

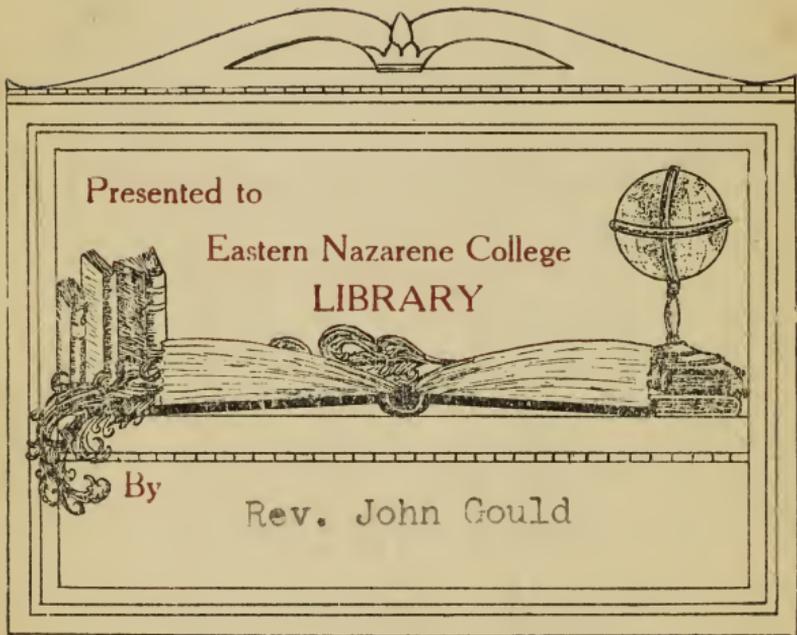
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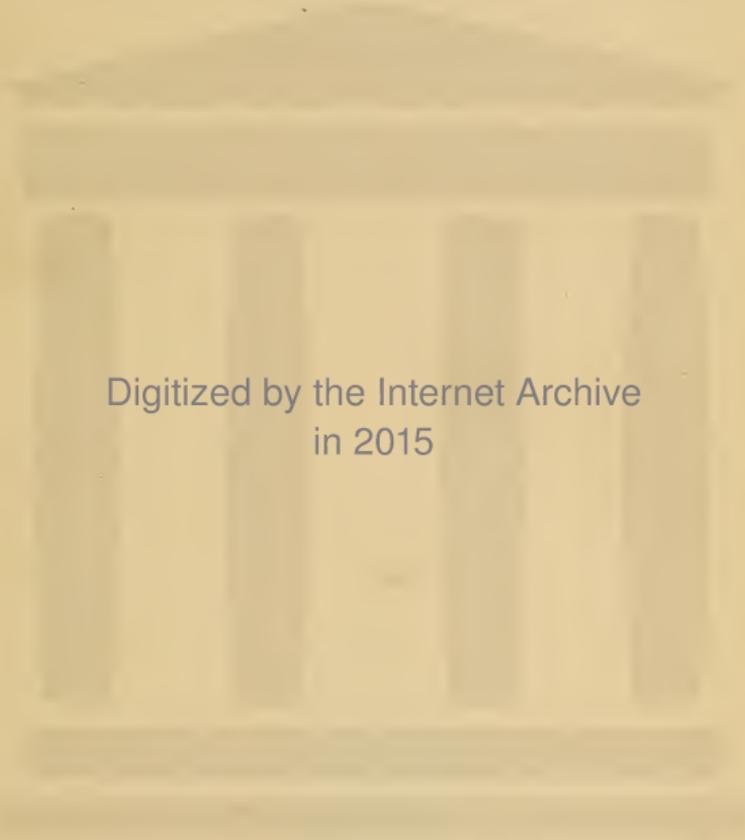


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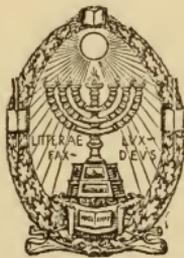
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LIFE ON HIGH LEVELS

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.



15903

CINCINNATI: CURTS & JENNINGS
NEW YORK: EATON & MAINS
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

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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

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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

Our Place in the World

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.

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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

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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. To-day, 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.

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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, downright 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.

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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

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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.’

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“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,

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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-

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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 floes 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,

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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 worshipping 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 assim-

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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

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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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ture, 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

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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 perdue 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.

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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*.

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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cial, 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

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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 boulder. 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

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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 unflinching 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

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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. Unsuitable 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.

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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

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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

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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,

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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-

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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

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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.

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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

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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

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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”

“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 repellent 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

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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?

Shall the Wife be a Breadwinner?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Shall the Wife be a Breadwinner?

TO this question the answer is sometimes given unequivocally, "By no means." If the wife be the mother of little children, if she be even partially an invalid, if there is no need that her exertions shall increase the family income, if her taking on her shoulders the labor of partially supporting the household means that she shall be overworked and borne down with care, then let her hesitate long before she accepts such a task. Certainly there is no propriety in the wife's undertaking wage-earning work if the result of her doing so be that she is left to support an indolent husband, a thing almost unheard-of except among the very ignorant or the intemperate. Charity workers often find wives undertaking willing task-work. But no man who is manly, or even decent, will for an instant shirk his own obligations and shift them to his wife, nor take from her weary hands ease which she pays for as with her life blood.

There are circumstances in which it is proper and convenient for the wife to add to the family

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income by the exercise of trained ability. Where, for example, she has, perhaps before her marriage, made for herself a place and name in some field of literature or art, in journalism or medicine, or any other profession, it may be wise for her to continue to whatever extent the new conditions make practicable the career on which she has entered, and which has already rewarded her efforts with success. The money she thus honorably earns will enable her, if her husband's means are moderate, to make their joint home more beautiful, and she can pay for service in departments which an unskilled worker can learn to fill. I can see no reason why the journalist, having married, should be obliged to make bread when her forte is really writing editorials; nor why the doctor shall spend her time sewing up long white seams when she could be better employed in stitching up wounds and alleviating pain. There is more than the mere money question here involved, for these workers are assisting humanity on a plane beyond the limited domestic sphere. This must be wisely cared for first, or the other will not, however, be a success.

Women whom I delight to honor have cheerfully and ably taken hold of the heavy end of the load when their husbands have been ill or unfortunate in business, and have filled their houses with summer boarders or with lodgers, or, in the

Shall the Wife be a Breadwinner?

way which seemed most appropriate, have brought their talents to bear on the situation, usually without complaint and with pluck and perseverance. In such emergencies there has been no sacrifice either of wifely dignity or of those winning graces which make the lady beloved of all who meet her. Her children have generally been judiciously trained, and their mother's business ventures have not resulted in neglect of their truest interests. On the contrary, in such households young people are apt to be exceptionally well equipped for life's battles.

The sum of the matter is probably this: When the necessity arises, let the wife, if her health allow and her judgment approve, assume the breadwinner's rôle, not that this is the ideal thing, but it is a thing to which no sensible person can reasonably object. It is also the separate and personal affair of each wife and each husband, and outsiders who censure or criticize are meddling and impertinent, decidedly beyond the confines of good breeding.

When the wife by native genius or acquired skill, or long and costly training, has become proficient in any branch, or at home in any field where education and practice count for much, let her not hesitate to carry her gifts to the marketplace. Her husband will be proud of her, and her generation will not be robbed of her ability

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“to serve the present age.” And, as women are in temperament and by habit vicarious, her gains will not be selfish nor her triumphs individual; she will bless many homes in adding to the wealth of one.

Only, by way of caution, dear gifted wife, remember that home must take precedence of everything else. You belong first to the man you have married, next to the world; you belong first to the domesticities, next to the region outside your front door. The music, the poetry, the painting, the glamour and the glow which have been around the studies, the arts and the sciences, and the work they have jealously exacted, are all splendid in their developments, though severe in their requirements, the splendor and the rigor both part of the girl's life, rather than the wife's, and thenceforward they are incidental only, not ever to be thrust into the foreground. Hence it is true that a wife must not expect a career, nor hope to work with the absolute single-heartedness and freedom which the spinster may bring to her task. The wife who helps to win the bread, or who adds some of the luxuries which else might be done without, is within her legitimate province, but she must be contented to resign some ambitions, and to clip the wings which would bear her too far above the ground where love has appointed her life work.

Rich Girls and Wage-Earning

Rich Girls and Wage-Earning

CHAPTER XIX.

Rich Girls and Wage-Earning.

THE sweet face uplifted to mine in the sunset light was almost pallid in the intensity of its anxious thought. Ruth had sought my advice on a question of conscience, a question which had deeply stirred her, and which she proposed to settle, not on the plane of accommodation to her own wishes or by the method of sophistry which often lend themselves to reason and which bolster up inclination, but on terms of lofty unselfishness.

“For right is right, since God is God,
And right the day must win,”

was Ruth's motto—a grand motto for man or woman.

“To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.”

Ruth's problem was simply this, and many young women have confronted it in moods similar to hers. She was not only the child of wealth, but she inherited wealth in her own right, so that while a girl in her father's house with all which he could give her, she had besides an independ-

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ence which enabled her to do whatever she chose—buy pictures, go abroad, enjoy every luxury, and indulge every taste—still without counting the cost or fearing to exhaust her income.

Yet Ruth's unsatisfied longing was in this direction. She ardently wished to teach, and a vacancy in the staff of a woman's college was at her disposal. To Ruth's mind no pleasure, no charm of travel, no ease or elegance, was comparable to the sitting in a class room with a group of earnest students, actually in close quarters with real work.

But where there was one person anxious to engage in this profession, as was Ruth, for the love of it, there were twenty-five equally well fitted, equally certain to fill the chair with entire credit and to the satisfaction of students and faculty, who needed the salary. Some of these young women had undergone great self-denial and endured hardships without a murmur through successive years that they might be ready to accept such a post, and either they had to support themselves or there were others dependent upon them, to whom it was more than a caprice to be gratified that they should not be turned away.

There was no doubt that Ruth would succeed well as a tutor or professor. But there was no occasion for supposing that she would succeed much better than would three fourths of the others. Her

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taking the place, in plain words, meant that another must forego it, and the salary, to Ruth a drop in the overflowing cup of her life, was to that other the cup itself, allaying thirst and giving strength in time of need.

We talked it over till the last drowsy bird hushed its faint vesper song and the great stars burned in the far sky overhead.

"I might decline the salary," said Ruth. "That course would help the college. Colleges are always struggling because they have not a sufficient endowment."

"You would thus establish a bad precedent," I answered. "The laborer is worthy of her hire, and, rich or poor, the employee should receive the stipend for which he gives his services."

"Then you think I should sit at home and fold my hands because my Aunt Luella left me her fortune. I think it is rather hard."

"I do not think so, Ruth; but I am sure your wealth forbids your coming into competition with women who are poor, and who, needing work which you do not, are fully able to do it as well as you can. You would do a wrong to some one by keeping her from this position. But other fields are open to you. Other avenues are not blockaded as this one is. Why not carry your enthusiasm, your learning, your rare magnetism, and your gift of imparting knowledge and ex-

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citing interest to the classes in a working-girls' club, or to a college settlement? Why not go into the foreign or the home mission field, accepting the modest remuneration there offered and turning it into the treasury again for the payment of another worker? In the mission field there is a crying need for volunteers, and the force is not large enough. You do not face supply and demand on the terms which meet you when you consider a professorate in Chicago or New York. If teaching is what your soul is bent upon, there are people to be taught, and you can find them, sacrificing the career of no one else to gratify your own desire.

“A rich girl of my acquaintance went at her own charges last year to a mission field in China. Another is engaged in Gospel work in the heart of an American city. Another has laboriously acquired the art of the trained nurse in one of our great hospitals. She is the daughter of a millionaire, and her home has been a palace, but she will exercise her vocation among the poorest without money and without price. Thus she will not lessen the chances of any other trained nurse who may seek employment in the homes of those who can afford to pay her. Should she enter on the practice of her profession, when there is no need for her doing so, taking an honorarium, no one could accuse her of violating an

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obligation because, legally speaking, the field is as open to her as to her friend of limited means, and because there is not one rule for women and another rule for men, and men do not avoid business engagements in similar circumstances. Yet in her case, as in that of the aspiring teacher, there is an unwritten and a higher law which womanly natures recognize. A woman of wealth cannot crowd her sister woman to the wall and feel justified by her conscience.

“Take another case, and a very common one. Hundreds of young women are deft with the needle, and artistic embroidery has become a favorite pursuit in which many girls have attained very great skill. When a girl who verily needs the highest price for her work on linen or silk carries her dainty centerpiece or sachet to a shop, and discovers that she can sell it only for a fraction of its value because she has been undersold by a girl to whom money is no object, and who works merely for pin money, or—save the mark!—to make enough to buy Easter or Christmas gifts, she has a just complaint against the cruelty of the rich. The latter girl has favored herself at the expense of her sister. If poor and rich do equally enter the breadwinning lists, absolute justice requires that they shall do so on equal terms, that the rich shall not cheapen the market value of the work of the poor.”

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“I think, also, a reservation should be made in behalf of the difference in the kind of work done. A certain gentlewoman writes respectably and turns an honest penny by describing various social functions and bits of domestic experience, which easily find their way into print. Her writing is mediocre, but it has a certain commercial value. She drives about in her carriage, wears velvet and satin, and belongs to the charmed circle of those for whom the paths are carpeted with flowers. She complacently informs her friend that her literary work pays for a crib in a child’s hospital or furnishes luxuries to the inmates of an old ladies’ home. Does it ever occur to the kindhearted woman that her charities should come out of her private purse, and that her little gift with the pen, never rising above the commonplace, is by no means so remarkable that she should use it to the exclusion, for lack of space, from the columns of the daily or weekly paper of some young or older woman, to whom the work would mean shelter, clothing, and daily bread?”

Ruth and I talked all around the question, the conclusion for that time being that one rich girl would not yet enter the ranks of the paid toilers, though she would show herself ready to do so and be prepared if ever the time came when it should be needful.

The Maiden Aunt

The Maiden Aunt

CHAPTER XX.

The Maiden Aunt.

HAPPY and blessed beyond others is the clan which, among its connections, includes a maiden aunt sufficiently unattached and at leisure to fill in chinks, to go to Jessie's assistance when the children are down with the measles, five of them at once, to accompany grandmother to the hospital when she has the operation for cataract, to appear on the scene like a fairy godmother when Molly's wedding feast is making ready, and generally to devote herself to the aid of whichever kinsman or kinswoman stands in need of service. This dear and useful functionary is less common than of old, for the new womanhood in its various manifestations has opened other channels of work for the unmarried lady, and whether youthful or middle-aged, she is no longer obliged to accept support or favors from relatives if she is in health and the possession of her faculties.

This, on the whole, is a great advantage, for the seamy side of the spinster's life, kept well out of sight, and only wet at night with her tears, was

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often, in the old days, her dependent condition. She felt that she was tolerated, that she existed on sufferance, and as she went from home to home she was sometimes sorely put to the test to keep herself from repining and fretting, to be amiable and considerate and uncomplaining.

But it being admitted that there were drawbacks in the former dispensation, and that the maiden aunt when we meet her to-day is usually a dear and prized survival of the fittest, we yet hope that she may not quite disappear from among us. She is the children's angel wherever she goes. Invested with less authority than the mother, she makes up for the lack by a tender and winsome influence, which establishes her position and leads the little ones, and the older ones who have reached the stage between childhood and adolescence, to make her their confidante and counselor. To her the boys come with their problems in arithmetic and in casuistry. She listens with sympathy to the story of school trials and triumphs, and the earliest love affairs are poured into her ears. Auntie is at once the mother's prime minister and the comrade of the young people, and when, as happens sometimes, she has a house of her own and abides in comfort beneath her independent roof-tree, her home is the rallying place for the young people of the entire family.

The Maiden Aunt

The spinster aunt is invaluable in our Epworth League, albeit we do not think of her as anything more than a gentle and well-bred woman, a little older than the girls, a little younger than the mothers, a woman in touch with life at many points, with philanthropy, with books, with church work, and with affairs of every kind. Her tact is invaluable, and her readiness to assume responsibilities and undertake difficult tasks is sometimes imposed upon. Less impulsive than she was twenty years ago, the spinster is not devoid of spontaneity, and she does not act as a wet blanket on new departures, nor interpose objections when daring new schemes are proposed. We may count on her to visit the sick, to be kind to the stranger, and to act as an efficient aid to the pastor, who often has occasion for unofficial help, and finds it in the elect ladies of the parish who are as much under his orders as if they were soldiers mustered in under a general commander.

The whole state of public opinion has changed with regard to spinsterhood since we who wear silver hair were ourselves girls. In a country where the women largely outnumber the men, it is plain that all women cannot marry but it is also plain that the opening of a hundred avenues for woman's work, where formerly there was but one, has made woman practically independent of marriage. No woman to-day should be tempted

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to marry for a home, or for any mercenary reason. The strong probability is that so far as ease of life and freedom from burdens are concerned she will have more of both as a spinster than as a wife.

The term "old maid," conveying always a slight flavor of reproach, has been supplanted by another, quite as distasteful to me, namely, the "bachelor girl." I have never been able to see any particular fitness in this phrase and prefer the good old English term spinster as, on the whole, more pertinent and more expressive of a single woman's state.

The spinster may choose her own rôle, live in her separate apartment, walk unchallenged in her own path, by day or by night. She has found her standing ground and conquered her place and overcome the prejudices of generations.

But in no other capacity will she ever be more gracious nor more well beloved than when she wears the honors of the maiden aunt.

"I have put quite out of my plans," said a beautiful woman, "all thought of marriage. No matter why. An accident on the railway, the stumbling of a horse, the miscarriage of a letter, or a disinclination to try a new path, set it down to what you will, to something which happened, or to my own thoughts, but I am content with my single estate. So now I am going into my life

The Maiden Aunt

work, and care for the children of others shall come first with me."

This dear gentlewoman is about to establish a settlement for herself and one or two spinster friends who are unattached by family ties, and they will live in a dark corner of the city where the tenement children cluster thick as bees in a hive and there they will do hand-to-hand work for Christ and the little forlorn lambs who are as sheep having no shepherd. Instead of being "Auntie" to one or two sets of small people, they will be the beloved adopted aunts of a whole neighborhood. May God bless them and make them blessings to all whom they meet.

Hospitality

Hospitality

CHAPTER XXI.

Hospitality.

LOOKING back across the years I am often impressed by the remembered hospitality of my father's house. That dear father had a way of going about the world like a sunbeam incarnate, always cheery, always cordial, always looking on the bright side, and his was the hospitality of the open hand and the cordial heart. Meeting a stranger who pleased him he would unhesitatingly bid the man to be his guest, and my mother was never surprised at a sudden incursion of unexpected people at a meal, or the arrival of somebody she had never heard of, who had come to spend a night or a Sunday at the invitation of the goodman of the house.

I never saw her speechless with amazement except once. It was May, and our carpets were up, and the house, so to speak, was all out of the windows. In the midst of a busy afternoon, the dear mother, with her helpers about her, had paused to take breath, when up to our door rolled a hack, and out of it poured husband and wife and wife's sister and children galore, all of whom had been

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asked on the impulse of the moment, some weeks before, to come and make us a visit whenever convenient, by that beloved man, who had never thought of the thing again.

“Where shall they sleep?” “What shall I give them to eat?” “The house is in such a state.” “Your father should have prepared me.”

Not one of these exclamations came from the mother's lips, but they were in her speaking eyes as she turned her dismayed glances on the inflowing tide of guests, and then on us. Equal as always to the occasion she then advanced to meet them, and somehow they were made comfortable, and the household was none the worse for the experience.

Hospitality of this old-fashioned sort still lingers in country places, and in the South and West, but it has vanished from our crowded and complex city life. Many of us have hardly room enough for ourselves and scarcely know how to accommodate visitors, and so we limit the coming of our friends to stiffly regulated and ceremonious calls on At Home Days, and to formal dinners and luncheons when there are many courses, and we all wear our best clothes and the children are out of sight. The grace of glad welcome, the simple offering of what we have, with a cup and a plate, for the friend who happens in, the doubling up and planning that we may entertain people we

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like and keep them with us for days together are getting to be things unknown.

And with its going a very dear and beautiful friendliness is going too. The children miss its educational influence in this new and needful counting of the cost; more than of old there is the thought "for value received," in what we do for our friends and in what they do for us.

When the thought of reciprocity, the commercial thought, enters, when bargaining is admitted, there is gone the fine gilding from the old courtesy which put one's house and all it contained at the disposal of one's friends.

Every guest brings something worth hearing and seeing from his life into ours, and guests in their coming and going broaden the horizon and extend the outlook for every one they meet. This friend has been a traveler and tells of the places he has visited and the people he has met, his conversation illuminating the books one has read, or firing the young people with desire to see and investigate climes remote and curious phases of existence.

The missionary friend is entertained for a blessed red-letter day, and from that time on you are aware of a new interest in her field of labor and in all fields where Christ's servants have carried the banner of the cross.

Sometimes in a serious-minded and sober circle

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where people have grown grave and inclined to look too much on the somber aspects of things, the entrance of a merry, it may be a frivolous, visitor acts with the effect of sudden sunshine. She is as unconscious as a child, and as careless of the effect of her words; she lives blithely and brightly and, somehow, the jest and the smile and the frolic and fun follow in her wake, so that her hosts feel younger when she has gone, and wish she would come again.

There are two or three admirable rules which simplify hospitality in our busy lives, and which by host and guest may be observed alike.

The first concerns the host. True hospitality does not require you to make a great strain on your finances, nor to entertain in the style befitting your cousin Midas, but quite beyond your modest means.

Give the friend you ask to your table the best you can afford, no more, and no less. Let the food be nicely cooked and daintily served, but do not strive for too great a variety, or for costly viands which are out of season. Your linens should be white, your china and glass immaculately clean, your silver shining. Beware of speck or stain, of any slipshod housekeeping which overlooks dirt, but when you have arranged for your very best, think no more about it.

When guests arrive for any reason unantici-

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pated, make no excuses for the plainness of your fare. They must take you as they find you, and all you need do is to give them a chair and a plate and receive them cordially.

When you invite guests, be explicit as to the time you expect them to come to you and the length of the visit you desire. It is customary, and the custom is very sensible and convenient, to specify in a note of invitation the exact period the visit is to cover, from Friday until Monday, or from Thursday until Saturday, or a certain designated Sunday, the hostess being at pains to inclose a time-table and to mention the train or boat by which the guest will come, stating also whether the family will send some one to meet the guest, or whether the latter will find a conveyance at the terminus of the journey which he or she can take to the house.

Once within your doors give your guest a certain freedom of movement. Do not hover around with perpetual attentions. While a visitor should not be neglected, and while pleasant plans may and should be made for the entertainment of a friend for whom you are to some extent responsible, it is wholly needless to stay always at the guest's side, or to fill every hour of every day with engagements. Most guests prefer to have a part of their time at their own disposal, and with their letters to write, their work or their personal en-

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gagements, they can successfully look out for themselves.

If there are children in the household let them help in giving pleasure to visitors, but they should not be brought in upon every occasion, nor should parents be disappointed if guests do not appear impressed with the children's beauty or cleverness. Children are naturally of greater interest or importance to their parents than to other people, and the world is full of these darlings, so that they are not curiosities. Indeed, for the children themselves the best place is a happy, loving, and comfortable retreat in the background.

I have a profound pity for the small men and women who are obliged to minister to the conceit and vanity of their foolish fathers and mothers, trotted out to speak pieces, play piano exercises, and sing songs for the benefit of friends of the family. These little exhibitions are usually in place only on the platform of the schoolroom, and are a mistake when the parlor is their chosen arena.

"Love me, love my dog," is a common proverb, not without appositeness. But everybody does not love dogs, and some people dislike cats. The owners and lovers of pets should not suffer them to annoy or distress those unfortunately constituted persons who regard animals with dread or aversion. This intimation is not a superfluous

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hint, for the adoring lover of a cat, dog, or parrot is seldom able to survey his idol from the alien point of view. I abate no jot of tenderness and regard for the lower creation, and I hold in utter abhorrence the man or woman who can indulge in cruelty to dumb animals, yet I have not ceased to think that human beings also have rights in the case, and I am always careful that my guests are not subjected to too much familiarity from the household pets ; a cat calmly reposing on the center of one's bed, or lying on the folds of one's gown, may not be agreeable to every one, and it is not always a delight to have a dog or a bird interrupting conversation by the attention it demands.

For the rest, a warm welcome, and so much attention as may leave the guest free, yet insure him every comfort, is the cream of hospitality.

The guest's duties are not less obvious nor less binding than those of the host. On receiving a note of invitation the first obligation is to reply to it promptly, as in case of nonacceptance your friend may have other guests in mind, and punctuality in your response is imperatively required both by good form and by common sense. Having made an engagement, keep it to the letter, allowing nothing within your power to interfere with your promise.

Should a period of any length intervene be-

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tween your invitation and its fulfillment, write or telegraph the day before your arrival, lest by any chance your hostess may have mistaken or overlooked the time and train. Be sure to send this reminder if so much as a fortnight has elapsed since the date of the correspondence.

Never make surprise visits. Even among relatives and very intimate friends they are, as a rule, a mistake. Most women like to be apprised in anticipation of an impending visit, and the unannounced arrival may occur at an inopportune moment, when the charm of the occasion will be dispelled.

As a guest one should be pleased and appreciative of whatever kindnesses are shown; above all things, one should conform to the ways of the house, avoid unpunctuality at meals, be present at family prayers, and as far as possible refrain from giving trouble. The ideal guest effaces himself at times, is not always lying like a helpless burden on the hands of his host, but has a sufficiency of resources at hand to provide a part of the time for his own entertainment.

A young lady or gentleman is careful to keep in order the pretty room assigned to the guest. A hostess is sometimes annoyed, and not without reason, by the gross carelessness of those who occupy the chamber of peace which she has lovingly adorned for their reception. My friend, whose

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precious toilet service of Royal Worcester was chipped by the heedlessness of a brilliant young theologian who behaved like a vandal in his destructive manner of using furniture and books, sat down and cried when she had speeded away her complacent guest. Be careful of articles lent to you for your enjoyment.

As a rule, a lady refrains from offers of service. If there is but one maid or if there is none she quietly takes care of her room, makes her bed, and relieves her hostess of labor on her personal account.

At the allotted time for the conclusion of a visit the judicious guest says, "Good-bye," and she does not forget on her return to her home to send a graceful note of acknowledgment, the sooner the better, again expressing her gratitude for the pleasant time she has had, and stating that she is, after a pleasant journey, safe among her people once more.

In these days of multiplied congresses and conventions it is often our delightful experience to be entertained by friends whom we have never met. The residents of a town open their houses to crowds of strangers and make them welcome at their boards. I am always filled with a wondering thankfulness when a home is thus graciously opened to me, and I am sure there is an added reason in such cases for the greatest tact, the

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most abundant politeness, and the most rigid observation of good manners. In visiting under the roof of a kind entertainer when you go to a convention be sure that you violate none of the regulations of the house, and, so far as you can, assist in making the time thoroughly delightful to all whom you meet. Make light of small inconveniences, be accommodating, and show your appreciation of kindnesses rendered by word and by look.

There is another than merely material hospitality of which this is a symbol and to which it leads. To be open to new impressions, to tender a kind reception to another's thought, to meet a friend with the spontaneity of good-fellowship, to encourage the reciprocal sentiment and the uplifting and ennobling idea, this is the hospitality of the soul.

The Neglected Rich

The Neglected Rich

CHAPTER XXII.

The Neglected Rich.

“**H**AVE you called on Miss ——?” I asked a young lady the other day. The question was prompted by the fact that my friend was a member of a certain committee charged with visiting members of the church and others who, for one cause or another, were not quite at home with the congregation.

“O no!” was the ready answer. “I don’t want to call there. Miss —— is too rich.”

“Has anyone called on her or her sisters?” I pursued my inquiry steadfastly, knowing that the girls of whom I spoke were very lovely, and also very lonely, having lately come to the place, where they had few acquaintances, and having left a community in which they had spent years.

“Nobody has called but the minister and his wife,” admitted my informant. “We are afraid of their splendor. We are in such different circumstances.”

“I have seldom heard so un-American a statement,” I commented, while urging my friend to repair her neglect, but the little episode started a

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train of thought. In our church plans and work do we not sometimes tacitly overlook the well-to-do ; perhaps because a little awed by their accidental elegance or their houses and grounds, perhaps because it seems that they have already so much that they can need no more. But desolate hearts may beat under sheen of velvet and frost of lace, and men and women often need to be comforted and cheered even when they have no stress or anxiety about money.

A mission to the brownstone front might do as much good as a mission to the slums. In how many a fairly ordered home are there found neglect of God and a sorrowful forgetfulness of early associations and hallowed memories !

We have no right to intrude on strangers nor to force an impertinent entrance through barred doors, but the rich who come to our sanctuaries, as truly as the poor, stand in need of cordial and loving courtesies. They should not be omitted from our little feasts nor passed by on our calling days simply because, in a worldly point of view, they are more fortunately situated than ourselves.

Dull Days

Dull Days

CHAPTER XXIII.

Dull Days.

“Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.”

WE may as well accept the fact with philosophy. Look on the bright side as obstinately and as steadily as we may, cultivate a cheerful optimism with all our might, we yet must now and then face a dull day. Possibly we have worked too hard and have been under too intense a strain; perhaps we have met disappointment and defeat where we had bright anticipations; maybe we are homesick and heavy-hearted and strangers in a strange land. There is a reason for it, or there is no reason for it, but accounted for or not, here is the dull day.

The stormy day of sorrow, the hard day of toil, the chilling day of penury, are each sufficiently distressing, but they all take less out of one than the merely dull day. A wise woman said to me once—and then I was too young to understand or to believe her—“My dear, anybody can bear a real trouble. Anybody can cope with real disaster. The intangible, the imaginary trouble is much harder to fight.”

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I have found out since then what she meant. I know the pall of the simply dull day when life seems to have lost its flavor, when nothing looks worth while, when you wonder if things are to go on forever in the same weary, monotonous routine, and when you long unspeakably for something to happen. And as I know that you have felt in the same way and had the same experience, I am going to give you a bit of advice.

In the first place, accept the dull day as a needful discipline. There is blue sky somewhere, but for you to-day the gray light and the enfolding clouds are best. Otherwise your loving heavenly Father would not have appointed the particular atmosphere and the weather which it has brought. Nothing is ever gained by fighting against the inevitable.

Next, drop your indoor employment and go out of doors, under the open heaven, and into the fresh air. A brisk walk will often tone up the system, set the blood in motion, and drive the clinging cobwebs from the brain. Try the effect of exercise and of coming closer to nature. Perhaps you will meet some one who will cheer you as I did once in St. Augustine when I heard on the pavement the tap, tap of a tiny crutch, and looking pityingly down into the face of a crippled child, met the brave blue eyes as they laughed into mine, and heard the sweet voice say :

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“Don't be sorry for me, lady! It doesn't hurt much now, and the doctor says it won't hurt at all by and by.”

But the tonic of tonics is to find somebody else whose gray day needs brightening. I do not care how severe the trial, how deep the melancholy, it can be helped by unselfish effort for other people. Come out of yourself and your own sorrow into the life of the world. Come out of the present distress and take hold of the cross under which another faints, and so shall your cross grow lighter.

Remember, too, how near and dear is your Father in heaven. As my beloved Faber puts it,

“Down in earth's duskiest vales,
Where'er my pilgrimage may be,
Thou, Lord, wilt be a ready home
Always at hand for me.

“For God is never so far off
As even to be near.
He is within. Our spirit is
The home he holds most dear,

“To think of him as by our side
Is almost as untrue
As to remove his throne beyond
Those skies of starry blue.

“So all the while I thought myself
Homeless, forlorn, and weary,
Missing my joy, I walked the earth
Myself God's sanctuary.”

This is very profound and subtle, and we have to think it over before we fully comprehend it.

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But it is only an amplification of St. Paul's declaration that we are temples of the Holy Ghost. And our blessed Lord says, "Abide in me, he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."

How can we have dull days if we realize the divine indwelling?

If the dull day comes of discontent, of impatience with our lot, of any irritation born of circumstances, the remedy is to be sought in patience, penitence, and prayer. So may we "drop the burden at His feet, and bear a song away."

Of Simple Accomplishments

Of Simple Accomplishments

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of Simple Accomplishments.

IN days not very far behind us, nearly every young woman thought she must have one or two accomplishments. You could not pass down the village street without hearing in every house the monotonous practicing of weary girls who were condemned to sit two or three hours a day counting one, two, three, or running their fingers up and down the scales of the piano. Very soon, the young performer learned waltzes, jigs, and marches, or variations of "Monastery Bells," "Home, Sweet Home," and "The Battle of Prague." Many became so proficient after two or three years that they were considered competent to instruct children, and to be a music teacher was an easy and quite frequent way of earning one's living.

By degrees, as we have emerged from the rude and primitive stage in musical culture, have heard more and better music, and know more about the whole subject than once we did, our feeling on the general advisability of universal piano study has undergone a change. We do not now insist

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that those who dislike music or who have no capacity for it shall endure its drudgery of apprenticeship. Their time can be more wisely invested. We have learned that of all arts music is the most jealous and the most exacting, and that only those who bring to it some leaven of love and some native facility can hope to gain more than a foothold on its infinite shore. And, even then, the labor of a lifetime will leave them with much left to explore, much to conquer.

But hand in hand with what is undoubtedly a gain, there is also a loss. Such as it was in the dear old days, the maidens were ready to give of their store, they would sit down in the evening to play for a tired father, they would entertain a home company, they went around to see a friend and lent her a new piece, or borrowed hers, and the simple light-hearted third-rate music did make people happy and added something to the gayety of life.

I find that my friend Celeste, who plays superbly, who has been trained in Munich and Stuttgart, on whose musical education thousands of dollars have been lavished, whose technique is extraordinary and whose musical knowledge encyclopedic, I find Celeste never able to play for me when I ask her. The piano is out of tune, or else she is out of tune herself, she cannot play when not in the mood, or she is out of practice. The

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finest performers are generally out of practice and cannot render the least thing from Chopin or Mendelssohn or Beethoven, or any other master, because they have not had time to study as they have recently wished. We have less home music than formerly, though we have finer concerts from professionals.

If at a prayer-meeting the ordinary leader is absent, the pastor cannot often call with confidence on the young people present to sit down and play familiar hymn tunes so that the congregation can join in. An elderly lady or a middle-aged one is more likely to come to his relief than one of the girls.

In the yesterday which has receded far, and which your mothers and grandmothers know all about, accomplished girls were encouraged to sing, to play, to read aloud, not for even a remote hope of utilizing the gift in a pecuniary way, but just to be pleasing. I know several dear grand-mamas who still sit in the firelight and in tender musing moods croon old-fashioned lullabys and the sentimental lyrics of their vanished summer. It is sweet to hear them, and you will not wonder that they have never ceased their lives through to be fascinating and most attractive women.

If you study music, why not draw a middle line between the old days and the new? Do not be

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satisfied with the mere tinsel, the gewgaws and the jigs, if any such can now be found, but learn to play well enough to soothe an invalid or cheer an aged person, to amuse a child or delight a parent. Learn to play accompaniments so well that you can do this for singers; it is really a rare accomplishment, and one worth cultivating. And be amiable when you are asked to play, and do it so willingly that you will confer a grace on the kindly act.

A talent for sketching is another which should not be despised. The traveler who can transfer bits of landscape, amusing episodes, interesting incidents to his pocket-pad will double his own pleasure and confer a great deal of enjoyment upon his neighbors. A kodak, with some skill in photography, is likewise an acquisition in the line of artistic description, and helps one in manifold ways, especially when travelling.

The accomplishment which is nearest our hand, least difficult of attainment, and on the whole best worth having, is that of reading well. For elocutionary reading of the ambitious order I care little. Its tragedy is too often bathos. Its comedy is overdone. When I see a hysterical young woman tearing a passion to tatters in the effort to "interpret" a great poem or a sketch from some well-known author, I am moved to much compassion for her that she is so sad a spectacle, and

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for her audience that they are expected to sit still until she has finished her performance.

Good reading is not of this claptrap variety. To read is simply to take the place of the author and tell his story as he told it, repeat his poem as he wrote it, speak from the heart of the printed page to the hearts of the listeners. Good reading is natural and unaffected. It is intelligible to any, even the deaf can hear the finely modulated clearly accented voice of the accomplished reader.

I am sure that a little investigation will convince most young people that there is a welcome awaiting them, if they will but learn to read, not at a railroad pace over a rough road, but with clear articulation, sympathetic emphasis, and appropriate inflections. There are blind people, shut-in people, weary people who hail such reading, and in the family circle the reader whose voice and manner and readiness to oblige are united will find his services more than appreciated.

The Desire to Write

The Desire to Write

CHAPTER XXV.

The Desire to Write.

PEN, ink, and paper. They are common enough and not at all expensive, and all over the world, in every clime, in every corner, there are clever young people who feel that here is their medium of expression, ready to their hand, a swift and easy method of giving out burning thoughts and blithe fancies, of winning fame, of writing their names among the stars. The desire to write is as frequently met as the ability to do it successfully is limited.

I am speaking here of the wish to write for publication, not of the very creditable and wholly natural desire to write what one sees for one's convenience of recollection, or for one's friends and family. I am constantly meeting people who declare that it is no trouble to them to write; they are never so happy as when they are writing, the words just flow from the pen's point as fast as their hands can move. Not the easiest reading, dear friends, is this same rapid writing, and not thus have the masterpieces of literature been given to the world.

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A widespread impression prevails that there is a sort of magic ring which must be broken before the aspiring writer can get his work taken by a publisher. Editors are more or less surveyed with suspicion by new writers whose manuscripts, sent out with such tender love and longing, are returned to them by post, "declined with thanks." That hateful printed form, so cold, so relentless, so conclusive, is abhorred by the ambitious novice, and the cordially worded typewritten letter which some editors, kind-hearted and gentle in their generation, have substituted for the former formula, is not more graciously received. There is something so very intimate and personal about a manuscript over which you have spent days and weeks, that its rejection involves a severe disappointment. You cannot endure the idea that the postmaster suspects what is in the envelope which brings back the poor storm-smitten dove. You are aware that it is folly, but you nevertheless feel hurt and humiliated when your brain-child returns to you, unwanted, unprized; it is like an insult to a member of the family.

And then, you are so sure that the very papers which will have none of your work, which with one excuse or another send back your story and your essay, are printing other articles not half so good.

You can account for it only on one hypothesis.

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The editors are in league together to repress literary merit, except when it is bolstered up by a well-known name.

Did it ever occur to you, gentle reader, that all these people with the famous names once had their feet on the lowest round of the ladder, as you have now ; that there is no royal road to success ; that every one who reaches the goal must press forward with disdain of toil, with acceptance of drudgery, with endurance of drill and discipline, with occasional defeat and depression, but with ever-increasing strength until the point foreseen from the first has been won at last ?

Did you ever consider still farther that the editor ardently longs for the new note, the new name, the work that is well done by the man or the woman who has not been hitherto heard from ? That though the competition is tremendous, yet that on the whole the rewards in the writing field are not more difficult of winning than in other fields of achievement ?

Editors, so far as I know them, are diligent, conscientious, and faithful, are among the most hard-working of professional men, and are always glad to lend a helping hand to the beginner when they honestly can do so ; always, be it added, remembering that their first duty is not to the literary novice, but to the public for whom they provide a daily or weekly literary feast.

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What are the requisites for successful literary work ?

The first and essential one, without which all others are useless, is the having a message. Unless you really have something to say, do not attempt to write. When people come to me asking me to assign them subjects, adding, "I could write well enough, but I cannot find a topic," I give them up at once. The born writer has more subjects than there are leaves on the trees. They start up before him wherever he goes, and sea, earth, and air for him are populous with fancies which throng upon his brain, and beg to be translated into words.

Have something to say. Then ascertain what there is to be said about it. Study it in its length and breadth ; if it has a relation to history or science or nature or political economy, master every possible detail, and when you sit down to write, marshal your facts in order, and present them as in battle array.

Write as you talk, not grandiloquently, not with overmuch rhetoric, but with straightforward ease and to the point. To acquire style, study the best authors. One forms a good style by much reading of the men who have written lucidly and strongly from Plato down through the ages to Drummond and Ian Maclaren.

Write as fully as you choose in your first

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draught, then go over this and cut out each superfluous phrase, each needless adjective. Condense, abbreviate, eliminate, be terse and brief, if in this period of many clamorous voices, you hope to have your voice heard.

In writing for the press, be careful about the form of your manuscript. Typewriting is not imperative, but legible handwriting is, black as to ink, white as to paper, correct as to spelling and punctuation. Never send a rolled manuscript anywhere, and always accompany your manuscript with stamps to insure its safe return to you. Send any note or letter about the manuscript under the same cover, not in a separate envelope or by another mail. Give your full name and post office address with great clearness at the top of the manuscript, and count the number of words and state them at the end.

You have now done all that you can do for your article. An introduction written by a famous friend will not help it, for in the world of journalism the sketch or story must stand upon its merits. You can, however, serve yourself by an intelligent choice in sending forth your work. A household paper will not require an abstruse philosophical essay, nor a fashion journal rejoice at a critique of poetry. The periodical to which your work goes has a scheme of its own, and can accept only such articles as fit into its plan.

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Against one step I must strongly urge you. Do not set out, without previous experience, without resources, and without friends who can aid you, on a career which bristles with difficulties. A youth, or a girl, determined to enter journalism, comes from the high school or the academy of the village, and finds in the great city no loophole for the work which from afar seemed so tempting. From office to office, from paper to paper, the poor, plodding aspirant goes, encountering disappointment everywhere, finding no rest for the sole of the foot. Do not begin thus.

For the city journalist there is no better school than that of the country newspaper. Serve your novitiate there. Prove your fitness for authorship by writing in your country home till you gain at least a little success.

Avoid writing bureaus and other intermediaries. They do you no good in the long run, and you may as well deal with your publishers at first-hand. Depend upon it, you will not fail if you ought to succeed, for though the world of literature is terribly crowded, there is always room at the top.

About Committing to Memory

About Committing to Memory

CHAPTER XXVI.

About Committing to Memory.

LEARNING by heart, the old phrase has it, when the thing in question is the fastening the exact words of a statement or description in the mind. What we learn by heart we commit to memory, and memory is of all stewards and treasure-keepers the most faithful and the least treacherous. Scientific students tell us that we forget nothing, that even trivialities and affairs of light moment once given to memory's charge remain fixed there forever. Overlaid by later impressions, apparently out of sight and lost to consciousness, some slight touch will awaken the sleeping monitor, and the whole drama of life will be reenacted on the mimic stage. A waft of perfume, a bit of song, the strain of a street organ, the sound of waves plashing on the shore, a face in a crowd, and a train of associations will be revived, the world of yesterday will confront the world of to-day, and another proof will be given that we are beings sharing the immortality of Him with whom a thousand years is as one day and one day as a thousand years.

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Therefore it is that we cannot too carefully measure values when it is a little child whom we are teaching and whom we are influencing by means of that which we give it to remember. Our tones, our gestures, our opinions are for us the flotsam and jetsam of our hurrying days, but for the children around us they may set the seal of life for two worlds.

There used to be a good deal of discussion as to whether a child learned most when obliged to repeat from memory the exact words of a text-book, or when allowed to give in his own words the gist of what he learned. Formulas in mathematics and rules in grammar it was conceded must be committed *verbatim et literatim*, but history and science and other studies, most of which were mentioned in a lump as "the English branches," were allowed more latitude. My judgment has never varied, though there are newer methods of teaching now which throw the old ways into the shade, that it is much better to store a growing mind with the ornate words of a good author, than to translate those into the imperfect expressions of a young student,

Certainly there is no wealth comparable to the wealth which may be ours for the asking if in early life we begin to memorize passages from the Bible, from Shakespeare, Tennyson, and Wordsworth, and from the hymn writers whom we love.

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Not only are our vocabularies very much enlarged and enriched by the familiarity which is gained by frequent repetition of a beautiful sentiment or a stirring speech or a comforting chapter, but our ideals are elevated and our critical faculties are developed. And much time is saved for us in the busy years when time presses if our minds are our convenient reference books, so that when we hear an allusion in a sermon or meet a quotation in a newspaper we can instantly verify or place it, or recall its context, because it is one of the treasures committed to memory.

You know nothing about it now, my bright-eyed friend, in the blithe strength and gladness of the twenties; but there may dawn a day in the long march of the days when you will not sleep as you sleep in youth. If one must lie awake when others sleep there is great joy and consolation in having some pleasant food for thought. The hours drift by slowly, it is true, but are neither desolate nor unprofitable when stanzas of poetry, thrilling lyrics, fine ballads, and beautiful scenes from favorite books come at a call and give one "songs in the night."

Commit to memory's keeping many texts of Scripture, and a few beloved chapters of Isaiah and St. John and St. Paul; learn by heart the Beatitudes, and, indeed, the whole Sermon on

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the Mount. You will find your intellectual equipment vastly greater and your power of assimilation in every direction much increased and heightened by this simple process.

I need not add that there is much rubbish in the world which is of the nature of useless lumber, and is not to be retained in memory if it can be avoided. For instance, take pains to forget transient annoyances and slights which wounded for a moment, but were not worth a pang. Commit to memory no grudge, no vindictive intention, no resentment. These and similar emotions, the offspring of hate and bitterness, should be obliterated from the tablets of the mind, and memory should be taught to drop them out of sight and out of hearing. Our manner of forgiving an injury is often half-hearted and imperfect, unlike that of our blessed Lord whose forgiveness is full, who blots out our iniquities, and our sins and transgressions remembers no more forever.

Remember the glad days, the bright days, the days of the years of the right hand of the Most High. For such days is the white stone, for such a name written in letters of light. But other days, and other seasons of wandering, and error, and temptation, and wrongdoing may be included in the things which are behind us, which we are enjoined to forget while we press onward to the prize of our high calling.

Candor at Home

Candor at Home

CHAPTER XXVII.

Candor at Home.

THERE has lately been published a beautiful little book, the story of a mother's life, written by her son. Readers of *Margaret Ogilvy* will recall the perfect candor and openness which prevailed in the little Scottish household wherein the beloved mother reigned a queen.

There were reserves jealously held, so far as the outside world was concerned, and "a stranger" was regarded with a curious mixture of dislike and dread. In our easy familiarity with people whom we casually meet it is difficult for us to understand the aversion which prevailed in Margaret Ogilvy's household against even the admission of an outsider as a servant beneath their roof. They consoled one another under the disagreeable necessity by reminders that the woman could go out on errands, that she need not be seen after her work was done, that somehow they would keep her very much in the background.

I have observed a similar withdrawing from people only slightly known, in ladies whose lives had been largely domestic, or who had not had

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much to do with affairs. But the compensation for this in the Ogilvy household was that the home itself was a very sanctuary.

The trust therein was flawless. There were no whispered secrets. Nothing was indirect or concealed from a motive of policy. There was never any walking over thin ice or danger that a mine would explode under one's feet, for the love and sympathy were perfect, the home people in speech or in silence understood one another, and the home interests were entirely in common. The whole picture is exceedingly attractive and winsome, and I am inclined to ask whether we are wise in our customs, whether there may not unfortunately be found that in many of our homes there is a reticence, not to say a deceit, always going on, which has not in its outcome the sweet harvest of homely happiness which that small Scottish household knew. Our sons and daughters are, from motives of mistaken kindness, kept in ignorance of their parents' struggles for a foothold in the world. They would willingly share the sacrifices if they were admitted into the confidence of their fathers and mothers, but, kept on the outside, they misjudge and resent where they might help and encourage. Fathers grow old prematurely in their efforts to meet the demands made by their families, the families straining after a false standard of living, the young people indignant that certain

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restrictions are placed on them which seem unnecessary and despotic, while if only the household life were built upon perfect sincerity, burdens would be distributed and trials would grow light. In temporalities, at least, the ideal home should be fortified by sincerity.

The rule works in another way and has its exceptions, which are equally unjust in another department. A year ago, in a Western town, a man died, all of whose life, so far as his family knew, had been a losing battle. Strenuous care had been the portion of his wife, constant and irritating limitations had hedged about his children, and his own days had been passed in a long and exhausting strife to make both ends meet. Lo! when he had been laid to rest with his fathers it transpired that the toiler had been laying up treasures and that he had left a large fortune, into the possession of which the bewildered heirs came, pleased perhaps, but still hurt that their lives had been needlessly hampered and clouded through the father's iron will and relentless self-denial. The wife, kept back like a child from acquaintance with her husband's affairs, was ill-prepared for the altered conditions, and for the older children the change came too late to give them the culture and the wider opportunities they should have had in full measure at an earlier period. Deceit, even for a purpose of ulti-

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mate advantage, is never justifiable. Who raises his house on falsehood builds on the shifting sands.

The very tenderness of love sometimes seeks refuge in the veiling of truth in home relationships. We see in one very dear to us a defect of manner, a fault which mars the otherwise lovely and amiable character, and hinders the symmetry which we desire to see from gaining its just proportions; yet we hesitate to speak, are evasive or silent or cowardly, where to speak in plainness and gentleness would be kind. "Experience will teach that child," we say, forgetful that experience is often a very hard taskmaster, whose wounds are grievous and leave ineffaceable scars. Surely from the lips of the home circle the truth might be borne, and the candor of true love might aid the one criticised to escape into freedom from the fault which invited censure.

We err, too, in home relationships, in our attempts to shield some dear one of whom we habitually think tenderly, and whom we try to protect from the world's rough winds. Such a one must at all hazards, we say, be saved from pain, and in our efforts to do this we are driven to many subterfuges, which fall into ruin at the earliest assault of evil. In most cases the gentle and well-meant, though ill-advised, en-

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deavors to deceive are not appreciated by their object, and in the end the truth has to be told and it leaves a sting which it would not have had at first.

When our heavenly Father set us into groups and families and households, and gave us the strong bond of blood relationship, the tender tie of kith and kin, it must have been because in this way we could reach our highest development and attain to our noblest possibilities. That each family may arrive at the fullest and most sacred ideal of Christian living there must needs be entire confidence in one another, and a continual and faithful striving to abide in the service and love of God.

But since every rule has its exceptions, we must not overlook the fact that love cannot afford to indulge in a frankness which is devoid of tact and may savor of brutality. The man whose love of truth leads him to comment on his wife's jaded looks, to remark that her gown is unbecoming and her hat a fright, and who calls attention in public to a defect in the housekeeping or a fault in the table service, is behaving like a boor.

Robert Louis Stevenson, than whom few writers are more subtle, takes a text from Thoreau and comments on it after a most delightful fashion. "It takes," says Thoreau, in *A Week on the*

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Concord and Merrimack Rivers, "two to speak truth; one to speak and another to hear." "He must," adds Stevenson, "be very little experienced or have no great zeal for truth who does not recognize this fact. A grain of anger or a grain of suspicion produces strange acoustical effects, and makes the ear greedy to remark offense. Hence we find those who have once quarreled carry themselves distantly and are ever ready to break the truce. With our chosen friends, and still more between lovers, for mutual understanding is love's essence, the truth is easily indicated by the one and aptly comprehended by the other. A hint taken, a look understood, conveys the gist of long and delicate explanations, and where the love is known even yea and nay become luminous."

Our young people are a little deficient in the deference toward parents which at once asks counsel of them, and delights to lay open in their sight everything which pertains to the younger lives. Li Hung Chang, in a wonderful letter sent from Peking to a little Brooklyn girl who attracted his notice, said: "If your parents are still living, I hope you are dutiful to them. I have observed that the Western nations are not so dutiful to parents as we are here in China."

Entire candor in the relationship between mother and daughter, for example, would save

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the latter from many mistakes and sometimes from lifelong disaster. Yet I have heard daughters say that their mothers were not their preferred confidantes, and a mother, with a look of heartbreak in her eyes, told me one day that "Mary is as distant with me as if I were a stranger. I know nothing of her thoughts; her friends are quite unknown to me."

That the associates of one person or set of persons in the home should be practically unknown, not even on a footing of acquaintanceship with the rest of the family, is not an uncommon, though it is an unhappy, state of affairs.

"I am driven from room to room in my home in the vain effort to find a resting place for the sole of my foot," a mother said, whimsically, with a smile, behind which was the suspicion of a tear. "Lottie entertains her friends in the drawing-room, Lida is taking a German lesson in the library, Tom has a client in the dining room, and Mary and Jane have a seamstress and the sewing machine in my room. There seems to be no place for mother and the mending basket." Yet, except in Tom's case, there was no reason why mother should anywhere have been excluded.

In the ideal household the friends of one are the friends of all, with varying degrees of intimacy. The girls and boys should not hesitate to bring home to the father and the mother those

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whose company and comradeship on the road of life make the road pleasant. The small separations which grow bit by bit into great chasms between members of the same family would never come there or would be swiftly bridged if the family habit were to share everything, and especially friends.

“I would not introduce Louis to my sister,” I heard a young man say with decision. “He is a brilliant fellow, but unscrupulous and profane. Not the sort of a man I want Elsie to be acquainted with.”

The sort of fellow a man does not present to his sister is not a safe or proper comrade for the man himself. The sort of girl whom a young woman does not like her mother to meet in her company is a girl to be avoided. In the home there should exist an unspoken freemasonry of sentiment, so that without speech or much explanation the home people should be able to signify approval or disapproval of those who come within its charmed precincts.

Establish our home life on a rock foundation of impregnable sincerity and few blasts can shake it, few storms menace its security, few perils cross its blessed threshold.

Above everything, let me urge you never to go on in a course of conduct which you feel must be hidden. From time to time we are startled by

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the downfall of some one who has occupied a position of honor and usefulness, and the broad white light of publicity streams in with a glow like that of electricity on a series of clandestine actions, of borrowings that were thefts, of associations that were not respectable, of behavior that was shameful. The whole of it might have been prevented had there been an absence of deceit in the beginning. The cardinal vices, as lying, stealing, and the like, have an evil affinity and hang closely together. One often sees a family rallying in its strength in a forlorn and distressful struggle to save a child, who has gone wrong, from the consequences of his sin. Alas! there was a golden moment, had they but known it, when such family rallying might have hindered the thing from so much as beginning, had there been a sympathy and a knowledge so full and so deep that the very temptation would have perished at the birth.

Good Citizenship

Good Citizenship

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Good Citizenship.

AMONG the chief obligations which confront our educated young people, that of being good citizens takes high place. To live selfishly, leaving our country, our State, our town, to shift for themselves without our aid, is unmanly and unchristian. Our dear home land demands our devotion, our love, our prayers, our work, and there are duties toward her which we are no more at liberty to shirk than we are to neglect or to shame the mother who bore us.

Our country requires of us first of all an intelligent and discriminating patriotism. Not our country, right or wrong; but, please God, our country, right, because her sons are bound to make her and keep her so, to uphold her banners, and to exorcise all which tends to drag her down. Bribery, corruption, and political knavery could have no success in a free land if our young men appreciated the rare distinction of good citizenship and stood steadfastly shoulder to shoulder to guard the country's weal and defeat the country's enemies.

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No young man—for that matter, no young woman—should be indifferent to politics. Politics and patriotism should be synonymous. If the girl has not the ballot, she has what is as potential—the power behind it, the power of influence, the power of example, the power of love. In our civil war, on both sides of the conflict, the North and the South, the women fought as bravely and as stubbornly as the men, and there never is a peaceful contest at the polls in which the silent suffrage of good women does not count for as much as the spoken voices of their brothers and husbands. A girl's interest should stimulate her brother and her sweetheart to vote for the side which will best represent the highest interests of the country and the race. A girl's scorn and contempt should humiliate the man who boldly asserts that he cares nothing for his country, not enough for her death or life to go to the polls and vote, not enough for her defense and her honor to undertake any service which she requires at his hand.

That bad men are in politics, that one encounters the low, the depraved, and the vulgar in primaries and elsewhere, excuses no good man from doing his duty. The bad will be swept away when there is a grand uprising of the good. Often the bad are bad because they are ignorant, because they are undisciplined, because life has

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been hard upon them, and their environment has been unfortunate. Our bounden duty is to bear with the infirmities of the weak, to be long-suffering with men, but implacably stern and unbending with evil methods, and to throw the whole weight of our personality everywhere and always on the right side.

Our beautiful great country asks very little of her sons when she calls to them, "Elect the best men; keep the courts pure; decide on governmental changes with eyes open and minds informed; hold fast the Lord's Day, give no chance for the European Sunday to break down the American Sabbath; still and forever maintain this country as God's country." When our young men are penetrated with the right feeling concerning good citizenship there will be the old heroism, the old loyalty to the land. East and west and across the sea our flag will be respected, and no man need blush to own himself an American, a child of this fair republic, and the heir of all the ages.

We need to take ourselves to task in that many of us have been derelict in paying what we owe the State. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem," cried the devout Hebrew, "may my right hand forget her cunning!" Let us cultivate patriotism by studying our country's history, by remembering her heroes—Washington and Lincoln and

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Grant and Garfield ; by investigating the sources of her amazing material wealth, her mines of gold and silver and iron and coal, her grain fields and her vineyards and her grass lands ; by following her rivers to the sea and climbing her mountains, and loving every foot of her broad territory. We have a country to be proud of—God's country! All she needs now is the loyalty and the consecration of her children—God bless her!—and this our young men must bring to her in good measure, pressed down and running over.

Our Debt to the Ministry

Our Debt to the Ministry

CHAPTER XXIX.

Our Debt to the Ministry.

IN the earlier history of our country the minister was a grand and stately personage whose progress through the town was in a manner processional. Children saluted him respectfully, and if he stopped to speak with them or laid his hand on their heads in kind familiarity, they were filled with awe; a blessing seemed to linger in the air. Mrs. Stowe in her *Old Town Folks* and in *The Minister's Wooing* has given us a picture of the clergyman as she recalled him in the New England of her childhood and in the traditions of a still more remote period, a man clothed upon with dignity as with a garment, a man accustomed to homàge, and one who, whether in the pulpit or out of it, bore himself always as a prophet of the Lord.

Ian Maclaren in his portraits respectively of Dr. Davidson and of John Carmichael has shown us the change which time and its vicissitudes have wrought in both the minister and the parishioner. Probably this is less marked in Scotland than with us; but Carmichael is of the

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new order, familiar, brotherly, social, impetuous, while Dr. Davidson is fatherly, benignant, and autocratic to a degree.

The minister is, whatever you may think, the hardest worked man in his circle, and the cases are very exceptional in which he is not in labors more abundant than any man in his congregation. Not alone the constant intellectual drain involved in the preparation of sermons and lectures, and the physical exhaustion of delivering them, are taxes on his vitality; but as St. Paul of old he is burdened with the care of the church; its membership is to him as his family, its sorrows are his, and his sympathies are always theirs to command, so that he halves every burden and shares every anxiety in his parish. Parents tell him their plans and confide to him their ambitions for their children's future, and if a boy is going wrong, or a husband has lost his position, or there is serious illness in a household, or any other combination of events, the pastor knows all about it. Then his gifts in money, actual gifts of solid cash, in proportion to his income are usually larger than those of the well-to-do of his flock, for he leads here as elsewhere, while there are few weeks in the year when he is not called upon to put his hands in his pocket to relieve the poor or the distressed. Few men approach the minister in the practice of unobtrusive and unos-

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tentatious charity, and when he asks you for a contribution, please believe that he is only asking you to do what he ungrudgingly does himself.

Our first debt to the ministry is, therefore, a debt of gratitude that in a timeserving and mercenary age, when money seems to multitudes the chief good to be sought, they set us an example of earnest unselfishness and of a consecration to duty which cheerfully faces and accepts poverty. Notably our missionaries do this, either at home or abroad, but the ministry is never a profession to be sought for pecuniary rewards. The man who enters it practically takes a vow of poverty and self-denial. Seldom can he save anything from his salary. But for all that his heroism makes life nobler for the rest of us and we owe him a debt.

Next we owe the ministry a large debt for the culture we receive at their hands. Ian Maclaren again, in *The Cure of Souls*, speaks of the diction of a sermon, saying aptly :

“ People have an instinct about what they hear from the pulpit, and their desire is the language of the home and the market place raised to its highest power and glorified. Every strong and clean word used of the people as they buy and sell, joy and sorrow, labor and suffer, should be of the preacher's store, but he should add thereto splendid and gracious words from Milton and Spenser, from Goldsmith and Addison, and other

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masters of the English tongue. The ground may be a homely and serviceable gray, but through it should run a thread of gold. People have a just satisfaction in seeing their best words serving in great affairs, and receive a shock of delight when now and then a word of royal carriage mingles with the throng."

I have quoted this passage because it is just here that Sunday after Sunday, week in and week out, our pastors lay us under an obligation for the privilege of listening to and absorbing beautiful and lovely thoughts clothed in the loftiest and choicest garb of language. An elevation of style in the common conversation of those who habitually "sit under" a fine and eloquent preacher may be traced to the influence of his fitly-chosen English, as well as to his sermons that "allure to heaven and lead the way."

We owe also a debt to the pastor for his open house and heart and hand, and not less is this debt due to the pastor's wife.

I have an affection for the old Scottish word "manse," designating the home of the minister, and bringing up a throng of beautiful domesticities and simple hospitalities whenever it appears on the printed page. With us, it may be, the pastor lives in his own hired house, and not in a house owned by the parish and set aside for the clergyman, so that, "the manse" has only a poetical

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meaning; but the minister's wife is as dear and sweet a reality here as in any moss-grown or ivy-mantled manse in the world.

We hear it stoutly affirmed in many quarters that the mistress of the manse is of no more account in the congregation which her husband serves than is any other lady there. She is not included in the contract, has no stipulated obligations, draws no salary, is in every way independent and free, and, so far as the parish is concerned, is a mere private gentlewoman. All of which is in a manner true. At the same time the truth is at best to be accepted with qualifications. Let it be supposed, for example, that the minister, marrying in his youth, has fallen upon those evil days which are the portion of the man who marries for beauty only; let us fancy him with a vain, or silly, or petulant, perhaps with a poorly-educated and ill-disciplined, wife. Does anybody for an instant think that he will not be very much handicapped professionally, his career of usefulness impaired, by this unfortunate marriage? Granting that in any social position a man's rank and value largely depend on the sort of a wife he has taken to himself, is not the man in the ministry, whose candle cannot be hidden under a bushel but must shine conspicuously in the sight of the whole town, in a poor condition if he have not a creditable and sensible helpmeet?

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Providentially, ministers' wives, as I have known them, have been usually women of rare loveliness, amazing tact, and charming discretion. They easily take precedence among gifted and agreeable women, and they assume their end of their husband's work with wonderful command of resources and unfailing courage; for the instances are few in which something is not expected of them by the congregation, or else in which, expected or otherwise, they do not with rare bravery and without the least air of complaint share the crosses and the losses of the day, conciliate the offended, soothe the irritated, and in many a quiet, unsuspecting way sustain their husbands in their work of love and constant toil. Blessings on them!

A popular minister's wife makes very secure her husband's position in a difficult parish. A beloved minister's wife helps to win love to her husband.

In a certain parish, where there were peculiarly inharmonious elements, several pastors in turn did their best, but retired vanquished from the field. Finally a man came to the post, fully aware of the various causes of trouble, the jealousies between the young people and the older people, the feuds between certain families, and the clashing of interests which had made the church in question a reproach and a byword.

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Meeting the brave pastor after he had held the position with increasing success for several years, I asked him how it was he had not been defeated too.

“Under God,” he said, “I owe everything here to Lizzie. She captured all hearts from the first. There isn’t a home in the parish where her influence is not felt. The women adore her, the young people consult her. She is the confidante of the whole congregation. I never could have gained a foothold here had I not been aided by my wife.”

It is not every husband, not even every clergyman, who is candid and discerning enough to see and own how large a debt he owes to the unselfish and gentle comrade who stands gallantly by his side in all life’s emergencies and vicissitudes. I liked the man who acknowledged so ungrudgingly the debt he owed to “Lizzie.”

The manse sets a pattern for many another household. Invited to tea at the manse table, the young visitor notes the simple courtesies and delicate politeness of the lady whom she admires, and absorbs something of the latter’s loveliness and charm. Advice given by the pastor’s wife is accepted and prized where it would be resented if offered by another.

The parish has no right to exact anything from the wife of the minister, it is true. But she can

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no more help being influential than a rose can help diffusing its fragrance, and her natural qualifications for leadership, if these she have, cannot be hidden in this sphere of activity. If she does not wish to take the lead officially she can still, by her own excellence, and in virtue of the fact that her husband must be a leader, largely modify the social life of the congregation. She is its first lady, and we are glad to accord her the place of eminence.

When we have admitted to ourselves and others that we owe a debt, the next thing in order is to pay it. How can we pay our debt to the minister?

One of the very best ways to do this is to attend our own church regularly, not allowing the praise service or the eloquent stranger in another church to tempt us from our pew. A minister should be able, looking over his parish roll, to count definitely on the loyal service of his people. Simply by being in their places at each service they help to strengthen his hands, and they uphold him in his work. There is no readier method of weakening a minister's influence and of rendering his efforts abortive than the method of intermittent attendance on the appointed services.

We pay our debt by listening appreciatively to our pastor's discourses. The art of listening well is so little understood that half the sermons preached every Sunday are never heard by large

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numbers of the congregation. Test this by asking everyone whom you know intimately what was the text, what the analysis, what the arguments in the sermons he or she last heard? Few people recall much which they heard, because few people listen with real attention. Never look at your watch during a church service. It is to the last degree ill-bred. Pay the same polite attention to the pastor in the pulpit which you accord to him when he calls on you in your parlor.

Then, praise the minister wherever you go. When he says a thing which helps you, take pains to tell him so. Always repeat to him the pleasant things you hear, and bury the disagreeable comments under a loving silence.

If your pastor proposes a plan of work and asks recruits to assist him in carrying it forward be ready for all which you can give, not of money alone, but of yourself. Here, as everywhere,

“The gift without the giver is bare.”

Pray for the pastor. We do not forget to help and strengthen those for whom we always intercede at the throne of grace. The name we mention in our closets is sure to possess for us a double sacredness, and we do not forget to work where already we have prayed.

Why Should I Join the Church?

Why Should I Join the Church ?

CHAPTER XXX.

Why Should I Join the Church ?

“ **W**HY should I join the Church ? I can be as good a Christian outside the Church as in its pale.”

The question and the assertion are often made by ingenuous young people who honestly desire to do their duty, but who fancy that in uniting with the Church they sacrifice something of their independence. They should be told that joining the Church is not, as they seem to suppose, a cross and a grievous burden, a clog upon liberty and a piece of self-denial, but, on the contrary, a great honor and a great privilege. Probably the state of mind in which they ask the question is one of unpreparedness for both privilege and honor, yet in some cases there are those who have suffered the inconsistencies of Christians, or their own disinclination to take a stand, to keep them hesitating on the border land of decision, instead of ranging themselves definitely on the Lord's side.

Not so does the young man compare conclusions and weigh pros and cons when he is invited to enroll himself in a favorite regiment, or to write his

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name down as a member of an agreeable order or association. Here, too, he must join the awkward squad and be drilled, he must serve a certain novitiate; but he appreciates the offered advantages, and feels that he will receive more than he can confer. Too often his unspoken feeling about the Church is that he will confer rather than receive benefit. A distinctly patronizing attitude of mind, which is based on mistaken premises, leads many men to act as if they bestowed honor upon Christ's Church when they bowed at her altars and marched with her hosts. If thus they view the "militant embodied host" which follows the Captain of our salvation, they will enter the ranks as half-hearted and cowardly soldiers. I never read Bishop Heber's splendid hymn:

"The Son of God goes forth to war
A kingly crown to gain,
His blood-red banner streams afar,
Who follows in his train?"

without a thrill of the heart, it seems so glorious to be numbered in that army of martyrs and confessors, of the excellent of the earth.

The word "sacrament" really means oath, and is borrowed from the Latin, carrying with it the recollection of the vow made by the soldiers of victorious Rome when they set forth to conquer the world. So, when we sit down at the feast where we celebrate in the simple elements of the

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Lord's Supper his body broken for our sakes, his blood poured out for us, we take the oath of allegiance and fidelity, we vow to be obedient as those under orders, we accept all that is meant by wearing a uniform and adopting a button and encamping beneath a flag.

“When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

“His dying crimson like a robe
Spread o'er his body on the tree ;
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.”

I do not think the full sweetness, the full self-abnegation, the full blessedness of the spirit of that hymn is ever so much as dreamed of before there are full surrender and entire consecration. It is “sell all that thou hast and come and follow me” which makes one a happy and efficient Christian, and nobody out of the Church can do this and live this as absolutely as they can who are in it, because in the one case there are reserves, and in the other there are none.

The most imperative reason for our joining the Church, if already penitent and believing we have joined Christ, is that only thus can we obey the divine command. He said, “Do this in remembrance of me,” and, “As oft as ye do this, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.” We

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have no right to be wiser than our Lord, and often to the soul of the honest doubter there comes great peace simply from dropping resistance and assenting heartily to the command given, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

Some dear young people hold back from this positive step because, as they express it, they are not good enough. For that matter none of us is ever good enough in our own poor goodness to so much as approach the Master. It is his goodness, not ours, which gives us power to overcome, and all the promises of Heaven are pledged to him that overcometh. He shall have the white stone with the new name, and the hidden manna, and shall sit, says Christ, "with me on my throne." O, the blessedness of overcoming in the strife; overcoming sinful desires and sinful deeds; overcoming the powers of evil; overcoming the world! Let us confidently take the hand that was once nailed to the cross, and appear at the altar, and sit at the board, just as we are.

"If you tarry till you're better
You will never come at all."

Let each one for himself disclaim all earthly strength, and exclaim in Ray Palmer's wonderfully direct words, appropriating them as his own voluntary confession, glad, full, and sincere :

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“ My faith looks up to thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine:
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
O! let me from this day
Be wholly thine.”

Another reason for our union with the Church is in the fact that “Ten times one is ten.” Every recruit, every volunteer, every man and woman who are added to the rank and file make the army stronger. We have need to set our battle in array, for the adversary and his legions are not idle, and to the holy war it behooves us all to go. The power of numbers is impressive, and where an army corps is disciplined, as well as mighty and vast, the force is that of the individual multiplied by the thousand and ten thousand fold.

I have heard from some vacillating souls a timid and procrastinating excuse to the effect that by and by they would join the Church. They were not yet ready. To-morrow would be time enough. This seems very weak. To-morrow is not yours or mine. We have only to-day. “Suffer me first to go and bury my father,” cried the man in the parable. And the Lord said, “Let the dead bury their dead, and come and follow me.” Christ’s command is in the present, not the future, tense.

It is as if one should say to a beggar in rags at

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the door of a palace, "Come in, my friend, to the light, to the music, to the feast, to the fire; come in, be warmed and fed;" and he should say, "Not yet, a little longer will I shiver and starve, a little longer I will stand on the threshold, a little longer I will hug my rags and my shame."

But never, dear friend, think for a single instant of joining Christ's Church unless you are willing to give him your whole service. "Lovest thou me?" he asks you, and if you cannot answer with Peter, "Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee," kneel down and plead for a softer heart, for a gentler will, for the grace of the complete surrender.

"O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine."

The Christ in His People

The Christ in His People

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Christ in His People.

ONCE, on a sweet day in early June, it happened to me to enter a darkened room after a long drive over the green hills of Maryland. The instant I had shut the door I was aware of a presence in the chamber, something beautiful and fragrant and wonderfully restful; but at first I saw nothing, and it was only after the interval of a few seconds that I observed in a vase in a corner a flower then new to me, a magnificent specimen of the *Magnolia Grandiflora*, whiter than the whitest alabaster; with a penetrating, insistent perfume which pervaded the place, the great flower, like a vestal uplifting a censer, making a temple of the little room.

Often and often since then the memory of that experience returns to me, and always as a symbol of the indwelling Christ. Do we realize it as we should, this precious knowledge that the dear Lord, once in the flesh and revealed to our senses as the Man who walked in Galilee, again and again shows something of his beauty, something of his divine tenderness, loveliness, and strength,

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as he makes his abode in the hearts of his followers?

How careful ought we to be that we show our Lord's characteristics in our gentleness, our patience, our steadfast adherence to the right and the true! When he was reviled he reviled not again, when he saw evil it shrank from his pure presence ashamed. When sorrow came to him, he comforted the mourning one; when want and suffering appealed to him, his very touch gave instant relief.

Sometimes we forget our opportunity in this dark world to be a shining light, making glad the winding ways and scattering the gloom. In ourselves we have no radiance, but we can uphold our blessed Christ, and he will be a lamp seen of all who pass us by.

“O soul of mine, I tell thee true,
If Christ indeed be thine,
Not more made he himself thy kin,
Than makes he thee divine.
As through his soul there frequent beat
Our human hopes and loves,
So midst thy varying joys and fears
His Spirit lives and moves.

“But O, my soul, as I thy good
And evil ways explore,
I seem to see the Christ in thee,
His earthly life live o'er.
Thou art another Holy Land
(Ah, holy mightst thou be!)
The olden joys and griefs of Christ
Repeat themselves in thee.

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“No longing for his coming,
No greeting him with scorn,
No mountain for his praying,
No sea by tempest torn,
No cheer of friends, no wrath of foes
From manger to the tree,
But finds its faithful counterpart,
Mysterious heart, in thee.”

If you have never read it I am happy to introduce you in these stanzas to Rev. Dr. Denis Wortman's beautiful poem, “Reliques of the Christ,” from which I have quoted only a few tuneful lines.

The thought of the divine indwelling fills us with a hallowed joy, the more so that we have Christ's own word, saying, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. . . . Without me ye can do nothing.”

In lower and less permanent relationships in the earthly life we constantly see examples of the abiding of one person in another, by way of influence, by way of command, by way of acceptance and belief. The patient abides in the physician, the pupil in the teacher, the friend in the friend. Highest and finest and most subtle and intimate of all is this love-life of the soul with Christ, in which he dwells in us as the flower dwelt in my little room, as the light in the lamp, as the radiance in the star. So do we thrill with

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the bliss of this tender belonging to him that we are fain to exclaim in moments of rapture :

“O Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord,
Forgive me if I say,
For very love, Thy sacred name
A thousand times a day.
For thou to me art all in all,
My honor and my wealth,
My heart's desire, my body's strength,
My soul's eternal wealth.”

Looked at from this point of view the inconsistencies of the Christian are very sad, for they are daily misrepresentations of the Lord. If the child, going forth from the home and behaving shamefully, conveys to the beholder a mistaken impression of the training and care he received at parental hands, much more the wayward and erring disciple challenges criticism, for he is wounding his Master, and fighting on the side of his Master's enemies.

As members of Christ's body, the Church, let us take to our inmost hearts the conviction that we must faithfully serve him, and constantly stand forth as his ambassadors. Never let us be ashamed to do this, for did he not say, “If any man be ashamed of me and of my words, of him will I be ashamed in the presence of my Father which is in heaven.”

Never let us forget that the only danger to the Christian is in getting away from the Christ.

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“ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered.”

Furthermore, let us do valiantly, and live joyously, and walk the world as victors, for this is our assurance from him, “ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

We cannot be neutrals in the warfare with sin and Satan. Either we are on Christ's side and fighting with him, and his light is in our faces and his joy allures us on, or we are ranged with his bitterest foes and are striving against him. “ He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.”

Our American Sabbath

Our American Sabbath

CHAPTER XXXII.

Our American Sabbath.

OUR precious American Sabbath, what fate is it to meet in days when Europe sends us its flood tide of immigrants to whom the Lord's Day is not sacred, and when our own pilgrims to older lands return from their wanderings with a weakened sense of responsibility as regards the fourth commandment?

Its fate is largely in the hands of our young people, who are growing up to take possession of their fair inheritance of freedom. As they observe the hallowed day, or lightly treat its sacred hours, the Americans of the twentieth century will march under the white banner of purity and reverence or the red flag of lawlessness and scorn.

Until lately our American Sabbath has been a praise among the nations. But bit by bit, a little more to-day, a little more to-morrow, the old landmarks are being obliterated, and we are ceasing to be known, as formerly, as a Sabbath-keeping people.

To take one feature, and one which is wholly

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in the hands of our young men and women to alter, without the delay of a single week. There is no sport in itself less objectionable, in itself more delightful and wholesome, than bicycle riding. But when on Sunday morning we vainly seek our young men in the pews, and are told that they are riding their wheels; when we meet, not single riders, but troops and throngs and armies of riders, young men and young girls, starting off for long spins in the early freshness of the Sabbath morning, we can but own that their personal pleasure and the gratification of the physical nature have taken precedence of principle.

Residents of suburban villages tell us that the tranquillity of the old rural Sabbath has vanished at the ingress of a mob of Sabbath-breakers mounted on wheels.

I know the arguments urged by young men and women who are busy all the week and sympathize with those who are weary because of much and continuous service, for this lot I share. But I do not believe that real rest, even of the body, comes from ignoring God's laws and forsaking his sanctuary. Our young people, though they fail to see it, are like Esau of old, bartering their birthright for a mess of pottage.

Instead of a race of thinkers, of strong, fervent, intelligent men and women, fearless in everything else because they fear God, we are rapidly

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degenerating into a set of people at the mercy of every fickle blast of public opinion. Amusement, in its proper place a legitimate and healthful means of recreation, becoming the end of existence, enervates those who pursue it in breathless haste. Outdoor exercise and athletic sports, in themselves admirable and helpful in building up a firm physical life, tend to degradation when cultivated at the expense of mental and spiritual growth.

We cannot afford to compromise on the Sunday question in this country and period. We cannot remain neutral. On every side, with specious excuse and meretricious argument, those who decry the old-fashioned Sabbath-keeping of the fathers are pushing their claims. When the enemy comes in like a flood, then is the time for the Spirit of the Lord to raise up a standard against him.

Almost as insidious and quite as deadly are the attacks made on our American Sabbath from the social side. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," said our Saviour, and he clearly showed by his example that there is no ban laid upon works of kindness or compassion on God's holy day. We may without a compromise with conscience visit our sick friend on Sunday, for it is always right to carry cheer to illness if we can, and equally we may go to

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one in bereavement or anxiety if our going will be a comfort. The daughter may run in on her mother, if their homes are separate; the children may very appropriately gather under the old home rooftree. This is not social visiting, which has grown so common in our cities that the informal receptions given on Sunday afternoons and evenings differ very slightly from similar functions on secular days.

The novice in Sabbath-breaking ventures the first time on this hitherto forbidden ground with a trembling step and a telltale blush mantling her cheek. But it takes only a few Sunday evening receptions to blunt her original feeling and take from her the delicate sensitiveness with which she once repelled the advancing temptation, and the epithets "Puritanical," "narrow," and "provincial" fall tauntingly on her ear, awakening an instinctive resolve not to incur such reproach. The offense of the cross has never ceased out of the earth, and, strangely enough, many people are far more distressed at being called "narrow" than at being thought profane or unscrupulous.

It does, however, require a certain amount of determination to refuse the invitation of lovely friends and winsome acquaintances who ask you to come in for an hour informally, "We are always at home on Sunday evenings," and who

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listen with a slightly amused smile and a lifting of the eyebrows when you explain that you do not visit at all on Sunday, and that you usually attend church twice on that day. Unless, indeed, you settle the question with quiet decision at the very outset and never yield an inch. Then, as invariably when one takes a decided stand for conscience' sake, your position will be respected and your example will tell for good. "One with God is a majority."

Because this nation was founded on a broad, deep basis of religious liberty, because there sweeps in on our shores the flood of a great immigration from Europe, because we are foolishly hospitable to every shade of unbelief which can exploit itself in a parliament of religions or elsewhere, we must defend our Sabbath. The sweet, still day, when worldly cares are in abeyance, and worldly business retreats, the "day of rest and gladness" given for the soul's protection and defense will be gone from us ere we are aware of it, or at least much of its tranquillity and the sanctity of its observance will have waned.

Whatever influence tends to secularize the Sabbath tends to a general lowering of the public conscience concerning it. The public conscience is the aggregate of thousands upon thousands of individual consciences; as we hold the individual

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rigidly to account we shall keep the popular sentiment at high watermark.

We do not need anything Pharisaical. No washing of the outside of the cup and the platter is required, no insistence on rules for the rules' sake only. But we do need a widespread, earnest, and fearless upholding of the Sabbath day, so that legislators shall not openly carry on their deliberations about national and municipal affairs during its sacred hours; so that pleasure-seekers shall refrain from its desecration by their wheeling, riding, driving, or jaunting; so that women in society shall not reserve the Sunday afternoon for their entertainment of friends. While I say these things I do not forget the poor and toiling millions whose only holiday comes on Sunday. The wish to fly from the tenement home, stuffy, close, and bare of comfort, to the parks and the fields is so natural that it makes its swift appeal to the pitying heart. And yet, for the laborer and his family there would be truer rest in Sabbath worship than is ever found in Sabbath junketing. Hendry, in *A Window in Thrums*, represents the extreme view of the strictest Sabbatarian, and Hendry's little home was a chapel of sacred memories and pure traditions, in strong contrast with the house where God is ignored and worship neglected on the Lord's own day.

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When we go from home, too, for a vacation or a visit, let us carry our religion with us. One young girl, living her life simply and sweetly in the village where she is summering, can light a candle for the Lord the flame of which will never expire.

“I dread the influx of summer people from town,” said a country minister. “They so trample on the Sabbath that they handicap our church work and alienate our young people, and in a hundred ways hurt the cause of Christ.”

We must not join such a party. Wherever we go let us remember that we represent a side of life, sometimes unpopular, sometimes alien to the fashionable view, but always with the promise of the covenant-keeping Jehovah pledged to its support. Among the blessed things for which we must not cease to strive we shall not be wrong if we include the Sabbath of the Lord our God.

Of Visiting the Sick

Of Visiting the Sick

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of Visiting the Sick.

“SICK, and ye visited me!”

The full significance of these benign words is seldom apprehended by us when we are in health, with strength to go about our duties and freedom to move as we will. Illness is a clog upon personal independence, a weight and a fetter; not its pain alone, but its wearing inactivity, its depressing weariness, its enforced captivity, its “often infirmities” of fretfulness and caprice, and its burden of weakness makes it a disciplinary process hard to bear. Slowly, slowly, moment by moment, drop by drop, pass the monotonous days of the invalid, uneventful, uninteresting days when the sands of life run low and flesh and spirit fail together. To some natures sorrow’s crown of sorrow, in illness, is remembering happier things. Being laid aside, to one who has taken a vivid interest in affairs and had a hand always at the helm, is a greater trial even than pain itself; that can be borne with heroic fortitude, but the battle with fever and suffering and lassitude tells heavily upon the will and bows the strong soul almost to the dust.

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“Sick, and ye visited me!” I think the word of appreciation was meant for those who have soothed the stricken in such cases as nurses and doctors know, cases of nervous prostration, cases of chronic malady, cases of long-drawn-out torture.

An acute attack soon runs its course. It is a brisk fight at the point of the bayonet. We know the worst of it, and take measures accordingly.

But the heart's deepest ache is for the shut-in sufferer, especially if he or she has led an active life and the illness has changed life's whole environment and put one ingloriously in the rear, when one has ever been at the front and in the thick of the conflict.

It must be admitted that there are sick rooms where visitors have no business. In the valley of the shadow of death one has no leisure for the ordinary courtesies; one does not wish to bow and shake hands; one's acquaintances are in the way, and only one's next of kin can be present without intrusion.

Physicians usually indicate the circumstances where visitors may be of use or the contrary in the invalid's chamber. The nurse knows who may see her patient and do him good by a call, and who will excite and tire him. An indiscriminating nurse may cause the invalid a serious relapse

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by admitting too many or too loquacious visitors when his strength is not adequate to anything which taxes its resources.

The sick room must never be a thoroughfare over which the world and the neighborhood tramp to and fro. Rather is it a guarded sanctuary, a retreat, an asylum, into which only the gentle, the loving, and the judicious may pass, having first, so to speak, halted and given the countersign to the watchful sentry at the door.

But I have known dear children of God at whose pale lips the cup of suffering has been held for many years. One dear friend was a girl in her bloom when the mysterious malady crept in upon her, which has held her, a tortured victim in a rack, till her hair is white. To see her smile over all that pain, radiant, victorious, to see her move her poor cramped fingers under the quilt in token of her gladness that you have come to see her, is to witness the triumph of love and faith over material anguish.

She welcomes her visitors as if they were angels. They read to her, they sing to her, they bring her flowers, they tell her what is going on in the world, and she lies there and smiles at them, and they leave her as if they had been in the presence of the Christ. As they have. For lo! he is incarnate still in the saints who shall reign with him by and by.

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I think of another, gone on into the world invisible, the sweetest, gayest, most queenly of women, living year in and year out under the terror of a great suspense, again and again feeling the dread which forbodes the worst, when one must close one's eyes in the merciful sleep which precedes the surgeon's knife. To her, too, people went, young people particularly, as pilgrims to a shrine, and taking her their gifts, their cheer, their comfort, they never went empty away. When she slipped into heaven one summer morning she left the world behind her lonely. Ill and laid aside, behold a power to bless was still hers, and, missing her as we do, we can rejoice in grief that she has gone to the King in his beauty in the land where the inhabitant never shall say, "I am sick."

No matter what may be our preoccupations and engagements, we who are well ought to bear on our tenderest memories those who are ill. If they are in the hospital, perhaps on a Sunday afternoon we can go and visit and sing for them. If they are well enough to read, we may send them books. The least we can do is to go often to inquire for a sick friend, and every day we may send a message.

"Comfort one another!
Do not wait with grace unspoken
While life's daily bread is broken
Gentle speech is oft like manna from the skies."

Of Visiting the Sick

The visitor to the sick must avoid lugubrious topics and melancholy reflections. Calamities and disasters have no place in the right kind of talk around a sick bed. Yet an aggressive cheerfulness assumed for the occasion, or a perfunctory sympathy in which there is not the ring of genuine sincerity, are as much to be deprecated and condemned as the doleful and woeful manner. Tact is golden, common sense is invaluable in the conduct of life, whatever the emergency, and I sometimes feel like proclaiming this from the very housetops. St. Paul in a sublime passage exclaims, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, . . . I am nothing." Our modern experience leads us sometimes to paraphrasing this on a lower plane: "Though I possess every grace and excel in every accomplishment, and lack common sense, I am a disappointment and a failure."

Tact and common sense united with Christian courtesy will certainly prevent a person from lingering too long where his transient presence is desirable. No one should ever be hurt or offended by exclusion from a sick chamber. The family and attendants are presumed to gauge accurately the situation, and the caution born of love would keep the visitor away if absence were best.

Our danger is, however, not that we will go

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too often, but that we may go too seldom, to see our dear friends who are laid aside.

That darkened upper chamber is quite apart from our hurrying life on the high road. We are summoned here and there. All our swift hours are filled to the brim and running over with engagements. Day after day flies by on wings, and we awaken some morning to be shocked that a month has passed since we last remembered that we had a wounded comrade or a friend descending to the brink of the silent river.

“Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me.” It is the voice of the Master, and its accents are penetrating and sweet. And among the jewels which sparkle in that “inasmuch” none shines more brightly than this, “Sick, and ye visited me.”

Attention to the Old

Attention to the Old

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Attention to the Old.

“**B**UT,” cries a bright girl, reading this title, “how shall we pay attention to the old? The old resent our attention. They prefer to wait on themselves. They are difficult and unreasonable, and we cannot be blamed for neglecting them.”

Well, my dear, what you say is in a measure true. The old are often difficult to get on with, and they do resent officious attention. Sometimes they only find out that they are old by the quick and intuitive aversion which they feel to being relieved of ordinary duties on the score of their apparent infirmities.

“I cannot keep my seat in the car while an old lady stands,” was the first intimation which had ever dawned on the consciousness of one active woman that she had outlived her youth. She told me that it was hard to adjust herself to the novel situation; that she went home, looked in the glass, took note of her gray hair and the faint lines on her forehead, and acknowledged that time had set his seal upon her, and that

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eighteen might with justice pronounce her "an old lady" at fifty-four. "But I didn't feel old," she added.

The fact which youth does not apprehend and consequently cannot accept is that the old do not feel old. This mysterious ego, living in the house of clay, is possessed of immortal youth. The tenement rattles about one's ears, but the indomitable soul still surveys the world with the eager wistfulness of childhood's days. Nothing is altered, except that experience has overlaid the child's immaturity.

The physical inability to undertake new enterprises and endure fatigues is so often in direct contrast with the mental impulse to these that the man chafes as against restraint, and his determination to go on as formerly gives him an appearance of crossness which he does not really feel.

This generation has recently witnessed a magnificent spectacle. A man, past eighty-seven, a scholar, a statesman, a leader, has stepped out into the arena and summoned Europe to the judgment seat. Mr. Gladstone's utterance, his superb eloquence, and his convincing arguments on the situation of Greece, with the concert of Europe against her on the side of Turkey, is the most splendid achievement of the period, and the achievement of a very old man. Beside his ripe wisdom the crudities of youth are put to the

Attention to the Old

blush. Yet, except as to the house he lives in, who shall call Mr. Gladstone old?

There are many things we all would like to do if we could, but the opportunity does not come in our way. There is one thing which we have the great privilege of doing every day of our lives, and that is the paying honor and reverence and gentle unobtrusive kindness to those who are older than ourselves.

I never can say too often, nor with too much emphasis, that the crowning grace of manner in the young is deference. So many other fine qualities are the dower of American youth that it is a pity they do not always possess this also. A too great self-assertiveness, an impertinent familiarity in the tone and speech of youth as it addresses age, make us often regretful that our young men and women cannot be spectators of their own behavior from the platform of the angels.

Whatever else may or may not be ours, if we live long enough we shall arrive at the inn upon the road marked with the sign "Old Age." The progress thither may be leisurely, but it will be sure. Such measure as we mete to others now may one day be meted unto us.

To be patient, tender, thoughtful, considerate in our dealings with the old, is to obey the Scripture injunction to rise up before the hoary head. It is to strew flowers and not thorns in the path

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which is leading away from the roseate meadows of morning to the groves thick with evening shadows. It is to brighten lives which are growing lonely, for, as life goes on, so many companions fall away from the old that they are often as those who stand in the front rank, almost solitary. How few remain who call your grandmother by the pet name of her schoolgirl days! How few of his old classmates still greet your grandfather when he goes to the annual alumni gathering of his *alma mater*!

You and I, to-day, can perhaps roll a stone away from the path of a dear old friend. We can at least refrain from wounding the feelings of one whose feet are tottering and whose faculties are less responsive than once to the call of the present.

With peculiar tenderness and sympathy should we minister to the aged over whose intellects a cloud has fallen. They live in the past almost wholly, the present is to them remote and puzzling, but they are back in their old homes, with the scenes of childhood revived and the dreams of youth again beckoning them onward. Second childhood! Let us hope that it is a beautiful time to those who dwell in its Beulah land.

One cannot but regard with deep and sorrowful indignation the sight of an elderly person, feeble, with waning intellectual powers; one who

Attention to the Old

has done the day's work and left it behind her, treated now as if she were in the way. "Anything is good enough for mother," I heard a bustling daughter say. "She is childish, and doesn't notice." But I feared she did.

It was an August afternoon, silent and languid with lily scents. The year was ripening, flowers and fruit were everywhere, and already on the hillside the brier vines were turning red.

Shall I ever forget the thrill of horror with which the hamlet was for an instant almost paralyzed when, out of the brook, was dragged, lying face downward, in a lilac calico gown, an old, old woman who had drowned herself there? Poor thing! They said she had been restless and flighty and had lived with her children, who were good to her, but she always complained that she was useless and an incumbrance, and she had nothing to do. Finally her mind went astray, and she lay down in the brook and died.

I fancy it would be better usually to let the dear old people work as they wish to, even if the work tires them, even if they do it blunderingly. They are grieved to be told that they may sit with folded hands; they prefer to take their share in the housekeeping, and to go to the shop on busy days and lend a hand. One splendid old gentleman of my acquaintance at eighty-six looks over the books of a certain firm and sees that they are

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correctly kept, teaches a Bible class every Sunday as he has done for fifty consecutive years, goes to market, and when he chooses takes a journey across the continent to visit his distant children. His is a green old age because still a useful one.

Do you like to read Tennyson? If so, you must enjoy his wonderful ballads. Here is a bit from "The Grandmother:"

"As to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet."

"Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two.
Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you;
Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie plowing the
hill.

"And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too; they sing to their
team,
Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream,
They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed,
I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

"And yet I know for a truth there's none of them left alive,
For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five;
And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh threescore and ten,
I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

"For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve,
I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve;
And the neighbors come and laugh and gossip, and so do I,
I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone
by."

Of Giving as Worship

Of Giving as Worship

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of Giving as Worship.

OUR lives would be singularly incomplete if there were in them no chance for giving as worship. I am of the opinion, and very strongly, that we ought to hail every opportunity to give something for the advancement of religion, for charity, for the missionary effort of the Church, as a means of grace, a way of increasing our generosity, and of reproofing our natural selfishness. Instead of suffering in ourselves any impatience with the collection box we ought to hail it with love and joy, remembering the blessing of our Lord bestowed upon her who crept meekly to the treasury and dropped in her two mites, all that she had. We must not misunderstand the spirit of this beautiful story. There is no merit in the modest and unobtrusive giving unless it be also liberal giving, and the distinction in the case of the poor widow whom Christ praised was that in proportion to what she had her gift was munificent. When to large liberality is added the essential of reticacy from public approval or recognition, the

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quality of not letting the left hand know what the right hand doeth, we have the perfect style of giving. Crown this gift with prayer and bestow it with thankfulness, and it is the beautiful offering which has in it the incense of the pure heart. It is the giving which is worship.

All our gifts to the Lord's altar should be of this sort. And to have them thus they must be part of our scheme of life, love must consecrate them, and faith must send them forth. They should be, first, systematic. A certain portion of our income set apart and sacredly devoted to the Lord should be put aside every week, and nothing in ordinary conditions should interfere with this. When everyone contributes as God prospers him, and does it regularly, we shall cease to see the chariot wheels of progress blocked because funds are lacking. Many small streams running from many sources compose at last a mighty stream flowing out to the great sea.

Gifts should, secondly, be loving. Not the churl's nor the miser's gift, grudgingly offered, but the full-hearted, free-handed gifts of those who yearn to help on in this world those needing help, are the gifts which will be accepted. Let the gift, though periodical as to design, be spontaneous as to each impulse, and its blessedness will return in your own life.

They should, thirdly, be intelligent. Look

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abroad over the wide field, and if you cannot bestow your largess everywhere select the portion of the vineyard wherein you will work.

All the missionary work is not done on the home or in the foreign field by the missionaries. Part of it is done there. Part of it is done by us when we send them forth; done when we subscribe to missionary papers, when we support mission stations, when we resolve that our church boards shall not groan under loads of debt, nor our representatives suffer because we withhold supplies. In every organized charity there are quiet people back of the bureau who are its sustaining and supporting members, without whom it could not go on for a single month.

Do not let us overlook the fact that our giving of money is only one part and a small part of our giving. We must give our time. This means that we must faithfully attend meetings. We must give our thoughts. This means that when the time comes to vote we will not do so without the background of information which should make the vote honest and individual. We must give our prayers. This implies that our whole heart is in the cause, for we never earnestly pray for anyone or anything without thereafter loving that better than ever before.

The giving which is worship must needs be self-denying. Nobody is ever entirely converted

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when the purse is held in reserve. The disciple who would be as his Master must not hold dearest houses or lands, or father or mother, or wife or children. Still down from the clear heaven above us rings the trumpet call, "If any man will be my disciple, he must forsake all, take up his cross, and come and follow me."

We are never to criticise the giving or the withholding of others. We have in this to do solely with our own consciences. But young husbands and wives should have a fair understanding on this point, and in the household planning of the provision for the future, as well as for the present, the amount fairly due from us to God should be considered and bestowed. "How much owest thou to my Lord?" is a home question which none of us can shirk.

Never must we in our most secret thoughts plume ourselves on our liberality. We cannot give in any hour of our lives as our Saviour gave himself for us, counting not even his own life dear. We are always unprofitable servants if we measure our service by Christ's goodness to our unworthiness.

But we are stewards of bounty received from heaven, and our privilege is to so administer what we have that our Lord shall overlook our defects and accept our sheaves when we bring them to him at the end of the day.

Milestones on the Road

Milestones on the Road

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Milestones on the Road.

EVERY birthday is a milestone on the road of life, the road which leads us home. As we pass the milestones one by one we seem to have made but little progress, the fifth, the tenth, the twentieth come, and then, later, the others, until insensibly we change from youth to maturity, from maturity to the second childhood of which we have been talking. It is well to keep our own birthdays, stopping at each for a brief retrospect of our yesterdays, and pausing to sow the seed of good resolutions for more beautiful to-morrows.

A little daily text-book, with a stanza and a quotation or a bit of the word, is a pleasant reminder of our friends' birthdays, which otherwise we would not be able to keep in memory. The friends' names written over against the right date serve to remind us that those we love are standing to-day beside *their* milestones, and we can pray for them or send them a letter or flowers or a gift. As the value of a gift is not in its costliness but in the sentiment it conveys, the simplest

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trifle lovingly sent will thrill with delight the heart of its recipient. The being thought of, remembered, this is what helps to make the hard places smooth and to keep people happy and full of courage. If for no other reason than that the world is pleasanter when those who dwell in it are kind and demonstrative it would be worth while to cultivate the amenities of social intercourse.

In one dear household known to me birthdays are always borne in mind at family prayers. Relatives and friends whose names are in the little daily devotional book are mentioned to the Lord, with a plea for their special blessing when their names occur in the regular order, and never do the birthdays come round, be the place ever so far away, that the intimate acquaintances of that home do not feel strengthened by the thought that they are thus remembered, for by prayer we know that "the whole round world" is "bound by gold chains around the feet of God."

Birthdays are not the only anniversaries which we keep; there are milestones as marked which belong to the individual history in a still more subtle sense. I suppose that Jacob must always have returned in tender and glad solemnity to the night when he lay at Bethel with a stone for a pillow and had that wonderful dream of the angels going to and fro on that ladder which

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reached from heaven to earth, and to that still holier night when he wrestled until morning with his unseen antagonist who gave him the new name "Israel," because as a prince he had power with God, and had prevailed.

To some of us there are hours known only to God and ourselves, hours of soul-conflict, hours of emphatic decision, hours of struggle and triumph. No more important milestone do we ever reach and pass than the one which sees us definitely pledged to live no longer for selfish ends, but for altruistic and Christian objects. The day we give ourselves up to God in complete surrender is a monumental one in the story of our lives.

Then come the days of courtship, of wedlock, of successful endeavor, of poverty perhaps, and disaster. The day our ship sailed away, the day our ship came in, the day our dearest friend died, the day we made a friend, are all eventful and lifted out of the commonplace. But for these marked days we might become too strongly bound by routine; these days save us from jogging along too complacently in the deeply beaten ruts.

Our white world milestones are Christmas and Easter, the most glorious days in the year, the one celebrating our Lord's coming to the earth, the other forever testifying to his resurrection.

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The angels heralded the wondrous birth at Bethlehem in Judea, and

“ Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still celestial music floats
O'er all the weary world.”

The universal good will at Christmas-tide, the surging joy, the loosened purse-strings, the mirth and melody, and the pleasure of little children, all witness to the presence of the Child among us, all seem to bid us listen again to the Gloria in Excelsis.

Nobody is churlish, nobody has a grudge, nobody is hard and forbidding at Christmas, for lo!

“ The star rains its fire,
And the beautiful sing,
In the manger of Bethlehem,
Jesus is King.”

Easter strikes a deeper note ; Christmas is the opening anthem, Easter the triumphant chorus. Lord of life, victor over death, at Easter-tide Christ comes to us leading captivity captive.

There is not a green grave in the whole earth, not a vacant chair, not a wounded heart, for which Easter has not its comfort and balm. “ Therefore let us keep the feast not with the old leaven of malice and insincerity, but in singleness of heart, praising God.”

For our national holidays, Thanksgiving and others, we must stand on guard, for the tendency

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among us is to exalt that which is merely utilitarian, and we do not always prize as we ought a day when we have a right to throw business aside and simply enjoy ourselves. All work and no play is quite as bad as all play and no work.

To plan for pleasure is a praiseworthy thing, and I wish there were more neighborhood frolics and social excursions and merry picnics arranged for our holidays. Festal times and gala times make the sober and serious times more enjoyable by contrast. A boon in a community or in a family is the person who has a gift for the details of an entertainment and who can bring people together, get them into pleasant relations, and make an affair of any kind go off creditably.

A woman of whom I think here is not young, nor has she ever been very beautiful, or talented, or conspicuous in any degree. Her one lovely gift is in her lovableness and her genius for keeping her home at the highwater mark of pleasure. "You might put her down in the center of a desert," said her husband, "and she would stand in the tent door and smile as if she were on the steps of a palace." She is never cross or fault-finding, and she never forgets to say "Thank you" for the smallest favor. In short, one of her sweetest peculiarities is that she has an agreeable word to say and a happy knack of doing the right thing in the right place wherever she hap-

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pens to be. The day which tells her years should be marked with golden letters, for she has a way of going about the world like an angel.

Such a woman is sure to make holidays gayer and working days cheerier than another can, for she has "a heart at leisure from itself."

I like to think of all our earthly life as a road leading on to the home in the Father's house. Let us not be chary of loving kindness on our pilgrim path! Let us not only love one another, but tell one another how dear and precious are the chances for happy meetings, and how we regret the partings. When I was a little girl we used to sing in school,

"Be kind to each other,
The night's coming on
When friend and when brother
Perchance will be gone."

When the lonely days come with our dear ones gone, when the moss drapes the milestones and the gray mists veil the sky and the sea, let us have no heartaches over our sins of omission, no regrets over harshness which might have been averted.

So let us live that all life will be luminous in the light of our Father's face.

"Looking forward to the haven
Where the ships shall all come in!
Looking upward to the triumph
Where we shall be done with sin.
Looking onward to the love feast
With the Master entered in,
Looking ever to the ending
Where the blessing we shall win."

The Value of Odd Moments

The Value of Odd Moments

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Value of Odd Moments.

IN this hurrying age there are few of us who who are not often somewhat discouraged because the time at our command is inadequate to all the demands we wish to make upon it. Our waking hours are filled with imperative duties, relentless in their sway. We are bound to others; employers, places of responsibility, work which engages our attention—we are not free to follow our bent; and if we attempt too much in our times of leisure, it is at the peril of sight or nerves or temper or health. So there comes for us a mood of discouragement, and we look out over the years that are coming with a sense of impatience, as if they were to stretch on like a long, weary day, on a long white, uninteresting road.

There are two aspects of the case which we overlook in our temporary moods of dissatisfaction with the thing that is, while we are vainly longing for the thing that is not, but which we would like to see. One of these is that drudgery *per se* is not a bad thing for anyone. The

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necessity for daily plodding on, along a certain line, holds us firmly to an ideal of duty, cultivates in us a sense of responsibility, and in the end enables us to accomplish much more than we could do by sporadic effort. Good old Dr. Wayland used to tell his classes tersely that nothing could stand before days' works; and we know from observation as well as from experience that those who make solid gains in the end in any line are those who forge steadily ahead, not especially caring for moods and tenses, but performing the task of the hour within the hour to the best of their ability. No one is wise who underestimates the opportunity given for character development by the unobtrusive, ever-recurring daily task, the engagement which must be met, the place at the desk or behind the counter, or in the committee room at which one is expected, and where one quietly fills in the little space which belongs to him or her.

Apart from this, however, anyone who is really in earnest about self-improvement will not fail to find that there are many odd moments in the day which may be used to advantage, and if not neglected will give one the chance of stepping up and out into a broader sphere. We are very apt to look doubtfully at the few moments here and few minutes there during which we are detained and in which we

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have nothing to do. Yet a distinguished and eminent oculist once told me that if people whose eyes are not strong would rest them for three minutes at the end of each half-hour they would find great advantage at the end of the day.

I met a friend one morning crossing a ferry. He took out of his pocket a Greek Testament, which he read with absorbed attention during the seven minutes which the boat occupied in crossing the river. Some time afterward I asked him about this, and he said that he had made it his habit for a long time to keep up his Greek, either in the Testament or the classics, by simply carrying a book and reading it in his daily trips across the ferry to and from his work.

A very busy friend, charged with the care of a large establishment, showed me some time ago a really elaborate and beautiful piece of embroidery, such a lovely piece of work as one sends down in a family as an heirloom. I said, "When do you find time for such work as this?" and she remarked, "In the morning one or two members of the family are apt to be a little tardy in coming to breakfast, and as I like to pour their coffee myself I always linger until the last one has appeared. Then I have a few moments every day in which I wait for the post-

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man, for the butcher and the grocer, and while I am detained in this part of the house looking for them I simply have my embroidery, my silks, my patterns, and do a little bit each day. In the course of a few months I have something to show for my labor."

A poor mechanic, struggling under the load of small wages and a large family, once sent to me to borrow some books. Supposing that he cared only for what might be entertaining I selected something which I thought would please him, and gave it to the messenger, his little tow-headed, freckle-faced son. The next morning there came to me a very kind and polite note from the man, saying, "Dear Madam: I thank you very much for your goodness in being willing to lend me books, but as I have only odd moments in which to read I cannot spend my time on anything so light. Would you kindly send me Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*, or a volume of Macaulay's *Essays*, or else some really good work of biography?" I was pleased to accede to such a request from such a source, and even though my friend has never been able to rise into a position in which his daily labor has been well rewarded, I have great gratification in knowing that his children are turning out well and that they will probably have a better vantage-ground in life than their

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father, as, if they imitate his example in the care of their odd moments, there is no knowing at what point they may finally arrive.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe did not, it is true, write her great book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in odd moments, but she had so accustomed herself to working under pressure, and to carrying on her literary employment while superintending her household, baking the bread, and looking after the various affairs of her life, as the wife of a professor, that the story grew under her hand while her other work went on.

Lucy Larcom, in her story of a *New England Girlhood*, shows us the employees of Lowell factories educating themselves by diligent study in their "between times," and one need not go back to Lowell mills nor to well-known names in literature for examples of equal success in broadening one's horizon and preparing one's own path to a career.

Such a young woman as one whom I know, whose sphere of service was originally in the folding room of a publishing house, but who took pains to improve her handwriting and her arithmetic and then acquired the art of bookkeeping by study in the evenings, is an instance of the rewards which follow painstaking and faithful endeavor. A vacancy occurred in a bank, and the teacher of Miss Emily's Bible class recommended

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her to fill it. She stepped from one sort of work to another without the loss of a day, and has easily kept the pace there with her fellow-clerks who are graduates of colleges. She possesses exactness, accuracy, the habit of attention, and a cheerful willingness to undertake any extra duty without complaint or air of injury. Consequently she is worth much to the institution which employs her, and in a comparatively brief time she has had two promotions with increase of salary in each case.

There is no reason why one should rest contented with a certain measure of attainment if by perseverance and thrift of time and watching for opportunity one may reach a higher altitude. Thus a girl who is already a proficient stenographer may try for greater speed, as well as entire accuracy, and her general usefulness will be augmented if she practice a careful attention to detail and cultivate a sort of economy akin to that of the bird that weaves every dainty thing she can find into the lining of her nest.

No knowledge, no scrap of information, comes amiss to the young woman whose ambition is satisfied with nothing short of excellence in her chosen department. She will discover, moreover, that it will do her no harm to take up, if not in her odd moments, yet in her occasional evenings, the study of bookkeeping, or of spell-

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ing, or of rhetoric. The wider our acquaintance with branches having some relation to the one which is particularly our own the more probable it is that we shall be able to rise to places of efficiency and trust. To him who is faithful in the least there comes the open door of service where he can be faithful in much, and the successful ruler over one city shall in good time hear a voice saying to him, "Be thou ruler over ten cities."

Two young people start out in life with apparently equal equipment, and their chances of success seem so nicely balanced that one can hardly predict which will outstrip the other. Watch them as the years slip by. You discover that one remains stationary; he makes no progress; younger men pass him in the eager race of life; he grows rusty and behind the times. The other little by little climbs, each foothold being kept as it is gained, each advance making sure another in due time. His motto might be, "Without haste, and without rest," for he never seems hurried or worried or preoccupied, but no point once won is ever lost, for he is bent on making every talent serve him, and he goes on conquering success by patient well-doing. He does not lose odd moments. He is on hand when he is wanted. His pluck, diligence, and fidelity stand him in good stead.

Far be it from me in this chapter to urge on

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any young man or woman that breathless and rushing sort of effort which takes no note of the need of recreation, which leaves no space for prayer, which has no margin for meditation. Odd moments are not wasted which are given to resting when one is tired, or, above all, to the cultivation of the soul's communion with God. Idleness and inertia are very different from leisure and introspection. The latter have their beautiful uses, the former are dead weights on progress.

“Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.” This is a legend to blazon on the tablets of the mind and memory. And when you are doubtful as to the voice which speaks to you, the call which urges you to go here or go there, say to yourself, “What, were he here on earth, would Jesus do?” and pray for the right answer, and be not disobedient to the heavenly vision. For Jesus is yet present with us, as if still He tabernacled in the flesh, and if we but walk as under orders, we shall not wander from the path. “Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it!”



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