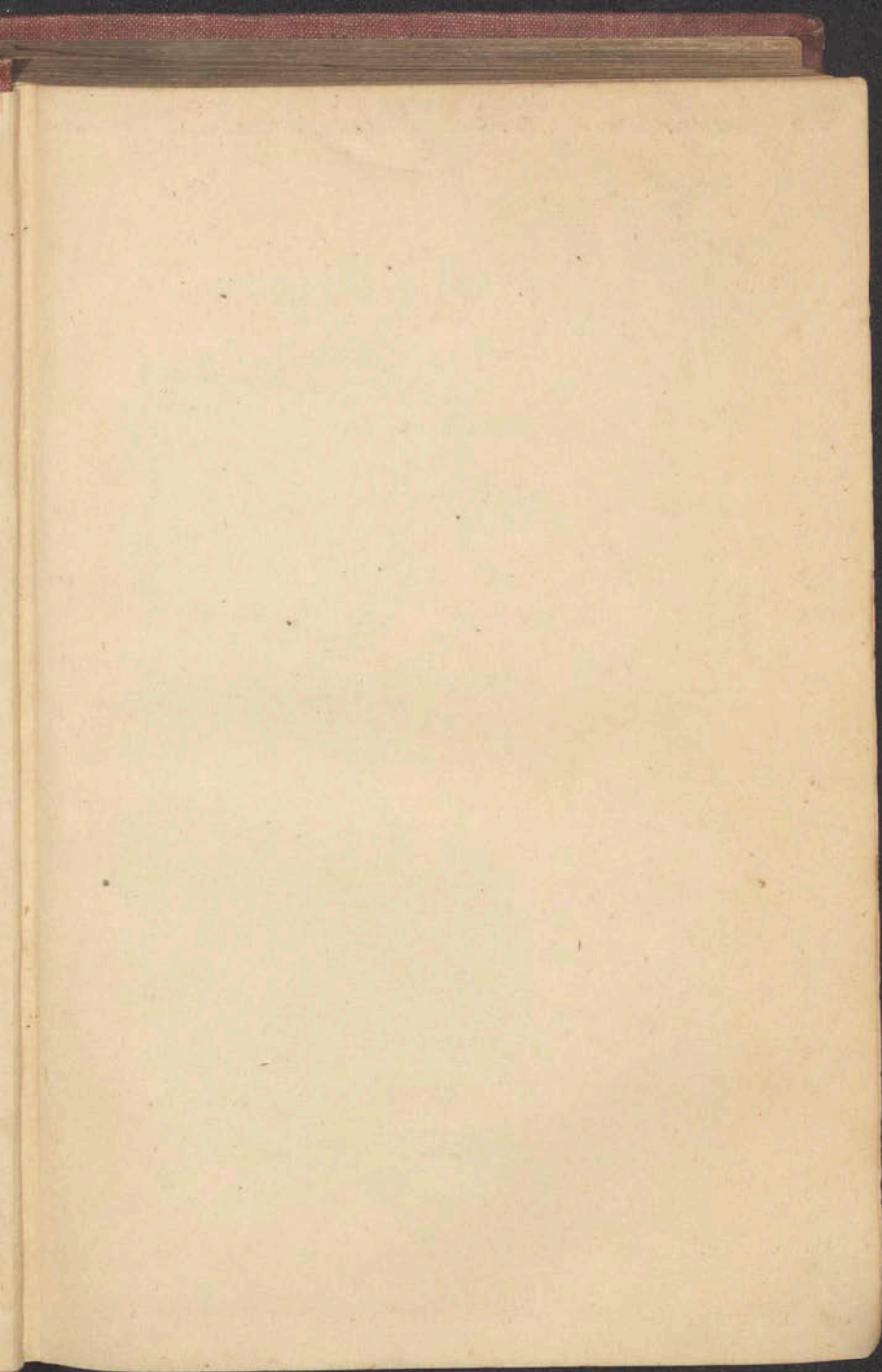
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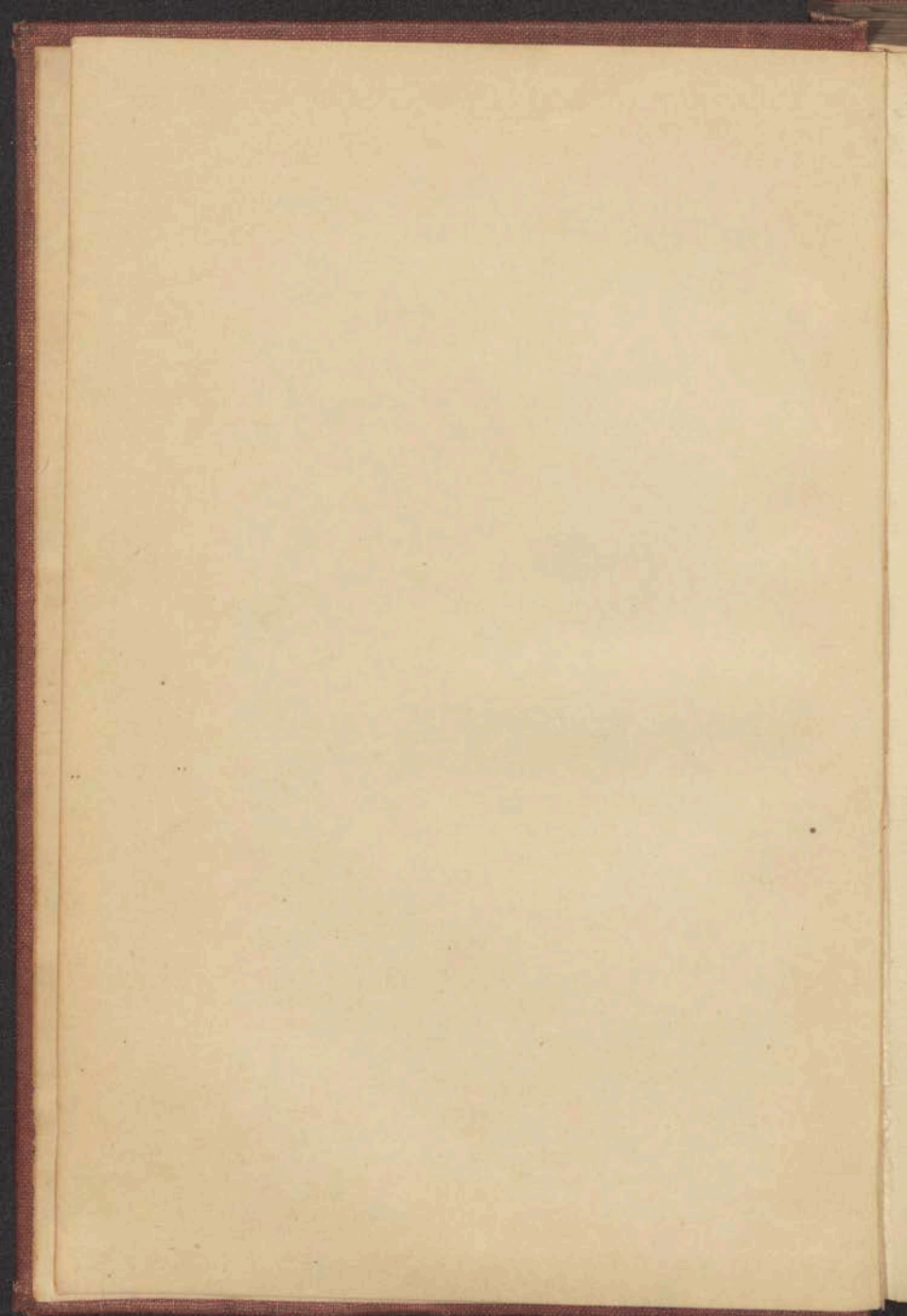


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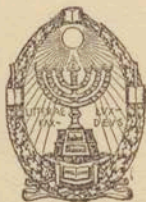


LIFE ON HIGH LEVELS

FAMILIAR TALKS
ON
THE CONDUCT OF LIFE

BY
MARGARET E. SANGSTER

AUTHOR OF "MAIDIE'S PROBLEM AND ONE OF THEMSELVES,"
"EASTER BELLS," "ON THE ROAD HOME,"
"WITH MY NEIGHBORS," ETC.



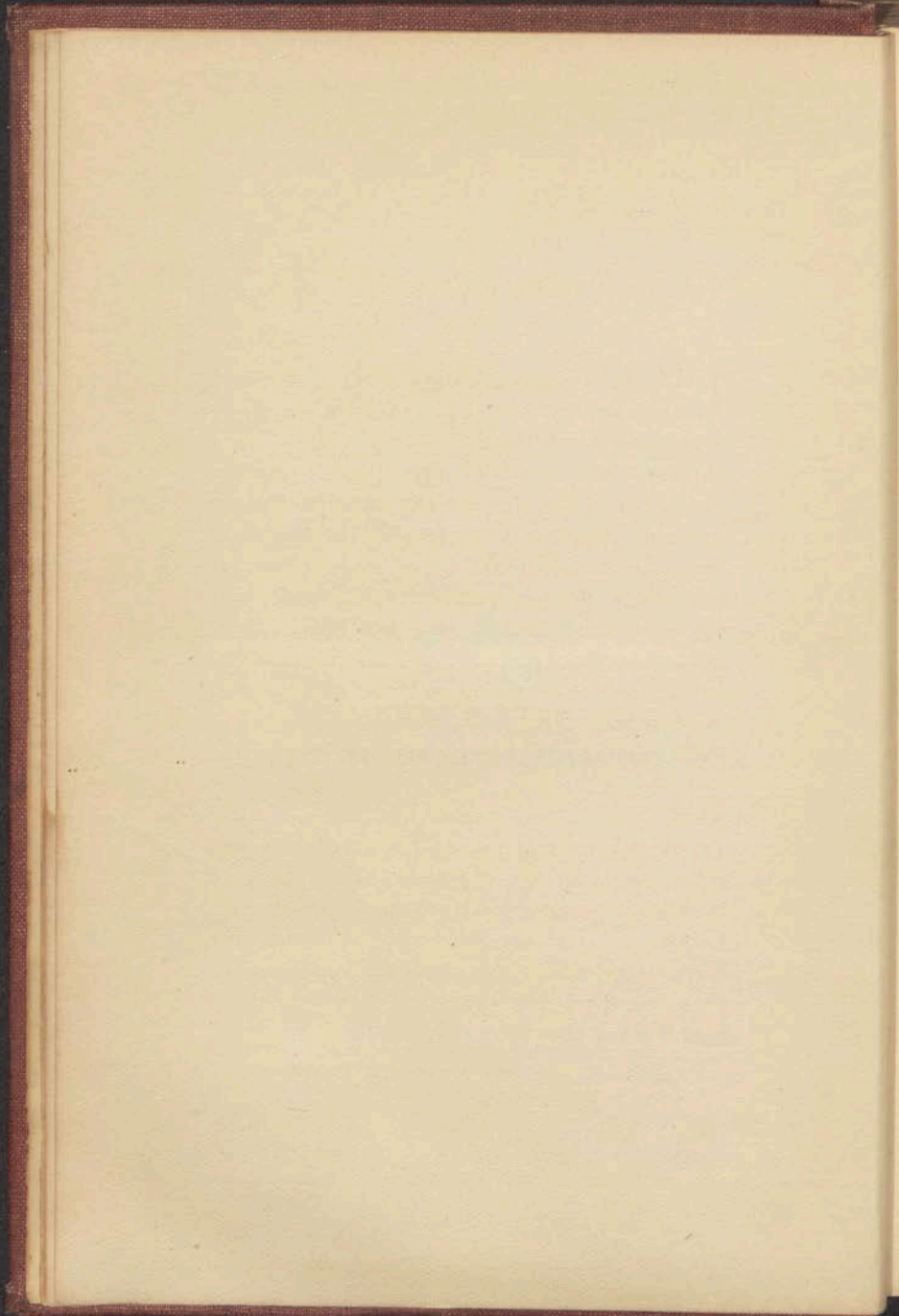
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1897

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EDWIN A. SCHELL,
General Secretary.

TO ONE
WHOSE LIFE AND WORDS
HAVE BEEN TO ME A CONSTANT INSPIRATION.
MY DEAR FRIEND
EDWARD P. TERHUNE, D.D.

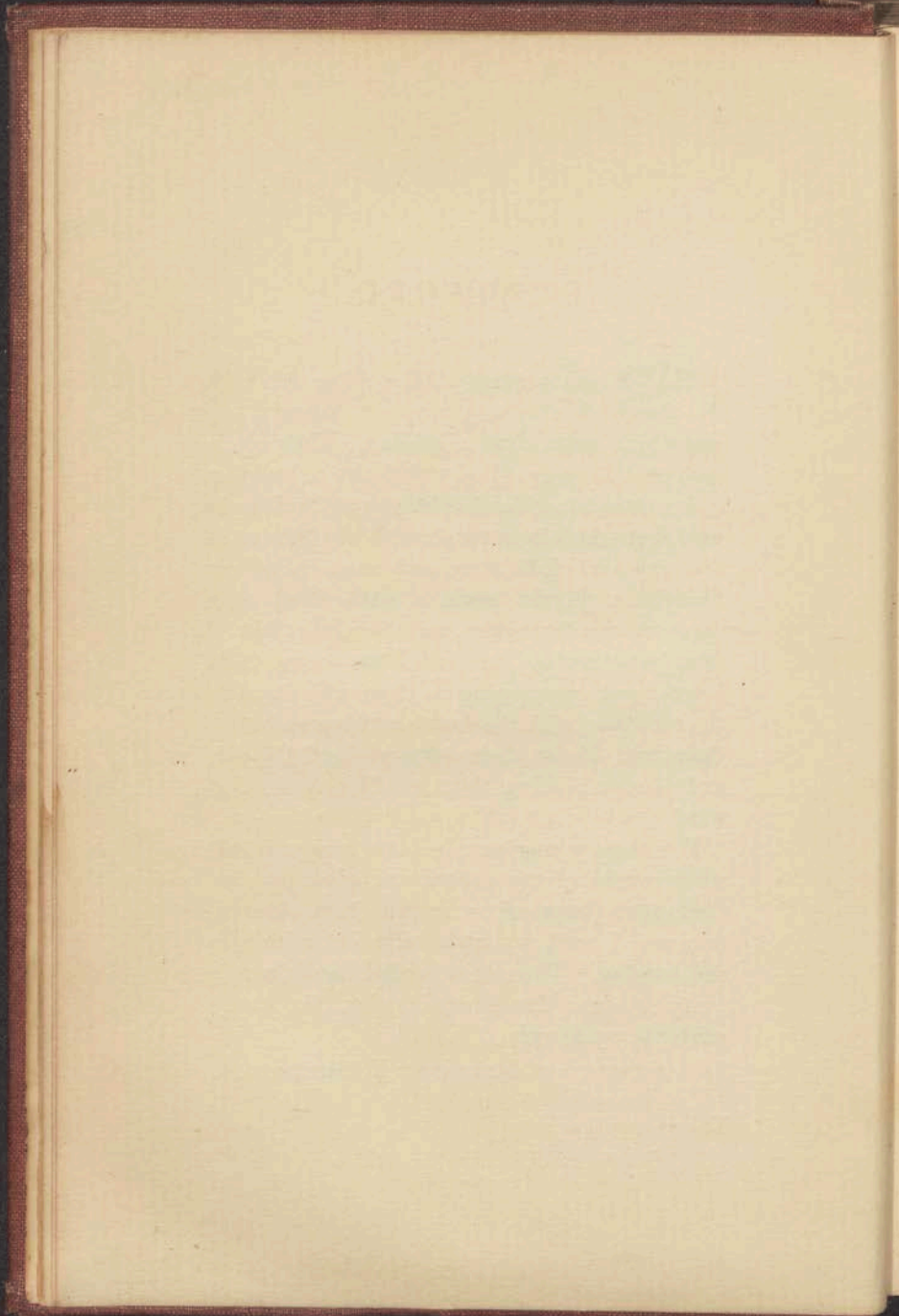


FOREWORD.

I HAVE had in mind while writing this book thousands of young people to whom life is something more than a holiday. They are in earnest. They are filled with desire to lead that consecrated life which has heaven as its ultimate goal, but which is in touch with the Master all the way on. Life more and more is to my thought a pilgrim path, a path filled with opportunities for service, and these quiet bits of talk, just "among ourselves," are meant to be helpful and encouraging to those who stand in the forefront, with the days marching on before them, and Christ their acknowledged Captain and Leader bidding them confidently go forward.

For these young people I am happy to cull some results of my experience, glad to give them some impressions drawn from observation, and I send my little talks out with love and longing. There is a cordial hand-clasp in every chapter for every reader, for every reader is my friend.

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.



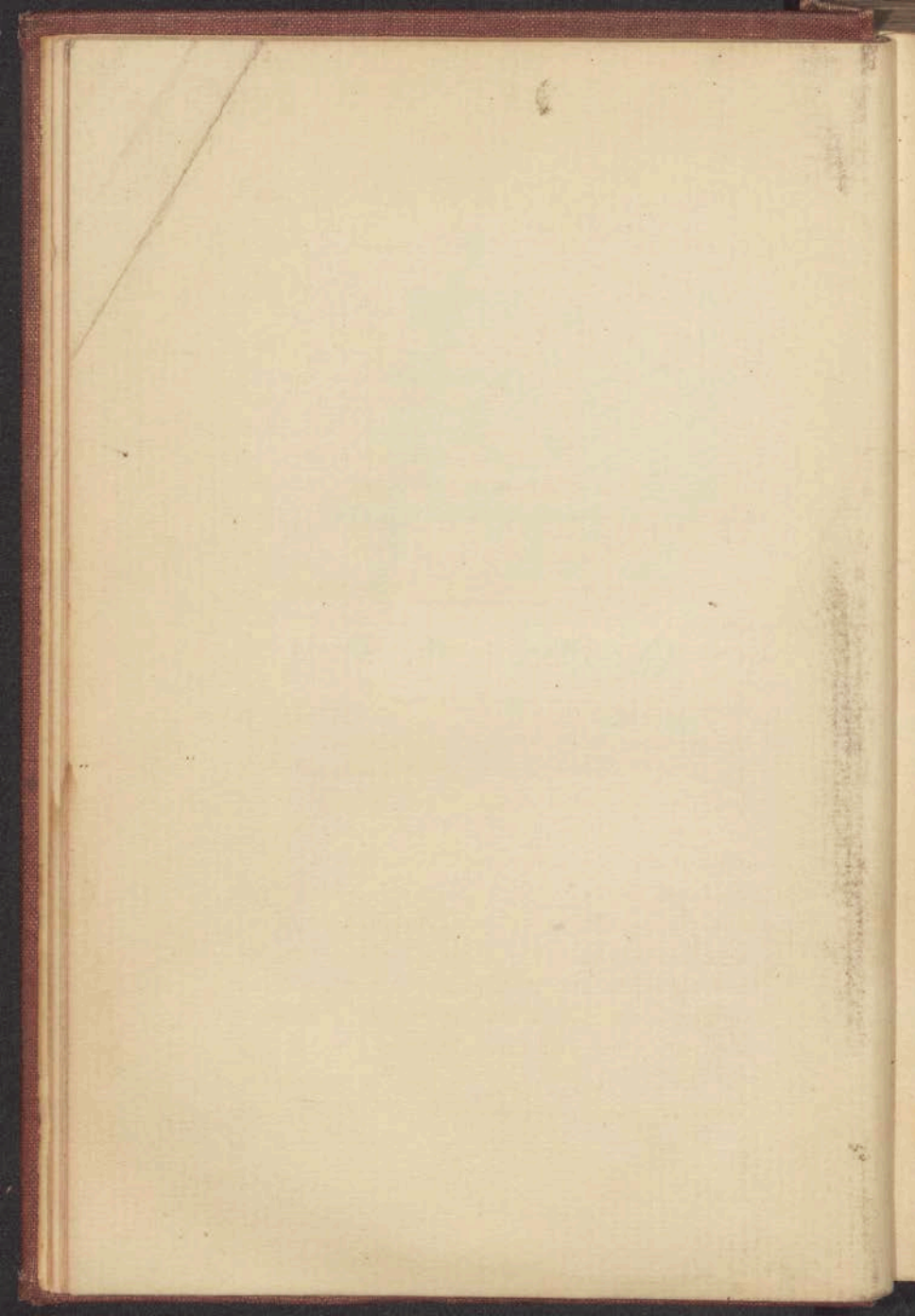
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Our Place in the World



LIFE ON HIGH LEVELS.

CHAPTER I.

Our Place in the World.

IN the happy days of childhood we naturally take everything for granted. Life does not trouble us, nor does care burden our hearts. Our duties are appointed for us by our parents and teachers; our homes are made sweet and safe by their loving care; and food, raiment, school, work, and play come to us like the outgoings of the morning and evening—are as little matters of forethought on our part as are the rain and the sunshine, the dew and the cloud, the pageant of the flowers and the ripening of the fruits. To the child it does not make much difference whether the house he lives in be a palace or a cottage, for father and mother are there and brothers and sisters, and it is his world of home. There may be poverty in the household and even want, and the mother and father be anxious, but the child does not realize this, and during the first joyous years the shadows pass him by. Unless he is actually very cold or very hungry, and the cold and hunger

Life on High Levels

are not at once appeased, he is not at all aware that he is an object of pity. The child is in the home, and the age of responsibility for his own support and his own needs has not yet arrived. Blessed are these days of our inexperience, when provision is made for us by watchful love which folds us close as under brooding wings.

With some of us this delightful sense of being cared for, this pleasant living from day to day without struggle and without anxiety, continues all through the early years, and does not vanish until childhood is merged in the busy years of youth. With some of us again the time of taking thought for ourselves comes earlier. Either we are naturally more observing than others, or circumstances force upon us the necessity of independent action, but however it may be, we one day awaken to the knowledge that we must stand on our own feet, that our time has come to answer to our names. Often this awakening brings with it a thrill of pleasure. There is pure joy in handling the first money one has actually earned, and untold satisfaction in handing over a portion of it to the dear ones who so long have toiled for us. Our turn now, we cry, glad to relieve those older and patient hearts which are growing weary in bearing the heat and burden of the day. Our turn now! We hold up our heads and step along gayly, and feel happy that we have found our

Our Place in the World

place in the world. I pity the man who never thus trod on air, and heard the beat of martial drums inaudible to his fellows.

An obscure place, a very humble place it may be, this one that God first gives us, but it is ours, and we may ennoble it. The boy who sweeps out an office and runs on errands, as compared to the head of the great firm, is a comparatively unnoticed person, but if he have good business habits, and if he perform his part of the day's work thoroughly and faithfully, he will not always be an office boy. And while he is, it is quite as important that he shirk nothing, that he be prompt, brisk, cheerful, obliging, and efficient, as that anybody else in the establishment shall be capable, amiable, and punctual.

Away back in the years that lie behind me, there was given to me the chance to do a little bit of work. Perhaps you would like to hear about it. I was studying French and my French master was a scholarly and interesting man, who had been in the military service, and who liked in his leisure hours to try his hand at verse making. He would sometimes bring his little lyrics into the class room and read them to his pupils, often giving them to us to translate. But "Alas!" he would cry, with an amusing shrug of the shoulders and a tragic emphasis, "my beautiful stanzas cannot be put into—what do you say?—into the

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English meter, the jingle? When you translate them, young ladies, they are plain prose, like the road the sleigh goes over when there is no snow."

Fired with an enthusiastic desire to help the poor professor, I, a little maiden of fourteen, one day offered my assistance. I knew I could make rhymes. It occurred to me that I could dress my friendly teacher's thoughts in a metrical English form; at all events I would try. Try I did, and the result was that *The Fireman and Other Poems*, in a brilliant red and gold cover, saw the light, and gave pleasure to a select circle of acquaintances, cheering the soul of the honest and gallant French gentleman, ex-warrior, and tutor of girls, a man who, though a scholar, was hardly a poet, and affording to one little painstaking girl an excellent school in composition. To that piece of obscure translation, she probably owes her present place in the world, and her present work, though a long time passed, filled with other duties, before she took up the literary profession with a definite end in view.

A place is waiting for you, my bright-eyed girl reader, and your present most important engagement is to get ready for the place. You may feel a little impatient that events move on so slowly, that you are able to do so little, and must make such slight advances, when you are quivering with desire to rush on, and feel that you could overcome every

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obstacle, if only you had a chance. It is hard to stay at home, cook the dinner, and wash the dishes, when you are panting to go out and sing or paint or write or study medicine, or do some other of the beautiful things which beckon you on. There are so many dishes to be washed that even an ordinary meal accumulates enough of them to prove the clearing away a tiresome piece of work: and then, when there are three meals a day, dish-washing grows monotonous. So it is with other ever-recurring domestic tasks; they seem petty and entail drudgery, and look disproportionate to life in the demands they make on one's time and strength.

Yet I am of the opinion that there is a noble and fine and dignified way of performing every task, and I fancy that a queen or an angel might make the homely labor of clearing away a meal as attractive and as fascinating a sight as one is ever likely to behold on this green earth.

Your place in this world to-day may be at home, with simple daily tasks, many of them drudgery. It may be in the countingroom, in the factory, in the shop, with long hours and small payment. It may be a shadowy little place, but contentment and fidelity will flood it with sunshine. Glorify the work, and the work will glorify the place. Never mind about yourself, let the work praise you.

Life on High Levels

There was once a man who set out to write the life of his friend. He was so full of his friend's wonderful powers, so impressed with the thought that every little thing his friend did, every word his friend said, was worth talking about and preserving, that it never occurred to him to bring himself forward in the least. His business was to describe a great man so that the world should see the greatness, and love the distinctive features which made it extraordinary and remarkable. So living and writing and forgetting everything but his object, Alexander Boswell wrote the life of Dr. Samuel Johnson, the most charming biography of a man of letters ever given to an admiring world. The book has the indestructible immortality of genius, but its crowning excellence is due to the unselfish enthusiasm of the man who wrote it. The worker was hidden behind the work.

A young man left college a score of years ago, handicapped by a record of crime on the part of his father. He was blameless, but there was a stain on his name. Before God, in solemn surrender of himself, that young man vowed to redeem the family name. He found a lowly place—the merest standing room in the yard of a great corporation, no more. Of the army of men and boys in the employ of that rich company, none was less conspicuous, none was apparently

Our Place in the World

less likely to rise than the one of whom I am speaking. But whoever secures a foothold may climb if he choose, and this lad chose to climb. To-day he is at the head of an important and widely-known enterprise. Hundreds obey his word. He was promoted slowly at first, then rapidly. Every one respects him, every one recognizes his marked ability, and that ability is built on a superb integrity and an absolute indifference to ease, to luxury, or to self-aggrandizement. He has conquered his place in the world. The work was put before the worker, and it is the work which has made the worker strong, successful—what men call fortunate, what God calls heroic.

What men call fortunate! Yes, what God sees as simple, conscientious, and single-hearted devotion to duty, with the power to grasp and use opportunity, and turn every hour to account. That is God's heroism.

If you have ever observed the sort of education which is given to princes of the blood royal, you have seen that from an early age these young people are obliged to study strenuously and to become familiar with all departments of science, with the arts, with literature, and with several foreign languages. They are drilled in those exercises which develop a fine physique. They are required to be diligent, and their days are filled with

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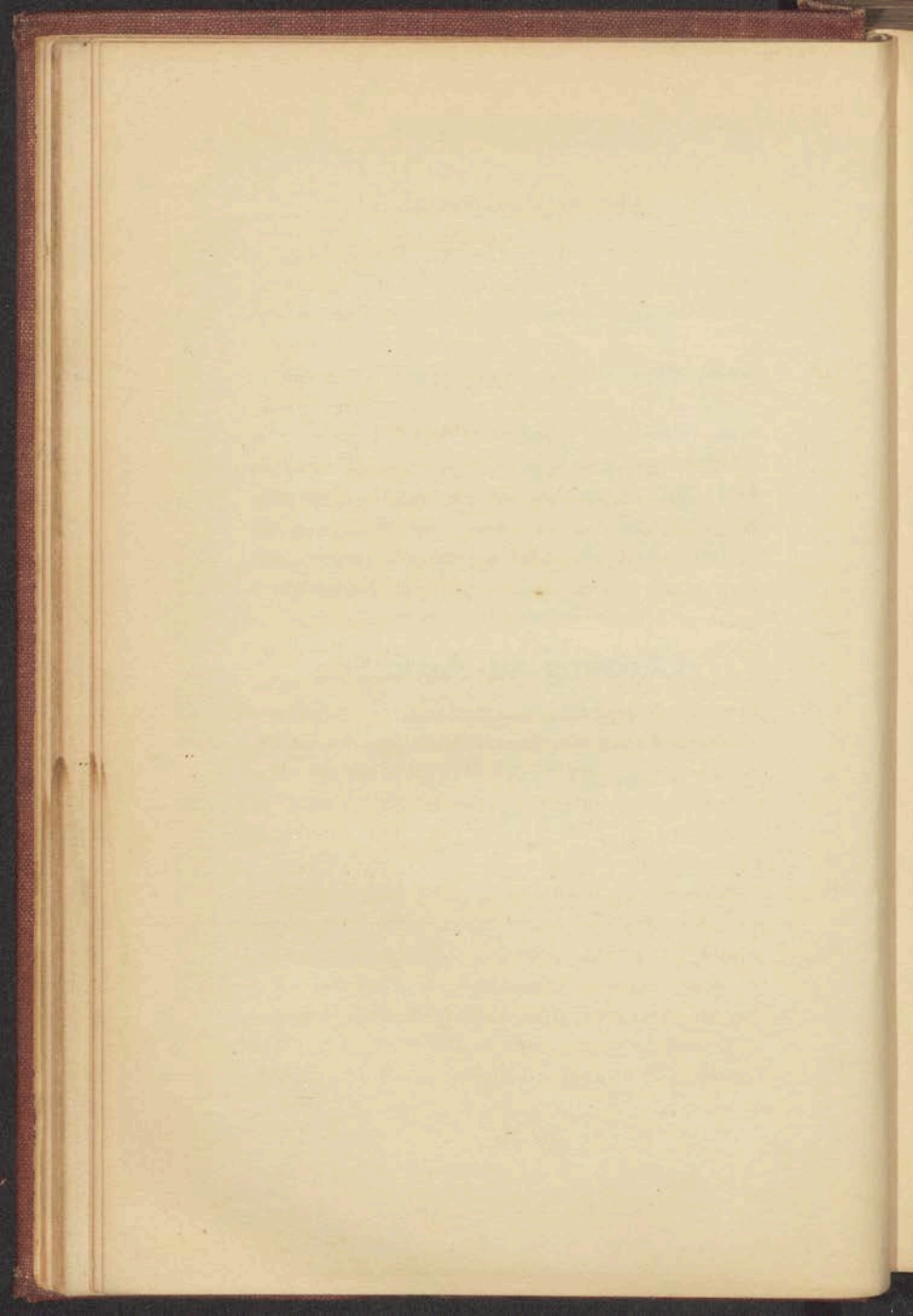
severe toil, both intellectual and manual. Their place in the world cannot be acceptably taken and creditably occupied unless their preparation for it is earnest and serious.

We, too, though not written in the earthly book of royalty, are sons and daughters of the King, and need a training befitting our rank. For, though it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet, beloved, now are we the sons of God. Our place will be the one our Father has given us, and in that he calls us every one to be faithful and true.

“Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts,
To keep and cultivate;
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait.

I ask thee for the daily strength,
To none that ask denied,
A mind to blend with outward life
While keeping at thy side;
Content to fill a little space.
If thou be glorified.”

Choosing an Avocation



Choosing an Avocation

CHAPTER II.

Choosing an Avocation.

FEW decisions are so important or have so many consequences depending on their issue as the choice of an avocation. In the days of our grandmothers, girls did not trouble their minds very much about their future callings. Boys were, of course, expected to go into a trade, a business, or a profession, and were trained accordingly, but their sisters were supposed to be growing up simply for domestic life, so that there was no necessity for them to think about a career. A little music, a little French, a little botany; it is curious to remember the persistent recurrence of that word little in the story of girlish training two generations ago.

Parents took it for granted that their daughters would marry and leave them, while their sons would go out into the world and become bread-winners, wage-earners, and men of affairs. Today, an avocation imperiously beckons both sexes, and sensible young women are as eager as their cousins and brothers to enter on some active form of service.

Life on High Levels

Equally with young men, young women patiently accept the apprenticeship which an avocation implies. This is the period of the specialist, and while a broad foundation must needs be laid, and the common and higher schools give a good deal of general culture, yet the person who wishes to succeed must determine on some particular course and become proficient in that. The professions specialize different departments, so that in law, or in medicine, or in journalism, one man no longer undertakes every branch; he turns his attention rather to the special branch in which he may become skilled, useful, and by and by famous. When we want advice we seek a specialist and pay him for the help he gives us—help we could not obtain from the all-round practitioner who, in devoting himself to every branch, had not thoroughly mastered in its minute details the single one which the specialist had studied.

I was a visitor the other afternoon to three studios. One belongs to a man famous for his portraiture of men and women. On his walls and easels are pictures of beautiful girls and stately men, pictures so life-like that they all but speak to you. The man is not young, and the consecration of many years has given his brush its magic, made his flesh tints so fine, showed him how to catch the subtle expression of lip and chin

Choosing an Avocation

and eye, to pose his sitters to advantage, and paint the bust and noblest phase of every character.

"Did you decide to be a painter in your boyhood?" I asked.

"It was not so much I that chose painting, as painting that chose me," was the answer. "I felt a call from God to take up this line, and I followed on and obeyed, though the traditions of my family were opposed to it, and I sacrificed business prospects to sit down before my easel."

I left this room and went to another, where a woman, gracious and charming, spends her days in the lovely art of flower-painting. She paints only flowers, and her violets, carnations, and roses, her pansies, clover blooms, and orchids, look so natural that they might deceive the bees. To sit down before her violets made me feel the woods of spring about me on a winter's day with sweet, shy fragrance wafting itself on every zephyr, and far up in the tree tops, falling now and then a silver challenge to the silence, the flute note of a robin, with his nest close hidden among the leaves.

"How came you to paint violets, dear lady?" I asked.

There was a sudden lighting up of the quiet face; she smiled wistfully.

"I had to," she said, gently. "The violets caught me and held me fast in their net. I can do

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nothing else, but I can show people violets when they are too busy to seek them in their haunts."

I turned my back on the lovely, sunny studio with the quiet woman and the wealth of flowers and stepped into an elevator outside the little bowery room; up, up, up it carried me smoothly and swiftly, and presently I was in another bit of a den, with draperies and vases and beautiful bric-a-brac, and here the presiding genius was a bright-looking Western girl who came to New York some years ago without a penny in her pocket, and who now is on the high road to fame and fortune. Her line of work is the painting of cabinet pictures, a flask, a table, a bunch of grapes, an open book, a curtain, a carving, a chair, a shelf, but whatever she does is exquisitely finished, and shows that the artist's heart as well as her hand has gone into every stroke of her brush.

"I tried several things," she explained, modestly, "but this was the only thing I could really do, so I settled down upon this, and my aim is just to paint better and better every single day."

I met a man one day last week to whom golden doors of opportunity had swung open from his birth. He might have been a man of science, a lawyer, a surgeon, anything he chose, but his preference was to follow on in the path where his forefathers had achieved wealth, and be an honest

Choosing an Avocation

shipping merchant. So he had begun on the ladder's lowest round, and was toiling slowly up, as anyone else in the great house might do. "I chose this occupation because it was the one for which I felt I had the most fitness," he said.

"I shall never be brilliant; but I can plod steadily on in the beaten track and do my day's work with any other."

To an eminent professional man, a man who has arrived at distinction and whose name is everywhere mentioned with honor and held in high esteem, I said:

"How did you happen to become a doctor?"

"I did not happen," he replied. "I might have been as successful in some other department. Attention, pluck, singleness of aim, hard, down-right work, tend to success. I might have been a teacher, for I have a knack at instruction. I know I could have been a successful traveling salesman, who could convince reluctant buyers that they must purchase my wares, but I saw that my town needed a good doctor, and I gave my whole mind to that. I always liked to nurse ailing chickens and pet dogs when I was a boy, and I have never regretted my choice. I meant when I went into the hospital to be the best doctor in the State before I got through with it."

"And you were not far out of your reckoning," was the natural reply.

Life on High Levels

Avoid, dear young people, the foolish fallacy that one kind of work is, *per se*, more noble and dignified than another. Any work is noble if God calls one to it, and in it one does one's very best.

Let the preliminary training be thorough. Then when the hour comes for choice, choose wisely, take friends into your counsels, and weigh the pros and cons. Once having chosen, adhere to your intention.

Chauncey Depew, addressing a graduating class in college, said, "Young men, I give you three magical words: Stick, Dig, Save."

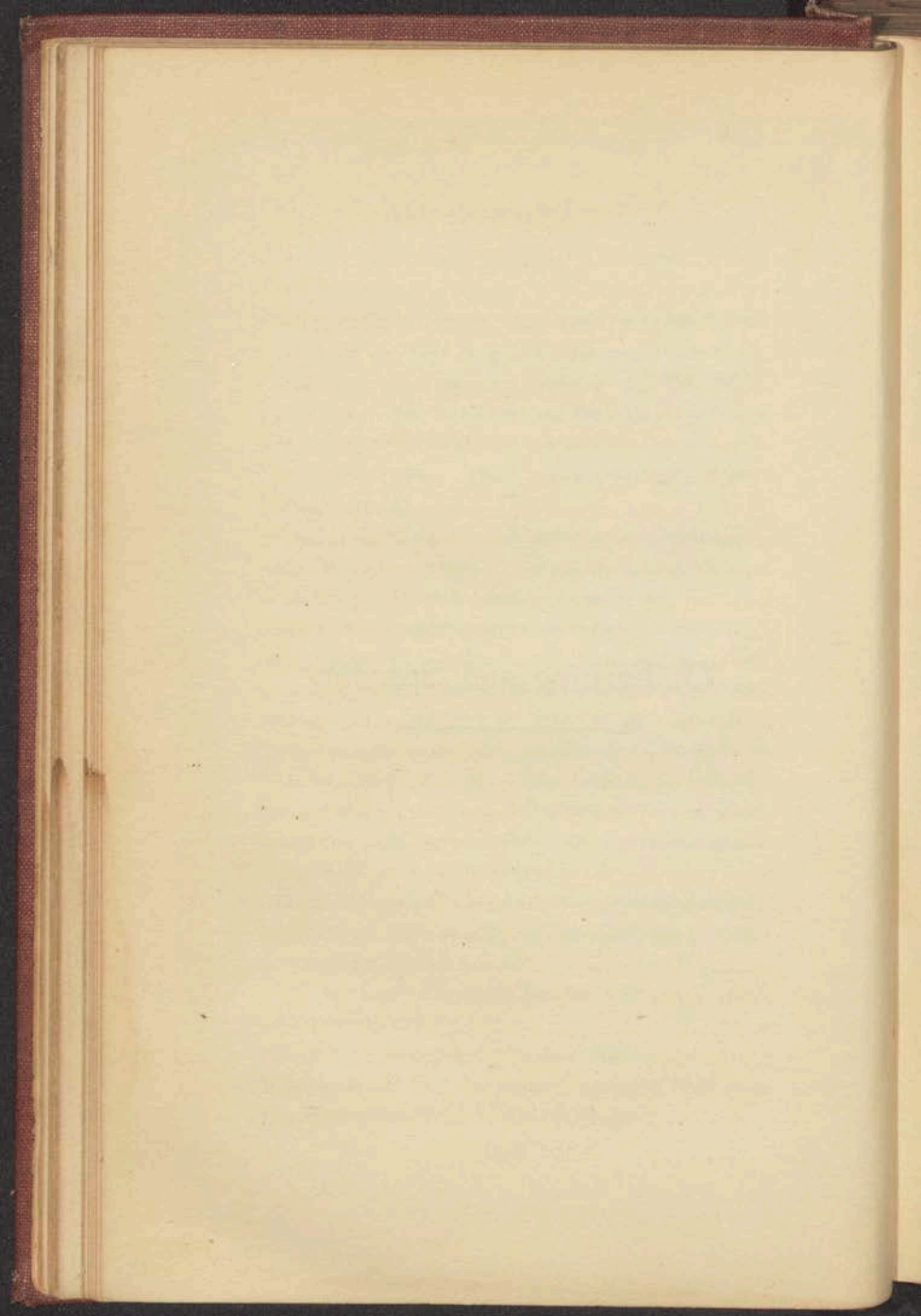
In entering on life's avocation I cannot improve on these. But I add a fourth word, Pray. And this is, perhaps, the most practical word of the four. The act of prayer, if the prayer be one of faith, brings the pledged assistance of heaven to us in our hour of need. The wisdom of God, the tenderness, the instant help, are promised to us when our Lord says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find."

That is a beautiful old story of the prophet and his servant at the gate of Samaria, the prophet serene, the servant afraid.

"Lord, open his eyes that he may see!" cried the man of God.

And lo! the mountain was radiant with an angel host, the chariots and horses of fire, sent from the skies for the help of Elisha!

Of Earning and Spending



Of Earning and Spending

CHAPTER III.

Of Earning and Spending.

THE ordinary person likes to spend money. It is the extraordinary person who prefers to save it. Indeed, the one who likes to hoard money for the mere pleasure of the hoarding has been labeled by the common consent of all ages as a miser, a sordid and miserable wretch, whose ideals are low, and whose scale of living is lower still. To most of us there is real enjoyment and satisfaction in going to a shop, looking at the myriad of pretty and charming articles displayed, choosing something we have secretly longed for, or else have just fallen in love with, and bringing it home in triumph. With what joy and gladness we hang the coveted picture on the wall; how we revel in the satin smoothness of the lovely bit of china; how our eyes rest in sheer delight on the dim softness of color which makes the Eastern rug or portière a dream of melting hues and tender tints; how we finger with an exquisite contentment the delicate daintiness of cobweb laces and shining linens; and, if we are book lovers, with what an air of exultant possession

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we arrange our latest purchase on our already laden shelves! Sometimes, in the latter case, we indulge our joy for awhile in secret, knowing that our families will shake their heads at our extravagance.

I heard a sweet, simple-hearted woman say, not long ago, that one of her greatest pleasures when she came from her country home to the city was found in making the round of the great shops, seeing the new things, and buying what she wanted. "I would rather do this," she naïvely confessed, "than go to art galleries and water color exhibitions, or see tall buildings, or be taken for drives in the park."

I knew precisely what she meant. What were tall, ten-storied business warehouses to one whose outlook at home was on the eternal hills up-climbing until they lost themselves in the blue distance of the sky and bathed their tops in the clouds? Why should she care for a park when her daily walks and drives took her through miles of green forest paths, over which the elms and chestnuts arched their dusky boughs? But she had the womanly liking for trade, and for bargaining in the market place for silken stuffs and carven fans and pretty bric-a-brac.

Womanly? It is hardly that. Men, too, have their temptations to acquire this and the other attractive article which is displayed on the mer-

Of Earning and Spending

chant's counter. Money burns a hole in many a masculine pocket until it is spent for something the owner longs to have, yet might do without.

For spending, mind you, is not extravagant, or in any way open to criticism, until it ceases to be held in the right relation to earning. As there is no virtue, *per se*, in mere saving for saving's sake there is no harm in spending lavishly whatever one can honestly afford. Thrift may be a noble or a niggardly quality, as it stands connected with integrity, with duty, with the clearly defined limitations of income and outgo.

The ever-to-be-affectionately-remembered Mr. Micawber remarked on a certain occasion, in substance, that twenty pounds being yours, you might, with comfort, spend nineteen pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence. Not a penny more unless you would be wretched. And he was right. There is a thrift of good spending as there is a diligent and praiseworthy system of good earning. Hand in hand they must go, the earning and the spending, with one or two obvious reservations and rules.

The terms poor and rich are relative, not arbitrary, in their significance. I know comfortably opulent poor people, and I have met unhappy paupers who had bank accounts. The secret of being rich on a small income is to spend less than you earn. The instant your ordinary expenditure

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goes beyond the mark of your ordinary earning you find yourself inconveniently poor. Even if you spend all you earn and have nothing over, simply coming out even at the end of the week or the month, you will still be poor and anxious, for this is a scheme of living which leaves no margin for incidental expenses, for illness, accident, or the thousand-and-one things not to be foreseen or anticipated, which may cause a sudden drain on one's purse. One should have a margin for emergencies if possible to compass it by provident forethought.

Spend less than you earn, and time will deal with you lightly. Spend more than you earn, and old age will march upon you with the relentless stride of an armed man.

A young woman in New York called one morning on a friend, to find the latter sitting in her pleasant morning room engaged in renovating an old gown. The first greetings were hardly over, when Number One said, with tears in her voice:

"I've come to say good-bye. Jack and I are mortgaged up to our eyelids; we're dreadfully in debt; we can't begin to pay the butcher and the grocer, and we've got to go and bury ourselves on a farm Jack's uncle owns on the South Shore."

"Why, Lucy!" exclaimed Number Two, "I don't understand it. Your husband's salary is

Of Earning and Spending

four times as large as Ned's, and you haven't had to buy any clothes since you've been married."

"I can't explain it," was the answer. "But I have had to buy clothes, dear. Of course I can never appear twice in the same gown, and all the people Jack and I associate with have quantities of money. Then, we have three maids and a boy in buttons; one can hardly do with less."

"I have one maid and I make over my old gowns," said the hostess, "and Ned and I never go into debt, not for a paper of pins. As for our friends, we do not try to live as the affluent do, and nobody seems to measure us by the style of our home, nor the figure we cut in society. I have worn the same dinner gown for three winters."

"The fact is," said the guest, breaking down and crying outright, "that you and Ned have common sense and good management, and Jack and I have acted like a pair of silly children."

As indeed they had, and silly was hardly the word. Debt incurred when there is no prospect of paying it is downright dishonesty, only one step removed from theft. At the best it hangs a millstone round the debtor's neck; at the worst it is little short of a crime.

The money earned by one's hard toil does not by any means always fairly represent one's value. Competition is so fierce in our crowded commer-

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cial centers that a really brilliant man may not rise rapidly, and may long have to be contented with a low salary. Besides, in the long run the plodder often excels the brilliant man in the business race. But the faithful and diligent clerk, bookkeeper, or salesman, the man of absolutely unimpeachable integrity, is in the line where promotion is possible, and in the long run he will reach his proper level. Circumstances favor the man of ability and integrity.

Of two young people who wait on you in a shop, what a difference one often finds in the interest each takes. I stepped into a large drygoods establishment the other day, intent on the purchase of an article of dress of which I was in need, and which I was resolved to buy that afternoon. It was a rather expensive thing and could not be selected without much care on my part and attention on that of the saleswoman who had the goods in her charge. But in vain were my efforts to convince that particular young woman that it was worth her while to display the garments on her shelves. Neither question, nor suggestion, nor amiable urgency on my side could prevail on her to show her goods with the slightest alacrity; she was passive, inert, indifferent, so far as her share of the transaction was concerned, turning her back on me with an air of great relief when I announced that nothing she had suited me, and

Of Earning and Spending

immediately resuming with zest the conversation with a neighbor behind the counter which my inopportune entrance had interrupted. I went to the shop next door, found there a competent and obliging clerk, selected what I was in search of without the least difficulty, and afterward bought several other things which the young lady, in a most engaging manner, brought forth for my inspection.

It would not surprise me, some months hence, to learn that the second saleswoman has become head of her department. She has the qualities of charm and concentration of interest in the affair on hand which make an employee very valuable. Even though one may not always feel thoroughly interested, yet the obligation on one who accepts wages is to earn them; not with a half-hearted and insincere attention, but with the whole power of one's being.

To spend less than one makes is manifest wisdom. In a thoughtful article on this subject the Rev. Dr. David J. Burrell says:

"The beginning of a fortune is made when a man learns to respect the day of small things. The largest of exchequers is reducible to pence. 'Little and often fills the safe.' Wasting the littles fills the workhouse.

"Cicero said, 'Not to have a mania for buying is to possess a revenue.'

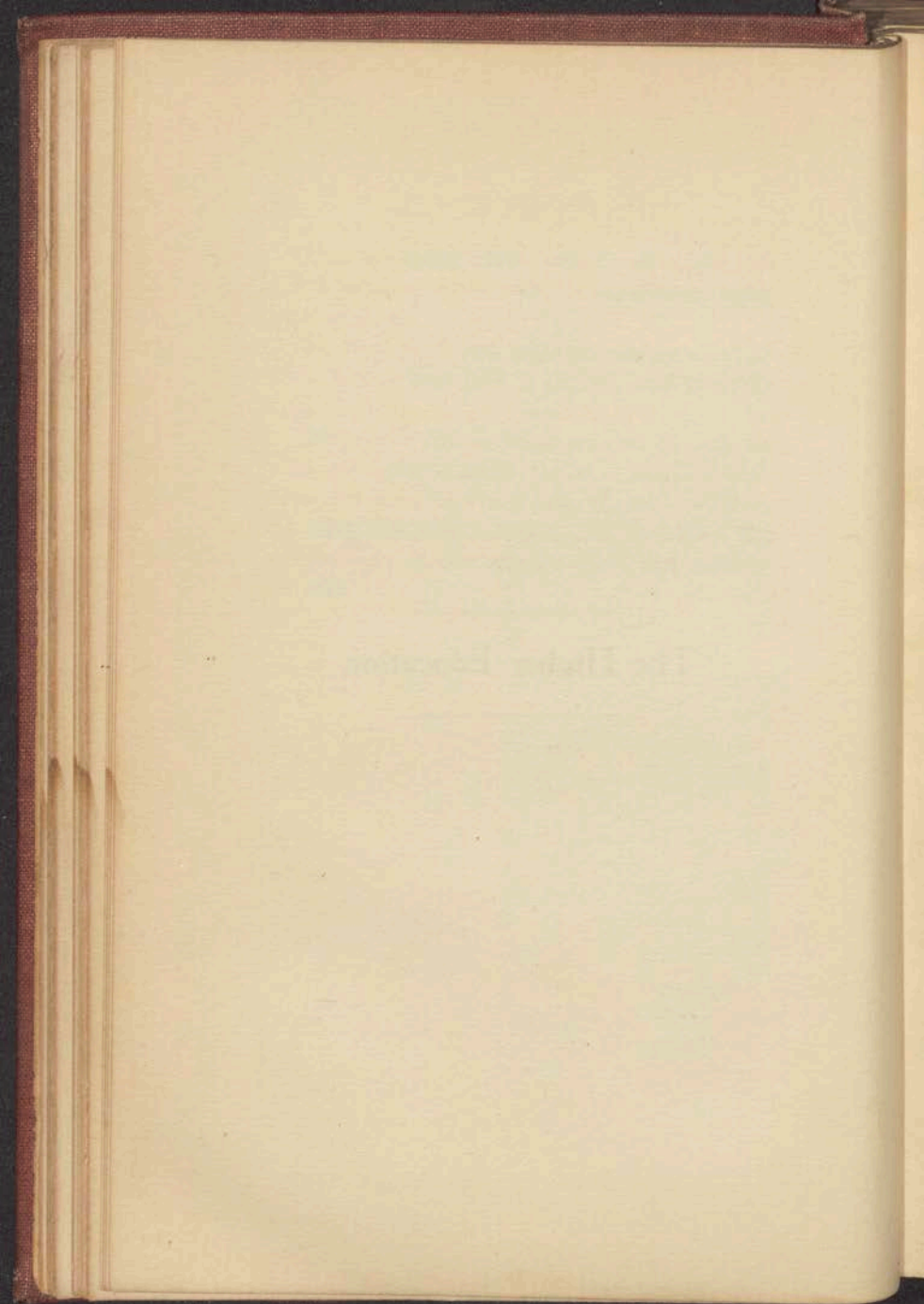
Life on High Levels

"Cato the elder, whose robe of state cost him only a hundred pence, said, 'A superfluous thing is never cheap.'

"St. Paul put it still more admirably when he said, 'I know both how to abound, and to suffer want.'

"We never realize what we can do without until we have thought thrice. Denying ourselves the luxuries which palm themselves off on the unthinking as indispensable, will keep the margin right on our balance sheet, and nothing else will."

The Higher Education



The Higher Education

CHAPTER IV.

The Higher Education.

WE hear a great deal about modern scholarship and the higher education, and sometimes there seems to be an impression in the air that there never was any learning worth speaking about before our own day. Now, there cannot be a greater mistake than to suppose that facilities and appliances and extensive and extended opportunities have made us giants, whereas those who went before us were pygmies. A glance at our libraries shows us volumes filled with research; the masters of literature and art still color our thought and demand our attention. Still are there old men and gray-haired women who are well and liberally educated, though the methods of their youth were somewhat different from those which their grandchildren follow.

The recollection that not the amount one studies, but the degree of assimilation, is the important thing would be timely for those of us who do not recognize the fact that while colleges largely mold and influence men and strongly impress their traditional advantages on their graduates,

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and on those whom their graduates meet, still there may be culture quite outside of college walls.

To the person who must early leave school, and abandon the pursuit of what is styled the higher education, let me say that all life is an academy, and that on every hand there are gates ajar, awaiting only the resolute touch of a man in earnest to push them open. One determined upon being well educated need never despair of realizing his ideal

For one thing, books are the best possible as well as the most friendly teachers. You may have very little time for a book, but use the little, the five or ten minutes in the morning, the spell borrowed from your luncheon hour, read with intention, and attack a real book, a genuine volume of essays or poetry or history, and at the end of three months you will be surprised at the progress you have made. I must caution the enthusiastic student against the prodigal use of sight in poring over fine print in trains or boats, or where the light is imperfect; but one's own common sense dictates care of those useful and loyal servitors, the eyes. Books are to be had in marvelously cheap editions, well printed in clear type on good paper; and bought one by one they are a wise investment for one's home, and one's life, or borrowed from a library, they are equally valuable friends. The person who reads daily,

The Higher Education

according to a prearranged plan, and not merely for amusement, cannot fail to become cultivated. And while there are among our chief literary favorites men who never saw the inside of college walls, but whose books are the lingering delight of thousands, we need not fear that we will be ill-educated even if our college must be the counting room or the shop.

Companionship with well-bred and thoughtful men and women is stimulating and educational, and uplifts us from the dreary level of the commonplace and rouses our finer ambitions. Perhaps we have gradually suffered ourselves to fall into a rut. It may be that we have imperceptibly adopted low opinions, as, for example, that money, *per se*, is the most desirable thing in the world, and that a great fortune is to be envied in its possessor and toiled for as a worthy end.

Too many of us are like Bunyan's man with the muck-rake, who could not lift his eyes from the ground, and who was forever drawing up sticks and straws and rubbish with his poor rake.

The society of bright, breezy, well-informed people, whose outlook is beyond the mere confines of to-day, who talk about large concerns, and care what happens outside their immediate front doors, is a blessed education for those who are admitted to it.

"Where did that young woman get her per-

Life on High Levels

fectly beautiful manner?" I heard some one inquire.

"Why, don't you know?" was the answer. "She traveled with that lovely Mrs.—, and to be under the same roof with her was itself an education."

Travel is one of the most broadening influences which ever touches human experience. It is not in every one's power to enjoy this, for some have not that free foot which can roam where it will, others lack the requisite funds, and others are bound by home duties. Here again books step in to aid us, and we may be accomplished pilgrims, even if we never stray beyond the fireside. With Nansen we may go to the fields and flocks of the "Farthest North;" with Williams and Griffis and Miss Bird and Adele Fields, familiarize ourselves with China and Japan; with heroic missionaries and valiant explorers for our guides, we may penetrate unknown regions, and eat strange viands, and learn the ways of odd and mysterious people. The next best thing to going to another land in person is being conducted thither by one who has seen and noted what he saw and written it down for our learning.

I cannot too highly recommend to the young friend who seeks the best culture a habit of steady and persistent churchgoing, not here and there to listen to gifted divines and splendid orators,

The Higher Education

but to one's own sanctuary, to sit under, as the Scottish phrase has it, one's own pastor, week in and week out. The pulpit deals with elevated themes, and the minister's office is to instruct. The hearer who goes to church, not to be critical, not to find fault, not to be inattentive, but to give a well-bred attention, and to maintain a receptive attitude of mind while in the pew, will insensibly absorb a sort of culture which is one of the best gifts the Church bestows upon her worshiping throngs. One does not go to church primarily for intellectual enrichment, but this follows in the wake of other and more spiritual privileges.

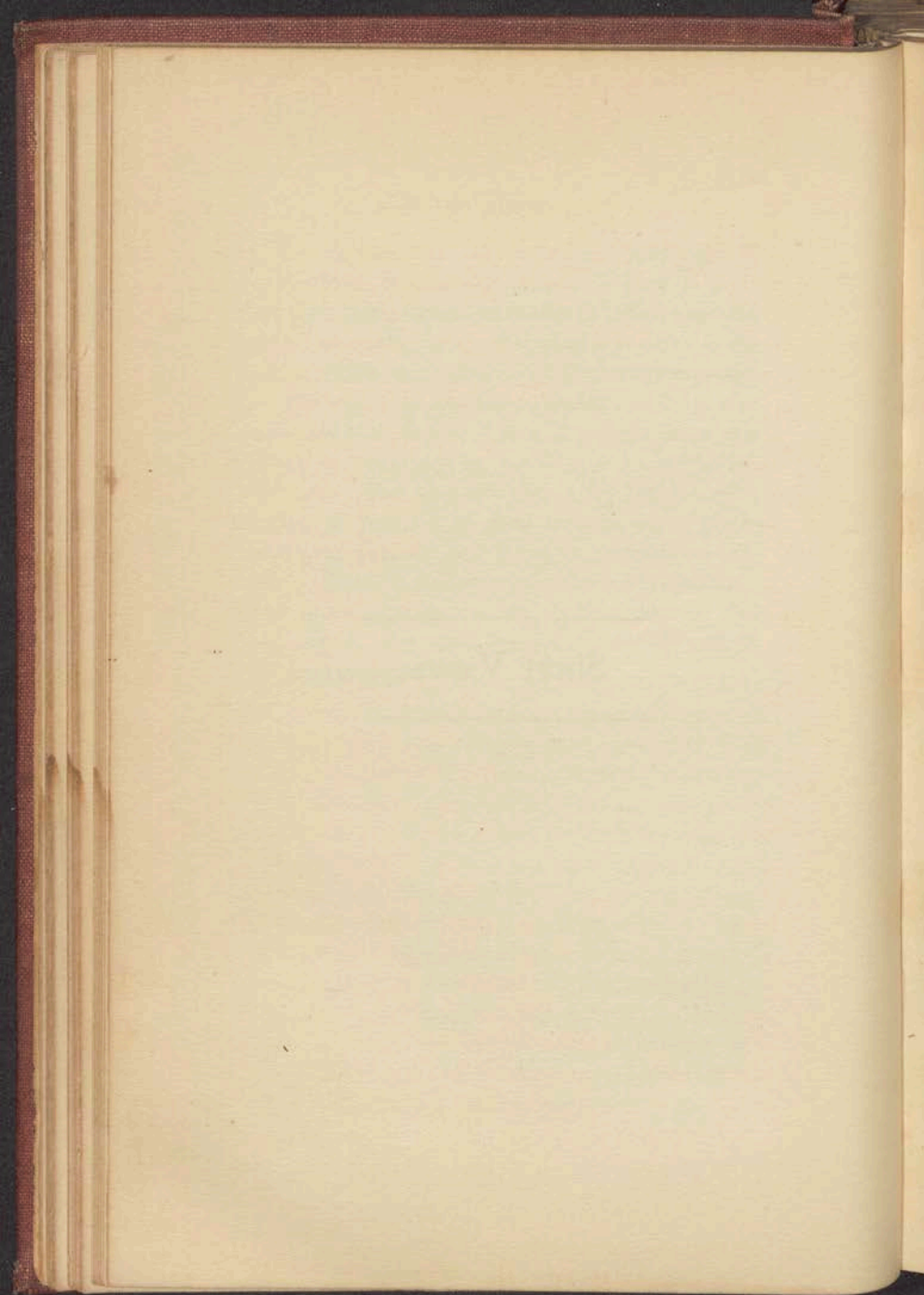
The wave of interest in the Scottish peasantry which has swept over us since Crockett and Maclaren and Stevenson have conferred upon us intimacy with those simple Scottish homes where God is held in reverence, and the Bible influences the daily life, has shown us how piety and culture may go hand in hand. Read "Margaret Ogilvy" and you will see in that noble revelation of what maternal love and filial loyalty may be at their best, how true and austere and refined a culture may coexist with somewhat restricted opportunities and a narrow and heavily-handicapped existence.

By all means get the best education you can, the fullest, the highest, the widest. Go to college,

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if that be possible. Do not make the blunder of underrating the smaller college. It may do, it often does, more for the individual student than the larger university can. It is what you carry to the college quite as much as what the college conveys to you which makes the splendid manhood, the gracious womanhood. But if college doors are closed in your face, go bravely and confidently forward. You may still obtain the highest education if you are in dead earnest, have pluck and perseverance and belief in yourself and in God. There is culture where there is not college, and more depends on the student than on the professors. For some fine souls the world proves the best *alma mater*.

Short Views



Short Views

CHAPTER V.

Short Views.

“I MET Arthur Lee just now on the street,” said my friend, dropping in to have a bit of chat on her way home from market. “And Arthur looks blue enough to blot all the brightness of the day for his mother and sisters, which is a pity, besides his having to carry around that burden of gloom himself. What ails the lad? Isn’t he well, or is he overworking? I haven’t been able to forget his downcast face since I left him, and his very step was heavy, like that of an old man.”

“Arthur Lee,” I answered, “has reached one of those hard places where there is nothing to do but to take each day as it comes, serenely sure that sufficient to itself will be its own evil. He is not very strong, he has more to do than is comfortable, and he sees little prospect of advancement. Life for the Lees has been a rough tussle with poverty, and Arthur has set his heart on achieving wealth. But the vision recedes as he advances. There is still the small salary, there is the inherited temperament which shackles the soul till courage wanes and cheerfulness vanishes, and there is a wretched habit of forecasting the

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years to come, instead of living one single day at a time.

"George Macdonald says somewhere, pithily, 'No man ever sank under the burden of to-day.' We can bear the trouble or the care which belongs to the hour. It is when we look ahead and see nothing beyond us but the same dreary prospect which now lies in shadow before us, that our strength is sapped."

"I wonder," said my friend, "that Arthur is so weak."

"All worry is weakness and tends to despair," I answered. "The difficulty is that the boy is trying to be brave and failing in the effort, and growing faint-hearted and sad, because he scorns to seek the help which might be his for the asking. There is One who would give him the power to keep a stout heart and a stiff resolution and a sunny smile, if only Arthur would take the comfort which is promised to the man who prays and believes."

"Well," said the lady, rising to go, "I shall pray for Arthur every step of the way home, and I will send the carriage around for his sister this afternoon and take her for a drive. Perhaps they don't keep the home atmosphere sweet and cheery. Men are like children. They need a lot of petting, and they respond to the tonic of gaiety in those they love."

Short Views

After my friend had gone, I thought, as often before, of the whole subject which is embodied in Sydney Smith's well-known advice to take short views. I thought of a picture I had seen of a sturdy shepherd in the Highlands, tramping up a steep hill with the mist in his face. I thought of Robert Bruce and his famous spider; of poor Mr. Despondency and his daughter, Miss Much-Afraid; of the pilgrims shut up in the dungeon, in the clutch of Giant Despair. I arrived at this conclusion, which I pass on to you, that there is nothing more foolish and on the whole more unprofitable than the giving up to present ills, and acting as if they were to be the abiding conditions.

A judicious physician once said to me, "Make up your mind that it is the nature of disease to get well." Of course people die, but then nature has been overpowered. We must always look for a good fighting chance and anticipate health, or else we shall neither be good nurses nor good doctors.

Look back across a few years. What long sunny intervals of pleasure, of family prosperity, of comparative freedom from any great trouble. The history of most of us is like the history of a tranquil nation, like a full-bosomed river sweeping smoothly to the sea. Only now and then come wars and rumors of war. Only occasion-

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ally arrives the great calamity. The year when some one dear to us almost went home, but was spared a little longer, stands out in bold relief. The autumn when the house burned down is marked in memory as by a tall shaft. But in no case of shock or sudden disaster could anything have been prevented by our sitting up at night to worry.

Even when we are aware that some untoward event might have been averted by our better planning or our different action in given circumstances, we have no right to be worried. There is a kind of worrying habit which looks backward and grieves over the past, just as there is a twin habit which paralyzes the will and destroys our efficiency in work by foreboding evil in the future.

Because in a day of my days to come,
There waiteth a grief to be,
Shall my heart grow faint, or my lips be dumb,
In this day which is bright for me?
Because of a subtle sense of pain,
Like a pulse-beat threaded through
The bliss of the day, shall my soul refrain
From delight in the good and true?

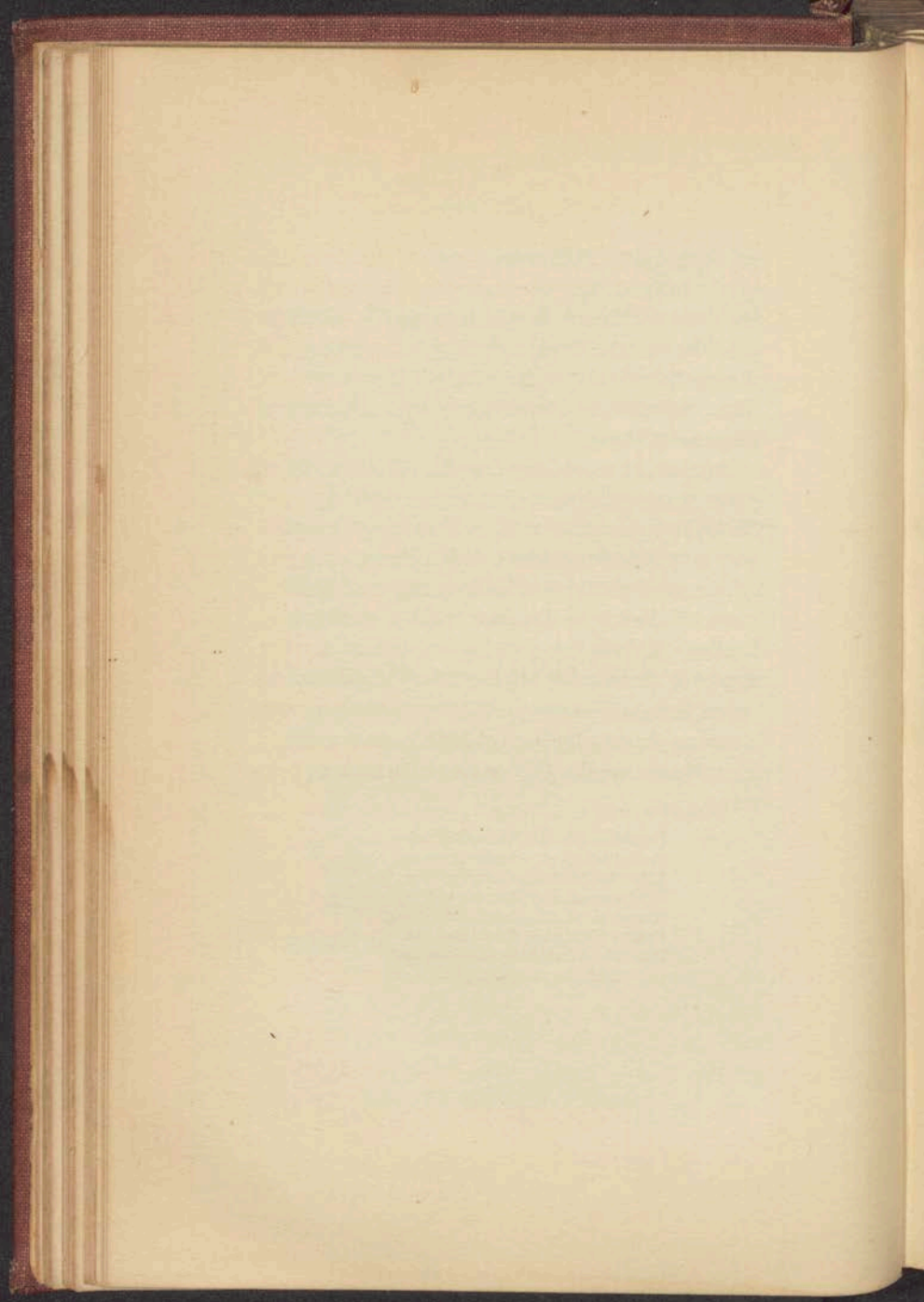
Blessed in every age is the tender and gracious assurance of the Master, that "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Forever and forever our marching order is the same which was once given to Moses, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they

Short Views

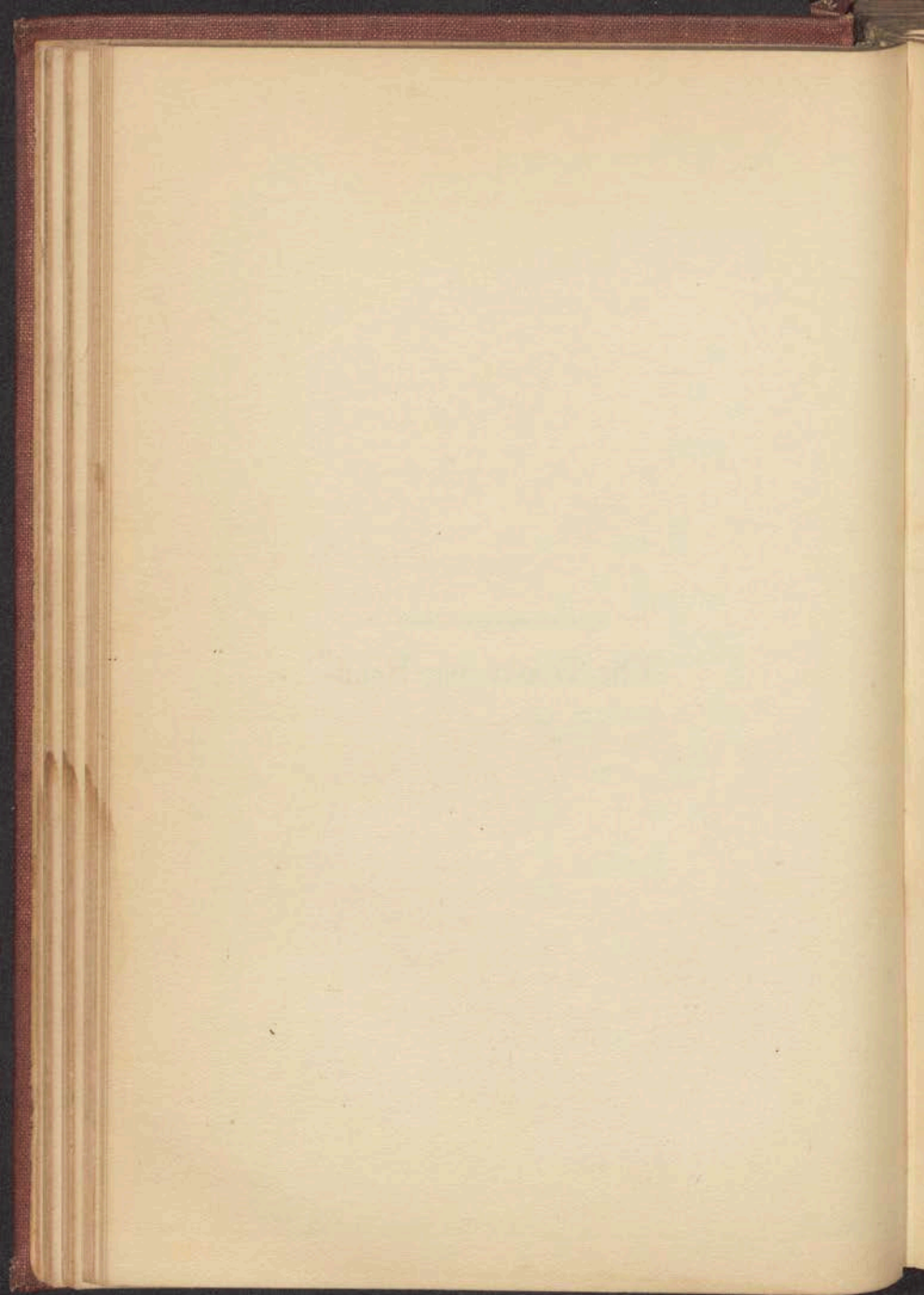
go forward." And sweet as a waft from the bright hills of heaven comes the sentence which the disciples heard in the long ago: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Take short views, my friends. Go blithely on your way, sure that farther on, perhaps just around the next corner, there is waiting to surprise you a wonderful bit of good fortune, a day of white-robed gladness and bird-song and blessedness. Take life as it comes, with a cheerful optimism. Do not lose youth prematurely in wearing and distressful anxiety, but challenge the worst temporal anxiety which can meet you with a serene philosophy born of faith in an overruling Providence, vigilant for your protection and defense.

Courage, though the skies are drear,
In the tempest's depth is cheer,
Life and love are drawing near,
Joy shall victor be.
Somewhere, singing in the snow,
Happy thoughts flit to and fro,
Heaven to earth is bending low,
Soul, be strong and free.



The Books we Read



The Books we Read

CHAPTER VI.

The Books we Read.

I HAVE already touched in passing the culture which comes from the books we read, but I cannot let the subject go without fuller treatment. The world of books is to me as real and actual as the world of people I meet day by day, and few pleasures seem to me quite equal to that of sitting beside a window, looking out on a garden, with a favorite book in my hand, or if the wintry chill be in the air of enjoying a book beside the fire. Books are companions that never jar on one's mood; they are patient with one's infirmities; they kindle our enthusiasm; they stimulate our thoughts; they console us for disappointment, and lift us above the low levels of the commonplace into clearer airs and finer altitudes. Even when I have not time to read a book I like it to lie near my hand, where I can pass my fingers caressingly over its binding, where I can sometimes, for one brief, happy instant, dip into its pages to catch inspiration for the hour. Books have a knack of cushioning the hard and jolting places on our journey, and I agree with Susan

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Coolidge when she says, that if she were called upon to act as a fairy godmother to a newborn child she would endow the little one with a sense of humor and a love of books, two admirable qualifications for a comfortable and easeful life. The person who has a quick appreciation of the drollery of a situation, who sees the funny side of a thing without the need of explanation, has an immense advantage over his duller witted brother to whom a jest is a conundrum, and to whose literal mind laughing is a foolish and trivial exercise of the muscles, not, as it really is, a relief to the brain, and a genuine help when times are trying. The Bible tells us that there is a time to laugh, and he or she is to be congratulated in whom mirth bubbles up as an irresistible spring.

A thorough and innate liking for books and a trained facility in their use go hand in hand. It was that splendid old bookman, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who once remarked in reply to a rather ponderous inquirer, "While you are fussing over which of two books your boy would better read, another boy will have read both." In Dr. Johnson's period juvenile literature had not attained its present dimensions, nor did it offer so many snares and pitfalls for the unwary as it now does, so that parental vigilance was less essential than it is to-day. The youthful Macaulay was so rapid a reader that he seemed to assimi-

The Books we Read

late a book through the pores of his skin, and this may have been the sort of railroad pace by which Dr. Johnson's typical book-loving boy read through two volumes while his friend's father was balancing their respective merits.

Neither slow nor rapid reading is in itself to be commended.

Some of our books give us a parlor-car seat, and we luxuriously turn leaf after leaf and are whirled along without stopping in one breathless excursion from start to finish. The home-stretch of the concluding pages is by a flying express, and we are exhausted by the tremendous speed, so that it is difficult again to return to our ordinary occupation. This is true of many novels, especially of the lighter ones which merely tell a story, sketch events and fashions of the hour, and require no analytical thought of the reader. Not all the novelists, however, can be read in such thoughtless haste, and, as a rule, the better worth while the story, the more it requires of the reader in the way of severe attention. Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*, Meredith's *Harry Richmond*, Eber's *Uarda*, Scott's *Ivanhoe*, or any other intensely dramatic or deeply philosophic novel or romance, demands thoughtful attention and must receive it, to yield up its stores of

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wealth. In a less degree this is true of the charming Scotch school which has lately had a new vogue in fiction. A good preparation for the enjoyment of the latter masterpieces is a course of Sir Walter Scott, whose Waverly novels, considered slow and tiresome by so many young people, once thrilled the world, and still commands the admiration of all lovers of genuine literature.

Having made the acquaintance of *The Heart of Midlothian*, of *Kenilworth*, and of *Tales of a Grandfather*, you are ready to come under the wizard spell of Stevenson, to follow with Crockett the hair-breadth adventures of the splendid *Men of the Moss-Hags*, to let Barrie show you *The Little Minister* and *A Window in Thrums*, and to dream over the pages of *Sentimental Tommy*. You will be hardly put to it to say whether Barrie or Maclaren is your favorite, when you lose your heart to Margaret Howe and to brave William Maclure in *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*. All these novels of Scottish life, be they in lowland or highland, by wild purple moor or singing burn, are wholesome, pure, and clean as the wind that sweeps the mountain peak, and their reading will make you long to be worthier to bear your part in the struggle and the strife of the market and the battlefield.

Read biography. I have only lately made a

The Books we Read

niche among my most precious books for *Margaret Ogilvy*, Barrie's tribute to the dearest of mothers; but on the shelf to which I oftenest turn are *Two Noble Lives* and *The Gurneys of Earlham* and *The Life of James Hannington*, and many another record of a fellow being who went before and blazed the path for me.

The lives of missionaries, either to the home or the foreign field, are stimulating to piety, and afford entertaining reading apart from the heroism which they record. The Church and the world owe to these standard bearers of the cross a debt which can never be paid, which can never be so much as estimated. Missionaries are the pioneers of civilization. They precede other agents in opening the dark places of the earth to the light of the Gospel. They have contributed many facts to philology and aided science in her discoveries. They have enriched literature. They have elevated woman. They have gone to farthest East or remotest West, endured hardness without murmuring, and in the midst of violence and degradation and wickedness they have reared the beacon of the Christian home. No literary toil has been more strenuous than theirs. No soldier under any flag has fought a braver fight than theirs under the banner of Jesus. The whole world is better because they have not counted their lives dear, and in this waning cen-

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tury, again and again, has the crown of the martyr been set on the brow of the missionary. Read their lives, and rise from the perusal of every one more than ever consecrated to Him who yet

“Shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run.”

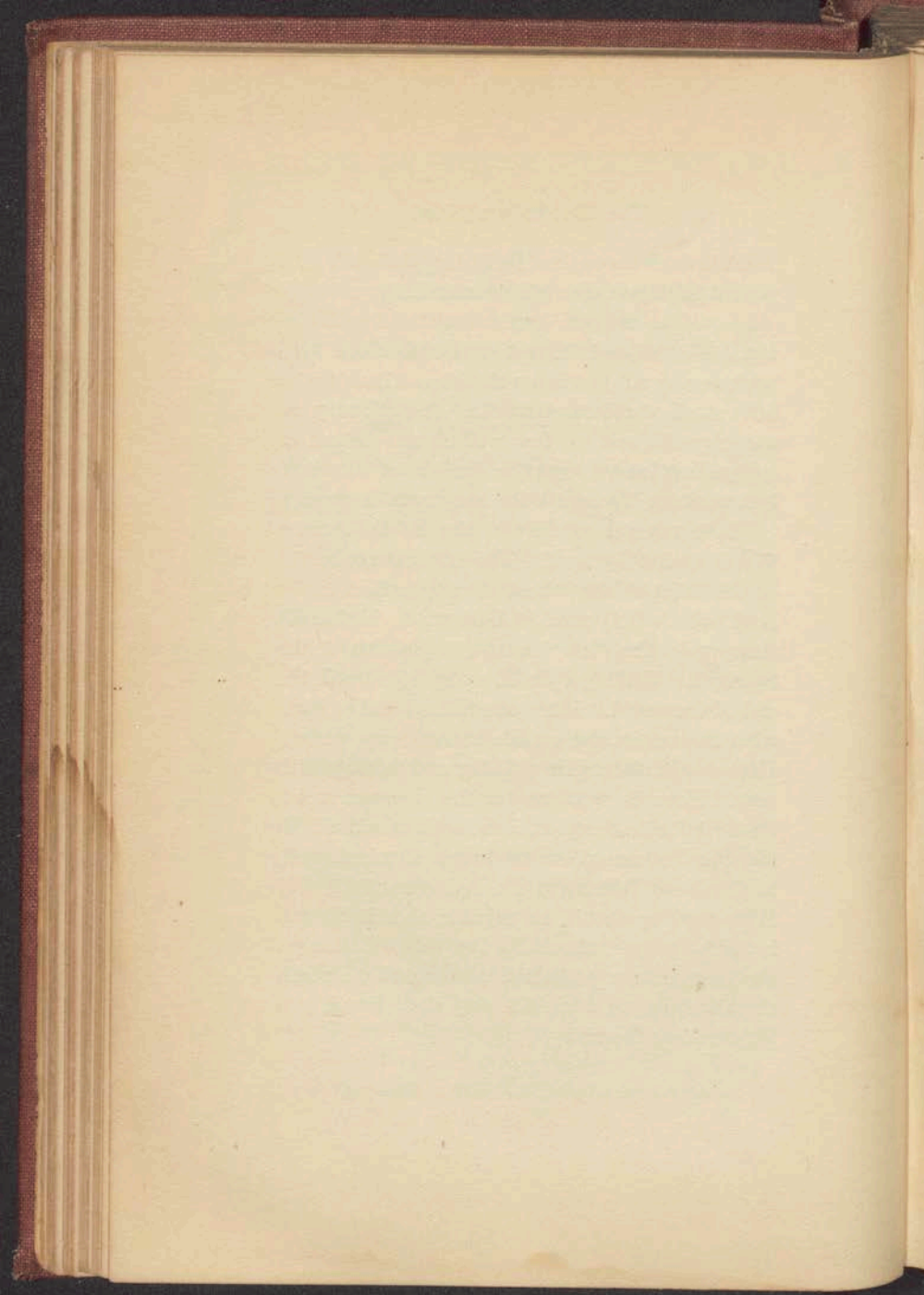
You will find, if you share my taste for the essayist, great profit in the thoughtful pages of many a terse thinker whose words are as apples of gold in pictures of silver. You cannot omit a knowledge of our English poets from Chaucer to Tennyson. Nor may you pass by the historian, since the course of God's providence in this earth, which is our home and our training school, is clearly outlined and marked in the stories of Nineveh and Babylon, of Greece and Rome, of the Middle Ages, of the French Revolution, of English history along its triumphant line from Saxon and Norman and Dane to Victoria's long career. You must read the story of South Africa, of modern India, of our own America, aiding your reading always by the torch of biography, as, for instance, when you study our own Revolution read the Life of Washington by Woodrow Wilson, and when you are reviewing our civil war procure the Memoirs of Grant and other great soldiers, and of Lee and Jackson, these gallant foes facing each other stubbornly, but typically

The Books we Read

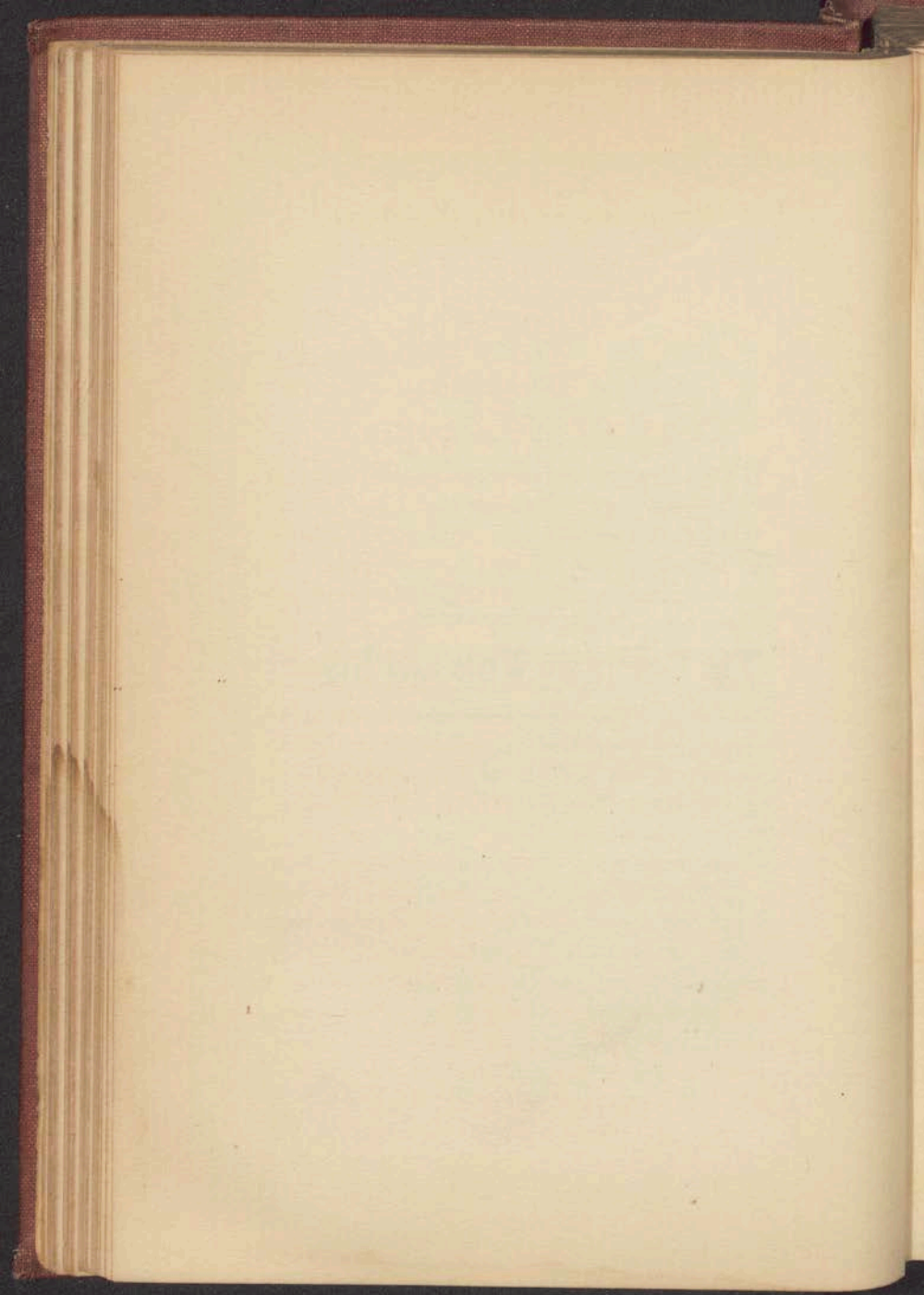
American all through. Read Lincoln's life, and with it begin a course of our later history.

Few of us can own or accumulate large collections of books, and the best attainable school text-book on any subject is a valuable addition to our little stock of reference works. A dictionary, an encyclopedia, and a few well-chosen school or college text-books, form the nucleus of an excellent working library for the busy man or woman.

I have not yet mentioned the Bible, because that is a book by itself. The soul cannot be fed on the finest of the wheat elsewhere than in the book which holy men of God wrote in the old time, under the dictation and inspiration of the Spirit, for God's people of every age until the end of the world. Here one walks hand in hand with the saints and confessors of every period. Here one finds angels walking and talking with men. Here is wisdom for the inexperienced, strength for the tempted, love for all mankind. In the Old Testament our Saviour is foreshadowed; in the New Testament He is incarnated. Our Bible reading should be regular, should be hallowed by prayer, should lead us onward through the years till our probation is over, and we reach the blissful time when the day shall break and the shadows flee away.



The Letters we Write and Receive



The Letters we Write and Receive

CHAPTER VII.

The Letters we Write and Receive.

ONE sweet spring night, as the stars came out in the deep and distant sky, I stood in the dusky gloom of a half-lighted Southern post office waiting my turn to inquire for letters. The town was a straggling, oddly built place, where tumble-down houses stood well back from the white sandy road half buried in a riot of roses, and instead of Northern elms and oaks there were feathery palms and banana and pineapple bushes, while orange and lemon trees perfumed the air. Pines were there, too, slender and straight, and the atmosphere was languid with the warmth of the tropics.

There were many pilgrims stopping for pleasure or in search of health in the little out-of-the-way place, and always after supper everybody went to the post office and stood patient and hopeful while unseen hands sorted the mail. How buoyant and blithe we were when we bore our letters away; how sadly dragged the steps of disappointed ones for whom there was no mail and who had to wait twenty-four mortal hours more

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for another opportunity to hear from the dear ones at home. That experience impressed me, common as it was, with the debt we owe to our swift mail service, and with the great value of an ordinary letter.

What is a letter anyway? It is your hand with your heart in it reaching across the world to clasp that of a dearly beloved one, and give cheer and the sense of kinship or true love. It is a dagger with poison on its edge stabbing you in the dark. It is a menace or a song, a blessing or a curse, a messenger from heaven or a dart of the adversary. A letter is a thing which has an imperishable vitality all its own. Nothing but fire can be relied on to destroy it; torn in bits the scattered fragments may be collected and reunited, soaked in the floods it may be rescued and dried. A yellow letter, locked in a secret drawer for a hundred years, has taken away the character for goodness which a man bore unquestioned to his grave. A love letter lying perdué between the leaves of a book on a dusty top shelf has brought consternation and dismay to one whose whitened hair and hollow cheeks have supplanted the bloom and brightness of a far-away youth. An angry or a malicious letter should never in any stress of provocation be written or sent, for it may rise up in a day of judgment and confront its author, until he wishes he had never been born.

The Letters we Write and Receive

But, nevertheless, it is a duty to write letters, and it is commonly a great joy to receive them. You will often hear people say: "I love to get a letter. I am not fond of answering a letter." Yet anybody who enjoys a social chat with a friend or with her family need not find difficulty in being a good correspondent, since writing letters is only talking with a pen point instead of *viva voce.* *by word of mouth*

To the child away from home, the son or daughter in business or studying some profession, the constant home letters bring a whiff of the home life. The dingy, narrow hall room in the boarding house, the tiresome details of the drudging day fade, and mother is setting the table, father is coming in with the brimming pails of milk, the little sister is studying her spelling book, the neighbor is looking in, the robin sings his vesper song, and the lilac at the farmhouse threshold was never so fragrant nor so rich with plummy sheaves before.

Perhaps the young man is held back from sin, held fast to the right and the best by these simple home letters which mother and father take such pains to write. Every little simple thing in them is music and joy and utter delight to the receiver. Just a sheet of paper and an envelope and a two-cent stamp, but money cannot pay for it.

You who are young and away from home

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should remember that it is a poor rule which does not work both ways. They miss you up there in the old place, and there is never a night when father bars the door that he does not wish you were asleep in your own little room as you used to be. Mother looks wistfully down the road and fancies she sees you coming homeward, and turns back to her ironing board or her mending basket with a dull, unsatisfied longing tugging at her heart. Your sisters go to the church sociable, and people ask when they last heard from you, and how you are succeeding, and when you are to have your vacation. Any good fortune which may fall to your share will delight the whole village, for the countryside takes pride in the lads it sends to the city.

There is a great deal going on in town, and your letters, if you take pains with them and send them periodically, will keep the homefolk in close touch with a larger life than belongs to the quiet hamlet which yet thrills in sympathy with the municipality, as a ripple on the edge of the lake stirs the fathomless depths at its center.

Let me repeat, that a letter in which you take pains will be the one most dearly treasured. In few things mundane do we so prize the art which conceals art as in epistolary correspondence. The letter must be colloquial, but it must not be careless nor slovenly. It must answer questions

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which have been asked, and it must suggest questions which may be answered, yet this will fail of grace and be a dry catalogue or a curious inquisition unless the writer do the work with the deftness born of skill and practice. The letter which is meant for the family will forget nobody from the grandfather to Jessica learning to walk. The intimate and confidential letter which is intended for an individual will be couched in another style. You know what I mean.

Some famous men have not thought it beneath them to write letters to children—letters which remain as models for the letter writers of all time. Martin Luther's letters to his little Hans, especially the one in which he gives the boy his own idea of heaven, John Sterling's letter to an idolized little son, and Matthew Arnold's letters to his children, are specimens of admirable tact and loving sincerity from parent to child with the pen.

It is wonderful when you consider how slight and fragile a letter is, regarded as a thing, that it travels so safely over land and sea, reaching its destination with such ease, passing from hand to hand with so absolute an immunity from disaster. Everybody respects that gummed inclosure; it requires no seal except for ornament. Even a very imperfect address is puzzled over by experts and deciphered and completed by diligent offi-

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cials, and it does not keep the letter away from the one to whom it has started on its flight.

The business letter should be brief, plain, and explicit. What you want must there be stated in few and aptly chosen words.

The friendly letter may be as diffuse as you please. It may indulge in the language of compliment. It may overflow with affection expressed in sweet phrases and loving words.

There are two or three rules applicable to all correspondence; pardon me for calling attention to them:

Every letter should be legibly written. At the top right-hand corner should be the full post office address. If the letter is on business, the date should be under the name of the place where the letter is written. If the letter be an invitation or a note of acknowledgment or a proposal of marriage, the date may be written out in full at the end of the letter instead of being inserted at the beginning.

Every letter should have the writer's signature appended, the whole name, as Charles James Fisher, Lillian Rose Williams, Mary Grace Hawthorn, Frederick Albert Peal. Write your name clearly. I have often received letters which were perfectly easy to read till I arrived at the signature, and that was almost unintelligible, a capital letter, a scrawl, and a flourish, as blind as

The Letters we Write and Receive

a pocket. Your name stands for your personality. Write it out boldly.

Only to mothers, sisters, and sweethearts is it safe to be Tom and Milly, Jack and Fan. To the rest of the world use your whole Christian as well as your surname.

In addressing anyone, friend, kinsman, or stranger, on business of importance or interest to yourself and requiring an answer, inclose return postage. This must invariably be done. Honesty and good breeding alike make it imperative. To address an envelope to yourself, stamping it, endears you very much to the correspondent whose time is absorbingly filled, and to whom every pen stroke saved is a boon to be thankful for.

Avoid fancy papers and eccentric styles of stationery. Plain white paper, preferably unruled, is always good form, and conveys an impression of elegance.

Mail a letter as soon as it is written; especially do this if it is somebody else's letter confided to your care to be posted.

Answer your letters within a reasonable time, while your interest in them is fresh and you feel the glow of friendliness they have kindled.

Never write to anyone that which would embarrass or mortify you were it suddenly blazoned from the house tops.

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Never write to anyone as an escape valve from even a justifiable irritation.

Never carry on a clandestine correspondence. Nothing but harm comes of concealments.

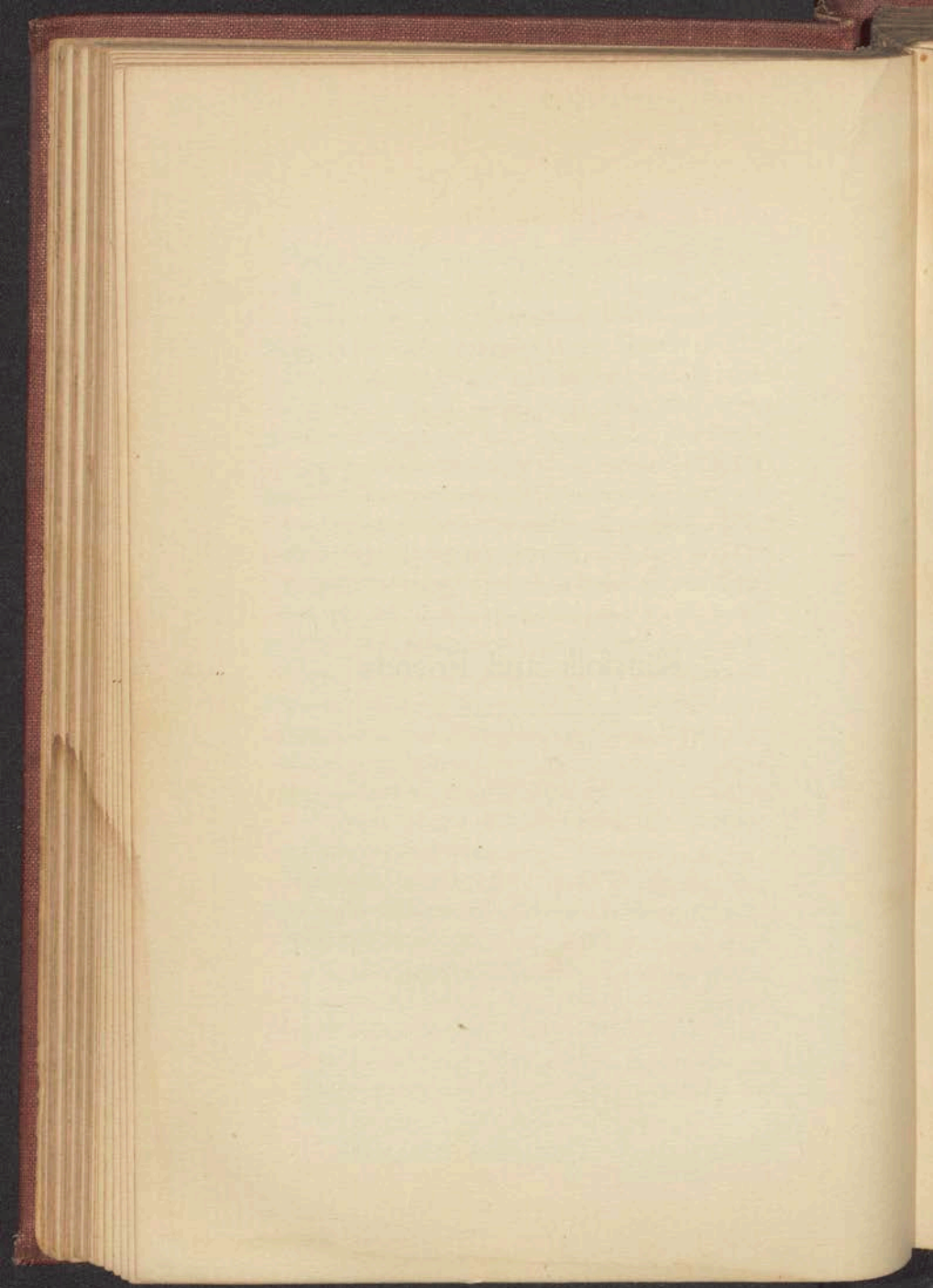
Indeed the desire for concealment should lead one to very serious questioning about the right and the wrong involved in the situation, for there are few occasions in which we cannot afford to be entirely open, plain, and aboveboard. Let us shun concealment as beneath our dignity, and usually very unworthy in itself.

At the same time we have a right to our own reserves, and our letters are not to be read by other people without our consent. Of course no honorable person opens or reads the letters of another. A man does not read his wife's correspondence, nor does she open her husband's letters.

We do not open a child's little letter. We leave the pleasure and the right to him or her, no matter what the child's age.

In sending a letter by a friend's hand, the rule is to leave it unsealed, writing on the envelope, "Kindness of —."

Kinsfolk and Friends



Kinsfolk and Friends

CHAPTER VIII.

Kinsfolk and Friends.

THE blood tie binds us very closely, and we are familiar with the saying that "blood is thicker than water," meaning that families under stress of emergency or when attacked by foes will stand shoulder to shoulder with a feeling of united opposition.

"Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."

exclaimed the amazed soldier in the "Lady of the Lake," when confronted with the clansmen of Roderick Dhu suddenly springing up, silent and wrathful, from every clump of trees and bunch of bracken and gray bowlder. It required more than ordinary self-poise to face that armed and threatening array. So, in Tennyson's picturesque idyls, one is always aware of the dark storm-cloud of Lancelot's "kith and kin" hanging vigilant and resolute on the borders of the tournament and fray. And in *The Story of the Glittering Plain*, by William Morris, whose prose poetry is as fine as his verse is splendid, the old English feeling of the tribal relation, of the

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house and the hall, with the men and the maidens who belong to one family, is very beautifully shown. So it is in the earlier chapters of Green's *Illustrated History of the English People*, and, for that matter, in a far older piece of literature, namely, the story of Abraham and his descendants in the Book of Genesis.

It is never safe to take sides in a controversy against a man's near relations, or a woman's either. He or she, at a given point, will probably forget or ignore everything which has led you to take up the battle against the very ones whom you supposed to be under disfavor, and will stand valiantly for the family's defense. When the old prophet asked the fair Shunammite what he could give her in return for her goodness to him, she simply answered, "I dwell with mine own." There was no added drop needed, she meant to say, in that full cup.

Blood is thicker than water, and the blood tie binds; yet it is nevertheless true that the very candor and unreserve of life among relatives does not always tend to the keeping of the peace. We speak with almost brutal frankness to the loved one so close to us by the kindred bond that our rude discourtesy cannot be resented. Over and over, through impulsiveness, through haste, through the informality which does away with protecting hedges of politeness, we "vex our own with look

Kinsfolk and Friends

and tone, though we love our own the best," and we cannot deny that "our careful thought" is oftener "for the stranger," "our smiles for the sometime guest," than for those who are our very dearest dear.

Perfect and unfailing tact and urbanity in daily household intercourse would go far toward making earth's desert places blossom like the rose.

Somebody has observed that we choose our friends, and that our relations are chosen for us. The element of selection and the qualities of congeniality and reciprocity enter into acquaintanceship, ripening it into intimacy, and there are souls that are knit together as were those of David and Jonathan where there is no faintest trace of kindred blood.

At different periods in our progress, apparently accidental circumstances, as propinquity, the going to this or the other school, the living in town or in country, the staying for awhile at a summer boarding place, the crossing of the ocean on the same steamer, bring to us those who may come to be as parts of ourselves. Life would be shorn of much which gives its finest flavor and deepest meaning if we had no friends, if, hermit-like, we drew into a cloister or a shell and refused the sweet influences which are brought to us by congenial company.

One of the best things which our colleges and

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our churches do for us, is in the opportunity they afford for beginning and cementing agreeable and elevating friendships.

Going on in our course from youth to maturity, and thence to the westering slope, it is wise for us often to make additions to our friends, as some one has said, to keep our friendships in repair, else we may find a deepening loneliness as the ranks of our acquaintances thin. One by one those who have walked at our side hear the call to come up higher, to a diviner service, a less clouded day, for it is always true that

"One army of the living God,
To his command we bow;
Part of his host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now."

The thinning ranks warn us more and more that we need many to love us and to love. The wise virgins replenish the oil of friendship from time to time so that the lamps never go out.

Did you ever stop to think that the least remarkable person is so many-sided, that his or her friendships can reach up and down, through a long scale of conditions, and include a number of opposites? We talk to one friend of metaphysics, to another of clothes. One touches us on the practical issues, the investments, the temporalities. Another is ethereal and spiritual, and when with her we are aware of angelic presences

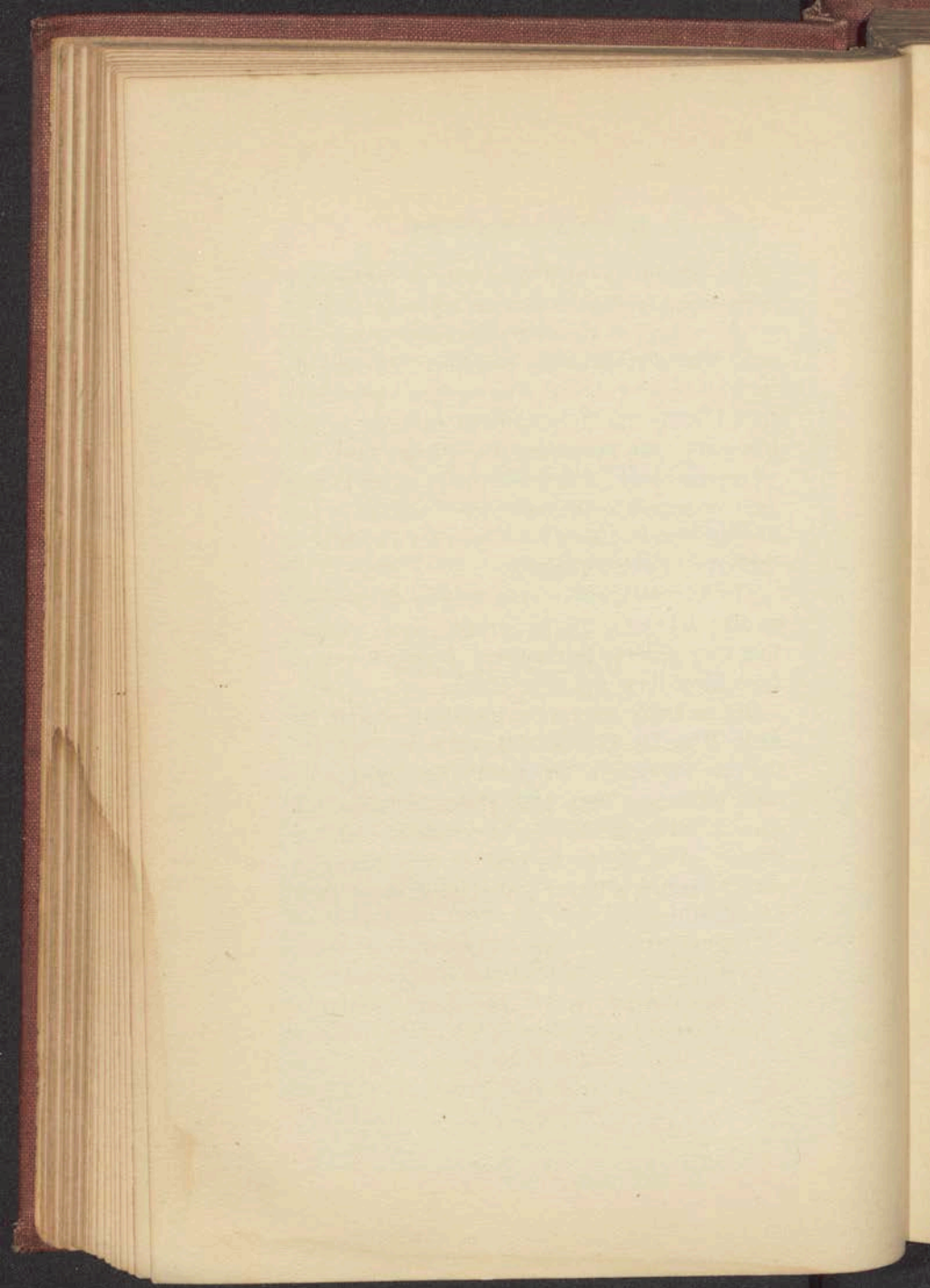
Kinsfolk and Friends

near, and almost catch faint echoes of the song which never ceases around the crystal sea.

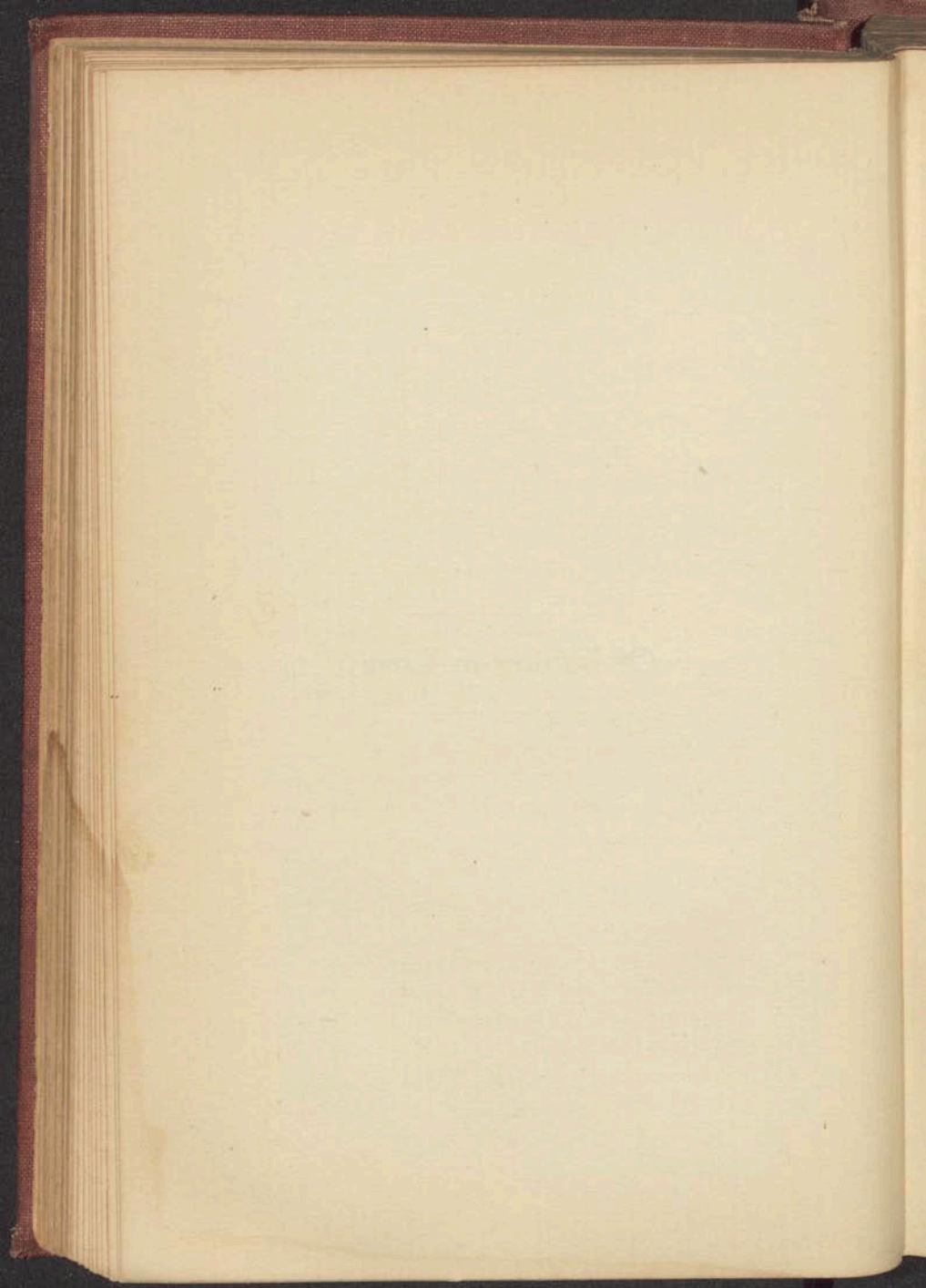
This friend is incisive, trenchant, true. The next is tender, caressing, steadfast. We can do without none of them. The motherly or sisterly friend, who comes to your relief when the grippe has you by the throat and the children have the whooping cough, is as much prized as the kindly gentlewoman who invites you to breakfast at her literary club and then takes you for a treat to a concert or a picture gallery.

The friendships of women for one another are so delicately adjusted, so perfect, and so lasting, that they seem to be the finest possible flower of friendship, its purest attar of rose.

But as triple steel is the friendship of man for man. King David averred that it passed in power the love of women. Friendship, less passionate than love, may burn with a steadier glow. A man is stronger for the comradeship of his friend. And, blessed be God, of One it may be said, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."



Of Falling in Love



Of Falling in Love

CHAPTER IX.

Of Falling in Love.

THROUGH the dim and shady vista of bygone years I look back to see a splendid specimen of soldierly manhood, to whom, as a tug might be attached to a man of war, appertained a silly little wax doll of a wife, a Dora Copperfield without Dora's amiability, though endowed with charms of satin smooth skin, peachy cheek, fluffy hair, and starry eyes, with all the superficial charms which fit a woman to bring a great sturdy man under the sway of "pink and white tyranny." The little lady had neither wit nor manner; she was gauche, irritable, absurd, and exasperating, and her husband and herself were in such marked and painful contrast that the first question of everybody was, "How in the world did that marriage happen?"

It happened because John, twenty-one and still at college, met Mary at a party, where she was a radiant vision in curls and white tulle, and fell in love with her out of hand, and eloped with her in three weeks. Unsited to him in birth, in education, in social position, she became

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his wife and the mother of his children, and though she did not do for him all that selfish Rosamond did for poor Lydgate, the results of the marriage were lowering to him and hurtful to her. The obvious inference is that falling in love is not always enough when the character and solemn lasting consequences of marriage are concerned.

But, in another instance, a man whom I knew, mine own familiar friend, went one day from New York to Boston. And at a way station stepped into the train a smiling schoolgirl, Hebe's very self. She had her books in her hand, and was apparently going home to spend her Saturday and Sunday. The sweet, modest face, the gentle air, had magnetism for the young man—his eyes were drawn from his vantage ground in the back of the car to that great coil of bronze-brown hair, that dainty ear, that head with its graceful pose. The train slackened into the station. The young lady alighted, and the young gentleman likewise. Ah, what rapture! She was met by her brother, and her brother turned out to be an old comrade of Dick's and Dick was presented to Susie, and so their romance was begun under proper auspices, a romance which ensued in a most beautiful and happy and fortunate wedded life, which endured the strains and stresses of many eventful years. In this case,

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there proved to be what was lacking in the first, a foundation for happiness in congenial tastes, excellent principles, a common respect and loyalty for and to religious faith, and a rare sympathy of nature. The falling in love was a happy thing for both the young people.

There should unquestionably be a mighty wave of unselfish love to sweep two life-currents together and blend them into one deep stream on which the argosies of future weal may float. In its ultimate analysis love is supreme unselfishness, and in love it is everlastingly true that "he that saveth his life shall lose it." He or she who pauses to weigh and to balance, who demands something in return, who keeps back a portion of the price, is not wholly surrendered to the glory of love; for love seeketh never her own, but always that of the other. Love envieth not, is not puffed up. Love is long-suffering. Love carries the torch of a pure flame kindled at the throne of God.

Two young people, meeting in a casual way or through the kind offices of friends, are at first interested the one in the other. Thought reverts to little incidents and expressions which arrested attention. They seem laden with intense significance to the two concerned, though to an outsider they would be less than nothing and vanity.

Being interested is only the first shy, tentative step—it is not a headlong plunge, where the judg-

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ment and the will are alike submerged. Before either is irretrievably in love, it is well for the man on his and the woman on her part to consider two or three propositions:

First, is there any manifest unsuitability in the relative training of the two, anything in the family peculiarities of either, which would probably make them, if the acquaintance became more intimate, useful or the reverse in the best development of that which made each what he or she really was?

Second, is this friend a believer in the religion which is sacred to me? A Christian man should not marry a girl who is either hostile to religion, indifferent to it, or a professed agnostic. A girl should not suffer her love to rest with a man whose sympathies and opinions, or whose avowed beliefs or disbeliefs, are antagonistic to the religion of the cross.

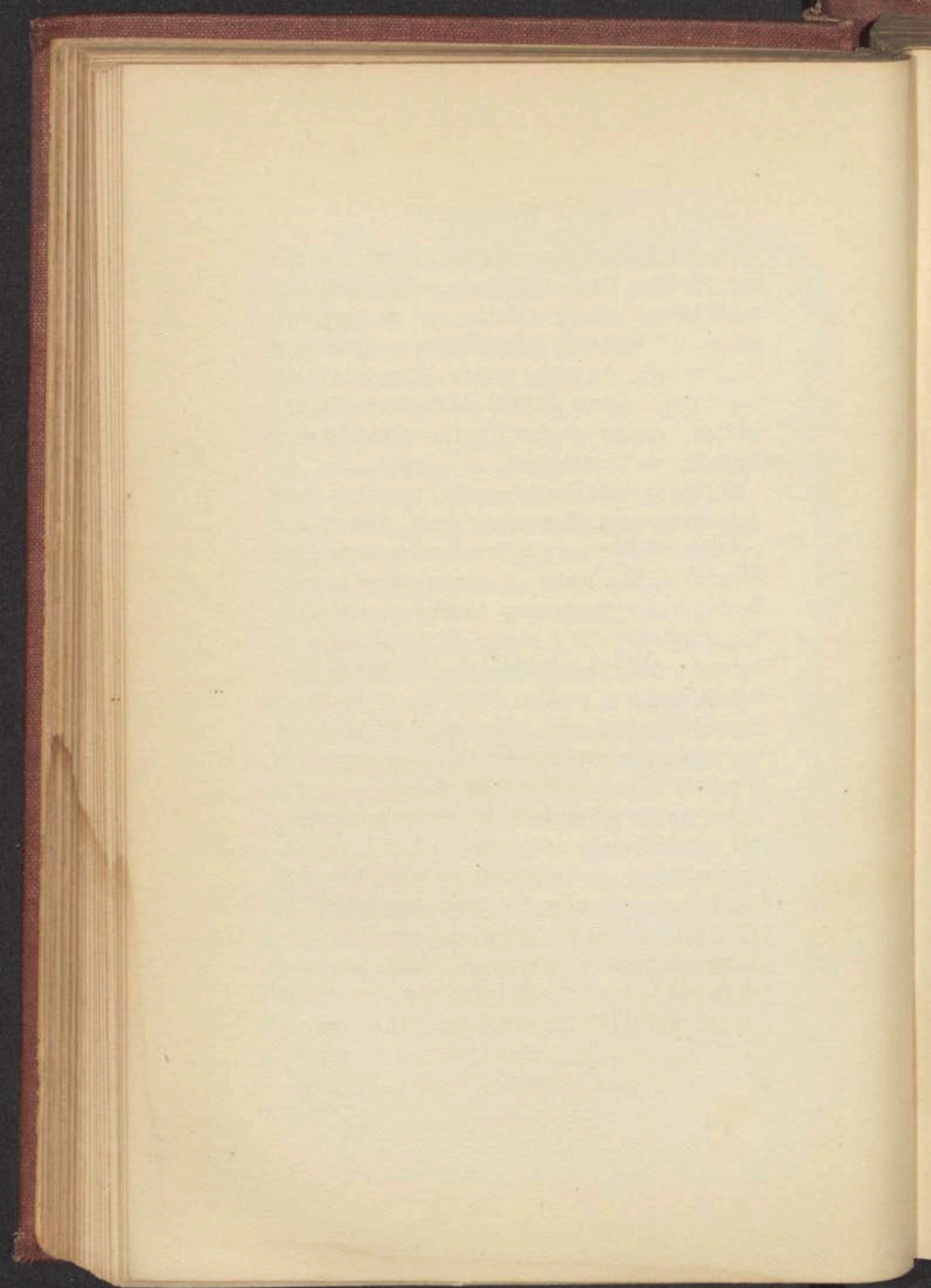
Third—and this appeals oftener to girls than to men, almost never to men and frequently to girls—never fall in love with a dissolute or depraved person with the idea that love will prove his redemption. Earthly love is not strong enough to do this—work so vast that only Christ's almighty power is sufficient to the task. The woman who loves and marries a weak and erring man, thinking to reform him and keep him in safe and steady courses, is bound to be woefully disappointed.

Of Falling in Love

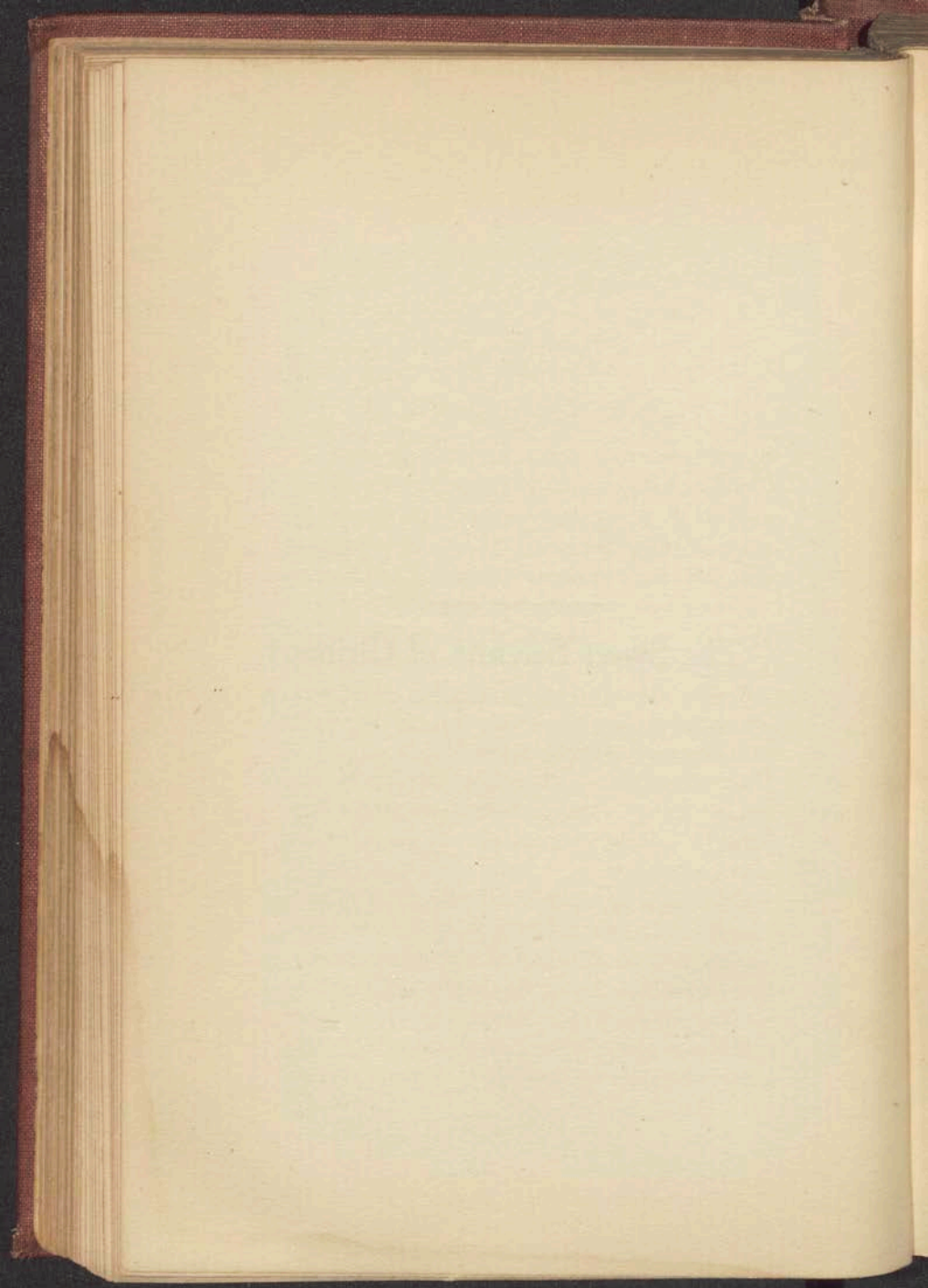
The foolishly sentimental girl, in love with her own ideal, and not with the man who seems to her bold and generous, daring and reckless, and whose sinfulness she invests with a glamour of blinding radiance, will one day waken to a black to-morrow. Pause while there is time. Do not profane love by allying it with willful vice or degrading self-indulgence.

We hear a great deal of pessimistic talk in these mercenary days, when in our great cities at least a positive indifference to love and marriage has followed in the wake of our modern luxury. Bachelor apartments stand to single men in place of a simple love-filled home. Girls, self-supporting and prizing their independence, hesitate to resign it, and are hard to win, even were suitors less reluctant to woo. The good old-fashioned ways are going out, and as yet nothing very much to be desired has come in their place.

Our young people look far and sagely ahead, and consider ways and means. And I, for one, am glad when, as he sometimes does, love still circumvents them and brings two souls in full sight each of the other, and persuades two young creatures to whom life is still new and fair to fall in love, try their fate together, found a home, and think the world well lost.



The Sweet Serenity of Girlhood



The Sweet Serenity of Girlhood

CHAPTER X.

The Sweet Serenity of Girlhood.

AS I write the caption of this chapter I am aware that girlhood is often anything except serene. A period of ferment and unrest, of strivings after the unattainable, of discontent with fettering restraints, girlhood is not always "a happy time, though it is so happy looking." And yet, on the whole, the path of girlhood is a pleasant path, and the woman who looks back to it from the vantage ground of her silver hair, sometimes wishes herself back again where its flowers grow and its birds sing.

At its best girlhood is serene, and it is always influential. Do girls, I wonder, estimate as they ought the power of their spell over the men they meet?

Not long ago I heard a girl defend a man for a course of conduct which was, to say the least, open to much criticism, if not really censurable. Her inexperience, perhaps, made her confident for the expression of her opinion, that one cannot hold a man to the same rigid standards of right living which are demanded of a woman, was un-

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qualified. An older friend challenged the position taken by the young girl, and in a few sentences showed her that right and wrong are the same for human beings, whatever their surroundings; that a man, equally with a woman, is bound to live soberly, honestly, and in the fear of God.

What I want to impress upon girls is a feeling that their influence for good or ill on the characters and lives of men is potential and far-reaching. A girl cannot condone vice in her associates. She must not have loosely elastic notions as to what her brothers and cousins and the men she meets socially may do without reproach. The truth is that a man has no license beyond that accorded to a woman, and good men and good women do not need license. There is abundant liberty for all right-minded and right-deeded persons within the safe and sacred circle of divine and human law.

A girl exercises her influence, first and most strongly, by simply being good herself. By good I mean all that the term implies—truthful, sincere, virtuous, Christian. Such a girl goes on her way as Una with her lion. Evil does not touch her, for her garments are white. Sin, profanity, intemperance, are repelled, and shun her presence.

We will take an example—it may be Bible reading or churchgoing, or attendance on the mid-

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week prayer meeting. The young girl who always, as naturally as the flower blooms, takes her stand on the highest plane as to these things, creates around her a sweet atmosphere which has its magical effect on those whom she meets. One such girl will uplift a whole set of young people, holding them to that which is noble by the force of her own sweet consistency, although she may never say a word in blame or reprobation.

I have seen, at a watering place, a whole gay company of young people induced to honor the Lord's Day, attend church regularly, and refrain from many things which were in doubtful taste, simply through the quiet example of one lovely girl. I can see her now, coming down the hotel steps at ten o'clock of the bright summer Sabbath morning, hymn book in hand, and instantly there was a change along the veranda, young men rushed to their rooms to assume their church-going clothes, girls abandoned the ideas of spending the hours till noon in walking or lounging, and the whole place was toned up. Yet Katharine had not said one word, or even looked a suggestion.

To let one's light shine! That is the main thing. Be the taper ever so small, yet in the dark it glows like a star.

A girl should think seriously whether she can

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take the responsibility of condoning an evil thing. She should sooner cut off her right hand than use it in offering temptation to a brother or a friend. If the friend is her lover, her influence is predominant in his life, and she should not hesitate to hold him not only to lofty ideals but to practical daily living on the very highest plane. In a girl's presence there should never be jesting about sacred things. Her friendships should be made with those who have learned that one does not lay a profane hand on the ark of God and escape unscathed.

To a girl's father and mother she is a very dear and precious thing, and they are untrue to their trust if they do not guard so rare a jewel with care and pains. Chaperonage, once almost unknown in America, has become the rule among people who wish to observe social rules, and I take it that most of us are among this number.

Nobody can afford to scoff at conventionalities. These are the hedges built by common consent to keep danger out and to give freedom for appropriate enjoyment to those within their inclosure. A party of young people, for instance, will find an agreeable matron, a mother, an elder sister, or married friend, no bar upon their good time, but, on the contrary, a decided addition to it. While we are proud to say that a girl may safely travel the length and breadth of the land

The Sweet Serenity of Girlhood

without escort and secure from impertinent intrusion, we must admit that where she can be accompanied by a parent or an older friend, it is pleasanter for the arrangement to be made.

In rural towns, where everybody knows everybody else, and the young people associate with each other in great informality, it is, perhaps, unnecessary that rides and drives and picnics should be under the care and management of the chaperone. Yet, I am sure, that once having tried the way which is universal in our cities of inviting a matron to forsake her fireside and go with the merry crowd, the newer fashion will, for reasons of common sense and comfort, supplant the old.

The sweet serenity of girlhood is illy purchased if it be at the sacrifice of a mother's ease. Mothers are self-denying beings, and they are very apt to give up all the pretty dresses and the outings, and to assume the heaviest share of the work, in order that daughters may be free to enjoy their lives in the heyday of youth.

If mother would listen to me, dears,
She would freshen that faded gown,
She would sometimes take an hour's rest,
And sometimes a trip to town.

And it shouldn't be all for the children,
The fun and the cheer and the play,
With the patient droop on the tired mouth
And the "mother has had her day."

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For now your turn has come, dears,
Her hair is growing white,
And her eyes are gaining that far-away look
Which peers beyond the night.

If you want to keep your mother,
You must make her rest to-day,
Must give her a share in the frolic,
And draw her into the play.

A daughter's relation to her father is a thing by itself. I know few more charming possibilities for the most beautiful of life's friendships than those which fall naturally into the intimacy of a girl with her father. She is often singularly like him, so much so that they understand one another without the need of explanation, and in her fair youth she renews to him his past, when her mother was a girl and he her manly wooer. To the father, plodding along through monotonous and possibly clouded days, for life's landscape grows gray as we advance, the young daughter is a bit of bloom, a strain of music; she is life's poetry in essence.

Let her be careful not to unduly burden a love so great and so little given to its own glorification. She will never be sorry for the attentions and the self-denials which grow out of her love for her father.

I have seen few more beautiful instances of the sublimity of which girlhood is capable than in the constant and unremitting devotion of a brave young girl to an invalid father. Hers was

The Sweet Serenity of Girlhood

always the hand to soothe his pain, her voice was ever sweet for him, her "Coming, my darling," always answered his querulous call. Of such are the kingdom of heaven, for their ministries are "in His name," and Christ rewards them with the sweetness which is of the hidden manna.

The charities in which girls may engage are largely organized for them in their Epworth League or Christian Endeavor or King's Daughters' societies. Few girls there are who do not belong to a "Ten," or an equally active association of that kind. So that I do not plead with you to enter on work of this sort; it is already yours, and you can find in it a sphere of consecrated action. I do urge every young girl to have, either in her home or in some missionary center, or for some patient shut-in or little neglected child, a private and individual love-work of her very own. Such a girl may know among her friends an over-burdened young mother, seldom able to leave her nursery long enough to go to church for a service, or to visit a friend for a half day. To relieve such a one requires only tact and gracious sweetness, and the sometimes taking her place with tender insistence of resolve.

To write once a month to a foreign missionary a full, bright, and personal letter is not a very great task, but it is a sweet thing to do, for it

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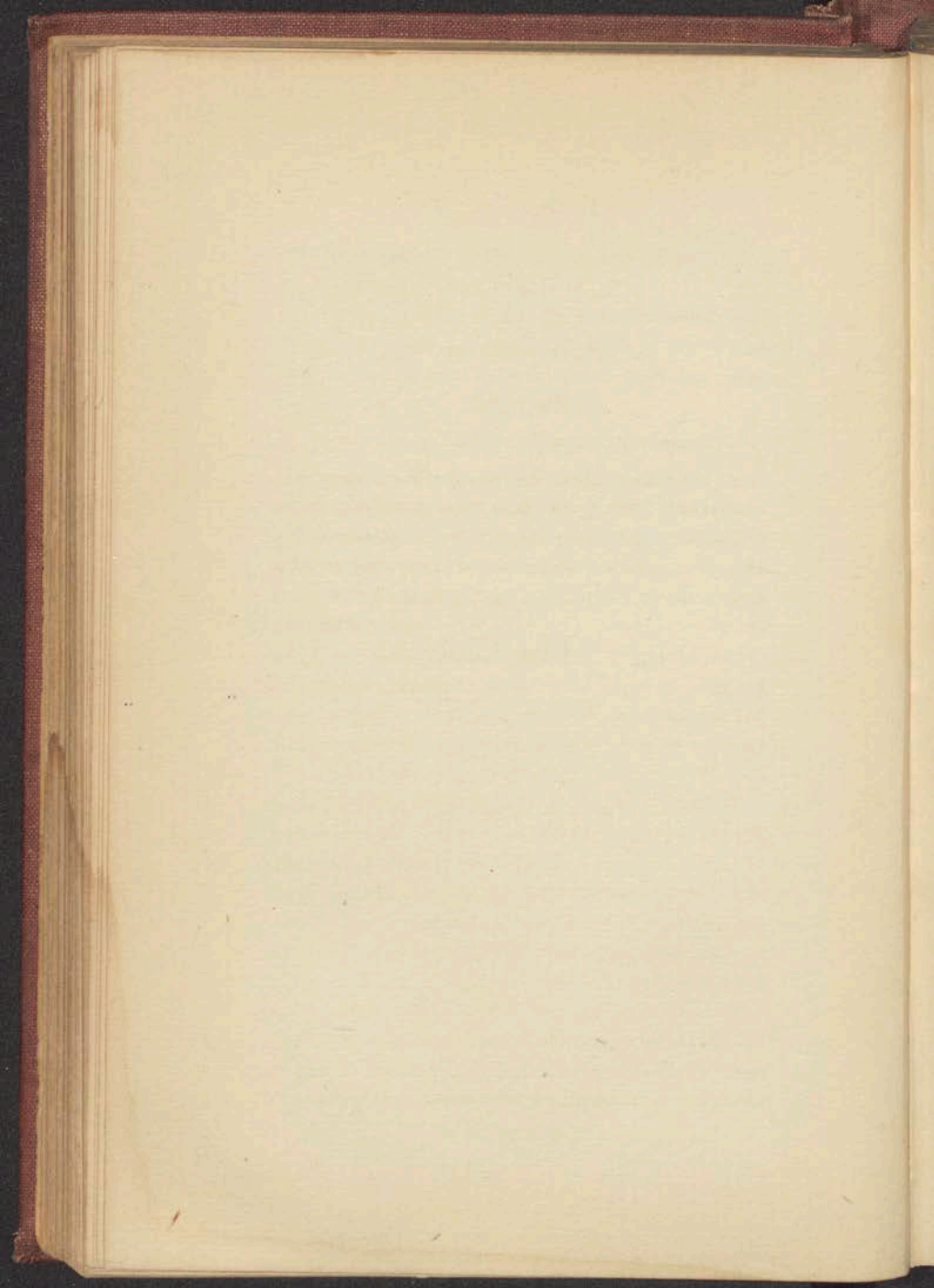
carries sweetness to the woman who receives this proof that she is not forgotten.

To live a helpful daily life in a round of petty things is not to make a great show in the world, but the angels take note of it and write the name of the doer high on their tablets.

“And lo! Ben Adhem’s name led all the rest.”

In one of the parables of our blessed Lord there is a word we may well heed and remember. “Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.” Faithful service in obscurity! Honor before angels and men!

The Club



The Club

CHAPTER XI.

The Club.

CLUBS have ceased to be novel. Nobody speaks of them as once with an interrogation point. They are largely educational so far as women are concerned, most of them either planning extensive courses for study and reading or taking up interesting and practical themes as occasion offers. They do for women what the debating society does for men, making them better able to hold their own in conversation and fitting them to be engaging and pleasing companions to those whom they meet at home and in society.

We are gregarious beings, and are meant to live in company, not in seclusion. The harmony of home is more imperiled by the dullness born of too much routine than by the brightness which comes from the friction of congenial minds, and so the club (one club, not a dozen) proves the friend, not the foe, of domesticity.

Women are unwise when they suffer what should be an agreeable diversion to become a clog upon their time and a drain upon their strength. One club is inspiration, recreation, and a benefit

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to mind and body. More than one, for most of us, is at least a mistake.

It may happen to you to have to take the chair at your club, if it have not, as in some clubs is the happy arrangement, the rule that members shall preside in turn. Now, at first, the thought is rather alarming, and the novice is embarrassed at the idea that she must wield the gavel and call the meeting to order and be responsible for its success.

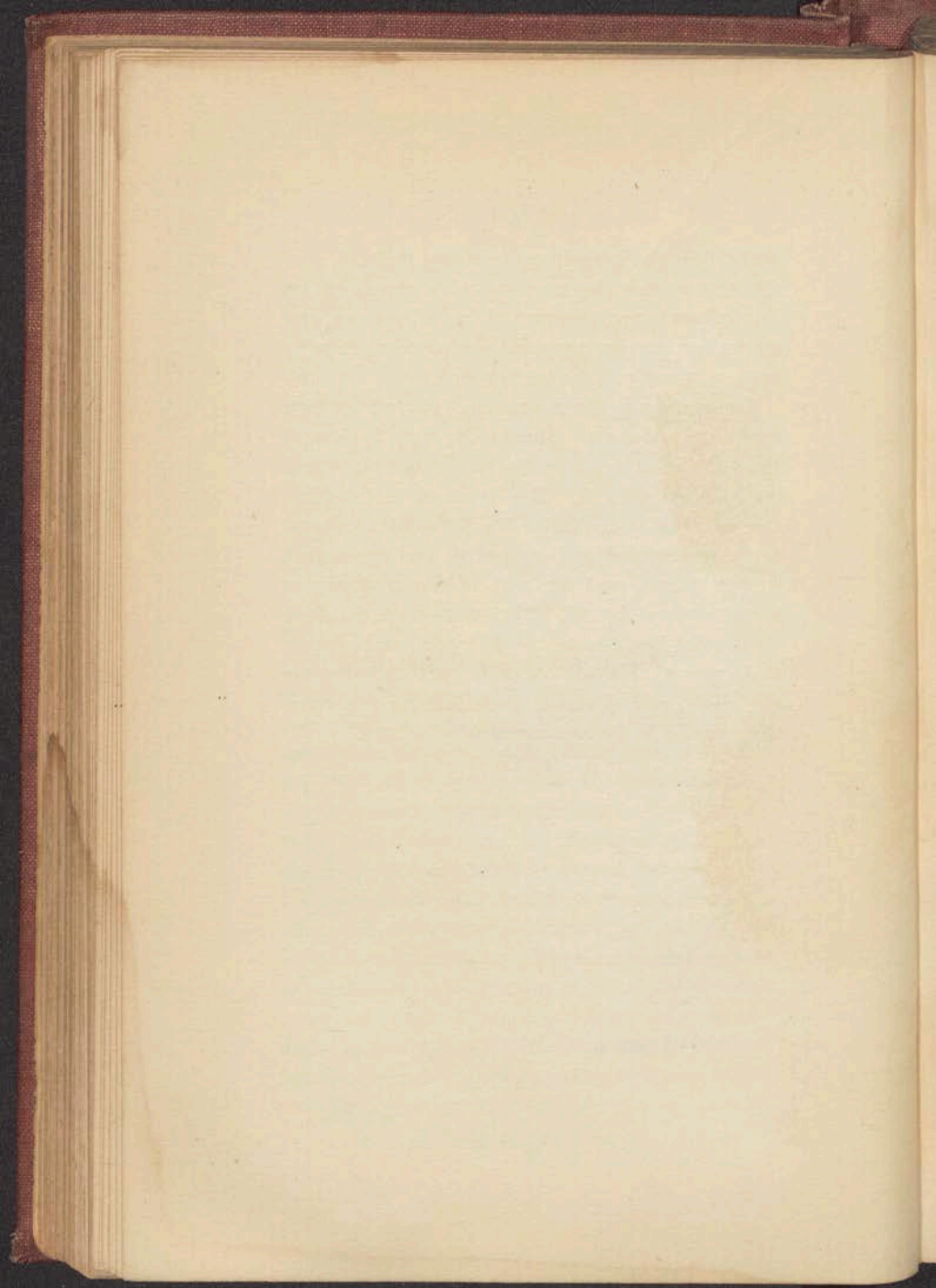
But nothing is more essential to any of us than to be equal to any emergency, and to be what may be called an all-round person. A distinguished teacher told me lately that all-round people were going out in these days of specialization. This is very well for the professions and the trades, but a wife and mother cannot specialize. She must know a little of everything, and be able to step from the kitchen to the drawing-room, and if need be from the drawing-room to the platform, with perfect ease and grace.

By attention to the manner of fine presiding officers, such as Frances E. Willard and Mary Lowe Dickinson, who manage large assemblages with the gentleness and suavity of a lady at her own table, by study of their unfailing courtesy and their quickness of decision, much may be learned. A little manual of parliamentary tactics is within the reach of every woman, its cost being a trifle,

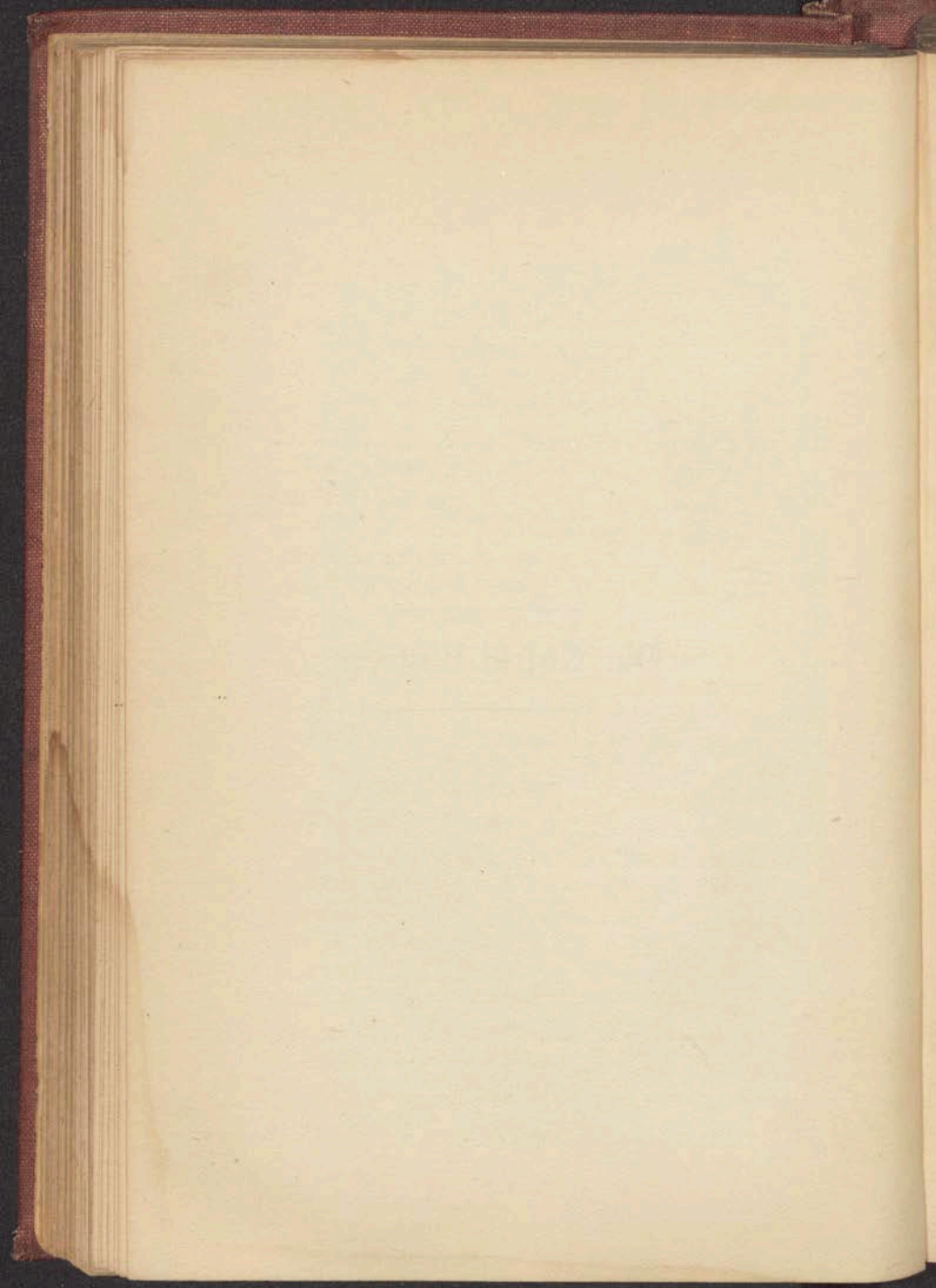
The Club

and it tells the intending chairman in brief, concise terms what she may and what she must not do, defines her privileges and her obligations, and shows her that her personal preferences are to be kept sedulously in the background.

The woman in the chair cannot exploit her own views and opinions. Should she wish to express these she must temporarily resign her place and let another take it. Her business is to guide the meeting, to recognize the different speakers, to be impersonal and impartial, and to see that justice reigns, and the will of the majority is acknowledged by all. The women on the floor should not hesitate to speak freely, and express their views. Silence on their part embarrasses the chair, and prevents their having the voice they should in the management of affairs.



Our Girl in Business



Our Girl in Business

CHAPTER XII.

Our Girl in Business.

MEN have been in business so many centuries that their success or failure is not a matter for much consideration. Among English-speaking people the entrance of woman in force on the arena of business conflict is still too recent to have entirely lost its aspects of novelty. French women have long been doing precisely what Americans are now finding both profitable and desirable, carrying on the management of affairs, preventing waste in the family economy, and saving that the family may have ease and independence when the soft footfall of old age shall steal across the door.

To the introduction of the typewriter we owe the appearance in our business streets and offices of an army of refined and clever girls, who have proved by their quickness, ability, and general air of intelligence and capacity that they are a trustworthy and admirable element in the business world. As these young women flit about our streets, or sit modestly at their little clicking machines, they represent a new condition of affairs among Americans, a condition in which it is

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as usual and as honorable for a girl to be a breadwinner as for her father or brother to be the same.

Breadwinner she often is not for herself only. Few girls who carry home their weekly wage fail to pour it into the mother's lap, and it goes into the household exchequer to eke out the deficiencies of the family purse. Where this is not the case, and the girl, being away from home, pays her board and buys her clothes with her earnings, she still has almost always someone to assist, an ailing sister, a struggling brother, or an orphaned child who depends on her for some of the comforts, or all of the luxuries, of existence. Women, as a rule, are very generous with their earnings, and few wage-earners among them have only themselves to support.

Our girl in business needs to gain a reputation for punctuality. She owes it to herself, and indeed to all other women, to show that she can be prompt in fulfilling an engagement, and honorable in keeping the terms of a contract. She must endeavor to conserve her health by conscientiously resting when business hours are over, since she has no right to be ill at her employer's expense if judicious care can prevent illness. The girl in business must deliberately forego late evening engagements; society except incidentally and sparingly cannot be indulged by her. "This one thing I do," must be her motto.

Our Girl in Business

If she be a lady—bless the dear and lovely word!—she will so far respect herself that no man will presume on rudeness in her presence. Should any of those among men with whom her occupation brings her into daily companionship offer her compromising attentions, she will unhesitatingly decline to accept them. While she will not exact the courtesies of the drawing-room, nor expect a busy man seated at his desk to rise when she enters the room, her own unfailingly modest and gracious deportment will win recognition. Men will generally, always if they are gentlemen, remove their hats in her presence, and language used before her will neither be improper nor profane. She will be treated as a business ally, she will seek and stipulate for and insist on obtaining the largest salary which her services are worth, but certainly she will accept neither compliments nor gallantries. These are not the due of the young woman in business. Above everything else she will scorn any attention which is questionable or clandestine. Never stoop to concealments; they are not to be justified; and though a romantic girl sometimes fancies that there is an excuse for a sentimental attitude which her charms have called forth, she awakens in time to an intensity of mortification which crushes her with its abasement. Business and sentiment are altogether distinct, and our girl

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in an office or a shop has nothing to do with the latter.

To the man whose eye may rest on this page let me say that his innate nobleness should be arrayed for the defense from misunderstanding or insult of the woman whose work places her during business hours at his side. As he would treat his wife or his sister or his daughter, as he would wish other men to treat them, let him deal with somebody's daughter or sister who has put her hand to the task of daily labor. For man, as for woman, there is nothing finer or worthier than to wear "the white flower of a blameless life" in a world which is full of temptation from without and from within.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

We must remember in the conflicts of every day, obscure and humble though they be, that powers of evil and of good fight for and against us. So, let there always be the word of prayer in the morning for strength from above, the word of thanks at night for relief granted, and all day long and whenever we are tried let the swift cry, the appeal of thought, go flying to the throne.

Never doubt that our Lord will hear and answer us in every time of need.

Our Girl in Business

Let me give you here a train of thought which at home and in business has often brought me peace and joy. It has happened to me more than once to feel well acquainted with and much interested in a set of people whom personally I had never met. The people were friends of my friends, and from the latter I would hear of the former until I was more or less familiar with the aims and plans and successes of a group of persons not one of whom I would have known had they passed me on the street. I have become almost intimate in my thoughts of the Lucy or the Mary who was tossed like a ball between her desire to gratify her parents and to do them honor in society, and her wish to enlist among the volunteers and work under Mrs. Ballington Booth's magnetic direction in the foundations, dim and often treacherous, which underlie the social order. The Johns and the Harrys, with their careers at college, their fortunes to make, and the world all before them, have been very much to me, though I have never had even a peep at their photographs. They were my friends in a sense because they were my friends' friends, and though they never penetrated into the region of the tangible and the actual, they were as real to me and as much a part of my life as if I had often grasped their hands and sat with them beside the firelit hearth.

Life on High Levels

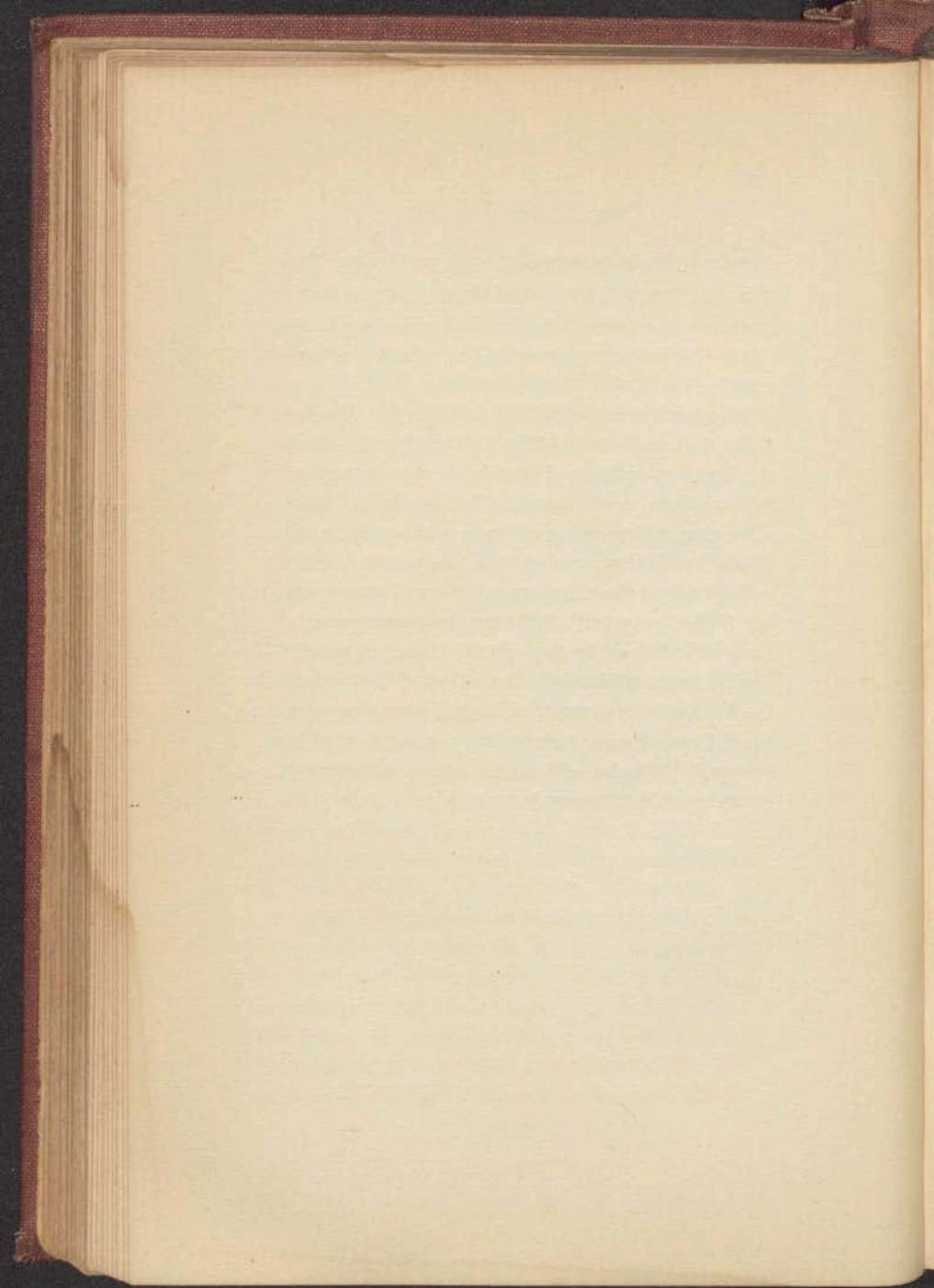
I am very much interested in another and quite different set of men and women, known to me only through the mention of them which I constantly find in the newspapers. They are always very much in evidence there, flitting about to Lenox or to Newport or to Florida, or to Europe, Asia, or Africa, as the season and their desires may prompt. Their names and those of their large family connections are as well-known to me as are those of my baker or my grocer or the dry goods merchants with whom I have dealings, and it is really a pleasure to me to know that they have wide houses contiguous to one another, in which from time to time are brilliant gatherings of their clans. For their feathers and their velvets and their jewels I do not care, but I have grown into a curious liking for themselves, and when one day I heard that a dear grandmother among them had gone to her rest, and another day when I saw that one of their families had lost a sweet child, I was genuinely sympathetic and sorrowful.

Still another and much larger group of personages enlists my thought, and it is composed of the folk who write books. Probably should I meet some of these I would be a bit disillusionized, for I have met a troop of the people who belong to the guild of the author and have not cared for them overmuch. Their work was more charm-

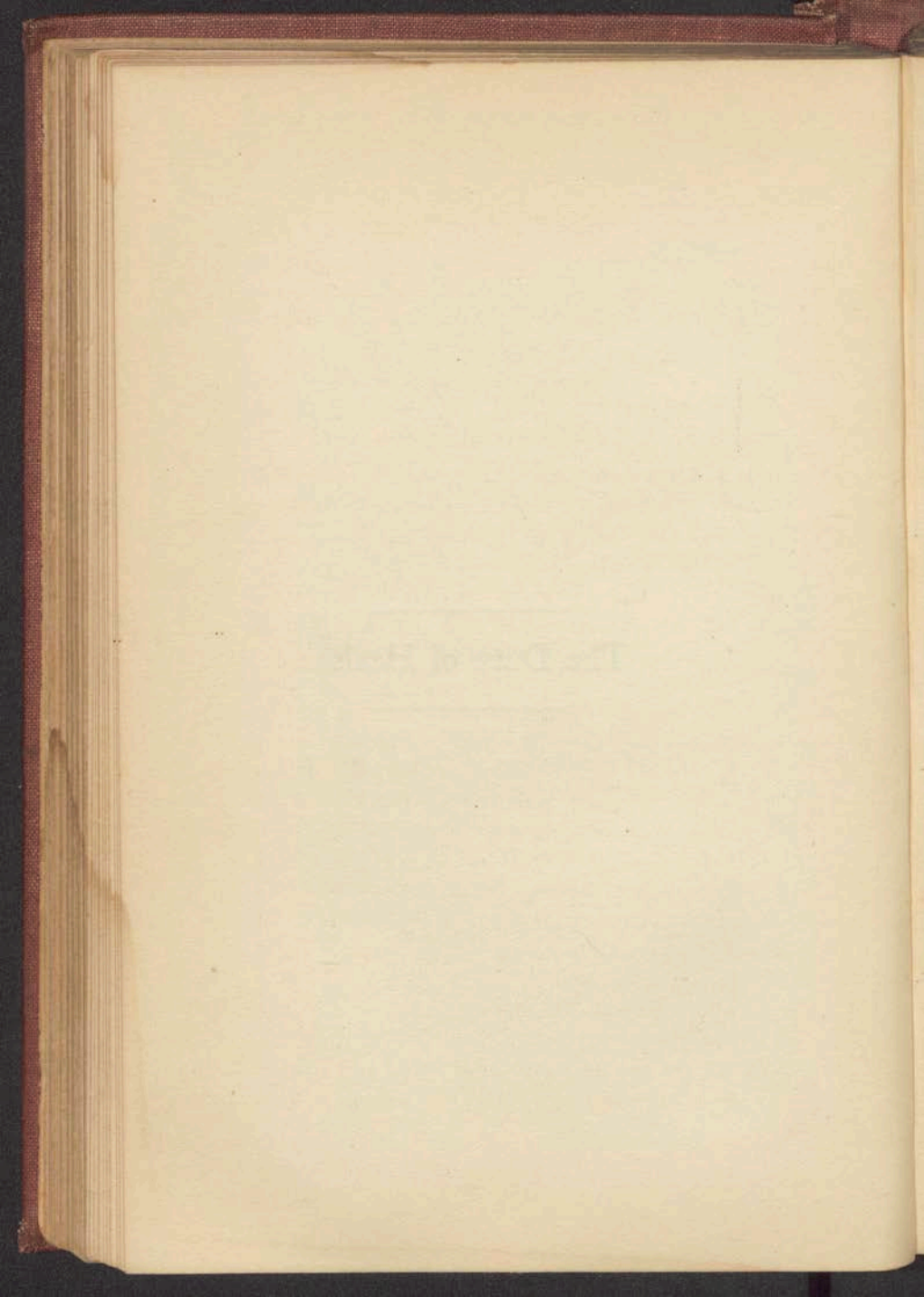
Our Girl in Business

ing than their personality. Nevertheless, they are my dream friends and dear helpers on the road, my comrades tried, and they belong to the circle of friends, my own, not my friends' friends merely.

Now for a single word. If I, imperfect, limited, finite, human, can hold in my hand and take to my heart so many and so diverse numbers of my fellow beings, need I wonder that the Lord Christ, all-seeing, all-knowing, all-loving, all-guiding, can in his hand that was pierced gather up all the individuals of the race, every tribe and tongue and age? Shall my faith fail when he assures me, "I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine?" Shall I not confidently believe that of those whom the Father hath given him, he will never lose one? Shall I ever for an instant lose the comfort of his personal thought of me in every emergency, every condition, every hour of life?



The Duty of Health



The Duty of Health

CHAPTER XIII.

The Duty of Health.

I AM not sure that we always put it to ourselves in this way. Health seems to us a privilege, a gift of God, a circumstance for which to be thankful, or an agreeable and satisfactory condition of affairs. But health is more than these; for the ordinary person it is a matter of duty, largely in one's own hands, and sickness is a blunder, not to say a crime.

A few years ago many people thought it rather elegant than the reverse to be not infrequently ill. Headaches were common maladies, a lady was often indisposed, and fainting fits were by no means rare. We heard about rude health as if to be well savored of rusticity and showed a lack of refinement, and delicate womanhood exacted certain attentions and claimed certain immunities on the score of sexual disability and an inherited fragility which was curiously regarded as a distinction. The milkmaid or the servant lass might indulge in a robust frame and a wholesomely sharp appetite, but the woman of high caste in Christian America as in pagan India was a creature to be

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coddled, guarded from wind and sun, and accorded the right of *carte blanche* at the druggist's, while her doctor's bills formed no mean share of the family's annual expenses.

Providentially all this has undergone a very decided change. Popular sentiment has gone to the other extreme. The pendulum has swung so far over that we are perhaps in danger of magnifying the importance of physical culture, and exalting the body over the soul. And this is a result to be deprecated. A sound mind in a sound body, and the ideal of perfect balance is preserved.

True, there are those who enter the race of earthly life handicapped by tendencies to disease, tendencies which have enfeebled those who came before them. But medical science and hygienic discovery have marched grandly in the last quarter century toward the healing of the sick, and heredity is no longer the dreaded foe it once was. By strict attention to the laws of health and to judicious environment tendencies and weaknesses can be overcome, and nobody need fight a losing battle who trusts God and sets himself in earnest to the reinforcement of his constitution. Much can be done in childhood, much can be done in youth, by the brave and conscientious and resolute seeker for health.

Health is dependent on temperance, cleanliness, and right living all through. The denial of base

The Duty of Health

appetites, the eating of good food in proper quantities, the taking of sufficient exercise, of sufficient bathing, and of sufficient sleep, are the open secrets of those who are habitually well.

It is doubtful whether most women eat enough to supply strength, counterbalancing the waste of tissue which our busy lives make inevitable. Few of us bring good appetites to our breakfast tables, and most of us know the aversion which one feels in the early day to such substantial fare as chops and steak, or hot griddlecakes, however delicately prepared. The course of fruit, followed by a well-cooked cereal, oatmeal or wheatlet, this preceding an egg, and the whole finished by a bit of toast and a cup of tea or coffee, is the breakfast which nearly all women like best.

We will suppose this breakfast taken at seven o'clock, or at half past seven, because when men go to business and children to school, and a single maid, or at most two maids, compose the household staff, breakfast cannot be late. Personally I prefer a late to an early breakfast, and when women are past their first youth think that whenever it is practicable they should start life's wheels very gently in the morning. A cup of hot milk, slightly sprinkled with salt, or of hot malted milk, with a cracker, if taken while dressing, will do away with the feeling of goneness which is a peculiarly distressing accompaniment of the early

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morning. Then a later breakfast, taken at leisure, is a comfort and a luxury.

But when one cannot do what one would, one must do the best the circumstances permit. For many women, their place is at the breakfast table in the early morning, and they cannot eat much then, and therefore ought to supplement the meal with something else by and by.

About eleven o'clock a cup of cocoa and a piece of bread and butter, or else a glass of milk and a biscuit, will give the needed nourishment and renew the strength which is beginning to wane. This is often a real necessity, too, to children, and while constant nibbling is not to be allowed, delicate little people or sturdily growing and forever hungry boys should have a refectioⁿ midway between breakfast and noon. This does not interfere with the one o'clock meal, which should be a hearty and substantial affair, including meat and a vegetable or two, crackers, cheese, and a dessert. If people like pies, let them fill the dessert course at luncheon rather than at the six o'clock or the seven o'clock dinner, which, by the way, should never be a meal for children, whose most important repast ought to come in the middle of the day, unless school hours prevent. In the latter case children should have their dinner not later than five o'clock.

Blessed be the saint who invented afternoon tea.

The Duty of Health

At half past four or five, when the tea things are brought in, the pretty cups and saucers, the shining copper or silver teapot, the thin biscuits, wafers, or sponge cake, the family and any informal visitors who happen in may have a pleasant hour of talk and refreshment to soul and body. Nobody who acquires the habit of afternoon tea ever willingly gives it up, and it does not in the least take from the appetite for dinner. On the contrary the little fillip given the nerves by the five o'clock tea brings one with better heart to the most formal function of the day, the dinner, when labors are over and the household gathered at ease and with plenty of time to enjoy a meal.

Last of all, the cup of hot milk or boullion, just before retiring, is to be recommended, and, when pursued by insomnia, fight that fiend with a crisp cracker or a crust of bread. I think that to eat often and not too much at once is a golden rule for nervous Americans. An old gentleman of my acquaintance is now hale and hearty at eighty-six, straight as a palm tree, fresh-colored and ruddy as a boy, and a trip across this great continent is counted by him as a mere holiday excursion, for he has not yet reached the stage where the grasshopper is a burden.

I asked him once how he had contrived to keep so well, and he replied: "A good conscience has allowed me to sleep without much interruption

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during long nights. I have always retired early. I eat a luncheon at eleven o'clock, and I never let myself grow faint between meals. I take long walks."

The bicycle has enabled our young people to take pleasant exercise in the open air, and its general use by women as well as men has undoubtedly raised the health rate. For one thing it has shown women the futility of improper dress; a style of dress which interferes with breathing in comfort and which hangs heavy weights on the muscles of the back cannot be allowed the graceful and happy wheelwoman. Once having discovered that dress can be hygienic, and still modish, becoming, and beautiful, our girls have made an advance on the road to unbroken health.

Dress should be adapted to the occasions when it is to be worn. For society, it may be as elegant and ceremonious as one's means will permit. For the street, the office, the kitchen, the business, or the shopping requirement, or for traveling, let dress be simple, serviceable, and subordinate to the wearer's convenience. A skirt which trails over a muddy avenue or down polluted stairs is an offense not only to the fastidious but to persons of ordinary common sense.

The danger of overdoing in exercise is quite as much to be feared as is the peril of overwork.

The Duty of Health

Because you hear that a friend has gained immensely by her practice in the gymnasium or by long walks, do not fly at once to the conclusion that you can emulate her. Begin with the littles and go on. If you live in the hill-country of the South or in some community where people ride much on horseback you will find that exercise the most delightful which you can possibly take, surpassing the wheel, because a living creature under you is more sympathetic and more lovable, and much greater fun, take it all round, than a thing made of steel and India rubber can possibly be.

Horseback riding, however, in our cities and towns is only for a very limited class, for those to whom money is not a question for close consideration.

Exercise with the broom! Do I hear an old-fashioned grandmother's voice crying, "What's the matter with housework as excellent exercise?" There is this the matter, that it is often not interesting, and that it is taken in hot and stuffy rooms with closed windows. No class among us fades so easily and ages so soon as our domestic servants, and a subtle malady of the blood, in which it loses its vitality fast, is found among them, the product of hot kitchens and too little outdoor freedom. Let us do our housework and do it well, but do not let us suppose

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that it is a panacea, or that it will enable us to forego outdoor air and exercise. In fact our great trouble is that in our highly civilized life we do not get out of doors enough. Air is life, and healthful exercise in pure air will keep us vigorous and add to our good looks.

Another item in the preservation of health is repose. Rest when you are tired.

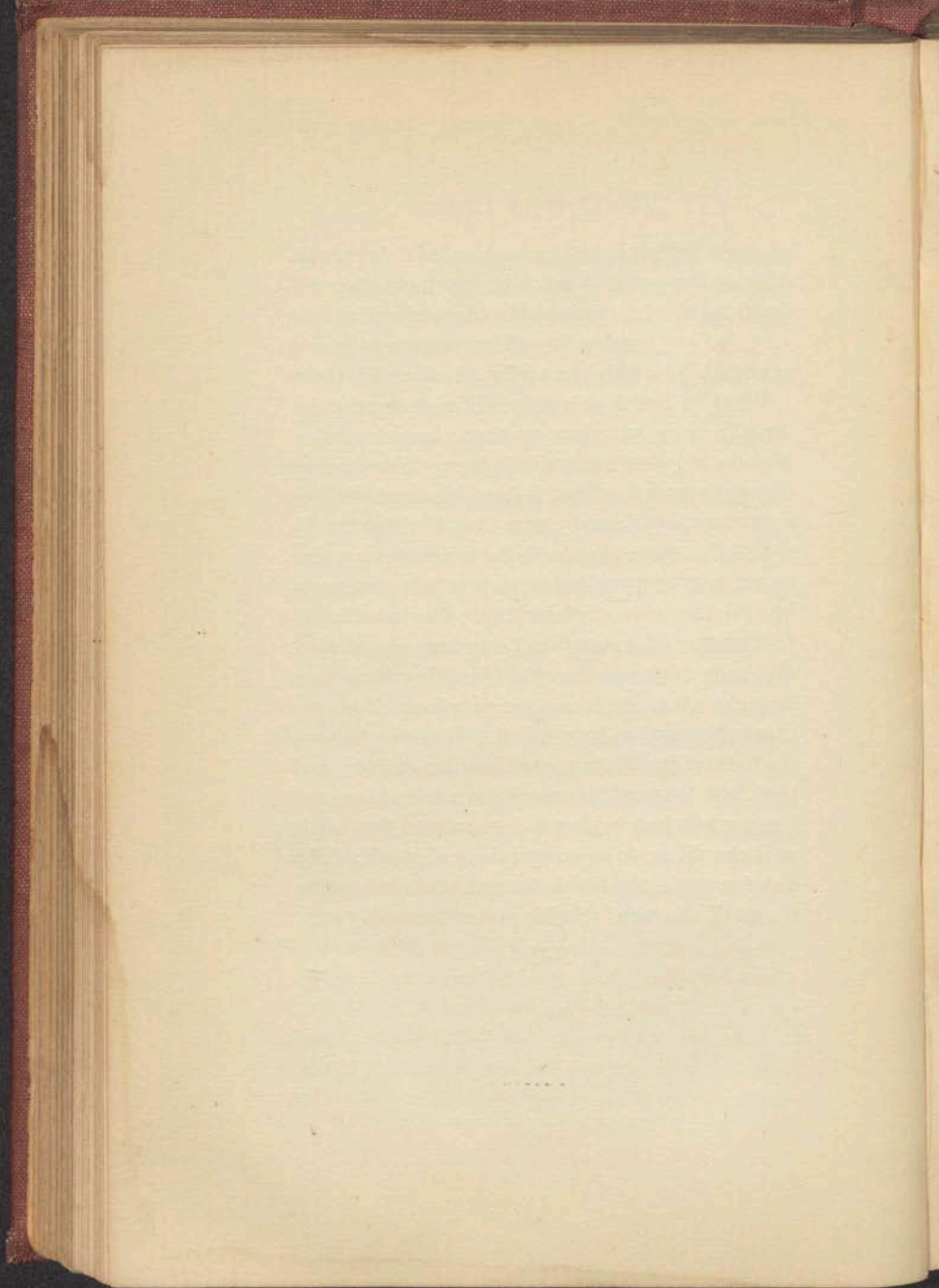
To some of my readers there is a fine irony in this direction. For their work is behind the counter, or at the sewing machine, or in the folding room, or at the typesetter's case, and they have little chance to rest from the drudgery and monotony of their daily routine. I trust a day is coming when employers will understand the need their operatives have of occasional rest-times through the day. Till then, let me repeat, snatch what rest you can and look on the bright side. It is better to have work and be tired, than to eat your heart out because you are tired of having no work.

Sleep, tired nature's sweet restorer, knits the raveled sleeve of care and literally makes us over, night after night. Retire early. It is a golden rule for the worker who toils with hand or brain. There is rest in the velvet darkness and the blessed stillness of the night, even if one must lie awake, rest for the weary muscles, for the eyes, for the ears. Try to put yourself to sleep by thoughts

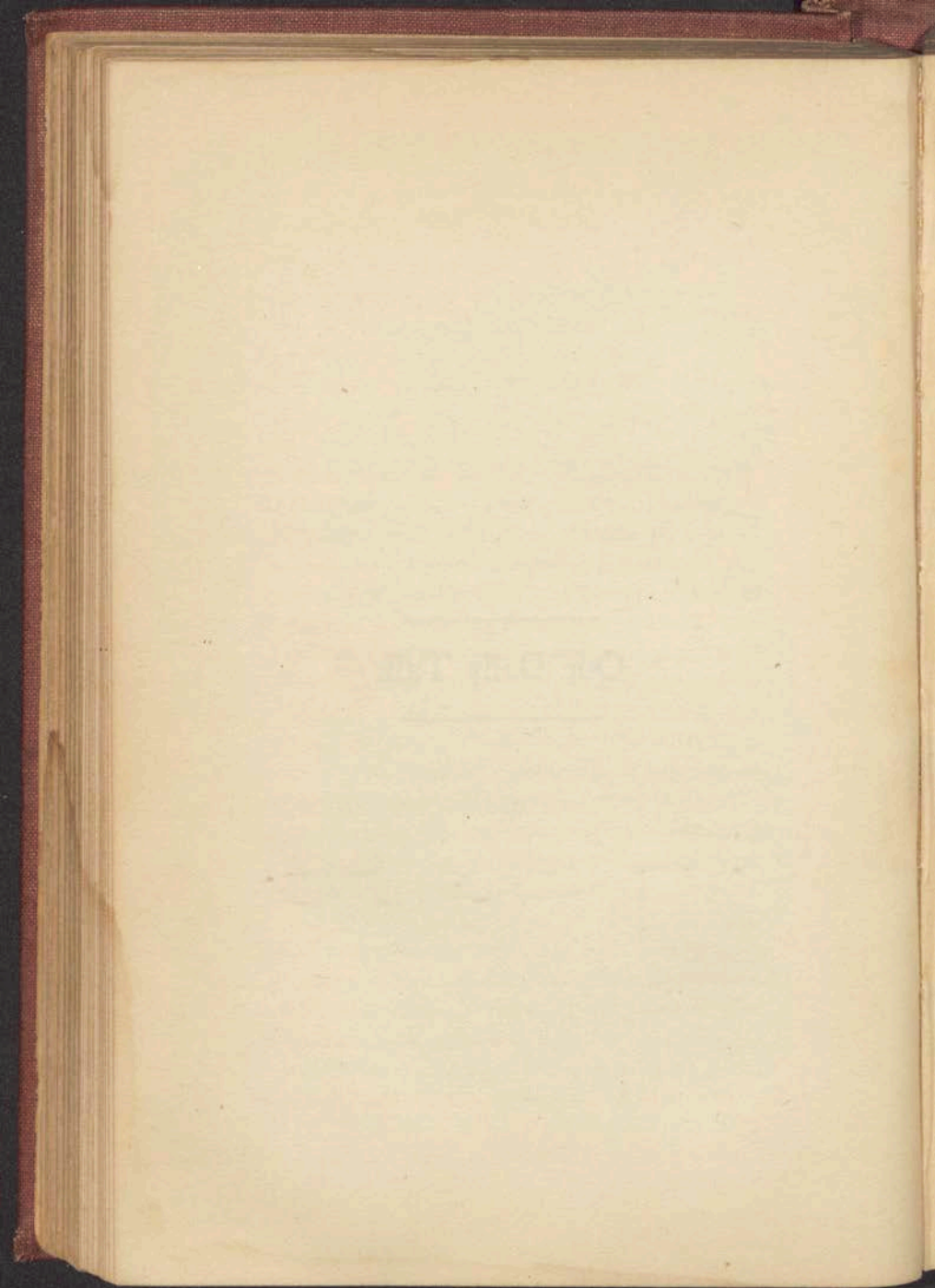
The Duty of Health

of green fields, of purling streams, of flowers nodding in the gentle wind. If you have the children's habit of dropping off to dreamland as soon as your head touches the pillow, you are to be congratulated, for this is a pledge of a long life lease.

Think of health as a duty. Discourage the idea that illness is ever to be more than a transient interruption of your methodical days. Should God choose to send it, accept it from his hand without a murmur, but be very sure that God has really sent it, for more than half of our illnesses are due to our needless self-indulgence or our own reckless infringement of plain laws. One may be intemperate with so simple a thing as candy or cake. One may invite pneumonia by sitting down in a draught when one is in a perspiration. One may court rheumatism by wet feet. It is wise to have the habit of health, to regard health as a duty, and then, not to spend too much time in talking and fussing but just taking it for granted that all is as it should be, to go on and do one's work. The day for work, the night for rest, and God caring for us all through. So life glides tranquilly on.



Our Daily Talk



Our Daily Talk

CHAPTER XIV.

Our Daily Talk.

I HEARD the other day a terrible and shocking piece of profanity, yet the person who uttered it with an unblushing countenance seemed entirely unconscious that he was violating decency, as well as offending God. Probably his daily speech had become so vitiated that oaths were to him as commonplace as the alphabet. Few well-taught men and women, brought up among polite and gently-bred people, are offenders in this regard, but a word about our daily talk may, nevertheless, not be superfluous.

For, indeed, we have individually and collectively an obligation to our mother tongue. How remarkable is the person whose use of English is always correct, who converses fluently and grammatically, and who uses the right word in the right place. The hall-mark of refinement is discernible here, both in the choice of language to appropriately clothe one's thoughts and in the pleasant intonations which convey an impression of the gentleman and the gentlewoman.

Slang which has invaded our drawing-rooms—

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the more is the pity!—is opposed to elegance, and should be eliminated from our daily talk. Of course, slang is sometimes picturesque, and it sometimes has an apt way of implying more than lies on the surface. Nevertheless, the really cultivated person must frown on its use, must not permit it to creep into his familiar conversation. A good rule about our daily talk is this: Never in our most informal home-speech, never in our talk with parents, relatives, or friends, to use any phrase, sentence, or expression whatever, the use of which, in any imaginable company or in any circumstances, could fill us with mortification.

Manners and talk are revelations of character. Our customary style of speech “bewrayeth” us, to use the Scripture word. A queen masquerading in a peasant’s garb would show herself of the court by the silver smoothness of her tones, the grace of her inflections, the charming appropriateness of her language. The boor, no matter how finely arrayed, has but to open his mouth to disclose his lack of urbane training.

Young people need to be cautioned against exaggeration and hyperbole, as well as against explosive exclamations of surprise, anger, or dismay, which add no real strength to speech, and yet crop out continually in the chatter of the ill-educated. “Heavens!” “Goodness!” “Mercy!” “Great Scott!” “By Jove!” and similar expletives are

Our Daily Talk

open to criticism on grounds which will readily occur to anyone who gives them a moment's thought, and as they add nothing whatever to a conversation, but on the contrary are a detraction from its pleasure, why not banish them from common use? I have heard of a family where a fine was exacted for each lapse into this objectionable sort of speech, the aggregate going into the home missionary offering at the end of every month. As habit has a great deal to do with our modes of speech, why not be at pains to eliminate the silly "ohs!" and "ahs!" and "mys!" and other exclamations which absurdly sprinkle the talk of the heedless person who makes up for lack of something worth saying by saying many things of little worth.

Again, in our daily talk it is well to avoid slipshod and slovenly methods of pronunciation. We need not drop final "gs," nor run our words together in such wise that "and" loses its "d," and "have" is shortened to "hev," and "which" is transformed into "witch," and verbal inaccuracies abound. A little more time if you please, and give each word its fair share of breath so that it will fall from the lips clear-cut as a new coin from the mint.

Almost as great a mistake as that made by the over-rapid and careless speaker is the one made by the other whose evident intention to be elegant

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obliges her to select words which have no merit except their length. Mrs. Malaprop herself is outdone by people who determine never to use a short word if they can find a long one, and whose sentences labor heavily, lumbering along, till we are distressed at the needless effort, and yearn to help the speakers by a timely colloquial lift. Nobody is so tedious as a conversational pedant, or a prig who uses ornamental and formal language where it is manifestly out of place.

The short words are usually the best for daily use. If anyone wishes to know how much may be done with monosyllabic words, how beautiful and swift of pace and full of meaning they can be, let them read Stevenson's inimitable *Child Garden of Verse*. I open the dear book at random, and I chance upon this, to the wind:

"I saw you toss the kites on high,
And blow the birds about the sky.
And all around I heard you pass
Like ladies' skirts across the grass.
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song."

Stevenson, dearly beloved, too soon gone from among men, had you left us only this good example, we had been your debtors for evermore.

So far, I have been concerned with the manner of our daily talk, but its matter is perhaps of even more solemn importance. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words

Our Daily Talk

thou shalt be condemned," we read in the holiest of books. It has been well said that for our fancies, our thoughts, our notions, we may not always be responsible, but our words are under our own control. We can be silent under great provocation, and nobody can force us to speak against our will.

Our daily talk should not descend to unkind gossip about our neighbors, to unfriendly censure of the motives of people, motives which we cannot know, since often we are much puzzled about our own. It is beneath the dignity of a decently brought-up person, leaving Christian character wholly outside the reckoning, to trade in slander, to carry stories to and fro, to whisper innuendoes, or to repeat secrets. Of each of us let it be told that our tongues have been ruled by kindness, that where we have been able to say nothing in praise we at least have refrained from blame.

There is a mean and cowardly silence which suffers a friend's good name to be impugned without rushing to its defense. There is a malignant silence which conveys a lie as readily as the most abusive speech. From such silence, unworthy a straightforward and honorable person, in all conversational encounters, we reverently pray, "Good Lord, deliver us."

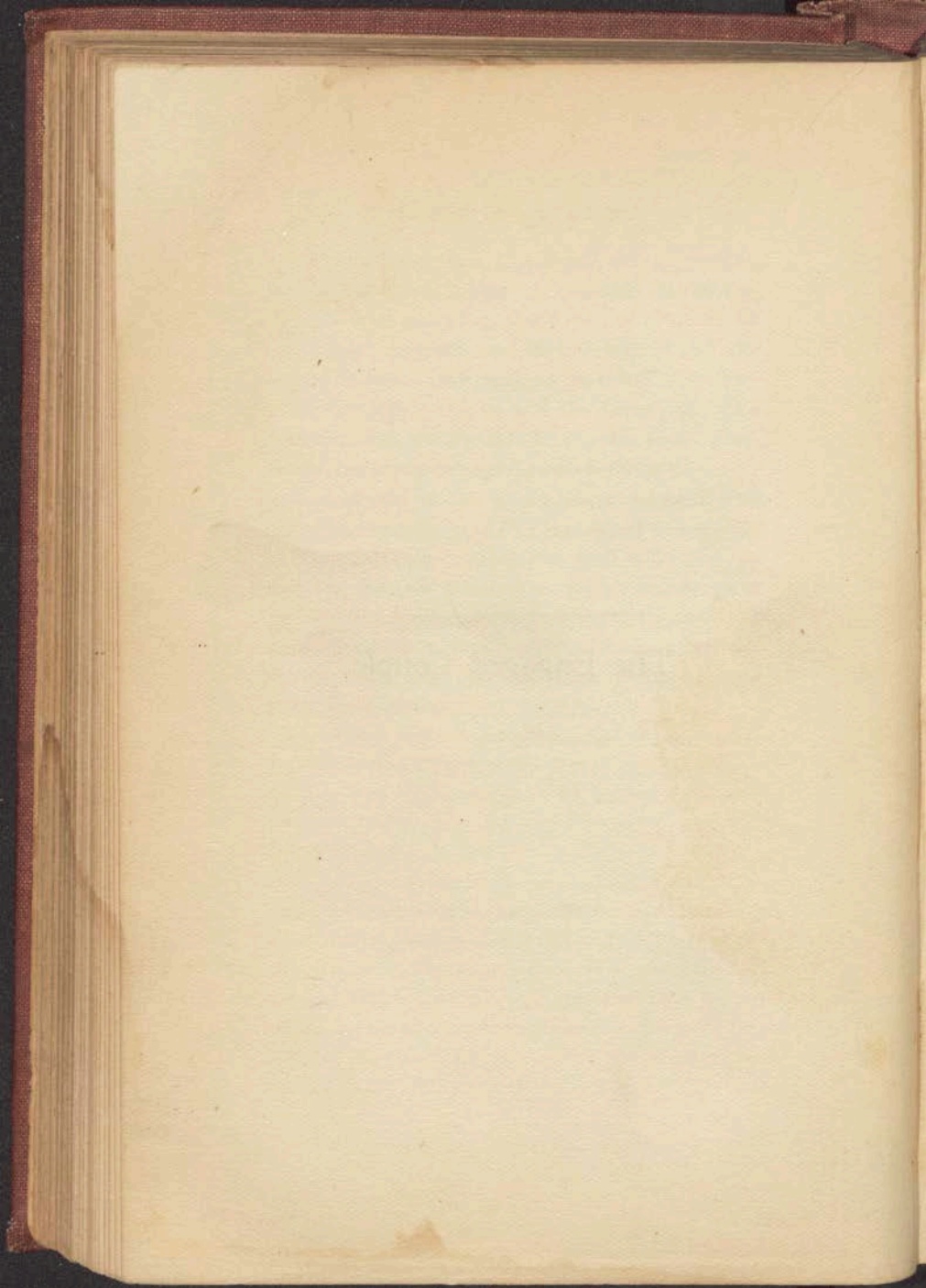
Let us, as a matter of course, in our daily talk, speak the truth. The temptation to add a little to a narrative, to amplify without reference to

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exact detail, to evade, to prevaricate, may come, for all falsehood is from our ancient adversary, who is ever prowling about to catch us in an unguarded moment, and he has been styled the father of lies. But here, as in every situation, resist the devil and he will flee from you. We may be, and we should be, crystal clear, absolutely sincere and frank in our daily talk.

Blessed, too, is the agreeable companion who takes the trouble to talk about what is going on in the world, who, hearing a droll witticism, or a merry quip, an anecdote or a proverb, passes it on. Such a person comes into the dull household and brightens it, is an invaluable guest at the dinner-table, and goes nowhere without being sure of a welcome.

The Engaged Couple



The Engaged Couple

CHAPTER XV.

The Engaged Couple.

BEGINNINGS are always fascinating. Few of us can resist the charm of novelty. The first impulse sends us with light steps and happy hearts to the new and untried enterprise; it is when the story has grown hackneyed, and the road familiar, and the day has settled down to the dead-level of the commonplace, that we show of what mettle we are made.

To the pair who have just pledged their faith in each other, life assumes rose tints and the atmosphere is radiant. True, there may now and then intrude a half-whispered doubt as to whether the perfect day will always last, but the shadow is so evanescent that it casts no gloom, and the young people drift on through a tender and delightful succession of dreamy hours; she, rejoicing that she has found one whom it is her pleasure and pride to proclaim worthy to receive her heart's loyalty; he, elated and amazed and altogether blessed, sometimes humbled in his own esteem, sometimes towering over his fellows like Saul over the children of his tribe, in his

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gladness that the best and dearest of women has consented to share his lot. The engaged couple walk on air. The girl does not need the pretty distinction of the ring which sparkles on her finger to set her apart from other girls; the man goes about clothed with a most becoming dignity, now that he has wooed and won the princess whom he feels that he has been seeking ever since he left boyhood behind him.

The engaged pair are always objects of interest and sympathy to those outside the charmed and mystic circle which invisibly surrounds them, for all the world loves a lover. It is their own fault, or at least their own misfortune, if they alienate this regard by a too pronounced selfishness, if they are so wrapped up in egoism that they cease to be altruistic, and show plainly that they have no care for anything of which they are not the center. Here is a danger to be averted by caution. For Amy does not cease to be a daughter, a sister, a friend, a fellow-worker, when she becomes Theodore's *fiancée*, and Theodore still has duties to his home and to society, to the Sunday school, the church, and the community, after Amy has promised to be his wife. A proper devotion to one another they are expected to feel and to show, but there are limits even to the amount of time and the degree of attention which the days of courtship demand.

The Engaged Couple

For many reasons long engagements are trying to the temper and the patience of friends and kindred, as well as to the health and spirits of the betrothed persons. More or less the engaged are under a strain. They are living at high pressure. There is something unreal in the conditions of their existence. They cannot settle down comfortably to the plain, everyday prose of life, now that their hours are set to the music and rhythm of poetry.

"'Zekel crep' up quite unbeknown
And peeked in through the winder.
Huldy sot shellin' peas alone,
With nuthin' nigh to hinder."

Very humble and homely sweethearts these,
but who does not love them when

"His heart was goin' pitapat,
And her'n went pity 'Zekel?'"

In a more polished social state the lover is not less bashful underneath, though he may carry himself with a greater outward assurance, for it is the very essence of love to be timorous, and the coy withdrawal of the maidenly soul is matched by the delicate homage of the man who fears to advance too boldly. Beautiful dawn of the day, which may go on through happy gradations from morning till night, until at last the one true lover may say to the other when the shadows gather in the evening sky,

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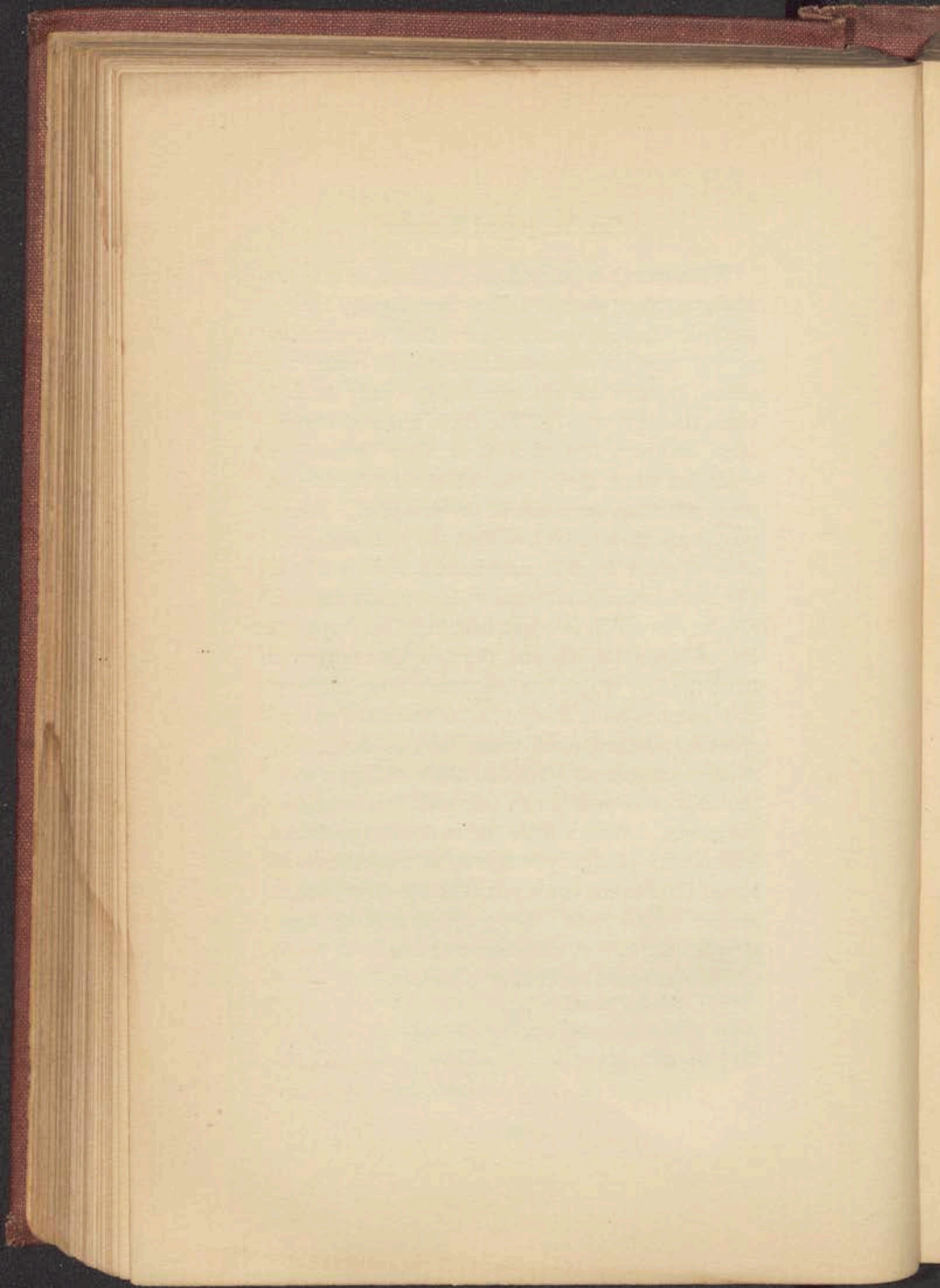
"Don't be sorrowful, darling,
Don't be sorrowful, pray;
Taking the year together, my dear,
There isn't more night than day."

Engaged people should be congenial comrades. Do you know what comradeship means? What of work shared and sorrows halved and joys multiplied it implies? Why, think of it! Your comrade takes the road with you, rests awhile, roams awhile, carries part of the burden, earns the day's wage and divides it when reckoning time comes, just as you do with him or with her. Married people who are not comrades fret each other as they go, wear on each other, are incompatible in temper; their lives are full of friction. It would be well for engaged people who discover that they are not already comrades to pause while there is time and consider whether or not their dispositions, qualities, and pursuits will incline them to comradeship when they are irrevocably wedded.

I plead for the short engagement. Once you have decided to belong to one another, do not put off marriage indefinitely while you wait for a larger salary, better prospects, more luxurious probabilities. The lapse of a few weeks or months is quite enough between the "yes" which plights the vow and the sacramental day when the bride slips her hand into her husband's, and both solemnly promise to be loyal and loving "till death do us part."

The Engaged Couple

Wherever it is possible the sanction of parents and guardians should hallow and dignify the betrothal. Love does not always find parental approval ready to accept his entrance upon the scene; fathers are not invariably ready to welcome the men who ask for their idolized daughters; mothers feel that their very hearts are wounded when their sons set their affection on some girl from the house of the stranger. Young people are slow to believe that the judicious criticism of older friends may have a *raison d'être*. Opposition precipitates avowals and stirs passionate desires which else had been held in abeyance. Nevertheless the son and the daughter may well trust the love which has been theirs since infancy, and parents have a right to be consulted and respectfully heard, even when they do not arrive at the conclusions which to their children seem the only ones possible to fair and discriminating judgment. Wait a little before deciding—do not irrevocably pledge yourselves till you have allowed time to convince you that the dear parents are not in the right. Love which is of the true, strong, eternal sort will sooner or later win recognition and prove its claims to be fair.



“Beginning Where Parents
Leave Off”

English White Paper
1840

“Beginning Where Parents Leave Off”

CHAPTER XVI.

“Beginning Where Parents Leave Off.”

WE are confronted in our complex modern civilization among the highly educated and refined classes of society with a growing indifference to marriage. The unmarried man in our larger cities finds himself provided with bachelor apartments where his physical comfort is looked after and his material wants are attended to by janitors, waiters, and a well organized service. He may live as expensively or as frugally as he chooses, and he is one of a numerous army of men who remain independent of family ties and obligations, responsible for nobody except themselves, and equipped as to the outward forms of life with every appliance for luxury.

The term “bachelor maid,” a singularly infelicitous and repellant one, is very commonly applied to the young woman who, standing squarely on her own feet and paying her own way, asks of the world nothing but a chance to show what she can do.

Now, so far as it goes, and for individuals, the bachelor life, selfish as its tendencies are, and

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lonely as it grows toward the end unless the person concerned is more than ordinarily fortunate, is free from certain anxieties and burdens, and is entirely respectable, but the more excellent way is that old-fashioned and simple one, accepted without question in former years, in which young people are mutually attracted, marry, and establish homes, and the family, going on, keeps up the succession of the race.

The modern objection to matrimony in most cases, if it could be discovered, would be found deep-lying, not in disinclination of the one sex to the other, not in a vocation for monasticism, but in the fear of poverty.

"I cannot ask a girl to leave her father's house, where she has had everything heart could wish, and begin life with me on my small salary," is the man's explanation. "Young people," says the cynic, "must begin in these days where their parents leave off."

Not long ago I heard a pathetic tale of two young people, not babes in the woods, but the son and daughter, respectively, of wealthy New York merchants. Jack's salary was larger than that of most college presidents or distinguished ministers of the Gospel, in very favoring circumstances. Fanny's mother furnished the house for the young husband and wife and promised to buy all Fanny's clothes, just as when she was a girl at

“Beginning Where Parents Leave Off”

home. Nevertheless they came to shipwreck. Debts accumulated, the exactions of city life in the way of clubs, carriages, the opera, and I cannot tell what else, kept them as verily paupers as the poorest denizen of the East Side, their creditors haunted their steps, and at last accounts they had been obliged, said my informant, to bury themselves in the country. Poor things! One wonders what had become of their American pluck and common sense. Too much ease and too much command of wealth, when one is young and still crude and inexperienced, enervate and enfeeble those who might in stimulating poverty and under the discipline of narrower means amount to something strong and fine.

In contrast to this pair of incapables, I think of another married couple who have very little of this world's gear, and an exceedingly small annual income, who yet are living cheerily, honestly, and happily in a little home of their own. They keep no maid, and they do not try to entertain except on a very small scale; a friend being welcome to share their loaf and their cup and their broiled chop and baked potato, and they are laying the foundations for successful home-building. A man who recently died, leaving a very large fortune, said that his wife and he had made it a rule, no matter how little they had, to put by a little from

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it every week, and thus saving they made their large acquisitions possible in time.

I cannot too strongly state my conviction that young men often do very great injustice to young women by supposing that the latter would shrink from sharing their poverty. It is quite the opposite could they read the inmost mind of the modest girl who is forbidden to show regard before it has been asked. Granted that a girl loves and honors a man, she is more than willing to share the hardships of his beginnings, nor will she count them hard. "Where there's bread for one there's bread for two," said the true wife of a young European artist, who thought to cross the Atlantic and carve his fortune here, sending later for his wife to join him. But she came with him, and together they toiled till fame brought him laurels and gold was poured into his lap.

Poverty and wealth are in a sense accidental and are always comparative. It is no great matter whether we ever arise above moderate circumstances, and the care of large wealth is not less a burden than the struggle with poverty which robs the shoulder of strength and the eye of luster.

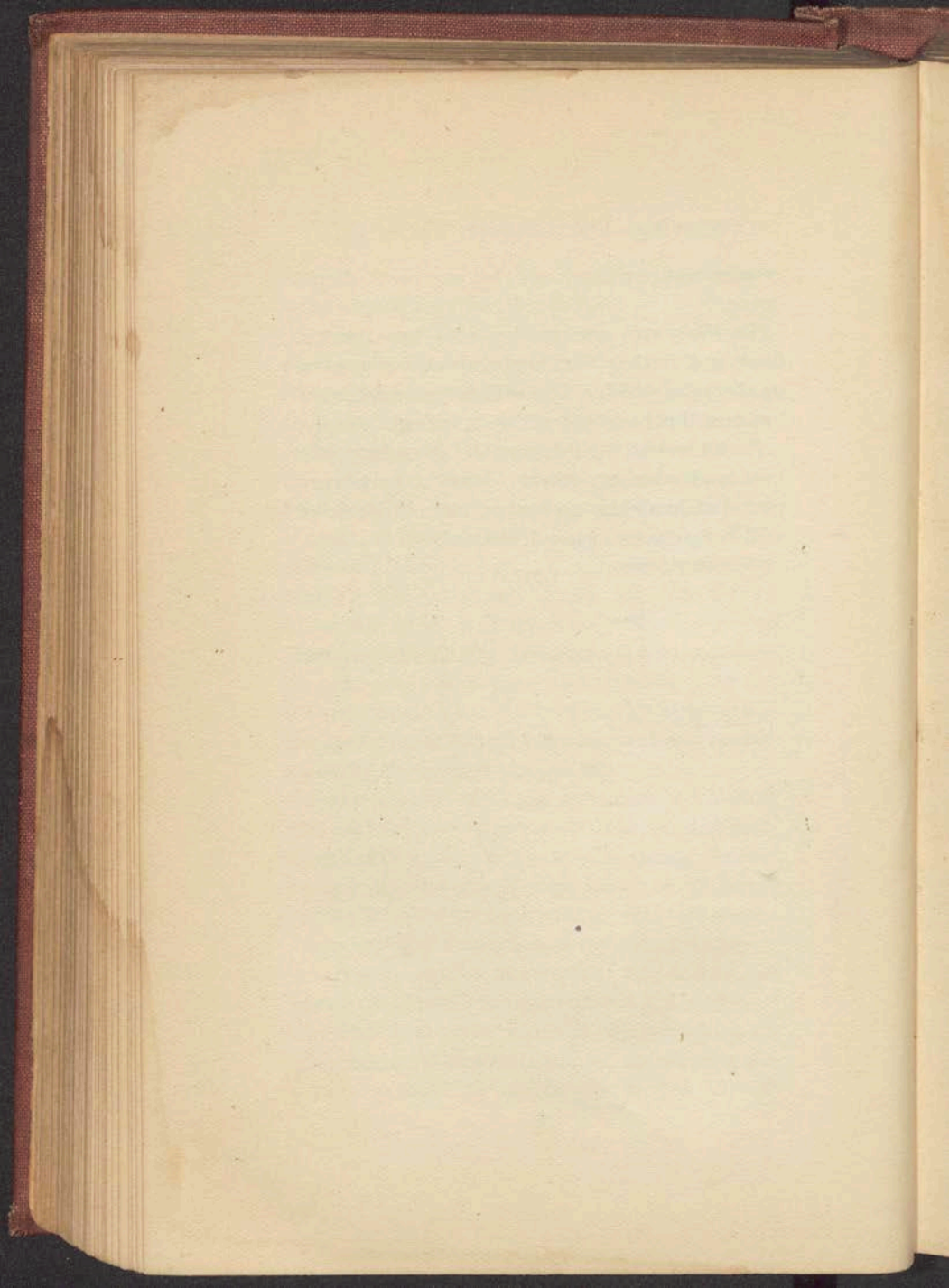
"Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me," was the prayer of one who had great wisdom. Enough to keep one's home in modest comfort, to exorcise the demon of debt, to enable one to live in self-

“Beginning Where Parents Leave Off”

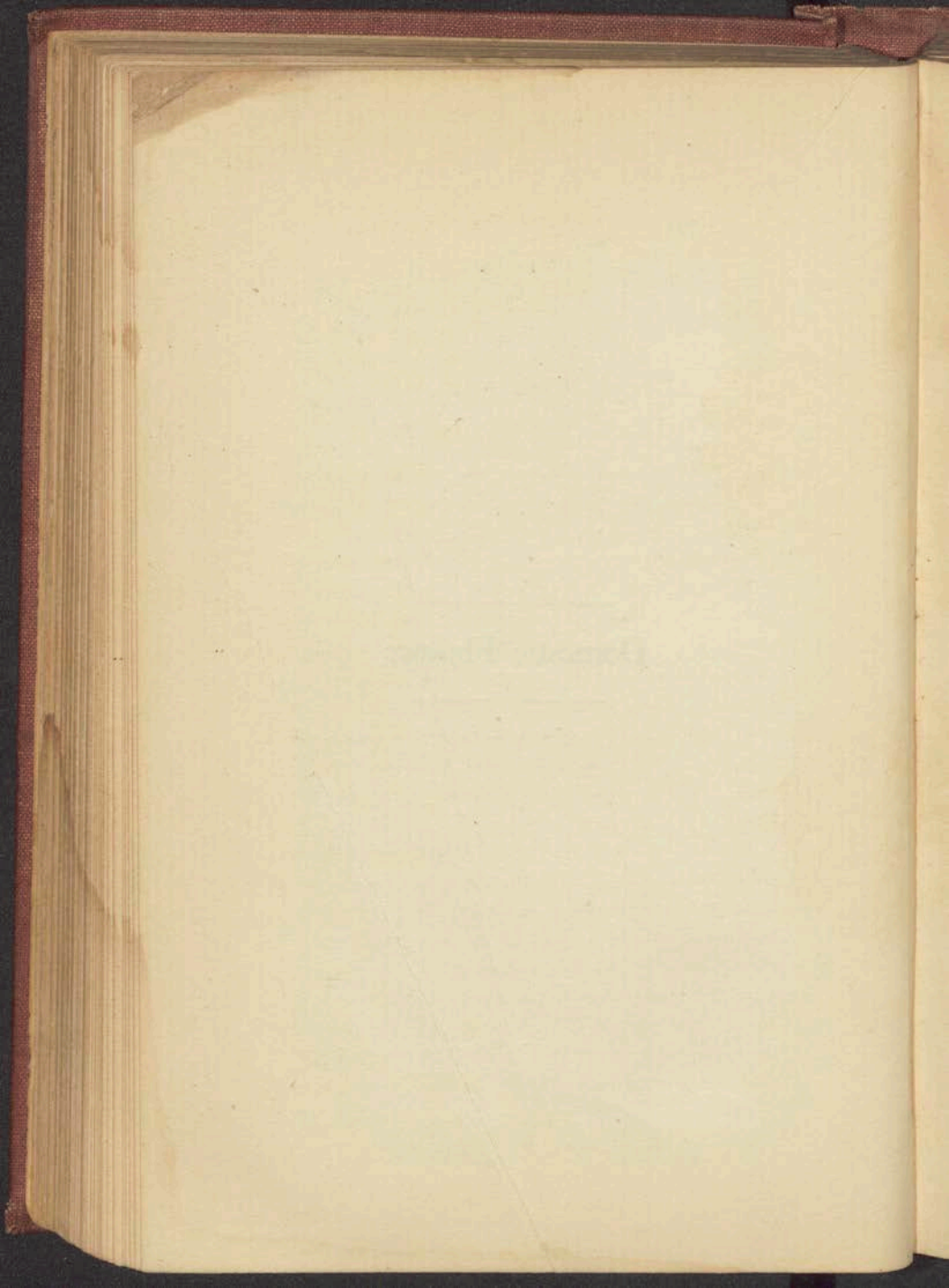
respect and serenity is all that any of us should crave.

To the youth and maiden who have health, hope, and faith in God, marriage should present no obstacles which a firm will and a united resolution will not easily push aside. Begin simply.

It will be well for this republic when its young men and women cease to dread a temporary period of hardship, and when our old ideals of simplicity are no longer dethroned.



Domestic Finance



Domestic Finance

CHAPTER XVII.

Domestic Finance.

WHETHER or not we have much money or little, we must administer what we have with due discretion or we shall conspicuously fail of receiving our money's worth. In the firm of "Wife and Self" the parties are in reality partners in business as well as friends who have taken one another for better or for worse. This view of the case is not always the accepted one, many excellent husbands practically behaving as if their wives were rather worthy mendicants whose persistent begging entitled them to relief, but who had no claim on the household exchequer except the claim of charity besought.

When we look at the thing impartially a glance shows us that the home funds belong to both husband and wife in equal measure, for if he earns them, she makes it possible for him to do so by giving him the home as a background, a shelter, a refuge, a place for withdrawal when his work is done. Her part in their joint lives is the part of the home-maker, and it is a matter of convenience that she should stay where she can keep house

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and watch children and cook dinners and sew, while he goes to the shop or the mill and, free-handed and light-hearted, toils in the daily round for the weekly wage.

The sensible way to look at domestic finance is to face it squarely and determine how much of the income is to be spent for rent or for payments in purchasing a home, how much for food and clothing, how much for the pew in church, for the literature which comes into the family, for church collections, and for charities. The running expenses of the home can be estimated, also the amount husband and wife should each reserve for their daily personal uses.

When possible the wife should have her personal allowance, out of which her individual expenses shall come. This cannot always be managed, but no honored wife should ever be humiliated by having to ask for every penny she wishes to spend. Wives never cease to hate this. I have known gray-haired women, the wives of men whose ships sailed the seas and whose stocks boomed in the market-places, who admitted with tears that the necessity of asking for money and the mortification of explaining what they did with it when it was grudgingly given had been the secret cross of their lives, the hair shirt under soft silk and sheen of velvet. All so exasperatingly needless, too, this petty pain which should

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never have been borne, yet which was keen enough to chill the warmth of love, to cast a shadow over much home sunshine.

A man, when you go to him for a contribution, either grants or denies your request, seldom waiting to consult Mary. A woman, similarly approached, in nine cases out of ten, is forced to make some excuse, or to tell you quite plainly that she cannot give anything until she has spoken to John.

The reason why women so largely give by indirection, by fairs and cake sales and suppers and in other roundabout ways, is that they are able to bestow their time and they can make articles to sell or take from their pantries flour, sugar, and spice at their will, and thus they can raise funds, while it would be beyond their power, whatever their wish might be, to contribute anything outright. Yet by strenuous exertion, contrivance, and management they do give very generously, though not quite as they would like to do, did they hold what Christopher North called "the Key of the Kist and the Siller." It is a strong element in daily happiness, the holding the power of the purse. Many charming women, who appear in public richly gowned, whose raiment is of purple and fine linen, and who fare sumptuously every day, never have more than a little change in their pockets.

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Sometimes, if the husband of such a woman is liberal and prosperous, he pays her bills when they are sent to him without murmur or complaint. Often their amount seems to him extraordinarily large, and he pays with a grudge and a grumble. If he be a stingy person, he makes life very forlorn for the wife whose financial transactions pass through his hands.

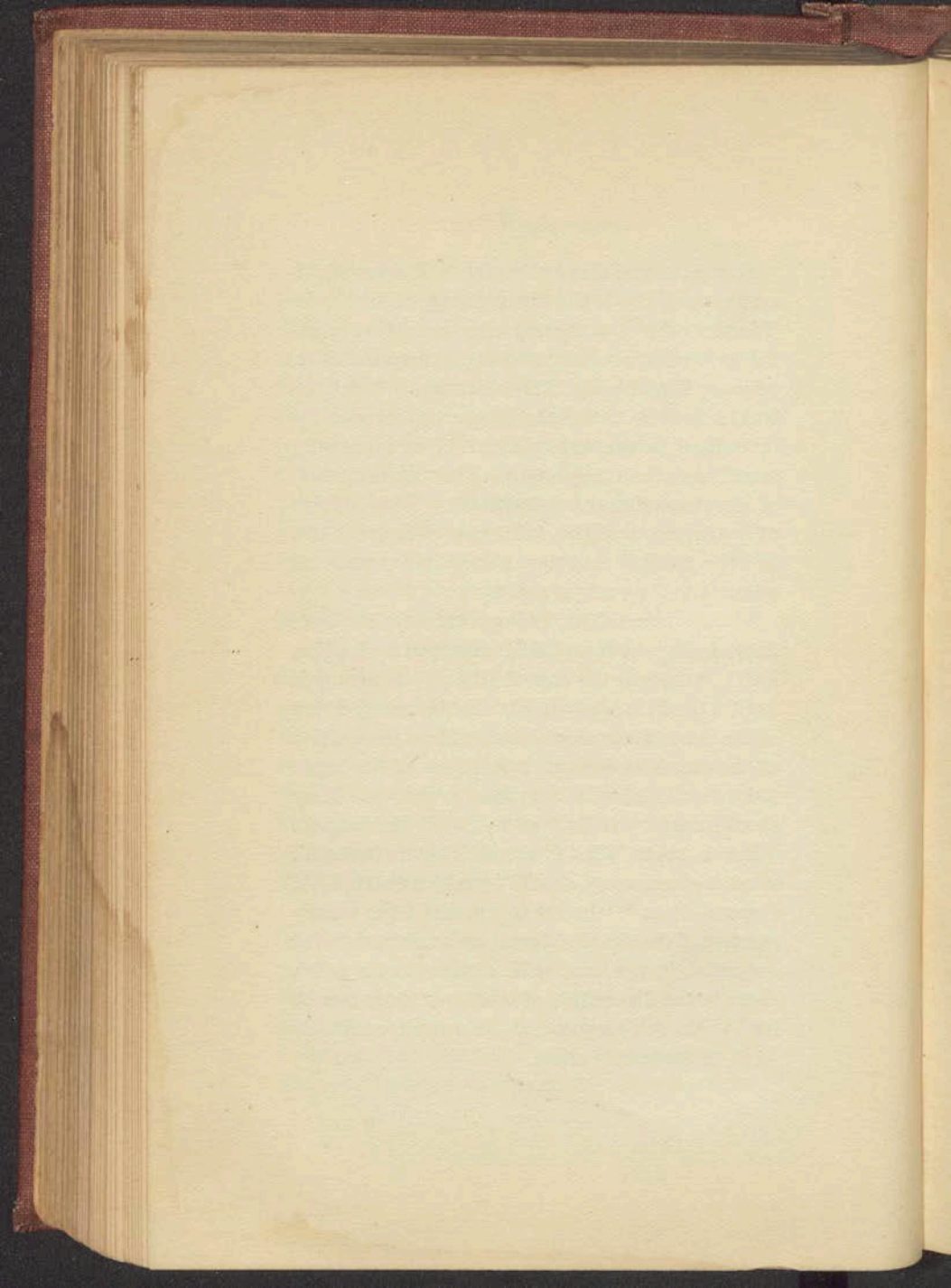
I once knew a sordid man who was in receipt of a good income and who believed in treating his wife like an immature child. "Betty wouldn't know what to do with money if she had it," he used to say, and Betty colored and sighed, but was too proud to remonstrate before folk. Out of her small housekeeping purse, for Betty went to market daily, by five-cent pieces and silver dimes and tiny three-cent coins poor Betty one year saved enough to buy her husband a Christmas gift, and she carried her little hoard just as it was to the jeweler's shop, where she made her selection, and poured it in a shining and pathetic heap on the counter.

But the worst was to come. Will you believe it—you must for this is plain, unvarnished truth—when Betty's husband received the present he exclaimed at her extravagance, and compelled her to take back the article to the merchant who sold it and ask for the money it cost! So mean may the spirit of cupidity make a man in whom it reigns.

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But loose and illogical methods of domestic finance work also to the disadvantage of husbands. Women who are treated like immature playthings, who are never taught responsibility, who are kept wholly in the dark as to their husband's resources, and the larger the income the more likely is this to be the case, often innocently spend more than they ought. They are not aware of any reason for exercising thrift. They indulge every caprice and give full sway to their whims, and the result is that they handicap the husband whom else they might assist.

Money is a talent, an opportunity, an open door, a gift which we hold in fee from God. The love of money is the root of all evil, but money is itself a good if rightly used. In the management of the home finances, there should be recognition of the common right of both heads of the house to know all about their common property. They should confer candidly as to its administration. What is spent, what is saved, what is invested, what is given away, should equally concern both. Depend upon it, the arrangement of the money matters of the simplest home, on a fair basis, with impartial justice, and with a view to the wife's share in the disposition of whatever there is, will tend to the self-respect and the complete contentment of the family circle.



Shall the Wife be a Breadwinner?
