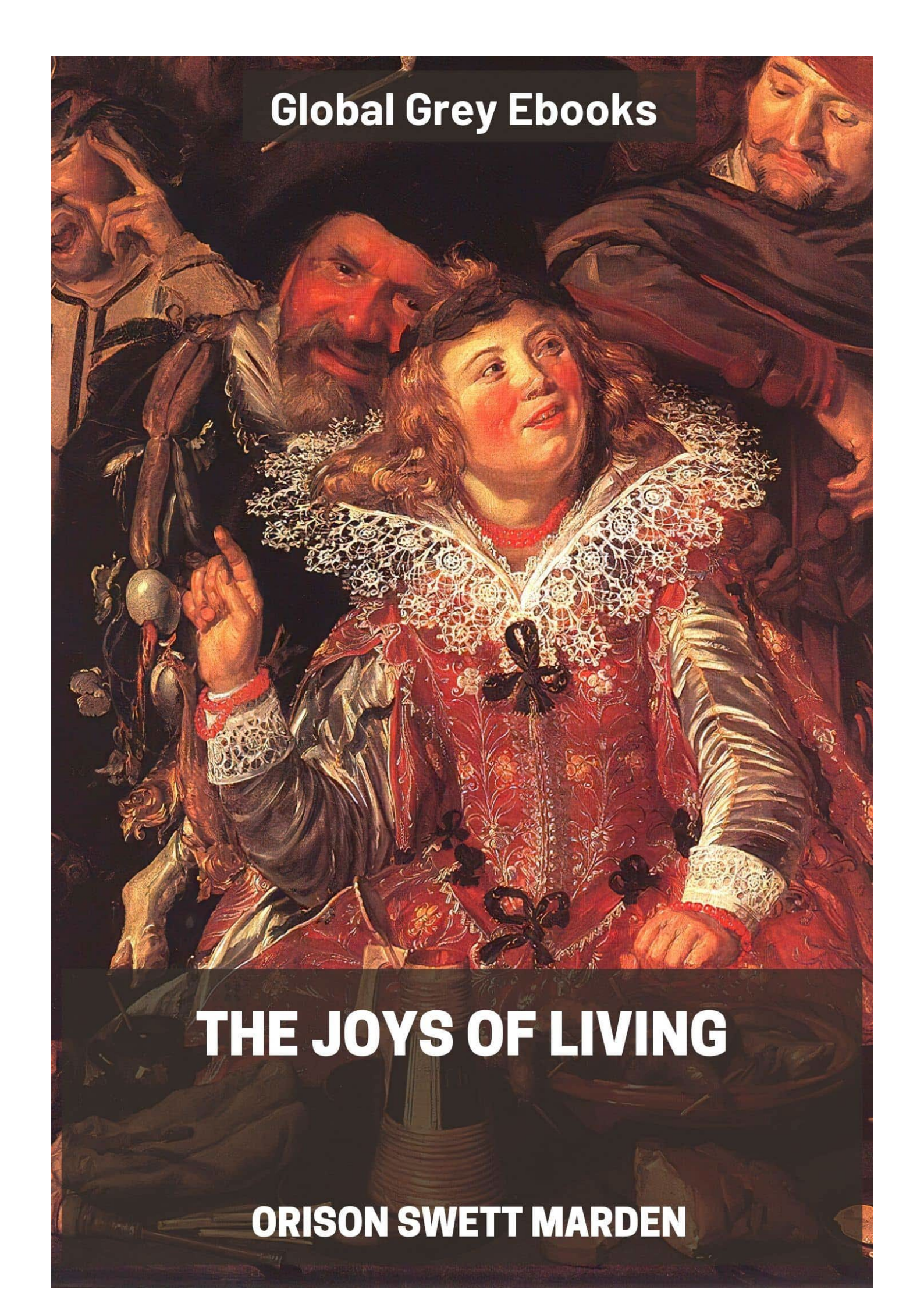




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THE JOYS OF LIVING

ORISON SWETT MARDEN

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The Joys of Living by Orison Swett Marden.

First published in 1913.

This ebook edition was created and published by Global Grey on the 18th September 2022.

The artwork used for the cover is '*Shrovetide Revellers*'
painted by Frans Hals.

This book can be found on the site here:

globalgreyebooks.com/joys-of-living-ebook.html

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I. Living Today, In the Here and Now

*Happy the man and happy he alone,
He who can call to-day his own;
He who's secure within can say.
To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day.*
—Dryden.

*“There never was a land so dear
But found its hallelujah here.”*

If an inhabitant of some other planet were to visit America, he would probably think that our people were all *en route* for something beyond, some other destination, and that where they happen to be living is merely a way station where they unpack only such of their luggage as they need for a temporary stay.

The visitor would find very few people actually living in the here and the now. He would find that most people's gaze is fixed upon something beyond, something to come. They are not really settled to-day, do not really live in the *now*, but they are sure they will live to-morrow or next year when business is better, their fortune greater, when they move into their new house, get their new furnishings, their new automobile, get rid of things that now annoy, and have everything around them to make them comfortable. *Then* they will be happy. But they are not really enjoying themselves to-day.

Our eyes are so focused upon the future, upon some goal in the beyond, that we do not see the beauties and the glories all about us. Our eyes are not focused for the things near us, but those far away. We get so accustomed to living in our imagination and anticipation that we lose much of our power of enjoying the here and the now. We are living for to-morrow, to-morrow, and yet, “When tomorrow comes it still will be to-morrow!”

We are like children chasing a rainbow. If we could only reach it, what delight! We spend our lives trading in “futures,” building air-castles. We never believe that we have yet reached the years of our finest living, but we always feel sure that that ideal time of life is coming.

Most of us are discontented, restless, nervous, and unhappy. There is a far-away look in our eyes, which shows that we are not content with to-day, that we are not really living here and now, that our minds are on something away beyond the present.

The great majority of people think that the proper thing to do is to live almost anywhere except right *here* and *now*. Many people dwell on the past with its rich but lost opportunities, its splendid chances which they have let slip; and while they are doing this, they waste the precious present which seems of little account to them to-day, but which to-morrow will begin to take on a new value in their estimation. It is astonishing what new virtues and forces we are able to see and to develop in regretful retrospection, the moment these have passed beyond our reach. What splendid opportunities stand out after they have gone by! Oh! what could we not do with them if we had them back!

Happiness for many people is marred by memories of unfortunate mistakes or bitter experiences in an unhappy past. To be happy one must learn to let go, to erase, to bury, to forget everything that is disagreeable, that calls up unpleasant memories. These things can do

nothing for us but sap the very vitality which we need for correcting our mistakes and misfortunes.

An old farmer was once asked at a meeting of the Agricultural Congress to give his opinion on the best slope of land for the raising of a particular kind of fruit. "It does not make so much difference," said the old man, "about the slope of the land as the slope of the man." Many a farmer who has the right slope makes a good living and gets a competence on very poor soil, while the farmer who does not slope the right way barely exists upon the richest soil.

Happiness does not depend so much upon our being favorably environed as upon the slope of our mind.

It is not enough to extract happiness from ideal conditions; any one can do that. But it is the self-mastered, the self-poised soul who can get happiness out of the most inhospitable surroundings. "Paradise is here or nowhere.

You must take your joy with you or you will never find it."

The trouble with us is that we expect too much from the great happenings, the unusual things, and we overlook the common flowers on the path of Life, from which we might abstract sweets, comforts, delights.

It is difficult for many people who are honestly striving to make the most of themselves to see how they can possibly get happiness out of their monotonous, humdrum vocations to which they are chained by necessity or on account of those who are dependent upon them. These people would get a good lesson by studying the bees, who, every minute during the day of the honey season, are finding sweets in every weed, in poisonous flowers, in things in which we would never think of looking for anything good.

If we are ever happy, it will be because we create happiness out of our environment with all its vexations, cares, and disheartening conditions. He who does not learn to create his happiness as he goes along, out of the day's work with all its trials, its antagonisms, its obstacles, with all its little annoyances, disappointments, has missed the great life secret. It is out of this daily round of duties, out of the stress and strain and strife of life, the attrition of mind with mind, disposition with disposition—out of this huckstering, buying and selling world—that we must get the honey of life, just as the bee sucks the sweetness from all sorts of flowers and weeds.

The whole world is full of unworked joy mines. Everywhere we go we find all sorts of happiness-producing material, if we only know how to extract it. "Everything is worth its while if we only grasp it and its significance. Half the joy of life is in little things taken on the run."

The men and women who move the world must be a part of it; they must touch the life that now *is*, and feel the thrill of the movement of civilization as the great life drama is enacted.

Do you ever realize that you are now actually living the life which looked so rosy and radiant with promise in your childhood and adolescence? Do you recognize in the days and weeks as they slip by that iridescent dream of the future, which then enchanted your youthful fancy, as a mirage in a desert charms the senses of the weary traveler? Do you ever stop to think that the time you are now trying to kill is the very time you once looked forward to so eagerly, and which seemed then so precious; that the moments which now hang so heavily on your hands are the same that you then determined should never slip from your grasp until you had extracted from each its fullest possibilities?

Why does what looked like paradise to you when viewed through youth's telescope now seem but a dreary desert? Because your vision is distorted. You are looking at your environment from a wrong point of view. You are disappointed, discontented and unhappy, because you did not find the fabled bag of gold at the foot of the rainbow, while you go on squandering, in useless repining, the time that, properly used, would convert your present seeming desert into the paradise of your early dreams.

“Yes, here in this miserable, hampered, despicable actual wherein thou even now standest,—here, or nowhere, is thy ideal. Work it out therefrom,—and working, believe, live, be free. Fool! the ideal is in thyself; the impediment, too, is in thyself; thy condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same ideal out of. What matter whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? Oh, thou that pinest in the imprisonment of the actual and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule, know this truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, here or nowhere, couldst thou only see.”

You thought that when you reached the golden land of the future, fruit would fall into your lap, without your preparing the ground or planting or watering the seed. You dreamed that you would reap where you did not sow. You are still looking forward, always following a mirage. You will wake up some day and discover, perhaps too late, that there is nothing in mature life for the man who will not pay the price in youth.

We cannot separate our lives from time. Why is it that we are so extravagant, so thoughtless, in our waste of time, especially in youth, when we cling so tenaciously to life? You cannot separate a wasted hour from the same duration of your life. If you waste your time, you must waste your life. If you improve your time, you cannot help improving your life.

How few people ever see the identity between their life and time! They seem to think they can waste time in all sorts of foolish ways, and even in dissipation, without wasting the life; but the two are inseparable. Remember, that when you throw away an evening or a day, or do infinitely worse than throw it away by indulging in pleasures which demoralize and tend to deteriorate your character and to form vicious habits, you are deliberately flinging away a part of your very life, and that when you grow old you would give anything to redeem the precious time you have squandered.

There is only one way really to live, and that is to start out every morning with a firm resolution to get the most out of that day, to live it to the full. No matter what happens or does not happen, what comes or does not come, resolve that you will extract from every experience of the day something of good, something that will make you wiser and show you how to make fewer mistakes to-morrow. Say to yourself, “This day I begin a new life. I will forget everything in the past that caused me pain, grief, or disgrace.”

I once knew a mother who, after death had taken away every one of her children, her husband and nearly all her relatives, prayed that death might relieve her from her awful suffering; but after a few years she was cheerful and happy again, consoled in helping others. The world did not seem so black, and life such a failure as she thought it would be. There were too many who needed her mothering.

Nature is marvelously kind to us. She is a great physician. She puts “the healing balm of Gilead” on all our wounds, and cures our mental ills in a wonderful way. If it were not for this great healing potency of nature, the world would be funereal enough, for there are few of us who have not been borne down very close to the sorrow of death.

Resolve every morning that you will get the most out of *that* day, not of some day in the future, when you are better off, when you have a family, when your children are grown up, when you have overcome your difficulties. *You never will overcome them all.* You will never

be able to eliminate all the things which annoy, trouble, and cause friction in your life. You will never get rid of all the little enemies of your happiness, the hundred and one little annoyances, but *you can make the most of things as they are*.

The reason why our lives are so lean and poverty-stricken, so disappointing and ineffective, is because we do not really live in the day; we do not concentrate our energy, our ambition, our attention, our enthusiasm, upon the day we are living.

Resolve to enjoy yourself to-day. Enjoy *to-day*, and do not let the hideous shadows of to-morrow, the forebodings, and the things you dread, rob you of what is yours to-day—your inalienable right to be happy *to-day*.

Just have a little heart-to-heart talk with yourself every morning, and say: “It does not matter what comes or what goes to-day, what happens or what does not happen, there is one thing of which I am sure, and that is, I am going to get the most possible out of the day. I am not going to allow anything to rob me of my happiness, or of my right to *live this day from beginning to end*, and not merely to exist.

“I do not care what comes, I shall not allow any annoyance, any happening, any circumstances which may cross my path to-day, to rob me of my peace of mind. I will not be unhappy to-day, no matter what occurs. I am going to enjoy the day to its full, live the day completely. This day shall be a complete day in my life. I shall not allow the enemies of my happiness to mar it. No misfortune in the past, nothing which has happened to me in days gone by, which has been disagreeable or tragic, no enemies of my happiness or efficiency, shall be a guest in my spirit’s sacred enclosure to-day. Only happy thoughts, joy thoughts, only the friends of my peace, comfort, happiness, and success, shall find entertainment in my soul this day. None of my enemies shall gain admittance to scrawl their hideous autographs on the walls of my mind. There shall be ‘*no admittance*’ to-day, except to the friends of my best moods. I will tear down the black, sable pictures and hang pictures of joy, and gladness, of things which will encourage, cheer, and increase my power. Everything which ever handicapped my life, which has made me uncomfortable and unhappy, shall be expelled, at least for this day.” So that when night comes I can say “*I have lived to-day*”.

A clean, new, optimistic start like this, every morning, will very quickly revolutionize one’s outlook upon life and increase one’s power tremendously. It is just a question of mastering the brain, of forming new thought tracts in the soft brain tissue, making a path for a new happiness habit.

Why should you make yourself miserable by living in the past, by dwelling upon your past mistakes, regretting your failure to seize the opportunities which you think would have made you rich, or blaming yourself for things that have injured you?

I have never known a person to accomplish anything worth while who was always lashing himself, criticising his past and lamenting blunders, mistakes, and other things that had already happened.

It will require every bit of energy you can muster to make your life a success anyway, and you certainly cannot focus your mind on the present with that vigor that accomplishes things when you are thinking or living in the past.

Every bit of force which you expend upon the things which you cannot change is not only thrown away, but you have so much less to make your future a success, and so compensate for your unfortunate mistakes. Every particle of force spent in regret is worse than wasted. It does not matter how unfortunate or how black the past has been, it should and can be outlived.

Haul down those black, threatening, deplorable pictures in the mind. They only discourage and incapacitate you from doing good work in the present. Drop from memory the unfortunate error of judgment; forget the unhappy experience, no matter how much it has humiliated or handicapped you. Put your blunders out of mind and resolve to do better in the future.

Nothing is more foolish, nothing more wicked, than to drag the skeletons of the past, the hideous images, the foolish deeds, the unfortunate experiences of yesterday into today's work to mar and spoil it. There are plenty of people, who have been failures up to the present moment, who could do wonders in the future if they only could forget the past, if they only had the ability to cut it off, to close the door on it forever and start anew.

However unfortunate your past has been, forget it. If it throws a shadow upon the present, or causes melancholy or despondency, if there is nothing in it which helps you; there is not a single reason why you should retain it in your memory and there are a thousand reasons why you should bury it so deeply that it can never be resurrected.

One of the silliest, most inane tasks any human being is ever guilty of undertaking is that of trying to modify, to change, the unchangeable.

There is a strange propensity in human nature to locate all the good things of life in an existence that is yet to come to us. Man is immortal *now*; is not to be, but *is* immortal. We are perfect *now* in our God nature, and if we would only claim these things as ours now, instead of trying to acquire them in the future, we should grow by leaps and bounds.

Happiness is something that we must take as we go along, or we lose it. When the Children of Israel were passing through the desert they were fed with manna fresh every day. Some of the people did not have faith enough to trust the Lord to feed them every day, and so they tried to store up some of this manna for future use; but it spoiled. This taught the Israelites a lesson of faith. They could not keep the manna for the future; they must trust the Great Giver of All Good. They must have faith that he would feed them every day. Our happiness is like this manna. We must gather it anew every day we live.

Everywhere we see people who have tried to store up what was intended for their daily happiness, as manna for the future. But they are surprised to find that it has spoiled, evaporated, would not keep,—that it must be used as we go along. We must use happiness when fresh, like fresh plucked flowers.

There are a great many things, such as good impulses, which are good for to-day, but not for to-morrow. How many people delay the kindness, the expression of love, until the person is dead, beyond their reach, and then try to atone for a neglected past by flowers and tears at the funeral!

To-day is the day to say the kind word that springs to your lips, to obey the generous impulse that stirs your heart. These people who haunt your mind, and whom you promise yourself that you will help some time, need your help now, and you can give it more readily now than at any other time. Every to-morrow has, in addition to its own cares and duties, all those which were neglected in the past, while its opportunities and possibilities are no greater than were those of yesterday.

What makes you think that you are going to do wonderful things to-morrow when today seems so commonplace, so void of opportunity? Why does to-day look so prosy; to-morrow so rosy, so poetic?

What reason have you to believe that you are going to be ideally happy and harmonious, unselfish and helpful at some indefinite time in the future, when to-day you are irritable and

selfish, uncharitable and unhappy? How is it that in some distant future you expect to get so much time to write letters to your friends and to those who are sick and discouraged, and also to devote to self-improvement, to broadening your mind, when you can find no time for these things to-day?

What is there in to-morrow that can work such magic of improvement upon to-day? Why do you feel that you are going to be so generous to-morrow when you are so stingy and narrow to-day? Why think that you are, some time, going to pick up the many things lying about the house—almost useless to you, but which would be valuable to those who are poorer than yourself—that you are going to make up a box of cast-off clothing, books, pictures, and other things that you can spare just as well as not, and send them next week or next month to those who really need them? You have not done it in the past, why delude yourself into thinking that you will do it in the future?

How many people, not through stinginess but from sheer thoughtlessness and ignorance of the needs of others, stow things away in cellar or attic that might help to open the way to a great future for some poor boy or girl!

Go up to your attic to-day, look in your trunks and about your house and see how many things are lying around that you can not only dispense with, but which are really in your way, that would bring a measure of comfort and happiness to others less fortunate than yourself.

Look over your old clothing and pick out the articles that you will never wear again, but which would prove a real godsend to some poor girls out of employment or who have so many depending upon them that they cannot afford to buy necessary clothing for themselves. Do not keep those things until they become useless, thinking you may need them some time. Let them do good *now*, pass them along to-day. They have served your turn. Let them be messengers of good cheer, evidences of your love and thoughtfulness of others.

Do not be selfish, at least with the things that you can spare. Do not hoard them, thinking that you may want them later. You can make an infinitely greater investment, in your own character, in satisfaction and happiness, by giving them away than by keeping them, in anticipation of some future contingency that will never arise. You may not be as magnanimous as you ought to be. Giving will soften your heart and open a little wider the door of your generosity.

There are probably books in your library, or lying around the house, which no one has looked in for years, or will read for years to come, which would be of inestimable value to boys and girls who are trying to educate themselves under great difficulties. Pass them on to-day. The more you give away the more you will have and enjoy. The habit of stinginess strangles happiness; the habit of giving multiplies it.

A highly cultured and refined woman not long ago told me of her struggles to get a musical education. She was so poor that for a long time she could not afford to hire any kind of an instrument, and used to practice for hours daily on a piano keyboard which she had had marked on a sheet of brown paper.

While struggling to get along in this way, she was invited to a dinner at the home of a wealthy family. After dinner she was shown over the house by her hostess, who took her from kitchen to attic.

“And there,” says the lady, “in the attic, I saw stored away an old piano, which I would have given anything I had in the world to have possessed. I would have been glad to have walked a long distance every day for the privilege of practicing on it. I cared nothing for the sumptuous dinner, the handsome furniture, the beautiful pictures, and evidences of luxury on every hand,

but that old piano, lying unused in the attic, haunted me. It would have opened the door to paradise for me, yet I dared not ask for it.”

There are hundreds of poor girls in this country struggling to get a musical education to-day who cannot afford any kind of a piano. Why not give your superfluous piano or organ to some struggler?

No one is so poor that he can not give something to enrich another, every day of his life. He who hoards his joys to make them more is like the man who said: “I will keep my grain from mice and birds, and neither the ground nor the mill shall have it. What fools are they who throw away upon the earth whole handfuls!”

Give! give! give *now*, to-day! Help yourself to grow larger, broader, happier, more useful to humanity as the years go by.

Many a man defers his happiness until he gets rich. Then he is surprised to find that his manna is spoiled, that he should have eaten it when first given. *Deferred happiness and the deferred good deed do not keep.*

Every one should start out with a tacit understanding with himself that whatever comes to him, or does not come, that whether he is successful in his particular undertaking or unsuccessful, he will at least be happy as he goes along, that he will not allow anything to rob him of the enjoyment which ought to come to every one each day.

He should resolve that he will not allow any little accident or incident, or any conditions, however trying, to interrupt the natural flow of his sense of well-being, comfort, and happiness.

Remember that yesterday is dead. To-morrow is not yet born. The only time that belongs to you is the passing moment. One might liken the sixty minutes in the hour to flowers, that live for only sixty seconds and then die. If we get the good that belongs to us here and now, we must extract the sweetness of each passing minute while it is ours. That is the real art of living in the to-day.

II. A Professional At Living

He who is his own monarch contentedly sways the scepter of himself, not envying the glory to crowned heads of the earth.—Sir Thomas Brown.

Is it not a strange thing that while we ought to make a profession of living, most of us are not even amateurs in this art of arts? We never learn the business of real living. We become specialists in our profession or our business, but in right living, which makes or mars the happiness of Life, we never become experts. We know next to nothing about the human machine, which holds the secret of all our success and happiness. We pay much less attention to it than we do to our business mechanism.

The human machine is the only medium by which the soul and the mind connect with the material world, and this marvelous mechanism, this temple Beautiful, should be kept in the superbest condition, for whatever mars it mars the soul's expression.

In our present system of education we are taught nearly everything except the very thing that we ought to know most about—the art of living. The schools and colleges teach scores of things that we never use directly in practical life, but scarcely a word about our marvelous human mechanism; and many a college graduate cannot even locate or describe the vital organs upon which his very life and welfare depend. He may know a lot about dead languages which he will never use; he may know much about the earth, about history, politics, philosophy, and sociology, but about his human machine, this marvelous mechanism which means more to him than anything else in the world, he has been taught practically nothing.

The art of living is more important to man than anything else, and yet he goes through life using the human machine, ignorant of its construction, though it is a million times more delicate and requires infinitely finer adjustment and more expert attention than any other mechanism in the world.

What would you think of a man who would buy the finest and most expensive automobile on the market and put it in charge of a man who had never seen such a vehicle in his life, and who knew absolutely nothing about it, and then, with his family, start out for a tour of the world?

To become an expert chauffeur a man must know how to take an automobile to pieces and put it together. He must be familiar with every part of the mechanism, must know the functions of each in its relation to the whole, because precious lives depend upon his knowledge, his skill, and his expertness.

But what does the average person know about this marvelous human machine, so delicately adjusted that every one of the billion of cells composing it is modified by each thought and each mood that passes through the mind?

A professional at living would not mar his day's run of the human machine, as most of us do, would not impair its marvelous expression, its output, by overeating or undereating, or by irregular living. He would not allow himself to be crippled for days by burning out its delicate brain and nerve cells with the fires of hot temper, by shocks of hatred, jealousy, fear or worry. Instead, he would protect this marvelously delicate and sensitive mechanism from its multitude of physical and mental enemies. What a pity that people do not know the science of human engineering, of training and running the human machine so that there will

be the least possible friction, the science of making the most of everything in the environment, of grinding everything into material for life's great masterpiece, just as Michael Angelo ground every experience of life into paint for his great masterpieces.

The best locomotive engine that science has been able to construct is able to transmute into propelling power less than twenty per cent, of the energy stored in the coal, and only one per cent, of the coal's energy in the electric light power house ever reaches the electric bulb to give light to the world.

The human machine, even at its best, is not yet able to transmute into practical propelling power, or light, but a pitifully small percentage of human energy or intelligence.

Under scientific management the human machine would be capable of expressing marvelous efficiency, harmony, perpetual happiness. But who ever heard of a real expert, a *master*, in the art of scientific living? We keep the human machine crippled a large part of the time by bad management, so that it is incapable of expressing a tithe of its possibilities. Many men who are very successful in their business make a daily botch of their living.

How few people do you know who are really happy? And yet, each human being is trying to be happy, really wants to be happy—but is expressing discord instead of harmony because his machine is out of order, and he either does not know how to remedy the defect or he is not willing to pay the price in training, in scientific effort, to become an expert in human engineering.

How many pangs we suffer, what humiliations, what embarrassments, simply because our human machine is not scientifically cared for and perfectly adjusted!

Think what we suffer through the sin of tired nerves, because the human machine has been abused, so that it is incapable of running without friction; of expressing harmony. We did not want to pain those we love, to be irritable, fretful; we did not want to destroy the peace of our home by our nervous, touchy, irritable, nasty moods. We did not want to injure the people we insulted and abused when out of sorts; we had no idea of hurting them, but the human machine was out of order; the brain cells and the nerve cells were poisoned by fatigue, by the broken-down cells, the debris from the previous day's run. The sensitive nervous mechanism expressed discord, when it was made to express harmony, simply because it was not running smoothly, was not properly adjusted; it often balked when it had not been properly refreshed and rejuvenated by a good night's sleep. Worry, anxiety, overeating, too many stimulants, dissipation, the violating in some way of nature's laws, was responsible for all this.

We had no idea of reviling, criticising, chastising, abusing our friends, or treating with contempt the people with whom we transact business; but the human machine was upset through the lack of scientific management, of systematic regular care.

There is nothing, except exposure in crime, that is so humiliating to a man who thinks anything at all of himself, as so to lose control of his human machine that it races wild, doing all sorts of damage, while he, the chauffeur, is utterly helpless to stop or control it.

One of the most humiliating things about a hot temper is that when a man has lost self-control he makes an awful spectacle of himself. When he has lost command of his brain, he reveals the brute in him which ordinarily he tries to hide from his fellows—all his vicious traits, his mean, contemptible, nasty disposition—the side of himself which he would give anything in the world to conceal from his dearest friends. Everything is brought out to the light and to the censure of those whose esteem he covets.

Do you, who say you cannot control your temper, that the explosion comes before you have time to think, ever consider that your brain is not *you*; that it is absolutely within your

control; that the great human machinery is outside the mind; that you can control every thought and be master of every emotion, with proper training,—so that your machine will never run wild, the brain never race away with you? *You* are the man behind the brain.

Did you ever consider that there are some people in whose presence you never would think of losing self-control, no matter what the provocation? There is somebody whose very presence would keep you from losing your bearings under the most provoking circumstances. Almost every man knows some woman, or has some friend, before whom nothing in the world could move him beyond his self-control. On the other hand, before an employee, upon whom he looks as part of the machinery of his business, for whom he has no real regard or sympathy, or at home, where he feels little restraint, he would lose his temper at the slightest provocation. This proves that we can control ourselves to an infinitely greater extent than we seem to think. The most explosive-tempered person would not show anger at a reception or dinner to distinguished persons, no matter what the fancied insult might be. He would not think of such a thing. If we had the proper regard for every one, if we respected even the humblest human being, as we ought to, and respected ourselves sufficiently, we should have little trouble in controlling ourselves.

The majority of people carry in their minds and in their hearts, grudges, jealousy, envy, antipathies, prejudices, which, although not very pronounced in their expression, are festering within and poisoning the inner life.

Just think what a revolution would come into our entire lives if we were even careful about the tone of our voices! You can use the sweetest and most endearing language possible to a dog in a tone of voice that will frighten him out of his wits, and make him unhappy for hours. On the other hand, you can use the worst possible language to him in a gentle, soothing voice and set his tail wagging, and bring him to you.

The language of our manner has everything to do with the happiness of every one around us, as well as of ourselves. Throw a bone at a dog and he will take it, and run away from you with his tail between his legs, without the slightest expression of gratitude; but, call him to you in a gentle tone, and let him take the bone out of your hand, and he will show his gratitude.

Much of the friction in life is caused by the tone of voice. The voice expresses our feelings, our attitude toward others. The discordant tone, which expresses antagonism and an uncongenial mental attitude, is trying. Even the mechanical lowering of the voice, as you feel the hot blood rushing through your veins when angry, will tend to allay your passion. We know how angry children will work themselves up to a perfect rage by screaming and yelling when things go wrong. The louder they scream, the more they yell, the madder they get, until they sometimes become hysterical. Their own angry tone feeds the fire of passion; whereas, a low tone, a gentle tone would help to extinguish the brain fire.

How much unhappiness in the home would be avoided if all the members of the family could agree never to raise their voices! If fault-finding, censorious husbands would only instead read aloud in the magic book of endearing words, in an appealing voice, when they were trying to get something which would mean everything to them; if they would adopt in the married life the same methods as during courtship, when they were eager to win the object of their affection!

The sarcastic, cutting, resentful, discordant tone of voice is responsible for a large part of the unhappiness not only in the home, but also in business, and in society.

Small natures who fret and stew and allow themselves to be annoyed and hampered by petty things, show by these ear-marks that they are not big enough to command the situation, that

they are not able to cope with conditions and preserve harmony. Their irritable ways indicate that they are out of harmony with their environment, that they hold the wrong attitude towards it, and hence they can not be masters of the situation, but are its victims.

People who are inclined to lose their temper, to fly into a passion at the slightest provocation, little realize that if they permit many of these conflagrations, the nerve cells will burn out the short circuits from constantly crossing the wires, injuring the fine, delicate mechanism of the brain, and after a while that they will lose the power of self-control, and be unable to restrain themselves. They will become hair-triggered and explode automatically.

There is no more humiliating spectacle than the exhibition of a man's meanest and most contemptible and most brutal qualities when in anger. At such a time Reason is strangled. Wisdom hides her head in shame, Good Sense and Good Judgment get down off the throne, and the beast vaults upon the royal seat and Anarchy rules throughout the mental kingdom.

After you have passed through such a passion fire, you feel that something precious has been burned out of your life. Your self-respect, your dignity, have been scorched in the conflagration.

I once saw a child in a perfect rage of passion taken before a mirror and he was so ashamed and chagrined at the awful spectacle that he stopped crying. If adults could only see themselves when they are burning up with passion, when the conflagration is raging through their brain, and tearing their nervous system to tatters, when the beast looks out of the eyes, it would seem as though they could never again be induced to make such spectacles of themselves.

The consciousness that you yourself are a power back of the brain, that you are in charge of the human machine, is a wonderful aid to self-control.

The story is told of an elderly woman who went to a photographer's to have her picture taken. She was seated before the camera wearing the same stem, hard, forbidding look that had made her an object of fear to the children living in the neighborhood, when the photographer, thrusting his head out from the black cloth, said suddenly, "Brighten the eyes a little."

She tried, but the dull and heavy look still lingered.

"Look a little pleasanter," said the photographer, in an unimpassioned but confident and commanding voice.

"See here," the woman retorted sharply, "if you think that an old woman who is dull can look bright, that one who feels cross can become pleasant every time she is told to, you don't know anything about human nature. It takes something from the outside to brighten one up."

"Oh, no, it doesn't! *It's something you can work from the inside.* Try it again," said the photographer, good-naturedly.

His tone and manner inspired faith, and she tried again, this time with better success.

"That's good! That's fine! You look twenty years younger," exclaimed the artist, as he caught the transient glow that illuminated the faded face.

She went home with a queer feeling in her heart. It was the first compliment she had received since her husband had passed away, and it left a pleasant memory. When she reached her little cottage, she looked long in the glass. "There may be something in it," she said, "but I'll wait and see the picture."

When the photograph came, it was like a resurrection. The face seemed alive with the lost fires of youth. She gazed long and earnestly, then said in a clear, firm voice, "If I could do it once, I can do it again."

Approaching the little mirror above her bureau, "Brighten up, Catherine," she said, and the old light flashed up once more.

"Look a little pleasanter!" she commanded; and a calm and radiant smile diffused itself over her face.

Her neighbors soon remarked the change that had come over her: "Why, Mrs. A, you are getting young! How do you manage it?"

"It is all done from the inside. You just brighten up inside and feel pleasant."

No one can be really happy or successful unless he is master of his moods, unless he becomes an expert in running his human machine and keeps it mentally and physically always in superb condition. Everything depends upon the machine.

Of course a complicated machine may do remarkable things, even with the sand grinding out its delicate bearings, and though not properly cared for or lubricated; but the same machine would do wonders and would last infinitely longer, if it were kept in perfect condition, perfectly adjusted.

A watch keeps accurate time not merely because it has a faultless mainspring, a superb balance wheel or hair-spring. Perfect time does not come from any one part of the watch, but is the result of the action and absolute adjustment and symmetrical relation of the scores of wheels, bearings, springs, etc.

If the watch were absolutely perfect, barring one imperfect cog of one of the tiniest wheels, this imperfection would defeat the ends of the watch-maker. Not only must every little screw or pin, every individual cog, add its perfection to the perfect whole, but all of the parts must also be correlated so as to produce harmony.

Health to the body is what time is to the watch. It is the perfect time of the body, the harmonious relation and inter-relation of all the parts; the slightest imperfection anywhere would throw the whole body out of harmony. Well-developed muscles, capacious lungs, a perfect liver, do not necessarily constitute health. Perfect health is the result of the harmonious action of all the organs of the body.

Health of the moral nature results from the harmonious action of all the moral faculties. A moral chronometer cannot keep perfect time with a defective part anywhere.

Power and happiness come from the harmonious, symmetrical development and expert operation of the human machine.

III. The Hunt For Happiness

*"I followed Happiness to make her mine,
Past towering oak and swinging ivy vine.
She fled, I chased, o'er slanting hill and dale.
O'er fields and meadows, in the purpling vale
Pursuing rapidly o'er dashing stream,
I scaled the dizzy cliffs where eagles scream;
I traversed swiftly every land and sea,
But always Happiness eluded me.*

*"Exhausted, fainting, I pursued no more,
But sank to rest upon a barren shore.
One came and asked for food, and one for alms;
I placed the bread and gold in bony palms.
One came for sympathy, and one for rest;
I shared with every needy one my best;
When, lo! sweet Happiness, with form divine,
Stood by me, whispering softly, 'I am thine.' "*

Man was made to be happy. The desire for fun, for amusement, for play, for joys that endure, is very strong in every normal person.

If the majority of the people in the world were asked to express their three greatest wishes they would be health, wealth, and happiness. If every human being were told to ask for his supreme wish in life, the majority would ask for happiness.

Every normal human being is really on a perpetual search for happiness. He may not think he is, but this is a mighty motive with every human being. We are all striving to better our condition in life, to make life a little more livable. We are trying to get, little by little, more and more emancipation from drudgery and hard work and exacting conditions.

And yet while the entire human race has been hunting for happiness from the dawn of history, how few have ever found it or have much of an idea what it is!

That they have not found happiness where they expected to find it has been the experience of every human being who has made a specialty of hunting for it. Happiness is not gained that way. It is the product of a deed and not to be found by hunting, as sportsmen hunt for wild animals.

Real happiness is so simple that most people do not recognize it. It is derived from the simplest, the quietest, the most unpretentious things in the world.

Happiness does not abide with low ideals, with selfishness, idleness, and discord. It is a friend of harmony, of truth, of beauty, of affection, of simplicity.

Multitudes of men have made fortunes, but have murdered their capacity for enjoyment in the process. How often we hear the remark, "He has the money, but cannot enjoy it."

"Some folks tries so hard ter be happy in dis worl' dey gits miserable tryin'. Happiness is allus whar you ain't lookin' fer it."

Who seeks happiness selfishly will never taste the blissful satisfaction which comes from the unqualified approval of an act. Happiness always eludes the selfish seeker. Selfishness and happiness cannot live together.

No human being, however rich, has ever found happiness by selfish seeking, for selfishness is not an ingredient in any of the enduring satisfactions of life. No man can be satisfied with a selfish act, for it violates the very law of his being. We inwardly despise ourselves for every selfish act.

Those who are capable of the highest, most disinterested appreciation find the most in life to enjoy. The habit of learning to appreciate to the utmost every situation in life adds wonderfully to the sum total of one's happiness. But many people are incapable of real happiness because they never learn to appreciate anything except that which appeals to their own comfort, pleasure, or appetite.

People who are always thinking of themselves, who are always trying to find something which will make them happy, some indulgence which will gratify their selfish cravings, are always disappointed seekers. Happiness was born a twin, and only he who seeks another's good, another's welfare, another's happiness, can find his own.

A man can have no greater delusion than that he can spend the best years of his life coining all of his energies into dollars, neglecting his home, sacrificing friendships, self-improvement, and everything else that is really worth while, for money, and yet find happiness at the end!

If a man coins his ability, his opportunities, into dollars, and neglects the cultivation of the only faculties which are capable of appreciating the highest happiness during all the years he is accumulating wealth, he cannot effectively revive these atrophied brain cells. His enjoyment, after he makes his money, must come from the exercise of the same faculties which he has employed in making it. He cannot undo the results of a life habit after he retires from business.

If you have not kept alive your ability to appreciate the beautiful, the good, and the true, you will be as surprised to find that it has left you as Darwin was when, in middle life, he discovered all at once that he had lost his power to appreciate Shakespeare and music.

Many men purchase the means of enjoyment at the cost of the power to enjoy. They murder the capacity for happiness while purchasing the means for happiness itself. Even the criminal thinks that his crime will improve his condition, that the theft will enrich him, or that he will get rid of an enemy that stands in the way of his happiness when he commits manslaughter.

No man can be happy when he despises his own acts, when he has any consciousness of wrong, whether of motive or act. No man can be happy when he harbors thoughts of revenge, jealousy, envy, or hatred. He must have a clean heart, and a clean conscience, or no amount of money or excitement can make him truly happy. With the sense of having done right men have been known to be happy amid the most adverse circumstances. Without that sense, men have been known to be most miserable with every worldly want supplied.

Fouquier Tinville, the prosecutor of the Revolutionary Committee in France during the Reign of Terror, claimed to find great pleasure in watching the execution of the beautiful, the brave, the young, the noble, the aged. It is said that during the trials a prisoner's acquittal made Tinville very unhappy, his condemnation happy. He used to find his relaxation from fatigue in his office, in watching the execution of his unfortunate victims. "That spectacle," he said, "did give me pleasure."

One man finds his pleasure in that which debauches, and which makes him ashamed and disgusted the next day. Another finds his greatest pleasure in helping the unfortunate out of trouble.

"We had such a good time!" or "Such a happy day!" Often we hear this remark from people after they have returned from some place where they went seeking enjoyment. We hear this expression from all sorts of people; but it scarcely means the same thing in any two instances. The word "happy," without indicating the quality of the happiness, does not mean much.

We may not recognize our motives but we are all trying to better ourselves, to get a little more comfort, a little easier position, a little more happiness, a little more out of life than we have been getting.

Real happiness, however, is not titillation of the nervous system. It does not come from eating, drinking, seeing, or hearing. It does not come from the gratification of desires or of possession. Real happiness is born of noble endeavor, a useful life. It is extracted a little here, a little there, from a kind word, a noble deed, a generous act, helpful assistance. We get a little bit of it from every right thought, from every kind word or deed, and it cannot be found anywhere else. Happiness, it has been said, is a mosaic composed of very little stones. Each taken singly is of little value; but when all are grouped together, combined and set, they form a pleasing and graceful whole—a costly jewel.

Remember, Mr. Happiness-Chaser, that wherever you go for happiness, you will only find what you take with you yourself. Your happiness can never be outside of yourself and it must be bounded by your own limitations. Your ability to appreciate and enjoy will mark the bounds of your happiness.

"We shall find nothing in the world which we do not find in ourselves." Happiness comes from a vigorous self-expression of the highest thing of which we are capable. It is the child of honest effort.

Notwithstanding the whole philosophy of the Bible tends to emphasize the fact that the kingdom of heaven is *within* man, yet, in all times, the great majority of people have been hunting for the kingdom of heaven that is without, not within themselves at all.

People spend their lives trying to gain this kingdom in material things—in money, in houses, and lands, in food, and drink, and clothes, in having "a good time." In other words, they try to find the kingdom of heaven through their five senses, through that which will tickle the nerves, that which will give an agreeable sensation; that is, they are always looking for an *outside God*. Everywhere we see people crowding, jamming the strong, crushing the weak, all trying to get something away from somebody else, which they think would add to their happiness if they could only get hold of it.

The trouble with us is that we try to find happiness where it does not exist, in transient, impermanent things; we try to find it in the gratification of desire; we seek it in animal pleasure. Happiness lives in giving, in doing, not in getting, in grasping.

Piling things around you, no matter how high, can never make you happy. What the man is, not what he has, makes him happy or miserable.

The human heart is always hungry. But unhappiness is the hunger to get; happiness is the hunger to give. True happiness must ever have the tinge of sorrow outlived.

Happiness is a reward for worthy services to others, for heroic endeavor in trying to do our part in the world, to perform our duty. There must be the desire to be helpful, to make the world a better place to live in, because of our efforts. Little kindnesses, pleasant words, little helps by the way, trifling courtesies, little encouragements, duties faithfully done, unselfish service, work that we enjoy, friendships, love and affection—all these are simple things, yet this, perhaps, is as near as we can come to finding and capturing illusive Happiness.

Beneath all our different races or creeds, sect prejudices, there is a oneness of life, a unity of essence which, if we were only conscious of it, would dispel all differences of race hatred or class prejudice. We would know that if all human beings are children of the same Father and Mother God, we must be of the same blood, the same in essence, of one Universal Brotherhood.

“I have come to see life,” says William Dean Howells, “not as the chase of a forever impossible personal happiness but as a greed for endeavor toward the happiness of the whole human family. There is no other success.”

“Ah! when shall all men’s good be each man’s rule.

And universal Peace lie like a shaft of light across the land

And like a lane of beams athwart the sea

Through all the circle of the Golden Year?”

IV. Training The Young Toward Sunshine

If it lay in me, I would do as the philosopher did who caused the pictures of Gladness and Joy, of Flora and the Graces, to be set up roundabout the schoolhouse.—Montaigne.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, in advanced years, acknowledged his debt of gratitude to the nurse of his childhood, who studiously taught him to ignore unpleasant incidents. If he stubbed his toe, or skinned his knee, or bumped his nose, his nurse would never permit his mind to dwell upon the temporary pain, but claimed his attention for some pretty object, or charming story, or happy reminiscence. To her, he said, he was largely indebted for the sunshine of a long life. It is a lesson which is easily mastered in childhood, but seldom to be learned in middle life, and never in old age.

“When I was a boy,” says another author, “I was consoled for cutting my finger by having my attention called to the fact that I had not broken my arm; and when I got a cinder in my eye, I was expected to feel more comfortable because my cousin had lost his eye by an accident.”

“I cannot but think,” says John Lubbock, “that the world would be better and brighter if our teachers would dwell on the duty of happiness as well as on the happiness of duty.”

The future child will be taught how to neutralize all his happiness enemies, such as fear, worry, anxiety, jealousy, envy, selfishness. He will be taught that nothing will change a lovely character to one that is hideous, a sweet to a sour one as quickly as the habit of holding hateful, revengeful, envious thoughts; that he cannot develop a lovable disposition while holding uncharitable thoughts.

Future instructors will know how to teach the science of brain-building; how to prevent and remedy weaknesses, one-sidedness, peculiarities, idiosyncrasies; how to neutralize the enemies of success and happiness and how to strengthen the weaknesses and to eliminate the obstacles which now handicap so many lives.

I understand that Dr. Paul Valentine has started a school of happiness in London. There is certainly nothing else in this world that is more needed than the training of people, and especially children, in the art of happiness, the art which every human being is *trying* to practice. But what terrible botches most of us make of this art!

If people were properly trained from infancy, it would be as easy for them to be happy as it is now to be unhappy.

It is just as simple to train the mind of a child towards happiness, to teach a child to look towards the sunny side of life, as it is to train it towards the dark and gloomy side.

The time will come when the child will be trained from the cradle to the grave to the habit of happiness. His mind will be so trained that happiness will be as natural to him as his breath. It will not be regarded as a side issue in life, but as one of the main objects because one's whole welfare is so seriously affected by it. In the future the child will be shown that his efficiency, his success in life, his longevity, his influence, his power in the world, will be very largely dependent upon his happiness, his mental harmony.

The parents of the future will know how to train the brain so symmetrically by strengthening the deficient faculties and developing weak qualities, that the mind will become poised, and a symmetrically trained mind will produce happiness, just as a perfectly adjusted chronometer will produce good time.

The first duty we owe a child is to teach him to fling out his inborn gladness and joy with the same freedom and abandon as the bobolink does when it makes the meadow joyous with its song. Suppression of the fun-loving nature of a child means the suppression of its mental and moral faculties. Joy will go out of the heart of a child after a while if he is continually suppressed. Mothers who are constantly cautioning the little ones not to do this or not to do that, telling them not to laugh or make a noise, until they lose their naturalness and become little old men and women, do not realize the harm they are doing.

The children should be kept strangers to anxious care, reflective thoughts, and subjective moods. Their lives should be kept light, bright, buoyant, cheerful, full of sunshine, joy, and gladness. They should be encouraged to laugh and to play and to romp to their heart's content. The serious side of life will come only too quickly, do what we may to prolong childhood. We see these sad, melancholy faces everywhere, without a trace of joy, without a sign of gladness. A joyless childhood is one of the great causes of early aging. Youth must be carried along with the years, or they will be dry and sear, parched. It is the juices of youth, the joy and gladness carried along through the busy years that make old age tolerable.

An eminent writer says, "Children without hilarity will never amount to much. Trees without blossoms will never bear fruit."

Play is as necessary to the perfect development of a child as sunshine is to the perfect development of a plant. The childhood that has no budding and flowering, or only a partial unfolding of its petals, will have nothing but gnarled and pinched fruitage. The necessity for play in the very beginning of a child's development is shown by the fact that the instinct to play is so strong in all young life, including the entire animal kingdom.

A happy childhood is an imperative preparation for a happy maturity. The disposition, the cast of mind, the whole life tendencies are fixed in childhood. An early habit of cheerfulness—the fun-loving habit—has a powerful influence over the mature man and his career.

The child that has been trained to be happy, that has been allowed free expression to his fun-loving nature, will not have a sad or gloomy disposition. Much of the morbid mentality which we see everywhere is due to stifled childhood.

The very fact that the instinct to play, that the love of fun is so imperious in the child, shows a great necessity in his nature which, if suppressed, will leave a famine in his life.

A sunny, joyous, happy childhood is to the individual what a rich soil and genial sun are to the young plant. If the early conditions are not favorable, the plant starves and becomes stunted, and the results cannot be corrected in the later tree. It is now or never with the plant. This is true with the human plant also. A starved, suppressed, stunted childhood makes a dwarfed man. A joyful, happy, fun-loving environment develops powers, resources, and possibilities which would remain latent in a cold, dull, repressing atmosphere.

Everywhere we see men and women discontented and unhappy, because there was no play in their early lives, and when the young clay had hardened it would not respond to a larger environment.

Can anything be more incongruous on this glorious, glad earth, than the picture of a worrying child, a child with a sad face, a human rosebud blighted before it has a chance to open up its petals, and fling out its beauty and fragrance?

Somebody has sinned and is responsible for this blight, this blasting of promise, this chilling of hope, this strangling of possibility.

Childhood should be sunny. Clouds do not belong to childhood. Joy, beauty, exuberance, enthusiasm, buoyancy, belong to childhood. A sad, worrying child, a child who has no childhood, is a disgrace to civilization.

Let the children give vent to all that is joyous and happy in their natures, and they will blossom out into helpful men and women instead of sedate, suppressed, sad, melancholy natures. Spontaneity, buoyancy, the bubbling over of animal spirits are worth everything in one's education. Children who are encouraged in self-expression of their play instinct will make better business men, better professional men, better men and better women in any walk of life. They will succeed better and have a better influence in the world than those who are repressed.

Many people think it is undignified to give full vent to their fun-loving instincts. They think they must be thoughtful, sober-minded, very dignified, if they would carry any weight in the world, and not be regarded as lightheaded and frivolous. We have all seen people who go about with their finger on their lips, figuratively speaking, as though they feared they might laugh out loud or say something funny.

Oh, the satisfaction of beginning early in life to cultivate the finer qualities of the soul, the heart, the eye and the ear; to develop the finer sentiments and the more delicate power of appreciation!

If you are so trained you will be able to make poetry out of the prosiest life, bring sunshine to the darkest home, and develop beauty and grace amid the ugliest surroundings.

There is almost no limit to the possibilities of enriching life, ennobling, beautifying one's personality, by the proper cultivation of the cheerful faculties in early life.

If all children were taught the philosophy of joy, there would be comparatively little unhappiness, sickness, or crime. We seem to think that it is very necessary to train the mind in business principles, to train certain faculties to do special things, but that it is not necessary to train the cheerful faculties.

Yet not even an education is as necessary to the child as the formation of the cheerful habit. This ought to be regarded as the first essential of the preparation for life—the training of the mind towards sunshine, developing every possibility of the cheerful faculties.

V. Riches And Happiness

Every mind seems capable of entertaining a certain quantity of Happiness, which no institutions can increase, no circumstances alter, and entirely independent of Fortune. Let any man compare his present fortune with the past, and he will probably find himself, upon the whole, neither better nor worse than formerly.—Goldsmith.

The youth should be so trained in the science of happiness as to be able to say to a man who has millions of dollars but very little else — “*I have set my face towards making a success of life, not merely a success of dollars.* If any one can get more out of life than I can he is welcome to it.”

What a misfortune to the world, if wealth could produce the happiness which most people think it can! If wealth were essential, if a man had to be rich to be happy, the wealthy would always be happy and the poor unhappy.

But riches alone do not make men happy or blessed. Money, to make a man happy, must serve his higher nature, the development of the good in him or in others, and not pander to anything which tends to bring out the mere animal in him. Wealth in the hands of ignoramuses, in the hands of people with coarse tastes and low ideals, does not contribute to real happiness. The brute qualities lead away from happiness. No one can be really happy who does not have a high ideal and a grand life purpose.

Most people are deluded with the idea that happiness consists in gratifying desires. They do not realize that “desire is as insatiable as the ocean, and clamors louder and louder as its demands are attended to.” “There is no satiety in riches,” said a Roman philosopher.

Gratification, satisfaction of our selfish cravings, only increases our real soul-hunger. Principle alone can give permanent happiness; material things are ever changing, ever elusive; there is no permanency, no endurance in them.

One of the greatest disappointments of many rich men is that they have not been able to purchase happiness with money. The powerlessness of money to purchase happiness has disappointed more human beings than almost anything else. People who seek happiness in money are in the position of a man seeking safety on a floating piece of ice, which is drifting with certainty toward the open sea. What money can buy only satisfies a small part of an immortal being. He cannot feed upon bread alone.

We all know people who have never amassed riches but who have built up a magnificent bulwark of character, a superb personality; who have never won millions but have become millionaires of character, have accumulated untold riches in priceless friendships, and have been enshrined in a multitude of loving hearts.

They are not rich in money but rich in the things that are worth while, in things which money will not buy. They have enriched hundreds of other lives by their encouragement, inspiration, their uplifting and ennobling influence.

To be rich in money and poverty-stricken in everything else is to be poor indeed.

“Money never yet made a man happy,” said Franklin; “and there is nothing in its nature to produce happiness.”

There are rich men in our large cities who are conspicuously noted for the absence of their names from among those connected with all worthy objects—men who seldom give to the

poor, who never lend a hand to worthy causes. They take no interest in politics, have no public spirit, belong to no organizations whose object is to help humanity.

They are entirely and completely wrapped up in themselves. They do not see why they should spend their money for other than their pleasure or that of their families. The result is that they become so hardened and greedy that they are not missed when they have passed away.

Is it not strange that when we have had so many experiences with the things that make us happy—such as good hard work, a right aim, kindness and helpfulness to others, courtesy, consideration, and appreciation— that we put so much emphasis on mere money wealth, and do not cultivate these things which give us such a feeling of satisfaction?

I know of a wealthy man who, when asked what deed of his life had given him the greatest happiness, replied that it was paying a mortgage off a poor woman's home, which was being sold over her head. The probabilities are that this man had expected to find infinitely greater happiness in money-making, in trying to manufacture and sell more goods than his competitors, but in helping to save the home of a poor woman he had gained greater joy and satisfaction than in any experience of his business career.

Some of the richest minds I have ever met have belonged to people who had very little of this world's goods. But they had wealth which no money can buy, no envy purchase.

After George M. Pullman became a multimillionaire, he testified: "I am not an iota happier now than I was in the days when I had not a dollar in the world I could call my own, save that which I worked for from sunny morn to dewy eve. I believe I was as happy, if not much happier, when poor."

"Riches are all vanity and vexation of spirit," said Russell Sage.

Men of such vast fortunes ought to be authority on this question; and yet the great struggle of the thousands is to acquire riches.

Why should the fact that other people have more than I, take the value out of what I have? Why should I enjoy mine less because somebody else has more? Why should I depreciate myself and bow and scrape to the people who have managed to rake together a huge pile of vulgar dollars. Is the dollar the measure of the things that are worth while? Is the dollar pile greater than the man? There should be something finer and richer and of infinitely greater value inside of a man than any of the material things that he can pile up about himself.

If we concentrate upon greed, if our mental attitude is always fixed upon the money-making game, and our own selfish interests, there is nothing in our thoughts to make happiness ours.

Money-madness first becomes a habit and then a disease, almost as dangerous as the morphine or drug habit. The opium fiend loses his sense of moral obligation, loses his appreciation of truth and of duty, and develops a marvelous cunning for procuring that which will satisfy his drug craving; just so the money-germ disease tends to kill one's sense of obligation to his fellow-men, develops a colossal selfishness and brutal greed, which are abnormal.

Human beings starve and pinch their lives and stunt their growth by their wrong attitudes toward life. They kill every joy and blight their happiness by their own envy, jealousy and false ambition. The sight of other people's prosperity seems to kill their appreciation and the enjoyment of their possessions.

To be happy, we must approve of ourselves; and there is something within us which always condemns the selfish act, as it does the sinful act. I have never known a greedy, grasping, selfish person to be happy. Where these propensities dominate in the nature, it is impossible

for the things which create love to live. These rank, vulgar weeds kill the more tender plants and flowers which radiate sweetness and beauty, contentment and happiness. The two kinds of plants cannot thrive together.

There is only one kind of happiness worth while and that is the happiness which has no reaction, which leaves no sting behind. The gratification of selfish desires gives a fatal reaction. It is easy to destroy one's capacity for the higher sort of happiness.

Most people exaggerate the value of mere money wealth. It does not compare with the value of a contented mind, a refined, cheerful personality. While there are very many desirable things about riches, they are full of temptations, especially for the weak, the superficial, the vain character. Wealth brings a great many enemies with it, enemies which tempt us to do a great many things which are not for our best interest and which deteriorate our health and demoralize our character.

Emerson says, if you own land, the land owns you. Property always means absorption of time and energy. Increased wealth brings many new obligations, furnishes temptations of indulgence in ease, in "good times," in all sorts of pleasures, in the gratification of the senses and desires. Great wealth is an enemy of the simple life, and we are so constituted that a complex life is not conducive to our best well-being or our greatest happiness.

One of the worst doctrines ever set afloat is that real happiness is in material things instead of in a condition of mind. In our ignorance, we ruin our ability for real mental bliss in our pursuit of the material things which we believe are going to solve our problems and make us happy. The more a man has, the more he wants. Instead of filling a vacuum, it makes one. A great bank account can never make a man rich. It is the mind that makes the body rich. No man is rich, however much money or land he may possess, who has a poor heart.

It is as impossible for selfishness to taste the quality of the highest happiness, as it is for a blind man to appreciate the glories of a sunset.

Is it not a strange thing that a man who has been selfish and mean and cowardly and dishonest in getting his money; a man who has taken advantage of those who helped him to make his fortune, who has crushed their opportunities, killed their chance, blighted their prospects; instead of letting them rise to independence, has made them his slaves; is it not strange that a man who has acquired his pile by such despicable methods, should expect to be happy?

The most unhappy people I know build their own purgatory by their false ideas of life, by putting the wrong emphasis on things, by setting the wrong value on things. The most pernicious idea that ever entered a mortal's brain is that the gratification of selfish desires will make a man happy.

If a man could get away from the pattern which was shown him in the mount of his highest moment; if he could tear out of his being the image of his Maker altogether, and eliminate everything in him that aspires, looks up, that reaches up; if he could eliminate everything but the brute part of himself, then he could have the brute's enjoyment, but not the man's. And this is the only happiness possible to many a millionaire,—he can simply have the enjoyment which comes from the indulgence of the animal appetite; he cannot enjoy anything higher until he develops the higher faculties, which can appreciate the higher quality of enjoyment.

A man can never realize complete, abiding happiness until he gets into the current running Heavenward, Godward, because everything on a material plain is transitory and in constant change. There is nothing permanent, nothing abiding, in that which material things can give.

Robert Louis Stevenson appreciated the great impediment of material things to man's soul-flight heavenward. He once telegraphed his congratulations to a friend whose house was burned down, because the wife of his friend had been driven to distraction with an army of servants and with the management of the great establishment.

Money means to many people the unrestrained gratification of their animal desires. They seem to think that if they only get money enough so that they can have perfect freedom to gratify all their desires, they will be perfectly happy. But they find that the money often brings the thorns to torment its possessor.

There are multitudes of rich men to-day who are resorting to all sorts of schemes to drown the rebuking, reproving voice within them which condemns their acts. They are trying to get happiness out of a fortune which they have gotten in questionable ways, and they cannot understand why money and influence will not buy that peace of mind, that comfort and satisfaction, that mental serenity and peaceful existence which they dreamed of obtaining.

The man with the ill-gotten fortune may found colleges, build hospitals, feed and clothe the poor, and yet never find the happiness which has been the quest of his whole career.

Happiness can no more be bought than love or respect can be bought. Some of the most wretchedly unhappy people I know of are spending money on every hand, trying to purchase that ideal happiness which can only come from right living, from a straight, clean life.

A false ambition, an over-vaulting passion to get ahead of others, cannot produce satisfaction. We inwardly despise ourselves for being selfish, trying to snatch things away from others to get a little more for ourselves. We condemn ourselves for trying to keep others back, for taking unfair advantage of them, even if we do get dividends out of their misfortune. We know it is not right and there is something within us which reproaches us for it. No man can be really happy who is not a man, who does not do the things which he would sanction and admire in another. If you do a thing which you would think less of another for doing, you will think less of yourself, and you cannot be happy without your own sanction.

The greatest aim of life should be to absorb into one's being the largest amount of sweetness and beauty it is capable of absorbing. The highest riches are beyond the reach of money, and are independent of fortune. They cannot be burned up, or lost in the ocean, or destroyed in a railroad wreck.

What is more common than to see men and women starve the soul, and paralyze the growth and expansion of the finer sentiments, which alone make life worth living, for the sake of the coarser pleasures of the senses, or in order to pile up material wealth, the effect of which is, as a rule, to draw us farther and farther away from the life of the spirit? A few acres of dirt, a row of buildings, a palace to live in, a few stocks and bonds, a little silver plate and fine furnishings, good clothes, are, after all, pretty poor sort of things to satisfy the longings of an immortal soul.

There are hundreds of wealthy homes in this country in which one will not find a single inspiring book, picture, or statue, or any work of art of spiritual significance,—anything, in short, that elevates the thoughts of its inhabitants or touches their lives to finer issues. There is a great display of vulgar wealth, rich carpets and tapestries, and costly furniture,—a fortune in decorations,—but nothing whatever to appeal to the spiritual qualities.

In many a home of poverty we find more that inspires to noble living, that lifts life above the commonplace and the sordid, and that stirs the soul to higher flights, than in the mansions of some of our millionaires. There are no costly paintings or tapestries, it is true, no priceless bric-a-brac, or crowding of useless ornaments,—perhaps not even carpets on the floors; but

one sees a few well-worn volumes whose character reveals that of the owners, feels a sense of real refinement, and breathes in a spiritual atmosphere and an outflow of love and helpfulness that invest the humble dwelling with a beauty and charm mere money wealth cannot command.

Beauty of soul, goodness of heart, and a cultivated spiritual nature are the furnishings that transform a hovel into a palace, and without which the most luxurious mansion is poor and tawdry and desolate.

Recently an employee said to me: "I am only an ordinary mechanic and my employer talks as though I were a failure in life because I am not in business for myself, and haven't got rich. He tells me that *anybody* with an ounce of brains and pluck ought to be able to make a fortune in this land of opportunity.

"Now he and I have different ways of estimating what stands for success and happiness in life. There is what you may term succeeding in an undertaking; that is, winning out in your own narrow specialty and making money out of it; and there is a success in life which means successful living all along the line,— that one has kept growing while getting ahead in his specialty, that he is a success in his personality.

"My employer looks down upon me, regards me as a nobody, because I cannot live in as fashionable a part of the city as he does, nor afford an automobile. My family do not dress as his family dresses. My children cannot associate with the same people. We do not belong to his social set. I am not invited to go on committees, on boards of directors, as this man is. And yet, when you come right down to brass tacks, I have personally a better standing in the estimation of my neighbors than my employer. He is looked upon as a shrewd, cunning, long-headed schemer. People look up to his money, but not to him; they bow and scrape to his fortune.

"Now, to my mind, there is a great big difference between raking together a lot of money and building up the man in you. I began to work for Mr. B----as a boy on three dollars a week. It wasn't many years before

I worked up to a master mechanic's position. I believe I have a greater respect for my occupation than he has for his. A beautiful piece of work, a well-done job, delights me as a superb painting delights an artist. But my employer seems to look upon his business merely as the most practicable means of piling up money. He is a natural money-grabber; but I think there is something infinitely better in life than money-grabbing."

It is not the possession of money that constitutes wealth, that gives the highest satisfaction, and awakens the consciousness of noble achievement, the assurance that one is fulfilling his mission, and that he is reading aright the sealed message which the Creator placed in his hand at birth.

Only soul wealth, generous disinterestedness, the love that seeks not its own, and hands that help and hearts that sympathize constitute true riches and fill the possessor with the joy of one who knows that he is fulfilling the real purpose of his life.

Time and again, I have traveled a long distance to visit a very humble home in Amesbury, Massachusetts. The whole property is worth but a few hundred dollars, but the fact that John Greenleaf Whittier lived there has given it an absolutely priceless value. Men and women cross continents and oceans to visit it. Enthusiastic admirers of the poet carry away from the spot bits of wood, wild flowers, leaves and all sorts of souvenirs to remind them and those who come after them that a man lived there,—one of nature's noblemen.

Thousands of people in this country look upon Whittier, the simple poet, as one of the richest treasures America has produced, and yet, considered from a commercial standpoint, all he left in the world was worth but a song.

Be careful how you laugh at men and women who think there is something better in the world than making money, and who refuse to worship it. Their monuments in parks and public places may proclaim the story of their heroic lives for centuries, after you with your millions have been forgotten. Selfishness has no immortality in it. Greed has no quality to propagate itself, its children are all short-lived. Who ever saw people making pilgrimages to the homes of millionaires, men who never did anything for the world? Who would insult the memory of Whittier by asking if he were rich? Who would desecrate the name of Lincoln by asking how much money he left, or who would dare say that he was not a success because he was poor? Hundreds of men and women have lived and died in wretched homes, in attics, and even in poorhouses who have enriched the world by their lives, who have given greater uplift to civilization, and brought more happiness into the world, than many a millionaire. Men who never had a thousand dollars have left names which the world will not let die.

Do you regard a man as really poor who may not happen to have money, but whose character is so exuberant and whose career is so succulent with the sweet things of life and experience that he has enriched and made happy a whole community? Do you regard a man as poor whose neighbors feel enriched by his mere presence? Do you regard a man as poor who lives in an attic, but whose very existence enhances the value of every acre of land and every home for miles around him? Do you regard a man as poor when every child in his neighborhood loves him and considers it an honor to be recognized by him on the street or to receive an invitation to visit him? Do you regard a man as poor when his home, no matter how humble, is looked upon as a shrine?

To be engulfed in one's occupation, swallowed up in a complicated life, harassed by the striving and straining, the worry and anxiety which accompany a vast fortune, is not to be rich. It is the consummate selfishness of mankind that places such a tremendous emphasis upon money and what money will do. There should be some higher motive. Time and opportunity and inclination to help others and to bring happiness into their lives, are the most valuable things in the world, and if you cannot seize these, if you cannot utilize them to your own enlargement, your own betterment, you are poor indeed, and can never know the joy and satisfaction of true living although you may have millions of dollars.

VI. Enjoying Without Owning

“What hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?”

A French marquis, with whom Washington Irving has made us acquainted, consoled himself for the loss of his chateau by remarking that he had Versailles and St. Cloud for his country resorts, and the shady alleys of the Tuileries and the Luxembourg for his town recreation.

“When I walk through these fine gardens,” he said, “I have only to fancy myself the owner of them, and they are mine. All these gay crowds are my visitors, and I have not the trouble of entertaining them. My estate is a perfect Sans Souci, where every one does as he pleases, and no one troubles the owner. All Paris is my theater, and presents me with a continual spectacle. I have a table spread for me in every street, and thousands of waiters ready to fly at my bidding. When my servants have waited upon me, I pay them, discharge them, and there’s an end. I have no fears of their wronging or pilfering me when my back is turned. Upon the whole,” said the old gentleman with a smile of infinite good humor, “when I recollect all that I have suffered, and consider all I at present enjoy, I can but look upon myself as a person of singular good fortune.”

The habit of feeling rich because you have developed the faculty of extracting wealth from everything you touch is riches indeed. Why should we not feel rich in all that our eyes can carry away, no matter if others happen to have the title-deed? Why should I not enjoy the beautiful gardens of the wealthy and their grounds, just as if I owned them? As I pass by I can make the wealth of color my own. The beauty of plants, and lawn, and flowers, and trees are all mine. The title-deed of another does not cut off my esthetic ownership. The best part of the farm, the landscape, the beauty of the brook and the meadow, the slope of the valley, the song of the birds, the sunset, cannot be shut up within any title-deed; they belong to the eye that can carry them away, the mind that can appreciate them.

How is it that some rare characters manage to have such precious treasures, to get so much that enriches the life out of a poverty-stricken, forbidding environment, while others get little out of the most luxurious and beautiful conditions that wealth can furnish?

It is wholly a question of the quality of the absorbent material. Some people are blind to beauty. They can travel with the utmost indifference in the midst of the most gorgeous and inspiring scenery. Their souls are not touched. They do not feel the inspiration which puts others into ecstasy.

There is a story told of a touring party in the Alps which included a lady and a phlegmatic German. The guide led the party to a point where a sudden turn revealed a marvelous panorama of beauty. The lady went first and gazing on the prospect said, “How charming!” The German, following, fell on his knees and, baring his head, cried, “Ach, mein Gott! I thank thee that I have lived to see this day!”

“If you are not wealthy yourself, be glad that somebody else is, and you will be astonished at the happiness that will result to yourself,” says the Rev. Dr. Charles F. Aked.

Did you ever realize, my poor complaining friend, how rich you really are? You say you have no land, no home of your own; that you are only living with your family in a few rooms. Of what a lot of pleasure envy robs us! It is a small soul that cannot enjoy what he does not own, that goes through life allowing his envy to rob him. We ought to be able to enjoy everything that is enjoyable, no matter who owns it. How foolish to envy others the things which we do

not happen to have or cannot afford! Always learn to enjoy what you cannot own. Be like the birds, who do not care who holds the title deed to the lands where, in their migrations, they joyously build their little homes.

Did you ever stop to think how small a part of the community really belongs to the individual? The streets, the roads, are free; the parks are yours; the public libraries are as much yours as the rich man's; the schools are yours; the rivers, the brooks, the mountains, the sunsets, the marvelous mysteries and beauties of the heavens are yours. Mr. Rockefeller cannot get more out of the sun than you can, or from the beauty of the moon; the stars are as much yours as his. The charms of nature, the change of seasons, the joys the Creator has reflected everywhere, are yours. The landscape belongs to you just as much as to the man who pays the taxes on the land.

Think of the fortune it costs a great city to keep up the parks! Even the estate of a Carnegie could not afford such grounds, and you are sure of always finding them in the finest condition without a thought of care yourself or a bit of anxiety. The people who care for all these things are public servants, giving their service for you as much as for the richest. You do not have to hire them, watch them, or pay them; no anxiety robs you of your enjoyment. The flowers, the birds, the statuary, all of the beautiful things in our great parks, are as much yours as they are the property of the richest. Why, the poorest people in our cities are landed proprietors; they own thousands of acres of land!

The trouble with us is that we exaggerate the great advantage of having much property. The fact is that the human mind is not constructed for either the appreciation or the enjoyment of a great many things, and a complicated existence defeats its own ends. "I would rather be able to appreciate things I cannot have than to have things I am not able to appreciate," said a writer.

Robert Louis Stevenson once packed up his pictures and his furniture and sent them to an enemy who was about to be married, and he wrote to a friend that he had at last rid himself of the master to whom he had been a bond slave. "Don't," he said, "give hostages to fortune, I implore you. Not once a month will you be in a mood to enjoy a picture. When that mood comes, go to the gallery and see it. Meanwhile let some hired flunkey dust the picture and keep it in good condition for your coming."

Why should I scramble and struggle to get possession of a little portion of this earth?

This is my world now; why should I envy others its mere legal possession? It belongs to him who can see it, enjoy it. I need not envy the so-called owners of estates in Boston and New York. They are merely taking care of my property and keeping it in excellent condition for me. For a few pennies for railroad fare whenever I wish I can see and possess the best of it all. It has cost me no effort, it gives me no care; yet the green grass, the shrubbery, and the statues on the lawns, the finer sculptures and the paintings within, are always ready for me whenever I feel a desire to look upon them. I do not wish to carry them home with me, for I could not give them half the care they now receive; besides, it would take too much of my valuable time, and I should be worrying continually lest they be spoiled or stolen. I have much of the wealth of the world now. It is all prepared for me without any pains on my part. All the people around me are working hard to get things that will please me, and competing to see who can give them the cheapest. The little I pay for the use of libraries, railroads, galleries, parks, is less than it would cost to care for the least of all I use. Life and landscape are mine, the stars and flowers, the sea and air, the birds and trees. What more do I want? All the ages have been working for me; all mankind are my servants. I am only required to feed and clothe myself, an easy task in this land of opportunity.

Some people are so constituted that they do not need to own things to enjoy them. There is no envy in their nature. They feel glad that others have money and a splendid home, even if they themselves live in poverty. Henry Ward Beecher had this broad, liberal, magnanimous, whole-hearted nature, which could enjoy without owning. He used to say that it was a great treat to him to go out and enjoy the good things in the shop windows, especially during the Christmas holidays, and he could make the architecture and sculpture of palatial homes his own and enjoy the grounds, no matter who had the title-deed to them.

Phillips Brooks, Thoreau, Garrison, Emerson, Beecher, Agassiz, were rich without money. They saw the splendor in the flower, the glory in the grass, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything. They knew that the man who owns the landscape is seldom the one who pays the taxes on it. They sucked in power and wealth at first hand from the meadows, fields, and flowers, birds, brooks, mountains, and forest, as the bee sucks honey from the flowers. Every natural object seemed to bring them a special message from the great Author of the beautiful. To these rare souls every natural object was touched with power and beauty; and their thirsty souls drank it in as a traveler on a desert drinks in the god-sent water of the oasis. To extract power and real wealth from men and things seemed to be their mission, and to pour it out again in refreshing showers upon a thirsty humanity.

Did you ever watch a bee flitting about gathering delicious honey from the most forbidding and unattractive sources? I know men and women who have, superbly developed, this marvelous instinct for gathering honey from all sorts of sources. They extract it from the most repellent surroundings. They cannot talk with the poorest, meanest, most unfortunate specimen of humanity without getting that which will sweeten the life and enrich the experience.

This ability to extract enjoyment from all sorts of sources is a divine gift. It broadens the life, deepens the experience, and enriches the whole nature. It is a great force in self-culture.

The secret of happiness is in a cheerful, contented mind. "He is poor who is dissatisfied; he is rich who is contented with what he has," and can enjoy what others own.

"Our eyes oft look above to find life's prize,

Whereas, when wisdom's years have made us wise,

We see it at our feet in that same way

We careless passed along but yesterday."

"There are joys which long to be ours. God sends ten thousand truths, which come about us like birds seeking inlet; but we are shut up to them, and so they bring us nothing, but sit and sing a while upon the roof and then fly away."

VII. The Sin Of Tired Nerves

The kindest and the happiest pair

Will find occasion to forbear;

And something every day they live

To pity and perhaps forgive.

—Cowper.

A great many well-meaning people, both men and women, are great “nerve sinners.” They allow themselves to become exhausted and so depleted physically that they lose the power of resistance. They cannot control themselves and are the victims of their nerves.

There are tens of thousands of women in this country who, much of the time, are in a chronic state of fatigue, and who seldom ever get rested. Many of them do not get sleep enough, are constantly interrupted by the children, and their great load of mental care, together with their hard work and monotonous lives, are enough to wreck the health and ruin the disposition of all but women of extraordinary poise and strength of mind and body.

Men who have their regular hours of work and are then free, little realize what it means for their wives to work nearly twice as long as they do, and often with a great many more things to irritate them. Most women would be cheerful and kind if they lived perfectly sane lives. Most men would be nervous wrecks in three months if they were to exchange places with their wives.

Women often get extremely nervous, and their husbands blame them for their irritability, when the whole trouble is the result of mental and muscular fatigue, which may be caused by long hours of work, the monotony of their lives, and the presence of all sorts of vexations which tend to keep them in a constant state of semi-exhaustion.

The friction in many unhappy homes is largely caused by overwrought, tired nerves. A large part of the mental suffering which many of us cause is wholly without intention. The cutting things we say, our criticism, our unkindness often come from kindly hearts but irritated nerves. We say cruel things even to our best friends and those we love best when our nerves are on edge from fret and worry; things we would not have said for the world but for the irritation, the sheer exhaustion, that robbed us of self-control.

How many people carry cruel wounds for years, perhaps for a lifetime, which were thoughtlessly inflicted by a dear friend in a moment of anger when their physical standards were down! How often we hurt those whom we love dearly and whom we would help, when we are tired and jaded and things fret us!

The sins of exhausted nerves, caused by vitiated blood or cell poisoning through lack of proper exercise or recreation, loss of sleep, or vicious thinking, are responsible for much of the world’s misery and failure.

Take for example a man who is suffering from insomnia. Hard times and financial panics may have completely demoralized his business; and being of a highly organized, nervous, sensitive temperament, accustomed to worry even when comparatively well, he is completely upset when his physical vitality is at a low ebb. His powers of resistance have become so reduced that his will power is perfectly helpless to master the situation, and he then becomes the victim of all sorts of trifling annoyances which when normal he would not have noticed.

He is unreasonable with his employees, cruel to those dependent upon him, and he says things for which he afterwards despises himself. In other words, the brute in him has usurped the throne and rules, while he finds himself the slave to passions which he has been trying all his life to conquer.

There is only one thing to do when you are not sure you can control your acts; that is, to stop whatever you are doing, retire to some quiet place, get out of doors, if possible, or get by yourself for a few minutes—long enough to restore your balance, get your bearings, assert your manhood.

The sunlight is as necessary for happiness as it is for peaches. Many a worried, discouraged, melancholy, despondent person would become vigorous and happy by merely getting out into the sunshine.

The victims of tired nerves should be very regular in their habits and take special care of their health. They should eat foods which will nourish the nerves.

There is nothing which will take the place of a great deal of outdoor exercise and a cheerful, harmonious environment. Worry, anxiety, and fear in all its phases are deadly enemies of the nerves. So is overwork.

Not long ago I had a letter from a rising young lawyer who is suffering from a complete nervous breakdown. He had, at the start, a strong constitution, but was so ambitious to make a name for himself that he had undermined it by working much of the time more than fifteen hours a day. He had the insane idea, which so many have, that the man who keeps everlastingly at it, sticks to his task year in and year out, has a great advantage over the one who works fewer hours and takes frequent vacations. He thought he could not afford to take frequent trips to the country, or even an occasional day off to play golf, as other young lawyers did; that he must make a name for himself while others were playing. So he kept on overdrawing his account at Nature's bank, and now he is going through physical bankruptcy.

Just when he should be in a position to do the greatest thing possible to him, when he should be most productive and vigorous, when his creative ability should be at its maximum, he is compelled, because of his mental breakdown, to relinquish his profession, perhaps forever.

It was never intended that man should be a slave to his work, that he should exhaust all his energy in getting a living, and have practically none left for making a life. The time will come when it will be generally acknowledged that it is possible to do more work, and of a better quality, in a much shorter day than our present average working day. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." The fact that we have such a strong instinct for fun indicates that it was intended we should have a good deal of it in our lives. But a great number of employees are obliged to work too many hours a day, simply because their employers have not yet learned the magic of a fresh brain and vigorous physique.

No matter how healthy or capable a person may be, the brain cells and faculties which are constantly used, like the bow which is always tightly strung, lose their elasticity, their grip and firmness, and become jaded, dull, and flabby.

The brain that is continually exercised in one's occupation or profession, with little or no change, is not capable of the vigorous, spontaneous action of the brain that gets frequent recreation and change. The man who keeps everlastingly at it, who has little fun or play in his life, usually gets into a rut early in his career, and shrivels and dries up for lack of variety, of mental food and stimulus. He destroys his capacity for happiness. Nothing is more beneficial to the mental or physical worker than frequent change—a fresh viewpoint. Everywhere we see men who have gone to seed early, become rutty and uninteresting, because they worked

too much and played too little. Monotony is a great shriveler of ability, and a blighter of happiness.

The great majority of people do their work mechanically, and regard it as unavoidable drudgery, whereas all work should be a delight, as it would be if all workers were in the right place and worked only when they were fresh and vigorous. Then the exercise of brain and muscle would give a sense of wellbeing, and work would be a tonic, not a grind; life a delight, not a struggle. Work, like religion, "never was designed to make our pleasures less." Work is essential to health, every faculty, contributes to one's efficiency, gives a keener edge to all of one's sensibilities, and health is the foundation of happiness.

It is a strange fact that many people cannot appreciate the infinite difference between working when the brain and muscles are up to the highest standard of efficiency and forcing them to work when they are fatigued. No one is himself when his nerve centers are exhausted, whether from excessive use or from lack of proper food. The quality of one's thought, ambition, energy, aims, and ideals, is largely a matter of health.

Who can estimate the tragedies which have resulted from exhausted nerve cells? Many crimes are the result of abnormal physical conditions consequent upon exhaustion. Men do all sorts of strange, abnormal things to satisfy the call of these exhausted tissue cells for nourishment. They try to restore them by drink and other kinds of dissipation.

If it were possible for the people of this country to follow the laws of health for six months, it would change the entire condition of our civilization. The unhappiness, misery, and crime would be reduced immeasurably, and the general efficiency would increase marvelously. Ignorance of the laws of health is responsible for a large part of the ills we suffer, and for discouragement and unhappiness.

It seems strange that we should spend so much time and money learning about a hundred things which we shall never use practically, but which are, of course, of great value as discipline, and almost wholly neglect to find out what we are ourselves. It is really an insult to the Creator, who has fashioned us so marvelously, that we should not spend as much time studying the physique which it has taken Him a quarter of a century or more to bring to maturity as we would spend upon a single dead language which we know we shall never use except indirectly.

I know a young lady who has very marked ability, and when she is in good health, and her spirits are up, she accomplishes wonders; but much of the time she is in poor health, and then her ambition is down, she is discouraged. The result is that she will probably never be able to bring out ten per cent, of her real ability, or to find the satisfaction her talents should warrant.

Everywhere we see people doing little things, living mediocre lives, when they have the ability to do great things, to live grand lives, if they only could keep their health up to standard.

The first requisite to success and happiness is good robust health. The brain gets a great deal of credit which belongs to the stomach and the muscles. Health is the fire of life which spurs us on to efforts which lead beyond mediocrity. Physical weaknesses of all kinds minimize our effort, belittle us, cripple us; no industry or will power can compensate for their evil effect.

Vigorous, robust health doubles and quadruples the efficiency and power of every faculty and function. It tones up the human economy; it clears the cobwebs from the brain, brushes off the brain-ash, improves the judgment, sharpens every faculty, increases the energy, freshens the cells in every tissue of the body.

A person with a weak, half-developed physique, puny muscles, a low state of vitality, fractious nerves, cannot have that buoyancy of spirits which are the offspring of robust health.

The ambition partakes of the quality and the vigor of the mental faculties; and a brain that is fed by poisoned blood due to vitiated air, to overeating or bad eating, or to dissipation, or a lack of vigorous outdoor exercise, can never do great things. It is pure blood that makes pure thought and wholesome enjoyment of life, and pure blood can only come from a clean life, strong, vigorous outdoor exercise, a great variety of mental food, and an abundance of sound sleep.

We all know the advantage the man has who can radiate vigor, who has a robust physique. Great achievement is the child of a strong vitality. It can never come from a weak constitution or vitiated blood.

What a sorry picture is a weak, puny, half-developed youth, starting out in the race for success, with an ambition to keep pace with his robust companions! What are his chances compared with those of the youth whose vitality and power emanate from every pore? How unfortunate to be thus handicapped on the very threshold of an active life! But oh, what a satisfaction to stand upon life's threshold, vigorous, fresh, hopeful, with the consciousness of physical energy and power, equal to any emergency—master of any situation!

Abounding health not only increases self-confidence, but the confidence of others; and this confidence is credit, is power. With rare exceptions the great prizes of life fall to those who have stalwart, robust physiques. One who has health possesses the greatest magnet-making force and can compel success to come to his call.

Robust health not only raises the power of and multiplies the entire brain power many times, but it also increases tremendously the power to enjoy life.

In the last analysis happiness is located in the microscopic cells of the body and the integrity of every one of these billions of tiny cells is essential for perfect happiness. Anything which interferes with this integrity, which causes discord, deterioration, poison, or pain, affects the well-being, the happiness, by just so much.

The problem of happiness can scarcely be solved without a proper understanding of what it consists physiologically. What are the discordant notes which have spoiled man's song of life? What is the new philosophy of happiness?

The student of happiness must learn how much our happiness as well as our character depends upon sound health. He will find that there is no lasting unhappiness with sound health, and no real happiness without it. He will find that upon the integrity, not only of cerebral cells but of every cell in the human system, happiness depends. He will find that every feeling of comfort or discomfort, high spirits or low spirits, hope or despair, cowardice or bravery, depends chiefly upon active nutrition of the tissues, strength of heart-beats, vigor of nerves, in fact, upon the harmonious working of the entire physical organism.

Few people realize that the cultivation and improvement of health is really the cultivation and improvement of the entire individual, for every degree of improvement in the health means the raising another degree of every mental faculty. Improving the health increases the courage, lifts hope, raises self-confidence, initiative, indeed lifts every quality in one's nature—every mental faculty and every heart quality. Physical deterioration means a corresponding deterioration in every mental faculty and a corresponding depression in all the emotions. It means a little less courage, a little less heart for our work; it means a little less

endurance, less powers of resistance to ward off the disease enemies, the enemies of our efficiency and happiness.

Robust health and optimism produce happiness. The power of a sunny soul to transform the most trying situations in life is beyond all power to compute. The world loves the sunny soul, the man who carries his holidays in his eye and his sunshine with him. The determination to be kind and helpful to every one, to be cheerful, no matter what comes to us, is a great happiness producer. "When a man does not find repose in himself it is vain for him to seek it elsewhere."

VIII. Think Health And Joy

It is the mind that makes the man

And our vigor is in our immortal soul.—Ovid.

There is nothing that will cripple one's creative power quicker than the self-pity habit, the habit of coddling oneself. It paralyzes the faculties because it destroys self-confidence, shuts off power, courage. If you desire to get force and vigor into your efforts you must have a free avenue of self-expression. There must be no restriction anywhere.

The moment you begin to coddle and pity yourself and to think that you cannot do this or that, your faculties will quickly sympathize with the condition of your mind, and your producing power will be weakened and cut down.

I know a naturally able man who, by constant self-analysis and dire conviction about his physical and mental condition, has become quite morbid and has so cut off his confidence in his ability to do things that he is rapidly reducing himself to a state of helplessness and uselessness.

He has ruined his digestion by constantly thinking about his food, what he can or cannot eat, and what will or will not agree with him. He swallows a mouthful of dyspepsia with every mouthful of food he eats.

He must have certain brands of this or that. Whenever he goes away from home he takes his own tea and coffee and a certain kind of breakfast food with him, and must have special dishes cooked for him at hotels, or wherever he happens to be. When others are uncomfortably warm, he wants to have the windows closed in order to keep out draughts.

He is constantly studying patent medicine advertisements and medical books, trying to find descriptions of his fancied ailments, and every time you meet him he is sure he has symptoms of some new physical trouble.

He is forever thinking about his ailments, pitying himself and imagining all kinds of dire things are going to happen to him. He is convinced that he cannot undertake anything without bad results following.

The consequence of all this is that he has become a pygmy instead of the giant he might be. If he would only burst his self-imposed shackles, get out of himself, break away from the narrow bounds of his sickly, limited thought, he could be a power in the world.

Physicians say that there is really nothing the matter with him physically; that the trouble is all in his mind; that he has thought of himself, coddled himself, imagined all sorts of physical limitations and studied disease symptoms so long that he has shorn himself of power and become a hopeless hypochondriac. It is his convictions that cripple him, and not his actual weakness or physical troubles. He is a victim of his imagination.

Here is man superbly endowed by nature, creeping along in his career when he should be going by leaps and bounds, doing little things when he is capable of doing great things, just because he has analyzed himself so much and has centered his thought upon himself so long that he has become a slave to self-pity.

No man can do anything great while he is constantly tying up his faculties by self-limitations, self-made handicaps. No man can get beyond his convictions. As long as he is convinced that he is physically weak and cannot do a thing he cannot do it.

Everything which will tend to make one strong and robust physically will be a great help to nervous and imaginary troubles, but the greatest healing balm for them is mental self-treatment.

A well-known physician who has made a specialty of nerve diseases, not getting satisfactory results from the prescription of drugs, tried the experiment of inducing his patients to smile under all circumstances,—to compel themselves to laugh whether they felt like it or not. “Keep the corners of your mouth turned up,” is his prescription for those suffering from melancholia. It works like a charm. With the corners of their mouths turned up the patients are obliged to smile no matter how melancholy or depressed they may feel. “Smile; keep on smiling; do not stop smiling,” the doctor will say. “Just try turning up the corners of your mouth, regardless of your mood, and see how it makes you feel; then draw them down, and note the effect, and you will be willing to declare, ‘There is something in it.’ ” He has his patients remain in his office and smile. If it is not the genuine article, it must at least be an upward curvature of the corners of the mouth, and the better feelings invariably follow.

This physician declares that if people will turn down the corners of their mouths and use sufficient will power they can actually shed tears. On the other hand, if they will keep the corners of their mouths turned up, pleasant thoughts will take the place of stormy forebodings.

One reason why we have such poor health is because we cany such a low health ideal. We have been steeped in poor health thought from infancy. We have been saturated with the idea that pain, physical suffering, and disease, are a part of life; necessary evils which cannot be avoided. We have had it so instilled into us from infancy that robust health is the exception and could not be expected to be the rule, that we have come to accept this unfortunate condition of things as a sort of fate from which we cannot hope to get away.

The child hears so much sick talk, is cautioned so much as to the dangers of catching all sorts of diseases, that he grows up with the conviction that physical discords of all kinds are a law of his being. He grows up in the belief that at any time disease is liable to overtake him and ruin his happiness and his career.

Think what the opposite training would do for the child; if he were taught that health is the everlasting fact and that disease is the manifestation of the absence of harmony! Think what it would mean to him if he were trained to believe that abounding health, rich, full, complete, was his birthright! Think what it would mean for him to expect this during all his growing years, instead of building into his consciousness the opposite, instead of constantly hearing about sickness and being cautioned against disease and the danger of contracting it!

A child should be taught that God never created disease, suffering, never intended that we should suffer; that we were made for health, abounding health and happiness, made to enjoy, not to suffer—made to be happy, not miserable, made to express harmony, not discord.

Mental activity and a healthy mental attitude have the most of all to do with happiness. The quality of the thought determines the quality of the life. We cannot get healthy thinking from a diseased brain or nerve cells. If the vitality is below par, the life will drop to its level, and the power to enjoy will correspond.

The happier you are the less energy you waste, because added happiness means added harmony, and the system wastes no energy while it continues in perfect harmony. The less energy you waste, the more vitality you will possess, and the greater your supply of vital energy, the less liable you are to sickness. When your system is absolutely full of vital energy, you will contract no disease.

We should early form the habit of erasing from the mind all disagreeable, unhealthy, death-dealing thoughts. We should start out every morning with a clean slate. We should blot out from our mental gallery all discordant pictures, and replace them with the harmonious, uplifting, life-giving ones.

A celebrated German physician says that there is something in man that is never sick, that never dies.

This something is *the man God made, the God image*. This can never be discordant. It is independent of circumstances. This is the seat of health that is an everlasting fact. This is not the distorted image which wrong thinking, vicious living, have made, but the man God made.

And, if we appeal to this wholeness, this completeness, this perfection (this something in us which can never be sick, never die), and know that it is one with the immortal creative principles, all our discords will disappear, and we shall be at one with Principle, at one with Truth. This is life, and the life that is truth. Then we shall touch power. Then we shall come into our birthright, into perpetual harmony.

People suffering from nervous or mental disorders are usually filled with fear, and fear comes from a sense of helplessness due to a feeling of separateness from the great Divine energy which creates, heals, and sustains us. When we regain the consciousness of our oneness, our at-one-ment with the Divine, with Infinite Life, when we get in tune with the Infinite, we feel a sense of wholeness, and assurance which drives away all fear.

IX. The Joys Of Imagination

*“O blest of heaven, whom not the languid songs
Of luxury, the siren! not the tribes
Of sordid wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils
Of pageant honor, can seduce to leave
Those ever-blooming sweets, which from the store
Of Nature fair Imagination culls
To charm the enlivened soul!”*

An old lady who has been an invalid for many years has rarely been out of the house, and yet she says she has the most delightful times imaginable on her mental vacations. She travels abroad every day, revisits the scenes familiar in her childhood; climbs the Alps, walks through the streets of the cities of Italy, once so dear to her. She takes frequent sails on the loved Mediterranean. For hours she sits on the veranda of her old Sorrento home and watches the numberless sails in the marvelous bay of Naples; and beyond she sees the smoke of Mt. Vesuvius trailing through the sky like the smoke of a great train of cars. She watches the oranges and lemons ripening on the trees. For hours this sweet old lady not only forgets all aches and pains which make her an invalid, but forgets the physical chains which enslave her in doors; and she wanders over the earth at will. She says that these mental trips are often more enjoyable than the physical ones, because she has none of the annoyances and discomforts of travel and none of the expense.

She attends the great theatrical performances frequently—takes mental trips to the leading theaters and reviews again the plays which she saw in her younger days. She reads Shakespeare, and sees Booth, Salvini, Bernhardt, and all the great actors and actresses, who never tire repeating their plays for her. During the opera season this lady says she regularly attends the great performances. Oftentimes when in pain she starts off on her mental trips and for many hours scarcely returns to think of herself; and when she comes back she is refreshed with new hope and new courage for fighting her physical battles. She says that if people only knew the possibilities of enjoyment through the picturing power of the imagination, the whole human race would be happy.

The training and education of the majority of people do not half emphasize the possibilities of enjoyment through the imagination. The trouble is that most of us put too much emphasis upon the limitations of the senses. The imagination was given us to lift us out of all surrounding things and to make us practically omnipresent. In the twinkling of an eye we can follow Arcturus flying through space at the rate of twenty thousand miles a minute; although we may be amid the snows of the North, in an instant we can be among the palms and orange groves of the tropics.

The trouble with many people who lack imagination is that they have no Utopia, no vision, and life is a hard, monotonous grind. Every one should have a Utopia and should live in it much of the time; a place where everything is ideal, and where everybody and everything is what they ought to be. It is a great relief and refreshes one wonderfully to retire into his Utopia at will, where everything is ideal and where there is no discord, no friction, nothing to worry or make one anxious, and where the mind can rest.

I know several people so hemmed in by an iron environment, and so confined to perpetual hard work, that it is almost impossible for them to be long away from their places of business or their professions, and yet, although they are subject to rasping vexations and annoying conditions such as would worry some people to shadows, they always seem to be serene, fresh, and buoyant, because they have acquired the happy art of mental refreshment and change by taking mental vacations. I have interviewed some of these people, and they tell me that, no matter how trying, or how exasperating their work, or how vexatious or annoying the conditions may be about them, when they get a bit of leisure they can instantly lift themselves out of their troubles into a harmonious and blissful mental condition which nothing material can touch or mar.

They cross oceans and take mental trips into foreign lands which they have once visited. They have so educated their imaginations that they can create new places, new worlds, people them, and live in them. They can see beauty that was never on sea or land, and hear melodies and harmonies that have never touched human ears. Many invalids have acquired this art of refreshment through mental tours, taking trips to beautiful lands that have never been seen by material eyes. They may not be able to go on long vacations into the country, but they are able to take many mental excursions there, and to go back to the old home or farm, and relive their childhood days. Mentally they wade and fish in the brooks, climb the mountains, tramp in the forest, and meander through the meadows.

What a wonderful compensation nature has provided to balance the hard, dry, dreary drudgery of life! The imaginative faculties are wings which enable us to soar away quickly into joys ineffable.

How little many of us realize what a great gift we have in the imagination—that ability to fly away at will from our harassing, embarrassing, poverty-stricken surroundings; from things which discourage, disgust, and annoy; away from grasping, grinding, sickening drudgery; away from our worries and anxieties, the things that vex us—away from the “blues,” into a paradise of joy, into an ideal world, where harmony, and beauty, and truth reign!

What luxuries this power enables the poor to enjoy! It helps the prisoner to fly out of his cell, revisit his home and friends, and go where he will unmolested. It is said that many prisoners become almost totally unconscious of their confinement for many hours at a time. People who have written a great deal in prison, such as histories and stories, for months at a time have not found their confinement very irksome. Iron bars and a cell are powerless to imprison the mind. What a wonderful world Bunyan really lived in while he was in jail! Few people who have had their liberty have had such wonderful experiences.

Nature has provided through the imagination a wonderful means of escape for the invalids and the shut-ins. Think what books mean to “shut-ins”! How they lift them out of their narrow walls and take them on tours all over the world!

Some people never seem to tire. Their minds are always fresh, responsive, resourceful, creative, because they have this faculty of orienting the mind, freshening it by beautiful mental pictures.

One of the great secrets of those who surprise everybody by the enormous amount of work they accomplish is their ability to take frequent mental recesses, or little vacations, their ability to shut all the doors through which little vexations and worries enter the mind, and waft themselves off on little excursions in the imagination, recalling the pleasant memories and reliving the scenes which have once made them happy.

It does not take long to freshen a jaded mind if one knows the secret art.

A child should be taught that the sources of his enjoyment are infinite, because the mere enjoyment of the physical senses, the pleasures from eating and drinking, the indulgence of passion, are as nothing compared to the larger, grander, sublimer pleasures which come from the intellect. There is as much difference between the pleasure of the senses and the joys of the intellect as there is between the gratifications of the lowest brute and the highest man. There are numerous instances in history where prisoners have been infinitely happier than some kings because their minds were unfettered.

No matter how badly things may go about us, what blunders or mistakes harass us, no matter what misfortunes overtake us, we have wings in our imagination and can fly away from it all, and be at peace and at rest. We are like the captured eagle which the boys harass, tease, and torment, but which wrenches away from them and in an instant soars into the ether and is free again.

The Creator gave us this power to make it possible for us to fly away at will from everything which embarrasses, humiliates, everything which annoys us, and in an instant to dwell in ideal conditions, in the sort of peace and joy never found in any earthly kingdom, or enjoyed by any earthly monarch.

Ruskin said he was not so much surprised at what we suffer as at what we lose, which might furnish infinite pleasure and satisfaction. We hear a great deal about the great loss of our natural resources, the coal, the waterpower, and the forests—but they are nothing compared to the tremendous loss in the possible resources of happiness.

The great mass of people do not extract ten per cent, of the happiness possible in their everyday life, largely because they were never trained to think of the normal sources of enjoyment. Their minds are blank, except for the little grooves which their daily routine has stamped in their brain tissue. They are as ignorant of their possible mental resources as the early Indians were of the natural resources of this continent, when the Puritans landed at Plymouth Rock. They raised just enough barely to exist upon. They did not know how to feed, to clothe, or to enjoy themselves. Their minds were blank, and they lived in wretchedness, while the vast resources of the richest continent in the world were all unknown to them.

X. Taking Life Too Seriously

*Talk happiness. The world is sad enough
Without your woe. No path is wholly rough.
Look for the places that are smooth and clear,
And speak of them to rest the weary ear
Of earth, so hurt by one continuous strain
Of mortal discontent and grief and pain.*

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

“Every man we meet looks as if he’d gone out to borrow trouble, with plenty of it on hand,” said a French lady, upon arriving in ’ New York.

“The Americans are the best fed, the best clad, and the best housed people in the world,” says another witness, “but they are the most anxious; they hug possible calamity to their breasts.”

“I question if care and doubt ever wrote their names so legibly on the faces of any other population,” says Emerson. “Old age begins in the nursery.”

How quickly we Americans exhaust life! With what panting haste we pursue everything! Every man you meet seems to be late for an appointment. Hurry and anxiety are stamped in the wrinkles of the national face.

The American people as a rule take life much too seriously. They do not have half enough fun. Europeans look on our careworn, solemn-faced people as on pieces of machinery run at forced speed and which squeak for lack of oil.

If a man is living in a perfectly normal way, he ought not to have, as so many have, a haunted, hounded look, as though he suspected either a policeman or a detective were on his track. He ought not to be worried and anxious every minute. He ought not to take his vocation so very seriously, and should not give the impression that the whole universe is hanging upon the result of his task.

One day in a week devout people meet to praise the God who made the beautiful flowers, painted the butterflies, made all things beautiful in their time. The keynote of worship should be *sursum corda*—lift up your hearts. But how often the sermon is pitched in a minor key—discouraging and depressing.

Not long ago, I heard a young clergyman preach a sermon which was so very serious, and so very gloomy, that it made everybody in the congregation feel melancholy and depressed. There was no uplift, no encouragement, nothing to stimulate one to greater endeavor. People did not go out of the church, as they should have gone, resolved to try a little harder than ever before, to do something worth while; but the whole congregation went away with a gloomy look on their faces. There had been nothing inspiring in the clergyman’s appearance. His face was so serious, and his whole manner so depressing, that it was really painful to listen to him. This young man was a substitute for the regular pastor. He said that he had not had a pastorate himself for a long time, and I did not wonder.

He evidently lives such a solemn, serious life, that he is not normal. He is perfectly honest, and is doubtless making a great effort to kill the animal in him and to develop his spiritual

side; but he is not doing it in a normal way. There is nothing in true religion that is pessimistic, doleful, or gloomy. Its very essence is cheerfulness, hopefulness. Its mission is to uplift, encourage, and exalt, never to depress.

What a blessing if all that is dejecting and disappointing, all that is sad, threatening, doleful, and gloomy, every particle of pessimism could be excluded from all the churches of the world! It is a positive sin for a man to enter the ministry with a naturally gloomy, despondent disposition, inclined to look on the dark side of things. People have burdens enough of their own to bear, and do not want anybody to inject dark, doleful pictures in their minds. They go to church for uplift, for encouragement. They want to rid themselves of the enemies of their happiness and prosperity. Thousands of people who now remain away from church would gladly go if they could come away feeling uplifted, encouraged, and with increased hopefulness.

Man wants his faith in himself, in human nature, in his God, enlarged. When people go to church, they want to look at a hopeful, inspiring face. Otherwise they will say to themselves, "If this man is an example of the religion he advocates, if he spends all of his time discharging such a glorious mission, it certainly ought to have produced a more inspiring, helpful product." We instinctively feel that the clergyman who does not make us more hopeful, who does not enlarge our faith and inspire us to greater endeavor for the right, has mistaken his calling.

"Away with these fellows who go howling through life," wrote Beecher, "and all the while passing for birds of paradise. He that cannot laugh and be gay should look to himself. He should fast and pray until his face breaks forth into light." "Some people have an idea that they comfort the afflicted when they groan over them," says Talmage. "Don't drive a hears through a man's soul. When you bind up a broken bone of the soul, and want splints, do not make them of cast iron."

Why take life so seriously, anyway? A lot of play will not only improve your health, but increase your efficiency wonderfully.

Happy recreation has a very subtle influence upon one's ability, which is emphasized and heightened and multiplied by it. How our courage is braced up, our determination, our ambition, our whole outlook on life changed by it! There seems to be a subtle fluid from humor and fun which penetrates the entire being, bathes all the mental faculties, and washes out the brain-ash and debris from exhausted cerebrum and muscles. We have all experienced the transforming, refreshing, renewing, rejuvenating power of good, wholesome fun.

From business and economical standpoints alone, to say nothing of increased health and happiness, even a good deal of time spent in play is time well spent, and is an essential part of the shrewdest, most profitable business policy you can adopt.

The man too absorbed in his business or vocation, too busy to take care of his health, to preserve it by wholesome recreation, is like a workman who is too busy to sharpen his tools.

You may never be able to accumulate a large fortune, but whether you are a big lawyer or a small one, a large merchant or a little one, you can cultivate the capacity for enjoyment and fun, and can get a great deal more out of life than many who are perhaps far above you in wealth and position.

Take your fun every day as you go along. That is the only way to be sure of it. Do not postpone your happiness.

Some of us are beginning to realize that we have taken life too seriously; that we have not had enough play in our lives: that we have not had half enough fun. Many business men see

the fallacy of working too many hours a day. Formerly they thought they must spend most or all of the daylight hours in working. Intense application to business had become almost a religion. But now they are beginning to learn that it is efficiency, mental vigor, freshness of mind and body, and not necessarily long hours, that do things; and that the mental vigor, freshness, and energy which produce efficient work are impossible when the body is weary and the brain is fagged; that mental robustness means physical robustness. So there has been a steady shortening of the working hours of men of affairs, and an increasing of the play hours, just in proportion to the importance and efficiency of their work and responsibility.

There are plenty of business men in this country at the head of great establishments who get through an enormous amount of work, who do not spend more than three or four hours a day in their offices, and who frequently take long vacations. They find that a good deal of play and mixing much with the world not only improves their health and multiplies their efficiency, but also gives them a broader, saner outlook.

There is no greater delusion than that we can accomplish more by working a great many hours, straining mind and body to the limit of endurance, than by working fewer hours with less strain, less fatigue, but with greater vigor, greater intensity.

Great efficiency, vigorous mental concentration, are impossible when the mind is overstrained, fatigued, or when we do not have sufficient recreation to restore its elasticity, its rebound. Many Americans have the idea that great achievement depends upon unceasing, strenuous industry, the everlasting grind. They think that the more they work the more they will accomplish. The fact is that what we achieve in life depends upon the effectiveness of our work, upon our efficiency, rather than upon the length of time we work.

Many people who are capable of doing good work, do very inferior work, simply because they are in a run-down, jaded condition much of the time. Everywhere we see ineffective, botched work, because men do not keep themselves in a vigorous, healthy condition. They do not play enough, do not have sufficient exercise in the open air, recreation that refreshes and strengthens both mind and muscle. They take life too seriously.

When you have plenty of fun you work with more vigor, and with greater enthusiasm; you begin your day in better spirits, are more hopeful, and you leave your work at night happy, and in a more contented frame of mind. Many men work their employees so many hours, and so hard, that they do not keep fresh, buoyant, and enthusiastic.

Where did the idea come from that we should take life so seriously, anyway? Why should a man be such a slave to his breadwinning? We ought to be able to get a good living, even to make fortunes, and yet have a good time every day of our lives. This idea of being a slave most of the time, and of only occasionally enjoying a holiday, is all wrong. Every day should be a holiday, a day of joy and gladness, a day of supreme happiness; and it would be, if we lived sanely, if we knew the secret of right thinking and normal living. There is certainly something wrong in the very idea of sacrificing the juices of our lives for the husks which we get. Remember that there is something else in the world even more important than making money. Your health, your family, your friendships should mean a thousand times more to you than dollar-chasing.

Life was given us for enjoyment, not for one long, strenuous, straining struggle in the dreary drudgery of scraping dollars together. Living-getting was intended to be only a mere incidental in the larger life of growth, of freedom of soul expansion, mind-enlargement.

Men could get joy out of their business if they only knew how, and by taking the drudgery out of it they would not only be happier, but they would also be more prosperous.

A great many men fail because they are too serious; because they develop unsocial, morose, cold qualities which repel, and which make them poor mixers. It is the sunshiny, happy nature which attracts friends and trade. The too serious people seem to say, "Keep away from me, life is too serious a matter to be spent on trivial things." They are dry, and ratty, because there is not enough play in their lives to furnish the necessary lubrication, variety, or change.

Some one said to me once: "The New Englander is actually afraid of enjoying himself. He does not feel just right when he is spending money trying to have a good time. He thinks that he ought to be doing something more serious, that it is frivolous for a man to be spending his precious time and hard-earned money trying to enjoy himself. He believes with Carlyle, that 'it is none of his business whether he is happy or not, that he was put into this world to do something serious, and he must do it.' "

While that is a very unfair estimate of the whole New England character, it is true that many New England people are so constituted that they cannot really enjoy a holiday or a vacation, because they feel that it is too frivolous, that they ought to be doing something better than that. They feel that they must be about "the Master's business."

Now, to my mind, "the Master's business" often means a great deal of play,—of healthful, rejuvenating recreation. It means a lot of enjoyment, a lot of real fun, to keep healthy, normal, and efficient.

It is said that "the easy chair is a necessary part of the strenuous life."

It is impossible for any normal being to keep his life in harmony without a great deal of recreation and play.

What magic a single hour's fun will often work in a tired soul!

We have all felt the wonderful balm, the great uplift, the refreshment, the rejuvenation which have come from a jolly good time with family or friends, when we have gone home after a hard, exacting day's work, when our bodies were jaded and we were brain-weary and exhausted.

Many people give us the impression that the famed Damocletian sword of pain, suspended by a thread, hangs over them constantly ready to fall and pierce them at any moment even in their joys and pleasures. They never seem to enjoy anything without alloy. They give you the impression that they are conscious of the skeleton's presence at every feast.

"It's a real duty to be jolly," says A. Merryman, "and the violation of it ought to subject any one to fine and imprisonment. What right has any one to go about the community lachrymose, woe-begone, with 'tears in's eye, distraction in's aspect'? What right has he to distribute the bacilli of depression, gloom, dumpishness, and general 'forlornity'? A fellow may have corns and porous plasters, and boils and styes and spasms, and freckles and moles, and ear-drums and quinine pills, and an utter absence of joy in the stomachic regions, but he needn't hire the town-crier to go about with a bell proclaiming it. He needn't be pouring it into the ear of every unwilling button-holed victim who feels afterwards as if he had visited all the hospital 'incurables.'

"Take a brace—a strong one! Smile on, smile ever! Groan not! Whine not! Whimper not! Grumble not! Say you're feeling gay, jolly, all right, salubrious—never better in your life. Laugh—laugh out loud—real loud. Risk the blood-vessels and have a good old chuckle for once. Burn your own smoke! You're not the only Job on the ash-heap. Stop peddling disagreeables and creating a social blanket of sticky, shivery fog. Scatter sunshine—bushels of it—cart-loads of it, whole freight-trains of it. Scatter it by the barrel, bag, and ton. People won't object to it. They'll take all you can give them."

“Care in our coffin drives a nail, no doubt;

But every grin so merry draws one out.”

A cheerful disposition that scorns every rebuff of fortune and laughs in the face of disaster is a divine gift. “Fate itself has to concede a great many things to the cheerful man.” To be able to laugh away trouble is greater fortune than to possess the mines of King Solomon. It is a fortune, too, that is within the reach of all who have the courage and nobility of soul to keep their faces turned to the light.

XI. Happiness Can Be Cultivated

“The rose is but a cultivated cabbage.”

I know a lady who once underwent an operation for the removal of a tumor. Everything in her life dates from that time. She cannot converse on any subject but she drags in her “operation.” It is her excuse for her explanation of all her shortcomings in domestic affairs.

How many people are loath to let their troubles go! They have lived with them so long that they have become sort of companions, and they seem to take a morbid pleasure in entertaining them, just as some patients like to dwell upon their symptoms and aches and pains.

Few people realize that happiness may be cultivated to any great extent. They seem to think that the power to enjoy life is largely hereditary, that they cannot do very much to change a crotchety, sour, unhappy disposition.

One of the most difficult lessons of life is to learn that we are largely the product of our thought; that our environment, our education, our habitual thought have very much more to do with the output of our lives than heredity. St. Paul was really scientific when he said to his disciples: “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

The brain changes to meet the demand made upon it. It is modified by its condition of activity, the motives which actuate, mold, and shape the conditions which the individual has to meet.

The brain is very adaptable, as shown by the effects upon it by the different vocations. Each makes a different call upon it and develops faculties and characteristics peculiar to it.

When the world was young, the human brain was very primitive, because the demand upon it was largely for self-protection and the acquisition of food; but gradually a higher call was made upon it, a more varied development demanded, and now it has become exceedingly complex. Every new demand of civilization has made a new call upon the brain, and it has responded to the call and has adapted itself to modern needs.

Many people have an idea that the brain is not susceptible to any great change, but is limited, fixed by heredity. But there are numerous examples of people who have completely revolutionized portions of their brains. Faculties which were weak at birth or deficient from lack of exercise, have been made strong.

For example, take courage. Many successful people were as children so completely devoid of this quality that it threatened to wreck their careers. Their courage was strengthened through the help of intelligent training; this was done by the cultivation of self-confidence, the constant holding in the mind the suggestion of courage, the contemplation of brave deeds.

There are plenty of people doing little things in the world who might become mental giants, if their dormant faculties were aroused, and their general ability improved and enlarged by scientific brain culture.

It is a curious fact that most people think that while they are obliged to spend many years in preparing for and developing a specialty in their careers, happiness, which means more to them than almost anything else, should be a haphazard development, that it should come with practically no training, no special study, while everything else in life that is worth while requires such infinite pains.

It is a great thing so to cultivate the art of happiness that we can get pleasure out of the common experiences of every day.

The happiness habit is just as necessary to our best welfare as the work habit, or the honesty or square-dealing habit.

What a great thing it is to be able to habitually turn one's back to every shadow that approaches, to face the light, whether much or little!

Most unhappy people have gradually become so by forming the habit of unhappiness. The habit of complaining, of criticising, of fault-finding or grumbling over trifles, the habit of looking for shadows, is one most unfortunate to contract, especially in early life, for after a while the victim becomes a slave to it. All of the impulses become perverted, until the tendency to pessimism, to cynicism, is chronic.

Nothing contributes more to the highest success than the formation of a habit of seeing the bright side of things. Whatever your calling in life may be, whatever misfortunes or hardships may come to you, make up your mind resolutely that, come what may, you will get the most possible real enjoyment out of every day; that you will increase your capacity for enjoying life, by trying to find the sunny side of every experience of the day. Resolutely determine that you will see the humorous side of things. No matter how hard or unyielding your environment may seem to be, there is a sunny side if you can only see it. The mirth-provoking faculty, even under trying circumstances, is worth more to a young man or woman starting out in life than a fortune without it. Make up your mind that you will be an optimist, that there shall be nothing of the pessimist about you, that you will carry your own sunshine wherever you go.

There is a wonderful medicinal effect in good cheer. Good news and glad tidings have a magic effect even upon invalids.

We often see a whole store or factory or home transformed by one sunny soul.

It is a great thing to go through life with a smiling face. Think how the pleasure of living would be increased if we met smiling faces everywhere—faces which radiate hope, sunshine, and cheer! What a joy to travel in a gallery of living pictures, radiating hope, cheer, and courage!

One of the rules of the vocational bureau of Boston is to cultivate a smile as one of the winning graces which enriches life. What would do more to bring sunshine and cheer into the life?

It is pitiable to watch the faces of many of our young people in great cities and to see how sad, serious, and suppressed they are. Why should a young life be weighed down with anxiety, care, and worry? What have gray hairs and furrows of care, deep lines in the face, sadness and moroseness, to do with youth?

If we were living perfectly normal and natural lives, we should carry youth into old age.

There should be no such thing as premature gray hairs or signs of age upon youthful faces.

“Cheerfulness,” says Ruskin, “is as natural to the heart of man in strong health as glow to his cheek, and wherever there is habitual gloom, there must be either bad air, unwholesome food, improperly severe labor, or erring habits of life.”

“I am resolved to give no further room in my thoughts to anxiety, fear, and depression,” says Florence Morse Kingsley.

We can so educate the will power that it will focus the thoughts upon the bright side of things, and upon objects which elevate the soul, thus forming a habit of happiness and goodness which will enrich the whole life. The habit of making the best of everything and of always looking on the bright side is a fortune in itself.

“Happiness should be sought as a duty to others for the benefit of self, and for self for the benefit of others. Happiness should be a means, a chief end. Without good conscience, good conduct, there is no happiness.”

When will men learn that the mere titillation of the nerves, mere excitement and dissipation or any kind of excesses, can bring nothing but a miserable, disappointing reaction and a wounded self-respect? Real happiness depends upon honesty. It is made up of square-dealing, of kindness, helpfulness, fairness.

“Happiness,” says an able writer, “is the greatest paradox in nature. It can grow in any soil, live under any conditions. It defies environment. It comes from within; it is the revelation of the depths of the inner life as light and heat proclaim the sun from which they radiate. Happiness consists not of having, but of being; not of possessing, but of enjoying. It is the warm glow of a heart at peace with itself. A martyr at the stake may have happiness that a king on his throne might envy. Man is the creator of his own happiness ; it is the aroma of a life lived in harmony with high ideals. For what a man *has*, he may be dependent on others; what he *is*, rests with himself alone. What he obtains in life is but acquisition; what he attains, is growth. Happiness is the soul’s joy in the possession of the intangible.”

“We take less pains to be happy than to appear so.”

It is the duty of everybody to cultivate a happy, joyful nature, a kindly eye, the power of radiating good will toward every one. It will not only brighten the lives of others, but the reflex action of such kindly effort will also help to develop that exquisite personality, that beauty of character and balance of soul, that serenity, which is the greatest wealth we know.

“Be glad! When you have said all there is to say about life’s sorrow, disappointment, and pain, about the selfishness and wrong that sweep over the earth like dark shadows, about the shortness of its days and the certainty of its nights, it still remains blessedly true that the universe is thrilling with the song of gladness,” says a helpful writer.

“Be glad for the beauty of the springtime, the blue of the skies, the music of the birds, and the glory of the sunsets. Listen to the laughter of the little children, answer to the hand clasp of friendship, grow warm in the love light of countless happy homes, and be sure that somewhere over and above all is a great Love that makes all these things possible. Note the noble lives round you, commonplace, it may be, but unselfish, brave, and true. Note the deeds of quiet self-sacrifice, the swift rush of human kindness to every place of need, the uprising of stately walls to shelter the weak and helpless, and believe, if you can, that the kingdom of Christ is not coming in the hearts of the children of men!

“Oh, put away gloom and grief and complaining! Do His work, trust His promise and be glad.”

One of the best of success helps is to acquire, early in youth, a habit of thinking that the best, not the worst, will happen; that we are not poor, miserable creatures, hounded on every hand by the enemies of our life and happiness, but that we were made to be happy, to be free from harassing cares, anxieties, forebodings ; that we were not made to worry or to project black pictures, but to create bright and cheerful ones.

Do not allow yourself to read, to hear, or to see anything which will produce discord or disturb your peace of mind and harmony.

“Find out, as early as possible, what you can best do, and do it with all your might, and expect to succeed, no matter what obstacles you may encounter,” says Ella Wheeler Wilcox. “Cultivate a philosophical vein of thought. If you have not what you like, like what you have until you can change your environment.

“Do not waste your vitality in hating your life; find something in it which is worth liking and enjoying, while you keep steadily at work to make it what you desire. Be happy over something, every day, for the brain is a thing of habit, and you cannot teach it to be happy in a moment, if you allow it to be miserable for years.”

We should no more allow a discordant or a dark picture in the mind, than we would allow a thief in our home. We should remember that such thoughts are worse than thieves, because they steal away our comfort, our happiness, our contentment. These black enemies, these discordant guests, leave their scars and stains and slimes upon the house that is beautiful within. It is almost impossible to exclude them when they once enter, but it is comparatively easy to keep them out when we once learn the secret of excluding them.

We should learn that these enemies have no right to intrude themselves upon our consciousness. Treat them as trespassers, eject them instantly, and do not allow them to paint their black images upon the mind.

“Most sorrows are gold bricks that will not pan out genuine grief in the assay, and not one person in a hundred has a right to indulge in melancholy. Of nothing else in the world is there such a sinful waste as there is of tears, and we should be just as much ashamed of being unhappy as of being unwashed. Both states indicate a slovenly submitting to the grime of life, instead of an energetic ridding ourselves of its unpleasantness.”

No matter what his vocation or condition in life may be, every one owes it to himself and to the world to form a habit of being just as happy as he can. Happiness means harmony and harmony means health to all bodily functions; it means efficiency. Faculties give out their best when they are normal. To keep happy is, therefore, the best personal economy and surest investment; it insures the greatest possible output of brain and body.

Much natural ability is rendered inefficient because men and women do not know that discord, whether in fear, worry, selfishness, hatred or jealousy, is a health and happiness killer; an efficiency blighter. Many men waste more vitality and mental energy in a few minutes of hot temper than would be required in the legitimate running of their business for days.

Have you ever thought of the great magic of happiness as a healer of troubles, trials, and worries? Happiness is a great healer of disease because all disease is discord, and happiness is harmony, truth, beauty.

The time will come when our physicians will prescribe happiness as the great healing remedy, and we shall be taught how to be cheerful and happy, even amidst the most discordant conditions, by neutralizing the causes.

“Health and good humor,” said Massillon, “are to the human body like sunshine to vegetation.”

The man who is habitually sad or gloomy is so because the corresponding thoughts predominate in his mind. By thinking the opposite thoughts he can produce the opposite results. The state of mind is largely a mental habit which is not very difficult to change.

“Happiness, as proved by ages of human experience, is simply the music of a well-ordered life,” says M. J. Savage, “and every time you break a law of body, mind or soul you detract

so much from the very possibility of happiness, just as every time you mar an organ you take away from the possibility of its producing music.”

“If you think of it and reflect upon it often, happiness will become habitual and a power in your hands for so much good,” says Margaret Stowe. “We can cultivate the habit of always looking on the bright side of things. We all possess the power of exercising the will so as to direct the thoughts upon objects calculated to yield to happiness and improvement rather than their opposites.

“If we try always to look happy and pleasant, whether we feel so or not, the effort will gradually become a habit with us.”

We may form this habit of happiness by making the most of little pleasures and not waiting for overwhelming joys.

“It is only now and then that a comet flashes into view, but the sunshine is a daily blessing,” some one says, “and it would be a silly plant which waited for a comet to appear before putting forth blossoms. There is little likelihood that any extraordinary joy will come to you to-day, but there will be plenty of small pleasures. Make the most of each one. Enjoy the friendly letter which came in the morning’s mail, the comfortable room in which you do your work, the pleasant acquaintance you made at dinner, the chance you had to say an encouraging word to the homesick girl in the next office. There is no mystery about happiness, neither is it a matter of chance, as some would have us think. Instead it is one of the most practical things in the world, and one who has learned to make the most of little everyday blessings has mastered its chief secret.”

Many people never take time to enjoy the pleasant things in life. They trample down the violets and the beautiful small flowers trying to reach the larger life blossoms. They try too hard to attain the big things while it is the multitude of little things, the little enjoyments as we go along, that makes life happy.

Most people go through life straining their eyes for something so far ahead and so impossible to attain that they trample down all of the lesser joys. It is our straining for big results that incapacitates us from enjoying the every-day little things.

It does not necessarily mean that life is disappointing because it does not measure up to the rosy pictures of your youthful dreams; it means that you have not formed the habit of happiness, and so have not learned to appreciate your life as it is passing. You probably do not get a tithe of the blessings out of the present moment that are awaiting you.

You may think that the routine of your life is extremely common, insipid, flavorless, but right alongside of you there may be others who lead the same kind of a life, who are getting happiness out of it; who think that life is a glory instead of a grind. They may make play of their work while you make it a drudgery. They may find joy in it while you find nothing interesting in it.

You may never have learned to see the uncommon in the common. Others may see more glory in the grass you tread under your feet and in the small flowers you never look at, than you could find in the garden of a king. There may be people living near you who get more out of a home with carpetless floors and pictureless walls than you could get out of a palace, for with them love and contentment and sweet sympathy dwell, while perhaps in your home there is only selfishness, greed, and discontent.

Thousands get into a habit of being unhappy, and nothing, it would seem, can make them less so.

“One who is not born a musician needs to toil more assiduously to acquire skill in the art, however strong his desire or great his taste, than the natural genius. So the man not endowed with joyous impulses needs to set himself the task of acquiring the habit of happiness,” says a well-known writer. “I believe it can be done. To the sad or restless or discontented being I would say: Begin each morning by resolving to find something in the day to enjoy. Look in each experience which comes to you for some grain of happiness. You will be surprised to find how much that has seemed hopelessly disagreeable possesses either an instructive or an amusing side.

“Cultivate happiness as an art or science.”

XII. The Joys Of Friendship

“Who knows the joys of friendship—

The trust, security, and mutual tenderness,

The double joys, where each is glad for both?

Friendship, our only wealth, our last retreat and strength,

Secure against ill-fortune and the world.”

“I would go to hell, if there were such a place, with any friend of mine, and I would want no heaven of which I have ever read if any friend of mine were in the outer dark,” said Dr. Minot J. Savage, in the course of a sermon on “The Companionship of Friends.”

The intimacy of friendship reveals the deep secrets of our hearts.

Is there anything more sacred in this world than unselfish, devoted friendship, and yet is there anything of great value we take so little pains to cultivate and to keep; is there anything of value we abuse so much by neglect?

One reason why so many people have so few friends is that they have so little to give, and they expect everything. If you cultivate attractive and lovable qualities, friends will flock around you.

Most of us attend to everything else first, and if we have any little scraps of time left we give them to our friends, when we ought to make a business of our friendships. Are they not worth it?

Is there anything more beautiful in this world than the consciousness of possessing sweet, loyal, helpful friends, whose devotion is not affected in the least by a fortune or the lack of it; friends who love us even more in adversity than in prosperity?

The faith of friends is a perpetual stimulus. How it nerves and encourages us to do our best, when we feel that scores of friends really believe in us when others misunderstand and denounce us!

Ah, there is no other stimulator, helpmeet, or joy-giver like a true friend! Well might Cicero say: ‘They seem to take away the sun from the world who withdraw friendship from life; for we have received nothing better from the immortal gods, nothing more delightful.’

It means a great deal to have enthusiastic friends always looking out for our interests, working for us all the time, saying a good word for us at every opportunity, supporting us, speaking for us in our absence when we need a friend, shielding our sensitive, weak spots, stopping slanders, killing lies which would injure us, correcting false impressions, trying to set us right, overcoming the prejudices created by some mistake or slip, or a first bad impression we made in some silly moment, who are always doing something to give us a lift or help us along!

What sorry figures many of us would cut but for our friends! What marred and scarred reputations most of us would have but for the cruel blows that have been warded off by our friends, the healing balm that they have applied to the hurts of the world! Many of us would have been very much poorer financially, too, but for the hosts of friends who have sent us customers and clients and business, who have always turned our way everything they could.

Oh, what a boon our friends are to our weaknesses, our idiosyncrasies and shortcomings. our failures generally! How they throw a mantle of charity over our faults, and cover up our defects!

What a cold, heartless world this would be to us,—empty, insipid, stupid, without our friends, those who believe in us, even when everybody else denounces us,—those who love us, not for what we have, but for what we are!

Those who appreciate us, who help to build up instead of destroying our self-confidence, double our power of accomplishment. In their presence we feel strong and equal to almost any task. This was one of the great secrets of Phillips Brooks's marvelous power. Filled with an intense belief in man's possibilities, he aroused many a mediocre youth to a realization of the strength that lay dormant within him, made him feel almost a giant in his presence, and inspired him to do things of which he would not otherwise have believed himself capable. He had the happy faculty of awakening people to a sense of their own innate dignity,—a feeling as far removed from mere selfish egotism as light is from darkness,—of strengthening their confidence in their own powers, of arousing their enthusiasm in the pursuit of good. He made those who came in contact with him feel that it was mean and contemptible to look down when they could look up, to grovel when they could soar, to do the lower when the higher was possible. In his presence the timid were emboldened, the vacillating became self-poised, the negative positive.

Who can estimate the value of such an uplifting influence? Our best friend never embarrasses us by making us feel our inferiority or weakness. On the contrary, he always gives us a lift upward, a push onward.

Oh! what a difference a friend has made in the lives of most of us! How many people a strong, loyal friendship has kept from utter despair, from giving up the struggle for success! How many men and women have been kept from suicide by the thought that some one loved them, believed in them; how many have preferred to suffer tortures to dishonoring or disappointing their friends! The thrill of encouragement which has come from the pressure of a friendly hand, or an encouraging, friendly word, has proved the turning-point in many a life.

What is more sacred in this world than our friendships! One of the most touching things I know of is the office of a real friend to one who is not a friend to himself—one who has lost his self-respect, his self-control and fallen to the level of the brute! Ah! this is friendship, indeed, which will stand by us when we will not stand by ourselves! I know a man who thus stood by a friend who had become such a slave to drink and all sorts of vice that even his family had turned him out of doors. When his father and mother and wife and children had forsaken him, his friend remained loyal. He would follow him nights in his debauches, and many a time saved him from freezing to death when he was so inebriated that he could not stand. Scores of times this friend would leave his home and hunt in the slums for him, to keep him from the hands of a policeman, and to shield him from the cold when every one else had forsaken him; and this great love and devotion finally redeemed the fallen man and sent him back to decency and to his home. Can any money measure the value of such friendship!

“And what delights can equal those

That stir the spirit's inner deeps,

When one that loves but knows not, reaps

A truth from one that loves and knows?”

The friendship which shrinks from telling the truth and cannot bear to cause pain when justice demands it, does not command as high a quality of admiration as the one which is absolutely just, frank, and sincere. No great friendship can rest upon pretense or deception. Sincerity is the very core of friendship.

Was there ever such capital for starting in business for oneself, as plenty of friends? How many people, who are now successful, would have given up the struggle in some great crisis of their lives, but for the encouragement of some friend which has tided them over the critical place!

Many people seem to think that their friends are mere incidental things in life, that it is not worth while to put oneself out a great deal to cultivate them. The result is that their Eves are barren, poverty-stricken, and unsatisfactory.

No one truly lives in any liberal, true sense who does not cultivate many friends. No one would get very much out of life if he lived absolutely alone. It is the vital connection, the sweet, satisfying communion with our kind that makes life worth living.

One reason why so many people are disappointed with what life has for them is because they have never cultivated the capacity for friendship.

Some one has well said that unhappiness is the hunger to get; while happiness is the hunger to give.

Friendship is no one-sided affair, but an exchange of soul qualities. There can be no friendship without reciprocity. One cannot receive all and give nothing, or give all and receive nothing, and expect to experience the joy and fullness of true companionship.

“Many are heart hungry and miserable for no other reason than this, they are living apart from their friends. There is a balm in friendship that can heal a thousand ills. There is a power in the tender sympathy of a friend that can disperse the darkness of despair and cause the sunshine of hope and cheer to flood the mansion of life once more.”

How many men and women go through life with a sense of loneliness, hungry for friends and for the love and admiration of others, simply because of something about their personalities which repels! These people are usually proud and sensitive, and they wonder why they are shunned and avoided, but they never learn to study themselves, and to find out the real reason.

Friendship rests largely upon admiration. Many are not capable of forming great friendships, because they do not have the qualities themselves which attract noble qualities in others. If you are crammed with despicable qualities, you cannot expect any one to care for you. If you are uncharitable, intolerant, if you lack generosity, cordiality; if you are narrow and bigoted, unsympathetic, you cannot expect that generous, large-hearted, noble characters will flock around you.

A happy temperament, a desire to scatter joy and gladness, to be helpful to everybody, are wonderful aids to friendship. The virtues that make the heart rich, must come from a sweet disposition, a helpful, sunny soul. There are people who fling out sunshine and joy everywhere they go; they scatter the shadows and lighten the sorrow-laden hearts.

How quickly we should sight the millennium if we could only see our brother in the most unfortunate human being, if we could always look at people as Charity does, who always sees a god in the meanest of men, a philanthropist in the stingiest miser, a hero in the biggest coward, and who is always saying, “Do not condemn that man; there is a god in him that something, somebody, may call out.”

If you would be happy cultivate an open nature, a kindly, cheerful manner, a joyous spirit; do not be stingy with your praise, your cordiality, your helpfulness. Fling out your best to every human being at every opportunity. Learn to say pleasant things to people about themselves; do generous things, and you will be surprised to see how your life will enlarge, your soul expand, and your whole nature become enriched and ennobled.

Do not be afraid to tell your friends that you love them. Tell them of their qualities that you admire. Do not presume too much upon your friendships. Do not allow them to be strained too much either by long absences without communication, or without seeing them when it is possible to do so.

It is only he who *loses* his life, who *gives* it royally in kindly, helpful service to others that finds it. This is the sowing that gives the bountiful harvest. The man who gets all he can and gives nothing, knows not real riches. He is like the farmer who thinks too much of his seed-corn to sow it, who hoards it, thinking he will be richer for the hoarding. He does not give it to the soil because he cannot see the harvest in the seed. It is not so much a question of how far we have gotten along in the world ourselves, as how many others we have helped to get on.

Perhaps really the richest man who ever lived upon this continent was Abraham Lincoln, because he gave himself to his people. He did not try to sell his ability to the highest bidder. Great fees had no attraction for him. Lincoln lives in history because he thought more of his friends—and all his countrymen were his friends—than he did of his pocketbook. He gave himself to his country as a wise farmer gives his seed to the earth, and what a harvest from that sowing! The end of it no man shall see.

One of the saddest phases of our strenuous American life is the terrible slaughter of friendships by our dollar chasers.

Is there anything more chilling in this world than to have a lot of money but practically no friends? What does that thing which we call success amount to if we have sacrificed our friendships, if we have sacrificed the most sacred things in life in getting it? We may have plenty of acquaintances, but acquaintances are not friends. There are plenty of rich people in this country to-day who scarcely know the luxury of real friendship.

There is something that is called friendship which follows us as long as we are prosperous and have anything to give of money or influence, but which forsakes us when we are down.

Real friendship will follow us into the shadows, in the dark as well as in the sunshine.

The capacity for friendship is a great test of character. We instinctively believe in people who are known to stick to their friends through thick and thin. It is an indication of the possession of splendid qualities. Bad people are incapable of great friendships. You can generally trust a man who never goes back on a friend. People who lack loyalty have no capacity for great friendship.

It is in relation to their effect on character that friends must be estimated at their real value. Dr. Hillis says that “destiny is determined by friendship; fortune is made or marred when a youth neglects his companions.” Character is tinted by the friends to which we attach ourselves. We borrow their color, whether it be black or white. We absorb their qualities, whether they be noble or ignoble. “Men become false,” says Charles Kingsley, “if they live with liars; cynics, if they live with scorners; mean, if they live with the covetous; affected, if they live with the affected; and actually catch the expressions of each other’s faces.”

We only get what we give. Our friends are the harvest of our friendship sowing. If the seed is poor, the harvest is poor. The man who is rich in friendships has sown richly of sympathy, of interest, of admiration, of helpfulness, of love.

“Our friends, if they be many and true, can add more to the richness and happiness of our existence than all the wealth of the Indies.”

“The purpose of friendship,” said Seneca, “is to have one dearer to me than myself, and for the saving of whose life I would gladly lay down my own, taking with me the consciousness that only the wise can be friends; others are mere companions.”

“In friendship lies ever a road to happiness. It was always my theory,” says Ella Wheeler Wilcox, “that a broad nature is capable of many true friendships. One friend appeals to you for one reason, another for some other. Friendships are the heart’s library. The serious friend is the book of philosophy; the merry friend, the book of humor; and there are the poet, the author, and the historian still to be represented. Even as no book crowds another on our shelves, so no friend should crowd another in our hearts.

“But you will find friends insincere, and friendship but a name,” predicted the pessimist. ‘You will suffer disillusionment, and it will be more bitter than any friendship can be sweet. Keep to yourself, and avoid the awakening from a useless dream.’

“Still I pursued my course. I formed many ties of friendship. Some were broken, and I suffered; but one great truth came home to thy heart, to rest there always. In being a true friend, and worthy of true friendship, lies the road to real, lasting happiness.”

Shakespeare tells us how we may distinguish the true from the false friend:

He that is thy friend indeed,

He will keep thee in thy need.

If thou sorrow, he will weep;

If thou wake, he cannot sleep.

Thus of every grief in heart,

He with thee doth bear a part.

These are certain signs to know

Faithful friend from flattering foe.

XIII. The Tragedy Of Postponed Enjoyment

“The mill will never grind with the water that has passed.”

There was once a very brilliant and charming young man who made up his mind that he was going to devote the first half of his life to the amassing of a million and the balance in the unstinted enjoyment of his money. He resolved to sacrifice every conflicting desire in pursuit of his one unwavering aim—to cut off everything which could possibly conflict with his life purpose. He hushed the great longing in his heart for music and sacrificed his soul’s calling for the beautiful, for art, until he could get the means for answering all these calls in his nature which bade for his attention. Later, he felt sure, he would revel in art and music.

But when this young man had made his first million he found that his ambition called for another million, and he resolved to work a little longer and to quit when he had two millions. When he reached this point, however, his ambition had grown to monstrous proportions and kept calling for more, more. He resolved to break away and to enjoy what he had; but he soon found that he was slaving under ambition’s lash and he kept going on and on, making greater sacrifices of his finer nature, until one day he caught a glimpse of himself in a long mirror. He was shocked at the gray hairs and wrinkles, at the bent form. For a moment he could not believe his eyes; but the truth very soon became painfully evident, and he resolved then and there to quit the money game and to start on his quest of pleasure.

But he very soon found that he had lost his taste for many of the things which called so loudly in his youthful blood. When he began to travel, he was surprised to find that the great masterpieces of architecture, painting, and sculpture, which he had dreamed would give him such pleasure, were closed books to his mind, because his esthetic faculties had become so atrophied that they no longer responded to stimulus.

He then resolved that he would make a business of surrounding himself with friends for the balance of his life. But his friendship faculties had also gone out of business for the lack of exercise. He had sacrificed his friendships in pursuit of the dollar. He felt sure that music, his first love, had not gone back on him and he went to the great centers of music to revel in the opera. But he soon found that his musical faculties had gone out of business also, atrophied from the lack of exercise, and so, in his desperation, he turned from one thing to another trying to enjoy himself, but he found that even dissipation no longer could give him satisfaction; he had lost all power of enjoyment, so that his fortune was but a mockery to him. He had sacrificed youth, health, his friends, his taste for music, for art, for literature, and he stood like a great skyscraper which had been ravaged by fire—a burned-out old man with a fortune, but with no power to enjoy it. He had money, but nothing else.

There is little except the form left to indicate that such men are human. Most of the qualities which make for real manhood, the sweeter, nobler, grander, sublimer qualities, which make normal men and women Godlike, have been burned out of the life by the dollar mania.

The time will come when these human monsters with vast fortunes, will be looked upon as enemies of all that is highest and noblest and sweetest and cleanest in human life. Men and women will not always bow down to the Golden Calf.

The only way to be happy is to take advantage of the little opportunities that come to us to brighten life as we go along. To postpone enjoyment day after day and year after year, until we get more money or a better position, is to cheat ourselves not only of present enjoyment, but also of the power to enjoy in the future.

One of the greatest tragedies of life is the postponement of enjoyment. I think the one great regret of most people when nearing the end of life is, that they did not live as they went along, that they attempted to postpone their enjoyment instead of living to the full each day as it came.

How often we see young people start out in life with small capital and work like slaves for years, putting aside every opportunity for pleasure or relaxation, denying themselves the luxury of an occasional outing, the attendance at a theater or concert, a trip to the country or the purchase of a coveted book, even postponing their reading and general culture until they have more leisure, more money! They delude themselves with the thought that when the following year arrives they will take life easier, perhaps indulge in some of these things, but when next year comes they think they must economize a little longer. Thus they put off every enjoyment from year to year.

They think that next year they will be able to send their boy or girl to college; but the habit of saving, the craving for a little more money gets the better of them and again they postpone. At length a time comes when they decide they can afford to indulge in a little pleasure. They go abroad, or try to enjoy music or works of art, or attempt to broaden their minds by reading and studying. But it is too late. They have become hopelessly wedged into the rut the years have made about them. The freshness of life has departed. Enthusiasm has fled. The fires of ambition have died down. The long years of waiting have crushed the capacity to enjoy. The possessions for which they sacrificed all their natural and healthy longings for joy and brightness have turned to Dead Sea fruit.

Such lives are repeated in thousands of homes about us. On every hand we see these burned-out lives.

This country is full of wrecks of people who have forfeited their reputations, their health, their homes, their vacations, their opportunities for travel, for reading, and culture, their friends, in fact, traded everything that was worth while, for money. Has it paid? Thousands of men are nervous wrecks, practically friendless and homeless, as far as the things we prize most in a home are concerned, and all because of a desire to scrape together a few more dollars. Does it pay?

Many a man has lost his life while trying to save a hat, or an umbrella, or a package in front of a trolley car, automobile, or carriage.

"What a foolish thing this is," we say, but there are tens of thousands of men in this country, who have lost about everything in their lives that was worth while, trying to get a few more dollars away from somebody else.

The sacrifices we Americans make, the price we pay for our fortunes is something appalling. Just take a look at the physical and mental wrecks we see on every hand. Does it pay to sacrifice the very thing for which we live, to get together a little more money? How often we see hungry, cadaverous men with great big pocket-books! They have the money but that is about all they have.

Did you ever think, Mr. Selfish-Greedy Man, of what you are losing on your way to your wealth? Did you ever realize that while you are gloating over the fact that you are getting ahead much faster than those about you, that you are losing something which is infinitely more precious?

Nature keeps a one-priced store. She lets you take whatever you want, but you pay the price for it, and you often leave that which is infinitely more valuable than what you take.

How many take the money but leave their character in exchange! How many swap their ability, their education for dollars! How many exchange all that is finest, most delicate, and sweetest in their natures for that which can only give a coarse satisfaction, can only feed the animal appetite! While you are grasping for more greedy dollars, your manliness may be oozing out, your nature may be hardening, your sympathy for your kind may be drying up, your affections may be becoming marbled. You may find that you like coarser things than formerly; that refined, cultured, educated, good people do not interest you as they once did. You are sliding down. Greed has lowered your standard.

I know business men who think they have made a great success in life, because they have gained a fortune, who would not recognize a photograph of themselves taken when they started out in the dollar-chasing game, for they have exchanged for dollars the most valuable things which they possessed at the start. Business diplomacy, cunning, have taken the place of their former simple, open straightforwardness. Their motto, "business is business," has completely changed their life. Business policy has taken the place of principle, of conviction.

The man who cultivates the habit of enjoyment, who avails himself of the opportunity to indulge in some innocent pleasure, to brighten and broaden his life by listening to good music or looking at rare works of art, studying the beauties of nature or reading an inspiring book, will unconsciously find himself far ahead in the race for success. He will be much less selfish and greedy and far more sympathetic and more in touch with his times, than the man who postpones all enjoyment and relaxation until he has accumulated a fortune. There is nothing more delusive than the idea that we are going to do something tomorrow which we believe we cannot afford to-day.

Miss Muloch has well said, in one of her books: "Nobody will see his own blessings or open his heart to enjoy them till the golden hour has gone by forever and he finds out too late all that he might have had and made and done."

How many people make slaves of themselves, pinch and scrimp and practice grinding economy all through the best years of their lives, with the firm belief that they are getting ready for great enjoyment in the future!

Oh, the waste of life, the precious years lost getting ready to enjoy! Oh, the delusion of always putting the time of enjoyment in the future, forever deferring good things until the tissues have hardened and the nerves have lost their power to carry agreeable sensations! How many people there are who murder their capacity for enjoyment and make slaves of themselves in trying to hoard up that which they might have enjoyed in their younger days, and which will be but a mockery to them late in life!

It seems strange that level-headed business men, who have been such a success in their line, should not be able to see that they cannot really enjoy themselves, after retiring from an active, busy life, unless they have a broad training outside of their specialty.

After all, what are the things which men expect to enjoy after they retire? It would be a good thing for a man who is thinking of retiring to test a few of the things which he fancies he is going to find enjoyment in after giving up an active life. For example, let him go to the opera. The chances are that he would be bored to death all through the performance. How could he expect to enjoy the opera if his musical faculties had not been developed?

Then let him visit the great art galleries. The average business man would get tired of this sort of thing inside of two days. His mind had not been trained in that direction. A life-time of training in a business career had not developed qualities which would help him to appreciate the beauties of art or to measure art values, to see the meaning in the great masterpieces.

Then, let him try travel, which he thinks is going to be such a delight. He would probably get very tired after a few months' wandering from place to place, living without the comforts and luxuries to which he is accustomed in his own home.

If he knew how to play golf, he might get considerable satisfaction out of that, but if he overdid it, he would very soon tire of it. He might try philanthropic work, helping the poor; but it is likely that, whatever he did, his mind would constantly be reverting to and longing for his old occupation. The chances are that he would very soon weary of playing at life. The faculties which had been made dominant by so many years of active service, would be constantly pulling him towards his business or profession.

The great secret of happiness is to learn to enjoy as we go along. Every day should be a holiday in the highest sense of the word. No matter how busy we are, something should be brought into every day's experience which will enlarge, broaden, and enrich the mind. Every day should add a new layer of beauty and joy to life before it gives place to the morrow. It was not intended that one part of life should be filled with joy and the remainder be left barren.

It doesn't pay to look forward to enjoyment. A recent writer says: "I would as soon chase butterflies for a living or bottle moonshine for a cloudy night. The only way to be happy is to take the drops of happiness as God gives them to us every day of our lives. The boy must learn to be happy while he is plodding over his lessons, the apprentice while he is learning his trade, the merchant while he is making his fortune, or they will be sure to miss their enjoyment when they have gained what they have signed for."

"There is an Eastern legend of a powerful genius, who promised a beautiful maiden a gift of rare value if she would pass through a field of corn, and, without pausing, going backwards or wandering hither and thither, select the largest and ripest ear,—the value of the gift to be in proportion to the size and perfection of the ear she should choose. She passed through the field, seeing a great many well worth gathering, but always hoping to find a larger and more perfect one. She passed them all by, when, coming to a part of the field where the stalks grew more stunted, she disdained to take one from these, and so through to the other side without having selected any.

"This little fable is a faithful picture of many lives, which are rejecting the good things in their way and within their reach, for something before them for which they vainly hope, but will never secure. On a dark night and in a dangerous place, where the footing is insecure, a lantern in the hand is worth a dozen stars."

The high school boy thinks that he will be happy when he enters college; the freshman is dreaming of the day when he will be a senior; the senior, of the time when he will be graduated; the graduate lives only for the propitious hour when he will go into business for himself or start in his profession; and the young man who has just entered on an active career looks forward to the happy time when he shall have saved enough money to build himself a beautiful house. But by the time he has built his fine house he has become so bound by his business, or profession, so absorbed in the every-day routine, that enjoyment must be pushed still further ahead, until he can spare a little more time from his business or office, or to the indefinite season when he shall retire.

He alone is the happy man who has learned to extract happiness, not from ideal conditions, but from the actual ones about him. The man who has mastered the secret will not wait for ideal surroundings; he will not wait until next year, next decade, until he gets rich, until he can travel abroad, until he can afford to surround himself with works of the great masters; but he will make the most possible of what he has now.

“If we would see the color of our future,” said Canon Farrar, “we must look for it in our present; if we would gaze on the star of our destiny, we must look for it in our hearts.”

The majority of us go through life with our eyes fixed on a distant goal, straining every nerve to reach it. On our way we pass indescribable beauties of earth and sky, and innumerable opportunities to help others over rough places, to brighten and beautify the commonplace life of every day,—but we see them not. Heedless of all that does not point directly toward what we consider the winning post, we finally arrive at our destination, to find—what? We have, perhaps, gained what we sought: wealth, the secrets of science, fame; we have satisfied our ambition, it may be,—but at the cost of all that sweetens, beautifies, ennobles, and enriches life.

The man who has spent all the best years of his life chasing dollars and neglecting everything else, developing one big money gland in the base of his brain to secrete dollars, and letting the upper part of his brain, his ideality, his esthetic, his social faculties, his friendship faculties, atrophy, and other higher intellectual faculties dwindle, cannot expect to enjoy much of anything outside of the rut and routine in which he has spent his life. He will be lost when he gets out of it.

He will find that, outside of these few tracks in his brain—formed by his routine life—he will get very little satisfaction, because his whole brain has not been developed.

It is sad to see a man who has ground his very life into his business, coined his brain and his very soul into making a fortune, because he believes that this will be a panacea for all his ills; who, after he has his fortune in hand, still feels the same emptiness, discontent, the same unsatisfied heart yearnings. Everywhere we see men who have led the commercial life so long, who have pursued it with such zest and such eagerness and grit that they have crushed all of the finer sentiments, all the nobler attributes, out of their natures. They have become money-making automatons, getting-on-specialists, and they are good for nothing else. They are miserable the moment they are taken out of this atmosphere. Their fortune made, they have nothing to which to retire.

No matter how much money you may have, Mr. Rich Man, your enjoyment must come from the qualities and faculties which you have been exercising the most during your active career. If you have been kind and considerate; if you have been just and generous with those who have helped you to make your fortune; if you have developed your friendship faculties, your social qualities; if you have been just and true during your money-making period; if there are no dirty dollars in your pile; if you have not trampled others down in your climb to your fortune, if you have developed your benevolence and generosity, you will be happy. You will enjoy what you have accumulated, but the habits of your past life, the tendencies of your developments will determine the quality of your happiness.

Is it not strange that when a man has been developing his selfish qualities, his greed, his grasping nature for a quarter or a half century, and has allowed his friendship faculties, his affection, his generosity and all of his noble qualities to die from lack of exercise, he should expect that the mere possession of a fortune could transform all of his life habits and give him the enjoyments which could be possible only with the highest development of the grandest qualities in him, instead of the lowest, the animal propensities?

“We treat our joys as one of my neighbors did her choice currants,” says a writer.

“‘Let’s have a pie,’ said the children, when the bushes began to bear. But the mother would not hear of using such fine fruit green; it must ripen. When the currants were ripe, the children begged them for the table, but the mother had decided to save them for jelly.

When jelly-making was proposed, she wanted to wait until other work was out of the way, and she could ‘do it as it ought to be done.’ But lo, when she was fully ready, the sun, the birds, and an unexpected storm, had all been there before her, and the bushes were bare!

“That’s the way we do with our blessings and gladnesses—the mercies that are ‘new every morning.’ We say, ‘Oh, how I could enjoy this if—and then we let the trial, foreboding, or trouble crowd it out of place. Some day we expect to be ready really to enjoy our health, our home, our friends; but who can promise us that when that long postponed day comes the fruit will still be on the bushes?’”

XIV. Intellectual And Esthetic Joys

“Milton in his blindness saw more beautiful visions, and Beethoven in his deafness heard more heavenly music, than most of us can ever hope to enjoy.”

“Had I but two loaves,” said Mohammed, “I would sell one and buy hyacinths to feed my soul.”

President Eliot once said to his Harvard students, “You ought to obtain here the trained capacity for mental labor, rapid, intense, and sustained. It is the main achievement of college life to win this mental force, this capacity for keen observation, just inference, and sustained forethought, and everything we mean by the reasoning power of man. That capacity will be the main source of intellectual joys and happiness and content throughout a long, busy life.”

I believe that the cultivation of the power of appreciation would alone increase human happiness a thousand per cent. Most people confound pleasure and happiness. Pleasure is a more temporary enjoyment. It is the soda water enjoyment compared with the enduring satisfaction which comes from the appreciation of a good book, or the enduring satisfaction which comes from the cultivation of the intellectual, the unfolding of the mental powers.

There are multitudes of closed doors in an untrained mind, which, if opened by education, training, and culture, would enrich the life wonderfully and would lead to untold happiness. Who can estimate what it means to a human being who is a lover of the beautiful to have the door of his esthetic faculties opened! How the early cultivation of the love of the beautiful would magnify all of the beautiful things in the world! Many people go through life beauty-blind because their esthetic eyes have never been unsealed.

We only enjoy what we can appreciate, and our appreciations are along the line of our training, our experiences, and our hereditary tendencies.

The music which ravishes one person may mean nothing to another. A bit of landscape, a glorious sunset, a masterpiece of art would send a thrill of joy through the heart of a Ruskin; while another person would get no enjoyment from the same experience.

Everything in life is loaded with some special meaning, but will only give up its secret to the soul that responds to it; the soul that has an affinity for it. Music does not awaken response in the deaf ear but only in those who have the musical sense. The sweetest organ does not appeal to those who have no appreciation of the laws of harmony and melody. It only speaks to those who have a spiritual responsiveness which can interpret its divine meaning. What a treasury of intellectual joys, which infinitely surpass all the pleasures of the senses or the joys which come from material things, is revealed by the opening of the door of thought! No matter how poverty-stricken one's environment may be, no matter what misfortunes, failures, distressing conditions surround an individual, it is possible to rise out of these discords of an inhospitable environment into a heaven of unspeakable joy.

Think what the opening of this door means to the world's shut-ins, invalids, cripples, the bedridden, and even the unfortunate prisoners! Through thought the wretched criminal can rise out of his barred cell. As Lovelace, in prison, wrote to Althea:

Stone walls do not a prison make.

Nor iron bars a cage,—

Minds innocent and quiet take

That for an hermitage.

A man's intellectual and beauty-creating powers were intended as a means of escape from the most discouraging, distressing surroundings. A man's soul was not intended to be imprisoned; nor can it be weighed down by unfortunate conditions. No failure, no disaster from fire or flood, can keep a human being from rising into a paradise of harmony and beauty where his soul can revel in a world of its own making, equipped, decorated by its own creative imagination; and yet what school or college has ever taught the youth the marvelous possibilities of creating his own ideal world?

The study of a flower, of a plant, of a sunset, of a bit of landscape, kindled the flame which fired the esthetic soul of Ruskin, opened up a new world in the great within of himself, which not only made his own life a joy/ but enabled him to open the door of happiness in a vast multitude of other lives. Once open this door of appreciation in a human soul and no power in heaven or earth can ever close it again, nor limit the possibilities in the discovery.

Benjamin West said that it was his mother's kiss in appreciation of a little drawing of his that made him a painter. It was this kiss, he said, that opened up a new world to him—the world beautiful.

"I too am a painter," cried Correggio when his eyes first beheld Raphael's St. Cecilia. Many an artist's soul has been set on fire by looking upon another's masterpiece, which started the conflagration in his esthetic nature, which was never quenched. Art is unquestionably one of the purest and highest elements in human happiness. "It trains the mind through the eye, and the eye through the mind. As the sun colors flowers, so does art color life."

Beauty is a refining, elevating, saving force.

The love of the beautiful is an indication of superiority, of a superior mentality. It indicates that the possessor has risen out of the basement of life into the upper stories where he has caught a glimpse of his God.

All through our youth and even in later life new doors to new joys are constantly being opened up, often by accident, by the suggestion of a friend, by the reading of an inspiring book or by thinking. As George Herbert wrote:

More servants wait on man

Than he'll take notice of.

The pleasures which come from the gratification of the senses, the appetites and passions, are as dross compared with the joys which are revealed in the wonderful realm of thought. The intellectual joys overtop all others.

Whoever has a good mind, well developed, ought never to have a dull or stupid moment. The man of trained mind is largely independent of his environment. If things are disagreeable, if people bore him, if his surroundings are uncongenial, he can lift himself out of it all and retire within the gate of his own mind and revel in the exercise of his intellectual faculties. He can not only retire from the most exasperating conditions, but also, in an instant, be in an ideal world of his imagination. The sources of a trained mind are inexhaustible.

What luxury, never enjoyed by former monarchs of the earth, does a thinker now find in books!

There is no spot on earth so dejecting, poverty-stricken, or distressing that a trained mind can not only summon the grandest characters that live in history, but he can also find them at their best; they will give him their best thoughts, their best moods, and finest philosophy.

What are the pleasures of the palate, the pleasures of the senses, the joys that come from material wealth, compared with the riches possible to the trained mind of the poorest creature on earth?

As Epictetus says, no power can keep us from enjoyments of the mind, from intellectual enjoyments.

The influence which others and conditions have upon us is immensely exaggerated. The fact is that happiness or misery is very largely in our own power. The poorest creature that walks the earth has power to summon into his presence the greatest poets who will sing to him their choicest songs; the greatest historians will reveal the past to him; biographers will repeat the stories of those who have triumphed over want and woe, who have conquered difficulties and won immortal fame.

The pursuit of education by a soul hungry for knowledge, yearning for intellectual growth, is the highest kind of pleasure, because it gives infinite satisfaction and infinite advantage.

He is the greatest man whose supreme ambition is to make the most of his life, to enrich it by self-education, self-culture, self-development and helpful service, until every fiber of his being becomes responsive to every good and helpful influence in the entire range of his environment.

What a joy people who have had the advantages of education and superior opportunities for culture and refinement may find in helping others who have been deprived of these opportunities, and whose souls hunger for the richer, fuller life to gain them.

One of the grandest sights in the world is that of an adult seizing every opportunity to make up for the loss of early educational advantages, pouring his very soul into his spare moments and evenings, trying to make himself a larger, fuller, completer man.

Opportunities for self-improvement surround us, and in this day of cheap books, free libraries, and evening schools, there can be no good excuse for neglect to use the facilities for mental growth.

There is nothing else that will give you greater satisfaction in after years than the forming of such systematic habits of self-culture early in life as to make your self-improvement processes automatic.

There never was a time in the history of the world when education was worth so much as to-day, when knowledge adds so much power, contributes so much to happiness.

What a golden opportunity confronts you for coining your bits of leisure into knowledge that will mean growth of character, promotion, advancement, power, riches that no accident can take from you, no disaster annihilate!

There is a divine hunger in every normal being for self-expansion, a yearning for growth or enlargement. Beware of stifling this craving of nature for self-unfoldment.

Man was made for growth; to realize poise of mind, peace, satisfaction. It is the object, the explanation, of his being. To have an ambition to grow larger and broader every day, to push the horizon of one's ignorance a little further away, to become a little richer in knowledge, a little wiser, and more of a man—that is an ambition worth while.

What you can abstract from life, is just a question of how you train your mind and form your habits of thought. It is just a question of your ability to extract beauty, utility, and joy from your environment, which you think is so commonplace, dry, lean, and void of beauty. If you think your life has so little for you, you have not learned the secret of extracting from life its

joys, beauties, truth, and loveliness. The soul that loves beauty can feast on it everywhere. There is not a nook or corner in the universe where it does not exist. Think of the marvels which the microscope reveals, or the wonderful mysteries which the telescope brings to us from the depths of the universe to the unaided eye!

A great admirer of Agassiz once sent him a check for one thousand dollars so that he could travel abroad and collect some valuable material and bring home precious truths for his wonderful science. But Agassiz wrote him that he proposed to spend his vacation in his own back-yard, and his great mind found even there remnants of fossil remains and other discoveries which made valuable additions to science. The mind which could profitably spend days upon the scale of a fish, and hours studying and reading the history of a grain of sand from the seashore, and the history of an ocean pebble, could find material enough in the humblest environment for the profitable study of a lifetime.

The possibilities of happiness which we have discovered and utilized are to the human mind what the little corn-patch of the Indians was to the vast wealth of this great continent. The things we never use because we were never trained to see or enjoy them, would, if utilized, revolutionize our lives. What the most intelligent of us use is as nothing compared to what we lose.

No matter which way we look we can see marvels of design, of possible utility and of beauty, which a whole lifetime of study could never exhaust.

“To watch the corn grow, or the blossoms set; to draw hard breath over ploughshare or spade; to read, to think, to love, to pray, these,” says Ruskin, “are the things that make men happy.”

We should more fully appreciate our opportunities could we realize what a blind person with a love of the beautiful would give just for a glimpse of the marvelous world, which is all shut out from him and free to us. What would he not give if he could just have his eyes opened for a few months and be allowed to travel over this beautiful earth and drink in the world’s beauties? Just to be able to see the flower, to get one glimpse of the landscape which we see so often that it makes almost no impression upon us, what would it not mean to one of these poor blind creatures! The ability to look into a sea of human faces, to watch the play of thought, sentiment, and mood upon their countenances would afford infinite pleasure and joy to them, and yet, how little we ourselves appreciate this privilege.

Luther said that paradise might apply to the whole world—and why not? There is not a corner of the Universe which the great Lover of the Beautiful has not decorated with more marvelous beauties than any human being ever decorated anything. In the far-away places where no human being has ever trod, there are beauties of plant life, of flowers, of crystal formation in rocks, beauties of birds and beast, of landscape, which no human eye hath ever seen, proving that the great Author of the Universe is a lover of “uncontained immortal beauty.” What a pity that every child should not be taught to read “God’s handwriting in beauty” in everything—everywhere!

Suppose the greatest human being that ever lived could be endowed with omnipotence, the omniscience, the magic power and the wisdom, to create a world which in every particular would be a paradise, a world which would be absolutely perfect in every respect; to evolve a plant life which would give the greatest possible joy and satisfaction to human beings; create fruits, vegetables and all else which would give the most intense pleasure to the human palate. In other words, suppose this human being should be endowed with the Godlike qualities to create a world, which could satisfy every yearning and every longing of his soul, could he equal the marvelous creations which have already been provided for every human being?

There is not a single human desire, not a longing which has not been provided for in this marvelous creation; and why is it that our lives are so very lean, so poverty-stricken, so pinched, so limited, so blighted, when they might be so grand, so magnificent, so sublime?

The love of the beautiful is a fundamental quality of the human mind. It first manifests itself in the rude decoration of the savage, and becomes an increasing passion with the progress of civilization. Merely to exist was not the object of man's creation, but to live sublimely, magnificently, to live like a king, not like a manikin, not like a starved, stunted, burlesque of the real man God intended.

To the man who has developed his intellectual and esthetic faculties there is untold joy in travel.

Ruskin saw paradise everywhere he went. Every plant, every flower, every new specimen of vegetable life, every sunset, every bit of landscape, were to him God's hieroglyphics, by which he could learn the mind of the great Artist of the beautiful.

Suppose a John Ruskin were to travel the world over with one whose brain had been pinched, whose intellectual life had been stunted and starved by a monotonous, routine life work!

Think of the difference between what these men would derive from such a tour—one, a man who sees God's handwriting in every leaf, a divine message in every flower, whose very soul leaps for joy at the sight of every bit of beautiful scenery, whose soul is all aglow in a sunset, who is entranced by everything that God made, and the other, a man whose deadened faculties do not respond to the stimulus of beautiful scenery, or strange lands and peoples, or works of art! Only the brain cells he has used in his narrow occupation have been developed; all of the others lie dormant, went out of business long ago, from the lack of exercise and stimulus. Travel to such a man means very little.

Surrounded as we are with the real sources of happiness, costless, limitless, many of us allow our finer senses to atrophy and turn to money as the primary source of happiness. But putting money into the purse is pretty poor sort of business compared with putting beauty into the life, cultivating the sublime, the magnificent in our natures. Cementing precious friendships, cultivating those we love, pushing the horizon of ignorance farther and farther away from us, opening up the intellectual life, enlarging the mind, unfolding the immortal sides of our being,—all these afford infinitely greater pleasure than chasing the dollar or titillating the senses.

The joy of living, therefore, lies not without us but within us. It is the power to appreciate, to make our own, the intellectual and esthetic joys that are free to all, which raises us from the multitude, who, owning more than we, are like "dumb driven cattle," that walk and sleep and feed but know only the things that minister to the grosser appetites.

From the man who has been trained to think, to extract the honey of life from all sorts of sources, the man who has been trained to use his ears, and see things, the mere lack of money can take little away. Circumstances have scant power to rob him if he has a good mind, good health, and all his senses are intact. He can manage to become very rich in his personality, a millionaire mentally, although a pauper in material things. He may be a billionaire in cheerfulness, in usefulness, and in nobility of character. The power of material things, to bestow happiness, to bring joy into the life is tremendously exaggerated. The right mental attitude, the trained mind, will bring to us the best there is in the universe.

XV. “Reading Maketh A Full Man”

Only three things are necessary to make life happy: the blessing of God, books, and a friend.—Lacordaire.

If the crowns of the world were laid at my feet in exchange for my love of reading, I would spurn them all.—Fenelon.

“In a certain village,” Sir John Herschel tells us, “a blacksmith got hold of Richardson’s novel ‘Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded,’ and used to sit on his anvil in the long summer evenings and read it aloud to a large and attentive audience. It is by no means a short book, but they eagerly listened to it all. At length, when the happy turn of fortune arrived, which brings the hero and heroine together and sets them living long and happily according to the most approved rules, the congregation were so delighted as to raise a great shout, and, procuring the church keys, actually set the parish bells ringing.”

Good books are lengthening and brightening the lives of a multitude of people. Perhaps nothing else has such power to lift the poor out of his poverty, the wretched out of his misery, to make the burden-bearer forget his burden, the sick his suffering, the sorrowing his grief, the down-trodden his degradation, as books. They are friends to the lonely, companions to the deserted, joy to the joyless, good cheer to the disheartened, a’ helper to the helpless. They bring light into darkness and sunshine into shadow.

How many a wretched one, poor and forsaken perhaps by the world, has found solace in his poverty and a refuge from his want and woe, a pleasant substitute for his gloomy thoughts, as he has delved like a prince in some great book!

We hear a great deal about the increased cost of living, but never in history could poor people get so much of the life essentials, and even the things that were luxuries a short time ago, for so little money, as to-day. The products of the greatest minds that have ever lived, were never so cheap. Copies of the great masterpieces of literature, which a century ago were only within the reach of the rich, are now often found in the poorest homes. The printing-press has brought the greatest literary wealth within the reach of the poorest people.

How many men and women there are, who think their lives have been failures; who feel dejected, lonely, and shut out from society, and pity themselves because they have not been able to see the world, or mix with people who have done things worth while! Little do these realize that they have right in their own homes, or can easily obtain for a small sum of money, the most precious, the richest sort of friends, guests who would have been more than welcome in the palaces of princes!

Why mourn because your poverty, your lack of chance in life, cuts you off from the society of those who have been more fortunate, when without the exertion of changing your clothing for a social function, you can spend the evening with the kings and queens of the earth, the greatest characters; can without embarrassment or timidity hold communion with the greatest minds that have ever lived!

“The purest pleasures I have ever known,” says Richard Cobden, “are those accessible to you all; it is in the calm intercourse with intelligent minds, and, in the communion with the departed great, through books, by our own firesides.”

Isolation, separation from others, whether it be caused by physical weakness or by an unfortunate disposition or unsocial nature, is one of the greatest sources of unhappiness; but

through books one need not be alone but can live intimately with the greatest personalities the world has known.

“Books are delightful society,” said Gladstone; “if you go into a room and find it full of books—even without taking them from their shelves they seem to speak to you, to bid you welcome. They seem to tell you that they have got something inside their covers that will be good for you, and that they are willing and desirous to impart to you.”

It is said that Bunyan during the years he was in jail, became so absorbed in some of the characters in “Pilgrim’s Progress,” and was so carried away with them, that he would often fall upon his knees and shed tears of joy in his ecstasies. His imagination transformed his prison into a Palace Beautiful. The jail walls did not confine his mind or his imagination. He lived in the town of Vanity Fair; he climbed the delectable mountain. Stone walls do not a prison make for such a spirit of happiness as Bunyan possessed.

Think of this wonderful man imprisoned for twelve years, and yet, in spite of all he suffered, producing a book only second to the Bible!

“I have friends,” said Petrarch, “whose society is extremely agreeable to me; they are of all ages and of every country. They have distinguished themselves both in the cabinet and in the field, and obtained high honors for their knowledge of the sciences. It is easy to gain access to them, for they are always at my service, and I admit them to my company and dismiss them from it whenever I please. They are never troublesome, but immediately answer every question I ask them. Some teach me how to live, and others how to die. Some by their vivacity drive away my cares and exhilarate my spirits, while others give fortitude to my mind and teach me the important lesson,—how to restrain my desires and depend wholly on myself. They open to me, in short, the various avenues of all the arts and sciences, and upon their information I may safely rely in all emergencies. In return for all their services they only ask me to accommodate them with a convenient chamber in some corner of my humble habitation where they may repose in peace; for these friends are more delighted by the tranquillity of retirement than with the tumults of society.”

Many of our choicest friends live between the leaves of our favorite books. We become more intimate with them than with any living characters. We are not afraid to open our hearts to one of them without reserve. There need be no clash of opinion. Our communion is heart to heart.

People are often ashamed to be seen with some persons with whom they desire to associate, and they are often secretive about some of their friendships, but they are frank in choosing friends in books. Hence, the voluntary selection of book companions is very important and we can quickly estimate a man’s character by his choice. They indicate the degree of his culture, his good taste and refinement or his coarseness and vulgarity. The books we collect are confessions of what we like and of what we are.

Many people make reading a means of intellectual dissipation. They do not read to learn, or to improve themselves, but merely to kill time, and for amusement.

Reading, without some sort of a purpose, is demoralizing. We read for recreation, but thoughtless reading without any purpose, except that of a means of intellectual dissipation, is always demoralizing. It brings on a form of *ennui*, and makes one restless and discontented instead of happy and contented. To read profitably one must keep these three things in mind: intention, attention, and retention. It is worth noting that the word retention comes from the Latin *retces*, a net. Nets are made so that the smaller and worthless fishes may slip through the meshes. So the mind trained to retention allows trivial things to escape and holds in memory only things of greater importance.

To read constantly for the sake of something to think of is to stultify one's self. Bacon said, "Reading maketh a full man." But there are different sorts of fullness, and that of the idle glutton is not to be commended. Let the dissipated reader ponder the wise words of Milton:

Who reads

Incessantly, and to his reading brings not

A spirit and judgment equal or superior.

Uncertain and unsettled still remains—

Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself.

If you are anxious to improve yourself, read books which tend to elevate your taste, refine your imagination, clarify your ambition, raise your ideals.

Read books of power, books which stir the very depths of your being to some purpose. Read books which make you resolve to do and be a little better; to try a little harder to be somebody and to do something in the world. Fifteen minutes' concentrated reading every day would carry one through the great authors in about five years.

Newell Dwight Hillis says: "One barrier that has helped to hold back the happiness that ought to sweep over our land like an advancing flood is found in modern literature. Man's mental mood must needs reflect the books and philosophy he reads. If former generations were happy in their garrets it was because their favorite authors were optimists, who saw life's good, indeed, yet also saw that evil, in its heart, was also good. The great authors, from Homer and Paul down to Shakespeare, have been the children of exultant joy as well as genius; all were large-natured, sweet, wholesome, healthy, and happy."

In his book, "The Pleasures of Life," Sir John Lubbock gives a list of carefully chosen books, "which so whet the mental appetite," says a writer, "that one wishes immediately to abandon even the glories of the earth, the companionship of delightful living friends, the excitements of travel, the pursuits of engaging avocations, to get to a quiet corner and for the time live in them."

Books make it possible for every person born into the world to begin where the previous generation left off. Every person born finds everything brought up to date for him. The author seems to say to the newcomer into the world, "I present to you in this volume the investigation of my lifetime—in science, in literature, in art."

One gives the results of a lifetime study of bird life. Another brings his lifetime study of insects, another of animals, another his travels, and so on. For a few pennies a newcomer on the earth may reap the fruit in art or books of a whole lifetime. Instead of going over the ground himself, he finds that multitudes have been gathering for him the results of their life's endeavor in their special line. For a small sum we purchase what may have cost fortunes, untold sacrifices, and struggles with poverty and hardship.

A great help in obtaining the knowledge which sinks in, springs up, and bears efficient fruit, comes from *owning* good books. Much of the wisdom which people possess probably comes from things which they read and reread many times in their schoolbooks. The sense of hurry engendered by the knowledge that a book must be returned to the public library at a certain time is extremely detrimental, if not fatal, to that absorption of its meaning from which alone can come power or restful pleasure. Therefore, have a library of your own. It does not need to be a large library. Nearly all America's greatest men and women read but few books when young, but these few they read so exhaustively, and digested so thoroughly, that their spirit,

purpose, and principles became a part of the readers' very souls, the dynamos which moved their lives to great ends.

The reading of good fiction is a splendid imagination exerciser and builder. It stimulates it by suggestions, powerfully increases its picturing capacity, and keeps it fresh and vigorous and wholesome; and a wholesome imagination plays a very great part in every sane and worthy life.

Aside from reading fiction, books of travel are of the best for mental diversion; then there are nature studies, and science and poetry,— all affording wholesome recreation, all of an uplifting character, and some of them opening up study specialties of the highest order, as in the great range of books classified as Natural Science.

The reading and study of poetry is much like the interest one takes in the beauties of natural scenery. Much of the best poetry is indeed a poetic interpretation of nature. Whittier and Longfellow and Bryant lead their readers to look on nature with new eyes, as Ruskin opened the eyes of Henry Ward Beecher.

Among books, the writings of the poets have perhaps furnished the greatest inspiration to the human mind. Poetry has been defined as the "highest expression of the highest thought."

"Poetry," says Shelley, "awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar."

Nor must the philosophers be overlooked.

The readers who do not know the Concord philosopher, Emerson, and the great writers of antiquity, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and Plato, have pleasures to come.

"When I consider what some books have done for the world, and what they are doing, how they keep up our hope, awaken new courage and faith, soothe pain, give an ideal of life to those whose homes are hard and cold, bind together distant ages and foreign lands, create new worlds of beauty, bring down truths from heaven,—I give eternal blessings for this gift," says an appreciative reader.

How books extend our mental horizon and broaden our limitation! Through them the centuries give up their choicest treasure to us. The wisdom of the greatest minds that have ever lived, is ours for the asking. No matter how poor, or how circumscribed our condition may be, books can quickly take us out of our close environment into any country or people. All the nations lay their best at our feet, and for a mere trifle.

"No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting." Good books elevate the character, purify the taste, *take the attractiveness out of low pleasures*, and lift us upon a higher plane of thinking and living.

Carlyle said that a collection of books is a university. What a pity that the thousands of ambitious, energetic men and women who missed their opportunities for an education at the school age, and feel crippled by their loss, fail to catch the significance of this, fail to realize the tremendous cumulative possibilities of that great life-improver, that admirable substitute for a college or university education —reading.

The following story shows how easily, with a little self-denial, one may collect a library:

"How can you afford all these books?" asked a young man, calling upon a friend; "I can't seem to find spare change for even the leading magazines."

"Oh, that library is only my 'one cigar a day,' " was the reply.

“What do you mean?” inquired the visitor.

“Mean? Just this: when you advised me to indulge in an occasional cigar, several years ago, I had been reading about a young fellow who bought books with money that others would have burned in cigars, and I thought I would try to do the same. You may remember that I said I should allow myself one cigar a day?”

“Yes, I recall the conversation, but don’t quite see the connection.”

“Well, I never smoked, but I put by the price of a five-cent cigar every day; and, as the money accumulated, I bought books,—the very books you see.”

“You don’t mean to say that your books cost no more than that! Why, there are dollars’ worth of them.”

“Yes, I know there are. I had six years more of my apprenticeship to serve when you advised me ‘to be a man.’ I put by the money, which, at five cents a day, amounted to \$18.25 a year, or \$109.50 in six years. I keep those books by themselves, as a result of my apprenticeship cigar-money; and, if you’d done as I did, you would by this time have saved many, many more dollars than I have, and would have been better off in health and own a library besides.”

Surround yourself with good books. There is something in the very atmosphere of books which is helpful and inspiring. One seems to absorb culture from the presence of books and contact with them. The mind changes; our ideals enlarge, when we are surrounded by good books. One can learn to love books, and derive much pleasure from them, too, by constantly being in their presence, and getting acquainted with them.

“An unread man,” says Richard Le Gallienne, “has only to read a very few of the great representative novels to find where he stands, what his tastes are likely to be, and what it is that he is looking for in books. . . . A living library is not to be deliberately made. You cannot plan it out on paper and then buy it *en bloc*. Of course you can make a collection of books in that way, but a collection of books is not a library. A bookstore is a collection of books, but it is not a library. A library is an organism developing side by side with the mind and character of its owner. It is the house of his spirit and is thus furnished progressively in accordance with the progress of his mental life.”

Cicero described a home without books as a body without a soul.

Although Macaulay had most everything that wealth, rank, and genius could give, yet he always preferred the company of his books to that of the greatest men and women of his time.

Gibbon declared that he would not exchange his love of reading for all the treasures of India.

“Books are both our luxuries and our daily bread. They have become to our lives and happiness prime necessities. They are our trusted favourites, our guardians, our confidential advisers, and the safe consumers of our leisure. They cheer us in poverty, and comfort us in the misery of affluence.”

It is of immense importance to teach children to avoid unpleasant, disagreeable, soul-harrowing books. Keep them from reading morbid stories, morbid descriptions of crime and misery in the newspapers. Do not let these black pictures etch their hideous forms into their tender, sensitive minds.

Many people who have lived troubled lives have regarded their love for books, their library, as their most precious possession—their Heaven upon earth. In their books they find solace, comfort, peace of mind, which passeth all understanding.

Whenever things go wrong with us and we are weary of life, when everything seems to bore us, when we are too tired and too distressed and too weary to work, we can call to our side the greatest writers that have ever lived and find rest and refreshment. The humblest citizen can summon Shakespeare or Emerson to his hovel, and he will give him his best.

Oliver Goldsmith once said: "The first time I read an interesting book, it is to me just as if I had gained a new friend; when I read over a book I have perused before, it resembles the meeting with an old one."

It might be truly said that those who have no friendship for books can live only a half life.

One who has but one hundred choice books in his library has one hundred doors each of which opens on prospects of infinite joy.

XVI. The Alchemy Of A Cheerful Mind

“A real power of life lies in smiles. Smiles are the only-potentials known that move things whether they intend to move or not.”

“What is an optimist?” asked a farmer’s boy.

“Well, John,” replied his father, “you know I can’t give ye the dictionary meanin’ of that word any more’n I can of a great many others. But I’ve got a kind of an idee what it means. Probably you don’t remember your Uncle Henry; but I guess if there ever was an optimist, he was one. Things was always coming out right with Henry, and especially anything hard that he had to do; it wasn’t a-goin’ to be hard,—’twas jest sort of solid-pleasant.

“Take hoein’ corn, now. If anything ever tuckered me out, ’twas hoein’ corn in the hot sun. But in the field, ’long about the time I begun to lag back a little, Henry he’d look up an’ say:

“‘Good, Jim! When we get these two rows hoed, an’ eighteen more, the piece’ll be half done.’ An’ he’d say it in such a kind of a cheerful way that I couldn’t ’a’ ben any more tickled if the piece had been all done,—an’ the rest would go light enough.

“But the worst thing we had to do—hoein’ corn was a picnic to it—was pickin’ stones. There was no end to that on our old farm, if we wanted to raise anything. When we wa’n’t hurried and pressed with somethin’ else, there was always pickin’ stones to do; an’ there wa’n’t a plowin’ but what brought up a fresh crop, an’ seems as if the pickin’ had all to be done over again.

“Well, you’d ’a’ thought, to hear Henry, that there wa’n’t any fun in the world like pickin’ stones. He looked at it in a different way from anybody I ever see. Once, when the corn was all hoed, and the grass wa’n’t fit to cut yet, an’ I’d got all laid out to go fishin’, and father he up and set us to pickin’ stones up on the west piece, an’ I was about ready to cry, Henry he says:

“‘Come on, Jim. I know where there’s lots of nuggets.’

“An’ what do you s’pose, now? That boy had a kind of a game that that there field was what he called a plasser mining field; and he got me into it, and I could ’a’ sworn I was in Californy all day,—we had such a good time.

“‘Only,’ says Henry, after we’d got through the day’s work, ‘the way you get rich with these nuggets is to get rid of ’em, instead of keepin’ em.’

“That somehow didn’t strike my fancy, but we’d had play instead of work, anyway, an’ a great lot of stones had been rooted out of that field.

“An’, as I said before, I can’t give ye any dictionary definition of optimism; but if your Uncle Henry wa’n’t an optimist, I don’t know what one is.”

An optimistic mind is a sort of a prism which brings the rainbow colors out of things which are invisible to the pessimist.

The prism does not make the colors in the spectrum. They are everywhere in the light before our eyes. Our light is made up of all the different colors of the rainbow. The prism merely separates them and makes them visible to the eye.

Every man should have an optimistic lens which can distinguish the uncommon in the common, which can detect all the beauties there are in his environment.

It is wicked to go about among one's fellow men with a face which indicates that life has been a disappointment to you instead of a glorious joy.

What a pitiable thing to see people go through life peddling vinegar, radiating bitterness, finding fault, and seeing only the ugly; worrying, fretting, cynical, and pessimistic! Some people have a genius for seeing only the crooked, the evil, and disagreeable. Pessimism is always a destroyer, never a producer.

We need more joy peddlers, and sunshine makers, more people who refuse to see the ugly, the bitter, and the crooked; who see the world of beauty and perfection which God has made, and not the world which sin and discord and disease have made. We need people who see the man and woman whom God has made—pure, clean, sane, healthy—and not the ugly, diseased, discordant dwarf, the burlesque of man, which wrong thinking, wrong living, and sin have made.

Oh, what riches live in a sunny soul!

Take joy with you; cling to her, no matter where you go or what you do. It is your lubricating oil which would prevent the jars, the discords, and shut out the sorrows of life. What a heritage is a smiling face,—to be able to fling out sunshine everywhere one goes, to scatter the shadows and to lighten sorrowing hearts; to have the power to send cheer into despairing souls through a sunny and radiant disposition!

The ability to radiate sunshine is a greater power than beauty or wealth. If you would do the maximum of which you are capable, keep the mind filled with sunshine, with beauty and truth, with cheerful, uplifting thoughts. Bury everything that makes you unhappy and discordant, everything that cramps your freedom, that worries you, before it buries you.

Probably many readers of this book have heard of "Smiling Joe," the optimistic little cripple at the Sea Breeze Home on Long Island. He was kept strapped to a board during four years of his life on account of severe spinal trouble. Yet he was the happiest child in the hospital, and, in spite of being strapped to his cruel board all these years, radiated more sunshine than anybody else in the home.

The test of character is one's ability to remain cheerful, serene, hopeful, even under fire. It is easy to be bright and optimistic when one enjoys robust health and is prosperous, but it requires heroic qualities to be so when poor health mocks ambition, and we are surrounded by disheartening conditions.

We want cheerful men and women, with more hopefulness and laughter! We have enough long and sour faces, enough of chilling looks and exclusive manners. Cheerfulness is one of the great miracle workers of the world. It reenforces the whole man, doubles and trebles his power and gives a new meaning to life. No man has failed until he has lost his cheerfulness, his optimistic outlook upon life.

Give me the man who, like Emerson, believes there is a remedy for every wrong, a satisfaction for every longing soul; the man who believes the best of everybody, and who sees beauty and loveliness where others see ugliness and disgust. Give me the man who believes that there is a great, underlying, beneficent principle running through the world, a current running heavenward; who believes that there is a great beneficent cause which brings things out infinitely better than we can plan them ourselves; who does not try to regulate the universe, but simply trusts this great divine principle. Give me the man who believes in the ultimate triumph of truth over error, of harmony over discord, of love over hate, of purity over vice, of light over darkness, of life over death. Such men are the true nation builders.

The man who has learned to surround himself with an atmosphere of peace and harmony, no matter what discord and darkness are in his environment, is the man who has learned the last lesson of culture.

And, after all, this peace and serenity must come by controlling the thought and by knowing that only the real, the good, is true, because God made it, and that everything else is false because He did not make it.

When we learn that discord, disease, and all that worries and frets and makes us anxious are only the absence of harmony, and that they are not realities of being, that God never made them, and hence they must be false, then we shall learn the secret of real harmonious living, we shall learn the secret of scientific living. Then we can throw the best of ourselves into the most unfortunate environment, we can fling out the fragrance and beauty of serene and balanced lives, even in the most discordant surroundings. Think the good; drive away evil; keep the mind so filled with the good, the beautiful and the true, that the opposites will find no affinity there. If there is no music in me, no affinity for justice, for the good, the beautiful and the true, then I may not appreciate them in my life. If there is no Emerson in me, then his works will not find a response in my soul. If there is no love of the beautiful in my soul, then I shall meet no beauty anywhere in the world.

When we learn that there is enough divinity in us to conquer all the inharmony, to swallow all the discord that would mar the great divine symphony, then we shall be living to some purpose. This knowledge is the magic which will transform the hovel into a palace.

Deacon Brown was always noted for expressing his gratitude in the prayer meetings, for some special blessing, even though all sorts of misfortunes and hard luck had followed him all his life, and he had lost everything he had ever had—every member of his family, his home, his property, his health.

His friends wondered what he could find to be grateful for. He seemed just as cheerful and optimistic as ever. "Waal," he said, "even if I've lost everything in the world, I'm still thanking the Lord I've two teeth left and one opposite t'other."

A man traveling in the West on a crowded train sat in the seat with an old lady, who every little while would take a bottle from her satchel, hold it out of the window and shake something out of it which looked like salt. The man finally asked her what she was doing this for. "Oh," she said, "these are flower seeds. I have made it a rule for many years when traveling to scatter seeds by the railroad tracks, especially in crossing the desert and in unattractive parts of the country. Do you see those beautiful flowers beside the track? Well, they came from seeds which I scattered along this same road many years ago."

"Hopefulness, laughter, and cheer!" some one writes. "Scatter them wherever you go like roses on your path. Give them in place of grudges and throw them out instead of hints. Exchange them for insinuations and substitute them for complaints. Take them to your shopmates in the morning and bring them back to your loved ones at noon. Bestow them in the office and send them in the mail. Carry them to the sick and leave them with the unconsolated. Everywhere and always, with your Christian geniality, warm up the cold streets and hearthstones of the world."

Cheerfulness amid dark and gloomy surroundings is like the glow of sunlight irradiating the murkiness of the day. The influence of a cheerful spirit cannot be estimated. It takes only a drop of oil to stop a screeching axle or hinge. So a little bit of sunshine scatters the shadows. Sunlight has an inspiring effect, a beneficent influence; it is favorable to health; it makes all nature rejoice, and it warms the soul of man. So a cheerful face lightens other hearts, gives strength to other lives, and imparts courage to face difficulties that may frown before one.

Some one has said, "A happy human face—it is the gift that may be made by poor or rich, by old or young. It is the gift to which all are entitled, with which all are pleased. It is written in a language all can read, and carries a message none can refuse."

"I just loike to let her in at the dure," said an Irish servant of a lady caller. "The very face of her does one good, shure."

How glad we all are to welcome sunny souls! We are never too busy to see them. There is nothing we welcome so much as sunshine.

"The cheerful heart makes its own blue sky."

We all know how the very landscape seems to laugh with us when we rejoice, seems to exult with us when we are glad, and the very sun and the flowers seem to reflect our joy. But when we are melancholy and blue all nature takes on the same expression, and while, of course, there is no real change in nature, yet to us this apparent change is tremendous.

When we lose the power to smile, what hideous images arise in the mind! How soon the imagination becomes morbid! The mind becomes infested with doubts and fears, and hallucinations when its activity ceases. When the purpose is gone, disorder comes in; when joy goes out, melancholia enters.

If there is anything we need in this too serious civilization of ours, it is men and women who smile always. It costs no more to wear a smile than to go about with a thunder-cloud expression,—and what a difference it will make to you and everybody who sees you! Everybody we meet is helped or hindered by what we radiate. It makes all the difference in the world whether we go about with a smiling face or wearing a frown. A smile in the heart not only changes the expression but it changes the whole nature which, as we know, takes on the color of our moods.

The time has gone by when long-faced, too sober, too serious people shall dominate the world. Melancholy solemnity used to be regarded as a sign of spirituality, but it is now looked upon as the imprint of a morbid mind. There is no religion in it. True religion is full of hope, sunshine, optimism, and cheerfulness. It is joyous and glad and beautiful. There is no Christianity in the ugly, the discordant, the sad. The religion which Christ taught was bright, cheerful, and beautiful. The sunshine, the "lilies of the field," the "birds of the air," the hills, the valleys, the trees, the mountains, the brooks—all things beautiful—were in His teaching. There was no cold, dry theology in it. It was just happy Christianity!

Refuse to be gloomy. Cheer up! Get your mind off your troubles. Do not think about them. Think of the bright things in life. Think gratefully of the good things you have, and be cheerful.

Emerson says, "Do not hang a dismal picture on your wall, and do not deal with sables and glooms in your conversation."

If you carry about a gloomy face, you advertise the fact that hope has died out of you; that life has been a disappointment to you. Adopt the sun-dial's motto: "I record none but hours of sunshine."

What else in life is more valuable than the art of forgetting, of burying, covering up the disagreeable, everything that has caused us pain and hindered our progress?

The person who has this art is largely independent of his immediate surroundings. He can be happy without money. He can be happy in good times or in hard times. He can rejoice when others are mourning, have a good time when others are in the "blues."

Man was not made to express discord, but harmony; to express beauty, truth, love, and happiness; wholeness, not halfness; completeness, not incompleteness.

The mental temple was not given us for the storing of things that distress us. It was intended for the abode of the gods, for the treasuring of high purposes, grand aims, noble aspirations.

It does not take very long to learn that the good excludes the bad; that the higher always shuts out the lower; that the greater motive, the grander affection, excludes the lesser, the lower. The good is more than a match for the bad.

“Above all else, I love a courageous gayety —one that can accomplish great deeds with smiles and song; that gayety of the soldier who makes the best of everything, seasons his thin porridge with a joke, laughs over his primitive bed, the inclemency of the seasons, and hums the tunes of his native country while firing his gun.”

What a marvelous gift to have that mental alchemy which makes even poverty seem attractive, which sees the ludicrous side of misfortune!

I once traveled with a young man who had a marvelous alchemy in his nature which turned the most disagreeable experiences into gold. He could find enjoyment in the most ordinary and even the most embarrassing situations. He had a genius for seeing the funny side of things, and kept everybody around him laughing. Once when we were so troubled with fleas in a hotel in Vienna that we could not sleep, I saw my friend on the floor having a lot of fun, measuring a large specimen. He said that he had found the biggest flea on record.

There is everything in acquiring the art of looking on the sunny side of men and things.

The world is a looking-glass which flings back to us the reflection of ourselves. If we laugh it laughs back at us. If we shed tears, it reflects a sorrowful face.

Do you go through life wretched, miserable, or do you rise above the petty annoyances which destroy the peace of so many people? Learn the fine art of enjoying everybody and everything. Like the bee, get honey from everywhere. Form the habit of getting good out of every experience in life. You can get something which will enrich your life, something helpful, out of everybody you meet. Every experience has something which would help somebody. Why not you?

A business woman thus tells of an interesting experiment she made:

“I started out to my work one morning, determined to try the power of cheerful thinking (I had been moody, sullen, and discouraged long enough). I said to myself: I have often observed that a happy state of mind has a wonderful effect upon my physical make-up, so I will try its effect upon others, and see if my right thinking can be brought to act upon them.’ You see I was curious. As I walked along, more and more resolved on my purpose, and persisting that I was happy, that the world was treating me well, I was surprised to find myself lifted up, as it were; my carriage became more erect, my step lighter, and I had the sensation of treading on air. Unconsciously, I was smiling, for I caught myself in the act once or twice. I looked into the faces of the women I passed and there saw so much trouble and anxiety, discontent, even to peevishness, that my heart went out to them, and I wished I could impart to them a wee bit of the sunshine I felt pervading me.

“Arriving at the office, I greeted the bookkeeper with some passing remark, that for the life of me I could not have made under different conditions; I am not naturally witty; it immediately put us on a pleasant footing for the day; *she* had caught the reflection. The president of the company, by whom I was employed, was a very busy man and much worried over his affairs, and at some remark that he made about my work I would ordinarily have felt quite hurt

(being too sensitive by nature and education) ; but this day I had determined nothing should mar its brightness, so replied to him cheerfully. His brow cleared, and there was another pleasant footing established, and so throughout the day I went, allowing no cloud to spoil its beauty for me or others about me. At the kind home where I was staying the same course was pursued, and, where before I had felt estrangement and want of sympathy, I found congeniality and warm friendship. People will meet you halfway if you will take the trouble to go that far.

“So, my sisters, if you think -the world is not treating you kindly, don’t delay a day, but say to yourselves: I am going to keep young in spite of the gray hairs; even if things do not always come my way I am going to live for others, and shed sunshine across the pathway of all I meet.’ You will find happiness springing up like flowers around you, will never want for friends or companionship, and above all the peace of God will rest upon your soul.”

Some people have a faculty for touching the wrong keys; from the finest instrument they extract only discord. They sound the note of pessimism everywhere. All their songs are in a minor key. Everything is looking down. The shadows predominate in all their pictures. There is nothing bright, cheerful, or beautiful about them. Their outlook is always gloomy; times are always hard and money tight. Everything in them seems to be contracting; nothing expanding or growing or widening in their lives.

With others it is just the reverse. They cast no shadows. They radiate sunshine. Every bud they touch opens its petals and flings out its fragrance and beauty. They never approach you but to cheer; they never speak to you but to inspire. They scatter flowers wherever they go. They have that happy alchemy which turns prose to poetry, ugliness to beauty, discord to melody. They see the best in people and say pleasant and helpful things about them.

There is no habit which will give more satisfaction, that will enrich you more than this of doing a good turn for others at every opportunity. If you cannot give material help, if you have no money to give, you can always help by a cheerful spirit, by cordial words of sympathy, kindness, and encouragement. There are more hearts hungering for love and sympathy and cheer than for money, and these you can always give.

XVII. The Twin Enemies Of Happiness: Fear And Worry

"I wrote down my troubles every day, And after a few short years. When I turned to the heartaches passed away, I read them with smiles, not tears."

"Worry is the most popular form of suicide."

"The gods we worship write their names in our faces."

Once upon a time a magician felt such pity for a mouse in his house which lived in perpetual fear of the cat, that he changed it into a cat. But it at once began to be afraid of the dog, and the magician changed it into a dog. It still suffered constant terror of a tiger on the premises, and the magician turned it into a tiger. Nor did its troubles end there, for it was in constant fear of a huntsman. Finally the disgusted magician turned it back to a mouse again, saying, "As you have only the nerve of a mouse, it is impossible to help you by giving you the body of a nobler animal."

Many people never seem to be able to rid their minds of fear. When they are poor they imagine that if they only had money and health they would never feel dread or worry again. They imagine that if they had this or that, if they were differently environed or conditioned, they could get rid of anxiety and its whole vampire family, but when they gain these prizes, the same old enemy, although in a different form, still pursues them.

There are no more enemies of happiness than fear and worry.

They are always and everywhere a curse. There is nothing which we are called upon to meet in life, there is no misfortune or disaster that can ever come to us which we cannot bear better without these joy killers.

Fear is an old, old enemy, indeed, and worry its hated accomplice. Primitive fear we have always had with us, but worry is the disease of our own age. In our "enlightenment" we both pity and ridicule the barbarous man who lived in mortal fear of his cruel gods. But have we not also our exacting demons before which our souls cringe and our powers wither and fail?

I know a most estimable man who has been terribly handicapped all his life by fear. It has played great havoc with his career. He has fought desperately against it, but he did not know until recently that it was possible to neutralize it by its opposite mental suggestion. He says that fear has dogged his steps from infancy, has strangled his self-expression, has stood in the way of everything he has ever attempted. It has kept him from undertaking things which he was perfectly confident he could carry out.

Since he has found out how to neutralize this great destroyer of his peace, his happiness, and his success, his whole mental attitude has completely changed. He says he never discovered himself, or dreamed of his possibilities, until he annihilated fear. The very elimination of this enemy has resulted in a tremendous uplift and improvement, so that where he was once weak, timid, vacillating, fearing to undertake things, he is now strong, vigorous, confident. The destruction of fear has unlocked his latent energy and resulted in a tremendous increase of mental power. He can accomplish more now in a month, and easily, than he could have accomplished formerly in a year, and that with very painful effort.

Fear kills hope; worry and anxiety crush confidence, ruin the power to concentrate, and paralyze the initiative. Fear is the fatal foe of all achievement. It is the poisoner of happiness.

“Take an antitoxin against fret and worry the moment you feel the approach of their contagious atmosphere,” says a writer.

Many people are always afraid of something. They do not have courage enough really to enjoy life. They are afraid to mingle with those who are mentally their superiors or who have been more favored by fortune. Fearful that their poverty of mind or purse may be disclosed, they thus forfeit many advantages and pleasures to be derived from social discourse. They are cowards, and cowards are never happy.

We were made to dominate our environment. It was not intended that we should be buffeted about by accident or chance. Our greatest enemies live in our own brains, in our imaginations, in our wrong ideas of life. We were intended to be conquerors instead of slaves and there is no slavery like the slavery to a conviction or a superstition that makes us cowards.

Foolish superstitions and ignorance mar the happiness of a multitude of people. Many think that superstitions are harmless, but nothing is harmless which makes a man believe that he is a puppet of circumstances, that he is at the mercy of signs and symbols, that there is a power in the world in opposition to the Omnipotent; something that is working against and trying to harm mortal beings.

It is estimated that there are more than five thousand different forms of fear. With a multitude of people a dread of some impending evil is ever present. It haunts them even in their happiest moments. Their joy is poisoned with it so that they never take real pleasure or comfort in anything. The skeleton in the closet is the ghost that is ever at the banquet.

The fear of disease mars the happiness of a vast multitude of people. They picture the horrible symptoms of some dread malady they are sure is developing in their system, and the constant fear impairs nutrition, weakens the resisting power of the body and tends to encourage or develop any possible hereditary taint or disease tendency which may be lurking in the system.

Fear modifies all the currents of the blood, poisons and dilutes all the secretions. It strangles the circulation, paralyzes the nervous system, whitens the hair, wrinkles the face, enfeebles the step.

What depresses and distresses, disturbs or worries us; in fact, all phases of fear and anxiety, contract the blood vessels and impede the free circulation of the blood.

On the other hand whatever makes us happy, whatever excites an enjoyable emotion, relaxes the capillaries and gives freedom to the circulation.

Children who live in a fear atmosphere suffer from arrested development, they never unfold naturally; their starved, stunted bodies never become normal; their blood vessels are smaller, their circulation slower, heart weaker, under the influence of these terror-producing demons. Fear dries up the very source of life, while love that casteth out fear has just the opposite effect.

It is a strange thing that after all the centuries of experience and enlightenment, the human race has not learned that fear is nothing but a ghost of the imagination, and has not resolved positively to refuse to be tortured by these enemies of happiness. It seems as though the race could have found some way out of this needless suffering centuries ago, but we are still frightened by the same ghosts of fear and worry that haunted our ancestors. They could be easily destroyed or neutralized by simply reversing the thought, the mental attitude.

Look back upon your life, you who are nearly at the end, and you will find that the fear of things that made you prematurely old, which wrinkled your face and took the elasticity out of your step, the bloom from your cheek, and robbed you of your joy, was of things which never really happened.

It is strange that that which has no basis in reality should have tortured the whole human race from the very dawn of history to the present, as has fear, which has absolutely no reality, but is purely a mental product, a bogey of the imagination. We know that the Creator never put into His image anything which would cause such distress and destroy peace of mind and happiness, which would ruin man's efficiency. A physician has recently said that fear was as normal to the human mind as courage. You might as well say that discord is harmony as to say that fear is normal.

Theology and our creeds have too much anxiety and fear, too much shadow, and too little joys and gladness, too much cloud and too little of the sunshine, too much of the hereafter and too little of the now and here. It is "the Christ and not the creed" that humanity wants.

For many centuries the Church taught such a wrong and totally false idea of death that it helped to develop a race horror of it. Death is as natural as birth. It is merely passing through another door on the life path, only entering another state of consciousness. The death change is as natural as the change of the caterpillar to the chrysalis, the grub to the butterfly. It is merely one more stage of unfoldment.

"Death is but a covered bridge

That leads from light to light."

Many people have developed such a fear of death, they are so terrified at the very thought of it, that they do not half enjoy the present life or get the most out of it.

Some people always seem to be preparing for death. This mental attitude—that, not knowing what may happen, we should be prepared for the end when it comes—this living in the shadow of death, is demoralizing. It is a skeleton that rises up to trouble many at their feasts. They cannot really enjoy themselves because of the perpetual death fear.

I know several men who, since they passed middle life, have been constantly preparing for the end, getting their affairs in order, making their wills, deciding how their business is to be managed after they are gone. And they are constantly referring to death, talking about it, holding the death picture in the minds of their families like a perpetual moving-picture show.

Think of what a wrong thing it is for children to be brought up in such a death-picture atmosphere that they are afraid to go to bed at night! I believe that the picture suggested to the child's mind in the prayer, "If I should die before I wake," has done infinite harm. What does the child know about death? He cannot comprehend what to him seems the horror, the awfulness of it.

I believe the death picture instilled into the young mind during its plastic years (when its imagination is so active) by the parents and the Church has been responsible for a vast amount of suffering and has tended to prejudice a vast multitude of people against their Creator. There is something so absolutely incompatible between the "father-mother" idea of the love of God, which we try to instill into our children, and the horrible idea of death, which the child is taught to believe is caused by the same loving God. The two things do not go together, and the child cannot possibly have that sweet, tender love for the Being who is responsible for such a revolting death that he should have for an all-loving Father.

For centuries multitudes of church people lived under sentence of death with an uncertain reprieve. They never seemed to know what moment they would be called. They lived in a constant fear of dying. This constant death horror hung over their lives like a great black pall, shutting off joy.

The great soul, calm in the nobler happiness, feels a sense of safety, of absolute security under all circumstances. When one believes that he is the victim of a destiny which he cannot control, that he is liable at any moment to have his life plans upset, his program spoiled, all his hopes frustrated without warning,—in other words, that there is no certainty for the future of his endeavor, however great, he cannot develop that solidity of character, that enduring, underlying principle, which is the backbone of every great life.

There must be a conviction that there is a divine something within us, which sustains under all circumstances; that a wise Creator has placed us beyond the reach of accident upon land or sea, before we can develop an enduring character. There must be a feeling of absolute security, before we can attain that symmetry or arrive at that perfect balance or poise of character which constitutes real manhood and womanhood.

As long as there is any doubt in our minds whether we are part of the eternal principle, of the great Infinite plan, which cannot be annihilated, but is beyond the reach of want, chance, or misfortune, the character will be defective. It will lack that enduring strength which is characteristic of all great lives.

All noble characters have had this unshakeable faith in the truth of being, in the one enduring principle, in the reality of love, and the supreme purpose of life. This beautiful confidence in God, who is life not death, was expressed by Whittier in the lines:

And so beside the Silent Sea

I wait with muffled oar;

No harm from Him can come to me

On ocean or on shore.

Fear is the consciousness of separateness from the great, Infinite principle of love, of truth, and of Omnipotent power. Could anything be more assuring, anything show us better our unity with the Divine, than this comforting statement, “Lo! I am with you always”? It seems as though the Psalmist and many of the other Bible writers took special pains to give specific remedies for all human ills.

All fear is based upon the fact that the sufferer feels weak from the consciousness of his separateness from the Infinite strength, the Infinite supply, and when he comes into consciousness of at-one-ment with the Power which made and sustains him, when he finds the peace which satisfies and passeth all understanding—then will he feel a sense of the glory of being; and, having once touched this Power and tasted the Infinite blessedness, he will never fear or worry again, never again be satisfied with the fleshpots of Egypt.

Our sense of fear is always in proportion to our sense of weakness or inability to protect ourselves from the cause of it.

The late Professor Shaler, of Harvard University, said that the greatest discovery of the last century was that of the unity of everything in the universe, the oneness of all life.

Life will take on a new meaning when we come into the realization of our at-one-ment with this great, creating, sustaining Principle of the universe.

The idea that there is but one principle running through the universe, one life, one truth, one reality, that this power is divinely beneficent, and that we are really in a great current running Godward, heavenward, is one of the most inspiring, encouraging, and fear-killing beliefs that has ever entered the human mind.

The realization that in the truth of our being we are actually a part of this great, divine Principle, a necessary, inseparable part of it, and that we can no more be annihilated than can the laws of mathematics, that we must partake of all of the qualities which compose our Creator, that we must be perfect and immortal because we were created by Perfection, are a part of immortal Principle, solves the greatest mysteries of life and gives us a wonderful sense of safety and contentment, which nothing else can give.

Just in proportion as we realize this oneness with the Divine, this at-one-ment with our Maker, do our lives become calm, confident, creative.

Our fear, our worry, our anxiety are indications that we have lost consciousness of our divine connection and have strayed from home, that we are out of tune with the Infinite, in discord with divine Principle.

When one feels that his hand is gripped by the Omnipotent hand, he is “too near to God for doubt or fear,” and he knows that no harm can come to him from any finite source, and all sense of fear vanishes. To feel that we are held always, everywhere by this Divine hand and protected by Omnipotent wisdom steadies the life wonderfully and gives a poise, an assurance and confidence that nothing else can. The consciousness that we are actually to live, move, and have our being in the Divinity will revolutionize our lives. When the mind is in us which was also in Christ, we shall never know fear again. As Whittier has beautifully said:

I know not where His Islands lift

Their fronded palms in air,

I only know I cannot drift

Beyond His love and care.

Every one should be able to dominate his own mentality, to be the master of his own mind at all times. It is pitiable to see a strong man in most things, a passive victim to the torturing thoughts which he should be able to strangle in an instant.

The minds of many men are so affected by chronic anxiety and fear, that something is going to happen to them; their minds are so troubled with foreboding thoughts, that their judgment is not reliable. When fear steps in, good sense, good judgment, steps out.

A man should be able to be master of his own mental realm. He should be able to detect the character of the guest thoughts which gain access to his mind. He should be able to open or close the gates of his mind, to include or exclude, as he chooses. But, when we look back over life and see what havoc fear and worry have made upon our digestion, our bodily functions, and our nerves, and how they have been destructive in the relations of our everyday life, we are appalled at their power.

Thousands die annually from depressed spirits, disappointed hopes, thwarted ambitions, and premature exhaustion. We have not yet learned to cultivate that high-minded cheerfulness which is found in great souls, self-centered and confident in their own heaven-aided powers—that lofty cheerfulness which is the great preventive of humanity’s ills. We have not yet learned, as a people, that grief, anxiety, and fear, are the great enemies of human life, and

should be resisted as we resist the plague. Without cheerfulness there can be no healthy action, physical, mental, or moral, for it is the normal atmosphere of our being.

The great thing is to keep one's physical, mental, and moral standards high, so that the worry, anxiety, fear germs cannot get a footing in our system. Our resisting power ought to be so great that it would be impossible for those enemies to get into the mind or body.

The other day I came across this sentence which struck me quite forcefully: "If you cannot be happy when you are miserable, you cannot be happy at all."

The writer no doubt meant that the man who is a victim of his moods, who cannot command his mental outlook, who is not master of himself, but who goes up and down with the mood that happens to be upon him at the moment, cannot control his happiness. He cannot tell you whether he is going to be happy or not, because he does not know how he will feel at any particular time.

Doctors could testify graphically to one of the worst results of chronic indulgences in fear and anxiety, and that is the growing use of narcotics. Modern worry is largely responsible for the alarming increase of the drug habit. It is a most unfortunate thing that so many patent medicines, which ignorant people think are specifics for all sorts of troubles, can be so easily procured at drug stores. All the preparations that contain morphine, cocaine, and alcohol, especially the headache specifics, are very dangerous in the hands of uninformed people, and often lead to tragic results. It is so easy for any one to get deadly drugs that it is a great temptation for victims of the worry habit to seek relief in them.

The self-drugging habit is one of the most dangerous symptoms of modern times. Medicines are put up in such attractive packages, so convenient to take and to carry in one's pocket, that the dangers of self-drugging are greatly increased. The use of these "nerve soothers" and "panaceas" reflects seriously upon the way we are living and working today. The tendency to the drug habit is fairly inherent in the abnormal tension under which we battle for a livelihood and for happiness. Our nerves are continuously strained to the breaking point; we can't "let down"; we lose the ability to surrender ourselves to normal influences for enjoyment. We *must* keep our capacity for enjoyment; we *must* find happiness at whatever cost. So, many people get into the way of depending on stimulants or narcotics to make happiness physically possible. They resort to drugs to escape their miseries and to realize whatever pleasurable sensations their jaded minds and senses may be able to get from life.

When Frances Willard was first studying intemperance among the laboring classes in this country, she said: "They are poor because they drink." But before long she inverted her inference and said: "They drink because they are poor."

Take the case of the common workman and victim of the gigantic steel industry in Pittsburg. He *'must*, toil, a slave subdued to a system like a devouring Minotaur, all his daytimes and even late into the night, with only a few hours, at long intervals, that he can call his own. Can we blame him when he snatches at that brief respite to swing the full length of the pendulum over into the world of vivid sensations that the grinding monotony of all his other days denies him,—or into the realm of Nirvana for shattered nerves and a body wound up like a machine that can never again find rest? He must get this reaction, or he will kill himself, or go insane. Such is nature's law. And how is a man who knows nothing except slavery of mind and body so to dispose himself, mentally and spiritually, in those brief hours of freedom, as to receive the real happiness of life? He thinks he has only one means of getting the indispensable reaction. Only one sort of happiness is open to him. He thinks he must go and get as drunk as he can, and for a little while monotony and pain will be dispelled, and dreams and grateful oblivion will possess him.

This is an extreme example. But it serves the more graphically to show an abnormal tendency of our times to which all of us, in measure, as life to-day makes drudges and machines of us, are prone. We fear to lose our sensibility for enjoyment of life. We worry lest pain and trouble deprive us of happiness. And if our souls cannot or will not replace fear and worry with true happiness in daily living, then we resort to external means, such as drugs and stimulants, to give us the pathological counterfeit of happiness.

Formerly there were very few things which people would resort to to acquire a feeling of well being and try to force their jaded nerves and vitiated brains and faculties to give up by artificial means,—something which they could not generate by natural ones.

Nowadays we see men constantly running to the barrooms for a “bracer.” At the clubs they are always wanting a cocktail, and they cannot get along without a cigar or cigarette in their mouth much of the time.

Business men are constantly goading their nervous system and brain to give out something that isn’t there. They keep forcing themselves by these artificial means until they use up all their reserves, so that they have no resisting power when disease or illness comes.

Worry and fear have made more drunkards than almost any other cause. Anything that will vanish care, relieve the strain of worry and anxiety, anything that will bring peace of mind is what a disturbed, distressed, and anxious humanity is seeking.

The millions of men who are constantly running into saloons for a “bracer” do so believing that they will get at least a temporary uplift or relief from the things that trouble them, and that they will then be in a better position to do their work. Few of them realize to what this constant stimulation from liquors, tobacco, coffee, drugs, will lead; they do not realize that they must pay for these prods, these stimulants, by a fatal reaction. Men do not realize that all a drink of whiskey does is to paralyze for the time being the nerves of the walls of the blood vessels in the brain, thus letting in an additional supply of blood, causing temporary congestion and additional brain stimulus, due to the surplus of brain nutriment floating in the blood, and that this condition must always be followed by a corresponding reaction and mental depression.

All this but emphasizes more strongly our innate need of happiness, and the fatal influence of fear and worry. Why is it that most of us, who are fortunate enough in the place we have found in the world, are not more capable of happiness?

The trouble is that we do not look within for the mainspring of power. It is a strange thing that man should look outside of himself for the very help that is inside him. The moment a man depends upon outside help, he cuts himself off from the source of power; he severs the divine cable. He drops the trolley pole so that he no longer draws his power from the divine current. He tries, without looking to his higher nature, to propel his car; it has all of the divine machinery, all the mechanism for drawing off divine energy, but only if he will connect his trolley pole of faith and truth with the divine current.

It is a reflection upon Him who made us, to be always worrying, fretting, and anxious; for, if we were in touch with Infinite power, we should be serene and balanced. It is as much our duty to repel every enemy of health and happiness as to keep thieves out of our homes. Worry and anxiety have no more right to darken our lives than wild beasts have to live in our homes. They are just as much out of place.

Harmony is as normal to the man God made as it is to music.

“Be sure not to worry.” “Keep cheerful and don’t worry.” These common injunctions of a doctor when he leaves a patient, show the universal belief of physicians in the fatal, blighting, health-destroying influence of worry. Physicians look upon it as a curse.

Worry poisons the blood, impairs the nutrition; and poisoned blood poisons the thought, and deteriorates all of the mental processes. “A day of worry is more exhausting than a week of work. Worry upsets our whole system, work keeps it in health and order.”

Many honest, well-intentioned, hard-working people suffer a great deal from night worry. It is wicked for God’s children who are doing their best to do their share in the world and make it a better place to live in, to be unhappy. Right living entitles every one to happiness.

“I have made it a rule of my life,” said a prominent English clergyman, “never to think of anything disagreeable after nine o’clock at night.”

“Every moment of worry weakens the soul for its daily combat,” writes a well-known preacher. “Worry is an infirmity; there is no virtue in it. Worry is spiritual near-sightedness; a fumbling way of looking at little things, and of magnifying their value.”

“Worry is a species of insanity. We would count a man insane who took a dose of poison every day to promote his health. He is no less mentally unbalanced who desires happiness and yet indulges a habit of worrying. It is like walking south to find the North; it is like going into a cellar to look for rainbows. It paralyzes the powers by which the evil thing may be averted.”

What would you think of a man on the verge of bankruptcy, who was trying in every way possible to get together money enough to relieve himself from his embarrassment or to save his business or property, who would draw from the bank several times a day a few dollars and throw them away or spend them foolishly?

Do you realize, you worrier, that you are doing something infinitely more foolish? Your brain power, your creative ability, your energy, are your capital, with which you are to solve your life problem, and yet, every sleepless night you spend worrying over your affairs, every moment of anxiety, of fretting and stewing, and nervous tension, is draining off your precious capital. Your brain capital, nerve capital, vitality capital, which should help you to clear up your perplexing problems, you are not only squandering, but you are also making yourself and those around you unhappy, destroying the harmony of your home, committing suicide upon months, and, perhaps, years of your life. All the time you are depending upon things outside of yourself to give you peace of mind, comfort, happiness, success. But these things are subject to accident, and you are risking all that life ought to mean to you in pinning your faith to things which are outside your control.

Now, there ought to be something in a life which is beyond the reach of accident, beyond the possibility of being wrecked by chance. Think of a man capable of leading hundreds or thousands of employees in a great enterprise—a man of achievement, born to do great things—lying around for days, as I have known a business man to do, the victim of the “blues,” in the clutch of mental demons which he ought to be able to throttle in five minutes!

Man certainly has an inherent right to success and happiness that is inalienable. God’s children are not the victims of chance, are not the playthings of a cold, cruel destiny beyond their control. Courage and cheerfulness are within our own will power, they are our safety, and self-preservation.

There is no worse tyrant than the demon worry, but he is a master of our own choosing. He cannot force his rule upon us against our will.

There are certain events, indeed, which come upon us unawares, certain psychic states which we cannot foresee nor escape. But, once we are conscious of those moods, we may become master of them. We may turn the darkest experience to the account of happiness. There is no joy equal to that of conquering bitterness, of overcoming sorrow. In such a victory we find a happiness beyond all our dreams of happiness.

We are challenged to-day to overcome worry, but this takes us back to the ancient fight with fear. Fear must go. Yet, through long conflict we have not been able to crush his citadel or drive him from his powerful seat. He continues to hold sway, the arch-enemy of the race, the great robber baron who plunders our hard-hoarded store of human happiness and efficiency; who makes of men cowards, obsessed with worry, anxiety, jealousy, and the sense of failure.

It is high time we realized that he is not to be forced off his throne by crude attack. Instead, we must, unknown to him, invite in another stronger than he. As Fear works havoc with the imagination, so must this newcomer absorb our thoughts and feelings in a yet stronger way, until at length he draws to himself the allegiance we have so long given Fear. He shall be Fear's antidote—and his name is Faith.

When we have given our allegiance to Faith, then shall we see Fear toppling from his ancient throne. We cannot drag him off by force but we can push him aside little by little to make room for a greater master of the human spirit than he. And when Fear shall be no more, worry, too, shall leave us,—both the old enemy and the new disease, the twin enemies of happiness. Man shall find a sublime, new self-faith; he shall rest in such sense of security, freedom, ability, as he cannot now conceive; and his efficiency shall partake of the divine creative power.

XVIII. The Strain To Keep Up Appearances Kills Happiness

“You can buy a lot of home happiness with a mighty small salary, but fashionable happiness always costs just a little more than you’re making. You can’t keep down expenses when you’ve got to keep up appearances—that is, the appearance of being something that you ain’t.”

Not long ago the home of a New York widow, and all her other property that the law did not exempt, were sold at auction. It was found that this over-ambitious mother, in her efforts to marry her daughters into families much above their station, had made desperate efforts to keep up appearances, and had run into debts which had finally cost her her home. It was found that she owed large amounts to the florists, the caterers, the milliners, and the dry goods people, and that she had been living for a long time far beyond her income, keeping up appearances which were perpetual lies. All this she did because of her insane ambition to marry her daughters to rich men. The family could have lived in comfort on her modest income, but for the mother’s false life standards. Thousands of dollars were squandered in buying hats, dresses, expensive laces, and all sorts of finery, so that her daughters might shine as brilliantly as other young women who had many times their means. Now the mother is without a home and the daughters remain still without husbands.

It is over-vaulting ambition, selfishness, the everlasting striving and struggling in the most unnatural way to keep up appearances, which causes much of the unhappiness in homes. Why is it that people burn out their lives with discontent and misery, struggling, striving, making slaves of themselves to keep up appearances, in great cities, without knowing what real enjoyment, real life means, when they might be so contented and happy, might be somebody and stand for something in a smaller town, where people were not so money-mad, and ambition-crazy?

I know two young married people in New York who are perfectly wretched because they cannot get into fashionable society and live and dress like those whom they envy, and whose example they are not able to follow. They are always anxious and worried, and they never feel that they can afford to take much real comfort, except when they are making an impression upon others. They feel that they must spend everything for appearances, because they are slaves of other people’s opinions.

It is not so much our lack of comforts, or of luxury, as our envy, our selfishness, our false standards that make us unhappy.

What terrible inconvenience, hardship, and suffering we endure on account of other people’s eyes and opinions! What slaves, what fools we make of ourselves because of what other people think! How we scheme and contrive to make them think we are other than we really are!

It is other people’s eyes that are expensive. It is other people’s eyes that make us unhappy and discontented with our lot, that make us strain and struggle and slave, in order to keep up false appearances.

The struggle to keep up with those in better circumstances is one of the tragedies of the times. Debt is one of the greatest sources of unhappiness, especially with young married people.

In a large city like New York, many people feel that they are nobodies. They cannot keep up appearances commensurate with their degree of education, refinement, and culture. They cannot get into the society for which their tastes fit them, and they do not wish to associate with what they call the 'vulgar, uncultured masses.' They feel that they are neither one thing nor the other in such a big city.

I know families in New York who live in perpetual misery because of this condition of things. I have in mind a business man who has a very small income, but both himself and wife are educated, cultured, and have refined tastes, and they simply will not live in any part of the city in keeping with their income. The result is that they are obliged to strain so much to live in the more fashionable neighborhoods that they have very little for food and clothing and recreation after paying their rent. Many people seem to think that it is a disgrace not to have a big income; that the great desideratum of life is to be able to spend a lot of money upon luxuries. But, after all, what is there in it?—Often unhappiness, ill health from trying to get too much out of life, from overeating, overdrinking, and dissipation.

On the other hand there are plenty of people who take scant pleasure in life because they are slaves to false economy and overwork. Their economy is niggardly, mean, stingy, even in their homes.

They are always scolding about picayune wastes of life, cautioning everybody not to use too much of this or that, and making everybody about them miserable.

I know a man who harps upon using too much butter and too much meat to such an extent that other members of the family fairly dread meal times. They dislike to put on a new pair of shoes or other articles of clothing because the head of the house will make such a fuss and ask if their purchase was necessary.

One of the meanest traits of stingy husbands is their inclination to exert a censorship over the wife's expenditures. It takes all the joy and interest out of her end of the partnership. If the wife happens to make a mistake in getting a bad bargain, many a man will get into a rage and make her miserable when perhaps he himself makes all sorts of foolish bargains, and takes home things which the wife knows are absolutely useless and that the money paid for them was practically thrown away.

I know a man who rarely ever asks his wife what she wants in the home, or gives her money with which to buy things herself. He will buy furniture and bric-a-brac, all sorts of things at auctions and bargain sales which do not match anything in the home, which are entirely out of place, and yet the wife does not dare to criticise her husband. He will buy a complete set of some author's works because he gets them cheap, when, perhaps there is not a single volume among them which any one in the home would care to read, and the wife knows perfectly well that a few selected volumes from choice authors would be worth more than a whole library of such rubbish as the husband has brought home.

There is probably no one quality which is more misunderstood and abused than economy. Especially is this true in the home. False economy is fatal to the home joy. In some homes saving becomes a fetish. Multitudes of things are put away in attics and cupboards and closets which can never be used, and which are a nuisance and ought to be burned up.

I have in mind a home where the atmosphere of poverty and denial predominates. The family does without even many of the comforts of life. False ideas of saving have so infected every member that it is positively painful to visit them. Only a little while ago I was at dinner in this house and the little boy of six remarked that they had mackerel that evening because they could get it cheaper than any other fish. Even the small children would ask the cost of things at the table when guests were present.

Many men allow their wives to wear themselves out in their early married life, to enable them to save a little money and get a start in the world; then after they become prosperous they are ashamed of their wives, because through hard work and self-denial for false economy's sake they have lost all their attractiveness. Then many of these men conclude that they are not congenial, and they get a divorce, and marry some young, attractive girl who can shine in society.

"The Governor's Lady" is a recent drama out of real life. I have seen in Washington men who have risen in the world and have gotten into Congress or obtained government appointments, who have come up from poverty by dint of the most extreme economizing in the home, and who have lost infinitely less in the struggle than their wives. I have seen them at public gatherings, where they 'not only did not seem at all proud to introduce their wives, but even avoided doing so, and devoted themselves to more attractive, younger women.

At a reception, not long ago, I met a multimillionaire who had worked his way to the front from extreme poverty, and whose wife had sacrificed her beauty and all her grace of form and her charm in the terrible struggle to help him on his feet and practically out of bankruptcy in their younger days. She had a sweet face, but it was sad. There was character there, but almost a total lack of the charm which attracts selfish men.

The man himself was faultlessly dressed, splendidly groomed. He was fresh and vigorous, because his constitution was very much stronger than his wife's. He was so much engaged in chatting, talking, and laughing with the more comely ladies that he scarcely had time to introduce his poor wife, who sat like a wall-flower in the background, plainly dressed, and very conscious that her years of hard work and pinching and saving had robbed her of the very attractiveness which first charmed her husband. Only twice during the entire reception did I see this man introduce any one to his wife, and then in a very perfunctory manner.

It could hardly seem possible that this very unattractive and apparently hard-working woman, in whom the joy of life was crushed out, could be the wife of this handsome, magnetic man, who, by the way, never liked to work, and who had not proposed to wear himself out, or worry himself to death, in getting a living.

I happened to know the history of this man's wealth, and that his success was due mostly to his wife's shrewdness, and as much to her hard work and self-denial as to his ability. He let his wife do the worrying and the scrimping. Yet now that he has the money she is practically side-tracked. He flies over the country in his splendid automobile, is much in demand because he can afford to spend generously, but his unattractive wife, except on rare occasions, remains at home.

This is how he has retained his physical attractiveness and robustness, and why, now that they are in the very height of their prosperity, just ready to enjoy what they possess, the wife is already a "gone by." A very unattractive old age stares her in the face, while, though no older in years, he is in the flower of his manhood.

The young wife was too unselfish, too devoted, too anxious to save and to help her husband get on in the world, to spare her strength or try to preserve her beauty. She was willing to give her all to help him; but now he does not appreciate it. Thus selfishness and niggardly economy have slain her happiness and their chance of happiness together in their home in old age.

In our day the home rides the waves between Scylla and Charybdis,—in peril of being torn asunder in the whirlpools of extravagance or ground to pieces on the harsh rocks of false economy. The home cannot find happiness, except it steer its course away into calmer seas of contentment, simplicity, a pleasant thrift and sane enjoyment of life.

XIX. Contentment, The Secret Of Happiness

*“Naught’s had, all’s spent,
When our desire is got without content.”*

*“Why thus longing, thus forever sighing,
For the far-off, unattained and dim,
While the beautiful, all round thee lying,
Offers up its low, perpetual hymn?”*

The average American sees just about as much of real life, of the things worth while, as he sees of the beautiful scenery through which he passes, driving his car at a high speed. Of course now and then he diverts his eyes long enough to get a hasty glimpse of a mountain peak or a beautiful valley or a gorgeous sunset, but the beautiful scenery, the details of the glorious flowers, are all lost upon him.

All the wonderful details of little experiences, the fine courtesies, the exquisite things of life, the things that are worth while, are lost to us because we live at such a terrific pace. We cannot take time to see things, to appreciate them, to enjoy them. We do not take time to enjoy our friends. Our whole mind is anxiously focused upon the machine and the road in front of us.

We are like men who carry the mails on the pony express. We are borne along at a terrific speed, and we only dismount to mount again. And so we go tearing through life forever changing from a tired to a fresh pony.

Bent forms, premature gray hair, heavy steps, and feverish haste are indicative of American life. Restlessness and discontent have become chronic, and are characteristic of our age and nation.

This straining, struggling, and striving is not life; it is a fever, a disease, well named Americanitis. It bears no relation to happiness.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, when questioned as to the secret of his marvelous youthfulness, in his eightieth year, replied that it was due chiefly “to a cheerful disposition and invariable contentment in every period of my life with what I was. I never felt the pangs of ambition. ... It is restlessness, ambition, discontent, and disquietude that make us grow old prematurely by carving wrinkles on our faces. Wrinkles do not appear on faces that have constantly smiled. Smiling is the best possible massage. Contentment is the fountain of youth.”

The sort of ambition the genial doctor condemns is that in which egotism and vanity figure most conspicuously, and in which notoriety, the praise and admiration of the world, wealth, and personal aggrandizement are the object sought, rather than the power to be of use in the world, to be a leader in the service of humanity, and to be the noblest, best, and most efficient worker that one can be.

“Oh, happy day for him who gives up striving to be richer, wiser, more clever than his fellows, and settles down content to be himself! And when abates the fever of possession and

he perceives that the riches of the rich, the joy of the happy, and the strength of the strong are his as well—then indeed for him has the millennium dawned.”

Shakespeare said:

My crown is in my heart, not on my head,

Nor decked with diamonds and Indian stones.

Nor to be seen; my crown is called content;

A crown it is, that seldom kings enjoy.

Now and then we meet characters so entrenched in Principle, so rich in personality and heart graces, which money will not buy, that the wealthiest people might envy them. Although often poor in material possessions they are rich in heart qualities, rich in contentment, in harmony, in things that are worth while. People who have money, but little else, cannot understand why they cannot purchase these things. They travel all over the world to find happiness and yet what they get is but a contemptible imitation of the real wealth of these simple, sweet, beautiful characters— many of whom are never able to indulge in life’s material luxuries.

I know a poor woman who has very little of the good things of the world, but it is a rich experience to hear her tell of the wonderful beauty she sees in the landscape, in the seascape, in the sunsets, and in the flowers. She appreciates the beauties of nature spread all around us, which most of us see without thinking of or enjoying; and all the little things of life, the common experiences which most of us think little about, are full of rich meaning for her and give her infinite pleasure.

Did you ever stop to consider that in all probability you are just as truly living right at this moment, as you ever can live, that you are just now going through the only sort of life you may ever experience on this earth?

The habit of thinking and asserting that things are as you would like to have them, as they ought to be, holding tenaciously the mental picture of yourself as you want to be, thinking and asserting your wholeness, completeness, and that you cannot lack anything, because you are one with the All-Good, one with the Principle that made you, will not alone help you to realize your desires, but also will give you a marvelous sense of serenity and contentment.

The life follows the thought. When the mind dwells upon a certain line of thought for a long time, it tends to bring the whole life into harmony with it. The constant dwelling upon and contemplating the beautiful, sublime, noble, and true, and the effort to incorporate them into the life, make the character beautiful. Our longings, our desires, are out-pictured in our lives. The desire is the pattern the life processes tend to reproduce.

Many of us instead of finding our happiness in things close at hand and in our every-day associations, in our work and experience, look to the future and long for other days and other conditions, when we assure ourselves we shall obtain perfect happiness. It is but a vain dream! That hour never comes and never will.

“He who does not find content and satisfaction to-day, who does not rejoice in the sunshine and the blessings God gives him moment by moment, will never find the path to Paradise and will live and die discontented.”

It is out of the ordinary duties, the common routine affairs of the ordinary day, in the home, in the store, in the factory, dealing with common, homely, every-day duties, that we manufacture life and all that it means to us. The extraordinary, unusual things do not affect us

nearly so much as the common ordinary affairs of our daily life, which are constantly molding us.

When will people learn that happiness is as legitimate a product of our thought, our effort, our aims and ambitions, our mental attitude, our outlook upon life, as the correct answer to a mathematical problem is the result of scientific procedure? Somehow most people seem to think that happiness can be found—just as people find gold; that there is a great deal of luck about it.

To many, happiness is a sort of Captain Kidd's treasure, and they bankrupt themselves of the real sources of pleasure, health, contentment, family affection, feverishly to seek a mythical hoard of gold.

Undoubtedly, ambition stands in the way of more people's contentment and happiness than almost anything else. The foolish determination to do what others do, to get ahead of others and to be able to live as they do, to have the luxuries and comforts of people who are better off than they—this over-vaulting ambition is one of the great happiness enemies.

It is a false ambition which keeps us pulling and hauling and straining to do something which somebody else has done, not because we need it ourselves, not because it would add a particle to our comfort or real welfare, or because it is really worth while, but because we are eaten up with the canker of an over-vaulting ambition, the chief element of which is selfishness, the desire to outshine others, to outdo them, to get ahead of them, to live a little better off than they, to have a little better home, a little better house in a little better part of the town, to dress our children a little better, to surround ourselves with more luxuries. But, after all, are these things really helpful, are they really worth while? Growth, enlargement of life, enrichment of one's nature—these are the things that are worth while. It is the ambition to be a man, to stand for more in the community, to push our horizon of ignorance farther and farther away from us, to think a little higher each day, to think a little more of ourselves, to have a little more faith in ourselves and in everybody else, an ambition to be of real use in the world, which, if achieved, will bring contentment and true happiness.

Everywhere we see lopped, one-sided, unbalanced men, mere dwarfs or apologies of the men God intended, who have starved their social and esthetic faculties, their symmetry, their mental growth, in their restless strife to put a little more money into their purse.

What will a man not do when drunk with an over-leaping, inordinate ambition! Multitudes have sacrificed family, homes, friendships, health, comforts, and honor itself, to appease that awful burning fever within, that terrible craving of the ambition for more, *more*, that perpetual hunger and thirst which are never satisfied.

On every hand we see men whose faculties have become marbled by following avaricious ambition. Grasping greed, like the starling which ever cries, "More, more," chokes all their nobler aspirations, blighting all that is fine, delicate, and sensitive in their natures, until they become blunt and irresponsible to all that is beautiful, sweet, and true.

Oh, what a pitiable sight is that of a human being in the mad clutches of a greedy aim! When a man has once become the victim of a selfish, sordid, money-mad ambition, he is practically dead to all that is best in life. He does not appreciate the glory and the grandeur, the sublimity, of existence. His pleasures are all of the coarser, animal kind.

How we deceive ourselves by this mirage of the future, which a selfish ambition pictures! We are always getting ready to live, neglecting the present, focusing our eyes upon the future, always straining for something yet to come, and never half appreciating what we have, or enjoying as we go along.

Is there anything more foolish than the idea that many people possess that the future will be very different from the present? Is there any reason for thinking that to-morrow will be any different from to-day? Why do we allow the mirage of to-morrow to keep our eyes from the beauties of to-day? Why do we allow anticipated joys to blind us to those that are close by us? We trample down the violets and the daisies trying to reach the larger blossoms on the trees.

Woe be to him who caters to a selfish ambition, and follows it blindly, who expects it to give him peace of mind when it is realized; for the more a greedy ambition is fed, the more ravenous its appetite! It is like the fire-water in the enchanted story; the more the victim drinks of it, the greater his burning fever.

A selfish ambition is a fatal guide, and will surely wreck the happiness of those who follow it. It will rob one of all that is dearest and sweetest in life. It will murder his enjoyment as he goes along, by holding up alluring pictures of the future, which will never become realities. Oh, what a fatal price men have paid for the mad following of this will-o'-the-wisp, ambition! What tragedies have followed it!

The majority of men seem to think they can purchase happiness. They may purchase animal pleasures, but the stimulation of the nerves, the titillation of the nervous system is a very cheap and comparatively low pleasure, and does not even approximate to joy or happiness, which is not purchasable, except by merit. They mistake pleasure for happiness.

No one has yet been able to bribe real happiness. There is one price for it, and the poor may gain it as well as the rich.

The world is full of happiness, and there is always plenty to go round, if we are only willing to take the kind that comes our way.

Most people seek happiness selfishly. They try to find something which will make them feel more comfortable, give some sort of easement to their disagreeable feelings and bad moods. The great majority of people in this world have an idea that happiness consists in the satisfaction which comes from gratified desires. But this is always a delusion; the satiety of desire is always followed by a reaction, an ever-increased call for more gratification. The appetite of passion survives all possibilities of satisfaction. The more it is indulged, the more imperious the craving. The appetite survives even when the victim is exhausted. The animal thirst can never be quenched.

How often we hear people give expression to the thought that they don't get much out of life anyway! Now this very spirit of trying to see how much they can get out of life is what causes them to get so little. It is the people who put the most into life that get the most out of it. A farmer might as well sit still and see how much he can get out of his farm without sowing and planting. It is the people who give the most to life who get the most out of it. With many people life seems something to plunder instead of to cultivate to the utmost.

Just like the farmer who would till a particular piece of land from which he is trying to win a prize, you must put as much as you can into life, make it just as rich as possible. Put love and contentment into it, cheerfulness and unselfish service, then you will not go around complaining that you get so little out of life, that the world has no reward to offer you.

"There is a good, healthful discontent, and there is a bad, unwholesome discontent," says Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

'Unless you have a grateful heart, a heart which lifts itself in earnest thanks to God for *something*, then your discontent is probably purely selfish. There can be no life which

does not contain something to be grateful for, and the habit of gratitude is one of the most powerful assets of success and happiness which can be named.

“If you wake in the morning and say, ‘I thank God for this new day of life and for whatever blessings are mine,’ then you can safely say to yourself and to your Creator, afterward, that you are not satisfied with your environment or with your situation, and ask for strength and guidance to change it and better it.”

Real happiness comes from the cultivation, the development, of the highest that is in us. Selfishness can never bring happiness, because it is constantly developing, enlarging the greedy, grasping nature, is constantly encouraging the very thing which leads us away from happiness. You will not find happiness unless you seek it with a pure heart, with a clean mind, a noble purpose, with unselfish aim and unselfish desire for the welfare of others.

Suppose that the way does look dark to you; that you see no light, no opening; do not take it for granted that there is no way out for you; that you will have no way to express what God has locked up in you just because you happen to be temporarily tied to an iron environment and see no way of getting away from it. Wait, and work, and have faith. The closing of one door always means the opening of another.

The right mental attitude is a powerful magnet, and whatever you desire to have or to be, you should affirm constantly to yourself that you have that thing, that you are what you long to be. If you wish to be well and strong, if you wish to have vigorous health, to have plenty instead of poverty, constantly say to yourself, “I am well; I live in abundance; there can be no lack, no poverty, no want, in my life; I am wealth because I am principle.”

How can people expect to become happy and contented who are always dwelling upon their miseries, misfortunes, and sorrows, always expressing discontent in their thoughts and actions? There is no philosophy by which a negative mental attitude will produce its opposite. Like thought, like man. Our state of mind is the logical result of our thought. The only happiness that can possibly come to you is the scientific product of your thinking and your getting. If you are dissatisfied with the kind of happiness you have had, and will analyze it, you will find it is absolutely just. It is merely the result, the scientific product, of past experiences, thoughts, and actions. So, if you are discontented and miserable, you will find that you alone are to blame. If you had used the ingredients which form real happiness you could no more have failed to have obtained the result than you can fail to get the right answer to a mathematical problem when you have followed the mathematical law.

It will do you no good to chase all over the world trying to find happiness. If you do not carry it with you you will never find it. History is strewn with wrecks of those who pursued happiness desperately all their lives and never once caught up with it, while multitudes of others who never thought much about happiness, but were intensely busy with their duties, busy trying to provide for the home and those dear to them and to make life a little easier, a little more comfortable, for those about them, were surprised to find that it came to them unsought.

“The pitiful part of this inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness,” says Charles Dudley Warner, “is, however, that most men interpret it to mean the pursuit of wealth, and strive for that always, postponing being happy until they get a fortune, and if they are lucky in that, find in the end that happiness has somehow eluded them, that, in short, they have not cultivated that in themselves which alone can bring happiness.”

I know a man who has made quite a distinguished success in his specialty and yet he is as uneasy, dissatisfied, and discontented as any man I know. He is always comparing himself with people who have been more successful, who have done more and better work in his line

and who have accumulated more money. The sight of people who have gotten along faster, the thought of their living better, or having a better reputation, more fame, irritates him. His eyes are so intent upon others' accomplishments and what they have that he seems blind to what he has accomplished and what he has. His own humbler surroundings mean scarcely anything to him.

He has an ideal family, a noble wife, superb children, and although his home is not as sumptuous or commodious, nor his environment as luxurious or grand as that of some of his neighbors, yet he has a multitude of advantages over them. Somehow, his strong constitution, his healthy and harmonious family do not seem to count for very much with him.

He has a far-away look in his eyes; his gaze is so set upon what others do and what others have, that he does not seem to know how to appreciate his own, and he is always castigating himself for not working harder, and getting on more rapidly, notwithstanding the fact that he is always overworking and never takes time to cultivate friendships or to enjoy social life.

Now, if this man would only realize the fact, he could revolutionize his mental attitude in a few months so that he would be a completely changed man. If every day he would stop for a few minutes and empty his mind of his envy and jealousy, and would thrust out his false ambition and try to appreciate his own instead of forever thinking of what others have, if every morning he would congratulate himself upon his good fortune in having such a happy and harmonious family—a beautiful wife and fine robust children, when many of those whom he envies have to bear all sorts of marital discords and troubles, frivolous wives and deformed and even imbecile children—he would learn to appreciate his own blessings. In thinking how fortunate he is in his happy environment, he would develop a capacity for appreciation, and what others have would lose its peculiar fascination.

Many of us miss the joys that might be ours by keeping our eyes fixed on those of other people. No one can enjoy his own opportunities for happiness while he is envious of another's. We lose a great deal of the joy of living by not cheerfully accepting the small pleasures that come to us every day, instead of longing and wishing for what belongs to others. We do not take any pleasure in our own modest car, because we long for the luxurious limousine that some one else owns. The edge is taken off the enjoyment of our own little home because we are watching the palatial residence of our neighbor. We can get no satisfaction out of a trolley ride into the country or a sail on a river steamer, because some one else can enjoy the luxury of his own touring car or yacht. Life has its full measure of happiness for every one of us, if we would only make up our minds to make the very most of every opportunity that comes our way, instead of longing for the things that come our neighbor's way.

How many of us are like the buttercup that grew in the field beside the daisy. The buttercup was discontented and envied the daisy "for daisies grow so trim and tall," and she always had a longing to wear a frill around her neck too. But a robin, who was flying by, heard her lamentation and told her how foolish she was to want to be a made-up daisy instead of her own bright self. He told her to

"Look bravely up into the sky

And be content with knowing

That God wished for a buttercup

Just here where you are growing."

A discontented, discordant mortal is no more a man than discord is music.

Robert Burns described the happy man when he said he was contented with little and happy with more.

“Be content with such things as ye have,” says the Apostle. Such noble contentment opens the way to larger fullness and satisfaction.

The power of the will, the influence of our own mind, the way we accept life, the interpretation we give to facts and experiences is a determining factor in our enjoyment or disappointment in this world.

XX. Home Joy Killers

"We have careful thought for the stranger.

And smiles for the sometime guest;

But oft for 'our own' the bitter tone,

Though we love our own the best."

Did you ever come across the American hog at home—the man who is so affable, such a genial good fellow in the club down-town and among his men friends and business associates, but who, when in his home, throws off his mask and feels no obligation to restrain himself or to temper his language; the man who finds fault with everything, abuses everybody, criticises everything, who storms about the house like a mad bull when he is out of sorts and things do not please him?

We have all undoubtedly met this man, the good fellow at the club and the hog at home.

The American hog at home is a very curious animal. I have seen him in the midst of a terrible rage when he seemed to be the plaything of his passion, become as gentle and docile as a lamb in an instant with the ringing of a door-bell and the announcing of company. It would seem as though there must be some magical connection between the doorbell and this man's temper.

When it did not seem possible for him to get control of himself, he did not have the slightest difficulty in calming down in an instant's time when a caller was announced, thus proving that this matter of self-control was largely one of vanity, self-pride. He would be mortally ashamed to have the callers see the hog husband that was there when the doorbell rang.

We often see him in the home sitting cross, crabbed, glum, during the entire evening and at meals, without making the slightest effort to be agreeable. At the club or in his business dealings, even if things go wrong, he feels obliged to restrain himself and be decent because he would not have his business friends see him with his mask off. He has too much pride and vanity for that. But when he is at home he thinks he is under no obligation to be agreeable; he thinks he has a perfect right to do just what he feels like doing, and to be just as mean, hateful, and disagreeable as he wants to be. He makes no attempt to restrain or control himself.

Such boorishness and lack of companionableness between husband and wife are among the most common domestic joy killers.

Of course the woman is often at fault, but she is more naturally a home maker at heart than the man. He is more selfish and apt to be indifferent to the home, and he is the one who needs to be roused to the responsibility of making home happy, and marriage full of mutual joy in giving.

"If there are women who do not, by study and that best companionship which they could offer to their husbands, truly learn rightly to play the part of helpmeets, there are far more men who, for one selfish reason or another, never give their wives the opportunity," writes Mrs. John Logan.

A woman's thirst for sympathy and close companionship is very difficult for the average man to comprehend. It would be as impossible for a woman to live her normal life under abuse or indifference without sympathetic companionship, as for a rose to develop its normal beauty

and fragrance without sunshine. This is often the reason why so many wives seek elsewhere the sympathy which their husbands deny them.

There are men who think that if they do not actually strike their wives, if they provide a house and clothing for them, they ought to be satisfied and happy. But these things will never insure happiness to the kind of a woman you would desire your wife to be, my friend.

It often occurs that a man marries a beautiful, bright, cheerful girl who was always bubbling over with animal spirits, and in a short time everybody notices a complete change in her character, brought about by the perpetual suppression of her husband, who if not actually brutal is severe in his criticisms and unreasonable in his demands. The wife is surrounded with this joy-killing atmosphere of sharp criticism or severity until she entirely loses her naturalness and spontaneity, and self-expression becomes impossible. The result is an artificial, flavorless character.

Think of the suffering of a wife who feels her spirits gradually drying up, and her buoyancy and youthfulness evaporating; her beauty, her attractiveness gradually fading; in fact, her ambition strangled, her whole life being blighted in a cold, loveless environment.

Some one recently told me that not once during several months which they spent at the home of friends did they see the husband display the slightest sign of affection for his wife, although she is a woman vastly superior to him in every way.

She has dragged out an unloved, miserable existence for more than a quarter of a century, with a husband who is cold and absolutely indifferent to her comfort, pleasure, or happiness. Not once in a year does he take her anywhere. He is practically never seen with her away from home. He never thinks she needs an outing, a vacation, or a change. When he travels, he goes alone or in the company of others, never even suggesting that his wife accompany him. This man is not unkind or cruel, he is only indifferent to his wife. He has not a particle of sentiment for her.

To many women indifference is worse than cruelty, if the cruel husband shows at least a little affection now and then. Utter indifference is one of the things that the feminine heart cannot endure without keen suffering.

Indifference and cruelty are evident forms of selfishness, the root of domestic unhappiness. Less evident, perhaps, is that self-love which many men mistake for love of their wives. It is a sort of projection of themselves with which they are in love. They think more of their own comfort, their own well-being, their own ambitions, their own pleasure, than they do of the highest welfare of their wives.

Many such men do not mean to be selfish in their home life, and really believe they are generous, but their minds are so focused upon themselves and their ambition that they can only think of a wife in reference to themselves. Whereas the highest love has the highest welfare of the individual at heart, not its own.

It is fortunate for the world that a woman's love is not so selfish, not so self-centered as a man's. If it were, civilization would go back to barbarism.

When a woman has given up everything for a husband who, before marriage was always bringing her flowers and showing other little evidences of his affection, who was generous and loving and kind, but who afterwards seldom thinks of these little attentions so much appreciated by women, but is often indifferent, cross, and fault-finding, she cannot help feeling unhappy at the contrast.

It does not seem possible that a man who could be so affectionate, kind, and considerate while pursuing the object of his regard, could become indifferent and cruel after he had secured the prize; but this is true of multitudes of men.

With many men romance ends with marriage, as a hunter's interest dies with the game when he has fired the shot that kills.

I have been in the home of a married couple where the husband showed the greatest lack of feeling for his wife, and treated her more as a menial than as a companion. If she complained of a headache, or of feeling unwell, he never showed any sympathy for her, but, on the contrary, appeared to be provoked, and often made sarcastic remarks.

He never tried in any way to lighten her burdens, nor showed her any special attention. He was not even polite to her. He would take no part of the responsibility of training the children or of conducting the household. He said he would not be bothered with such things.

He spent most of his evenings at the clubs, or in the company of women whom he considered more attractive than his wife, and upon whom he spent money freely; but he was extremely penurious with his wife, and made her give an account of what she did with every penny.

He became so brazen in his open association with other women that he often took them to his own home, where his wife, who was suffering tortures, tried to receive them graciously and to treat them kindly.

If there is any person who needs pity in the world, it is the wife who gives love and makes perpetual sacrifices in return for indifference, neglect, and even cruelty. Is it not a crime for a man to take a beautiful, affectionate, buoyant girl from a happy home, after a romantic courtship, and then crush her spirit, and freeze her love by cold, heartless indifference and selfishness; to wreck her happiness? Can any greater disappointment come into a woman's life than to see her dream of love, marriage, and a happy home blighted by cold-hearted, indifferent, cruel neglect?

Jealousy and suspicion poison the atmosphere of the family. The home joy cannot live where they are entertained. At the outset young people who marry should resolve never to permit the sun to go down on their wrath. Lovers fondly fancy that they will never have a quarrel. However, most husbands and wives occasionally have little differences which need not amount to much if they simply follow one rule: never to go to sleep at night except in friendly harmony. If there has been a disturbance of peace, settle it before bedtime. If either has done or said anything to wound the other, confess and seek forgiveness before the head touches the pillow.

"We take offense too easily," writes some one. "I know cases of husbands and wives who, in a discussion over a matter of perhaps no real importance, get offended with each other, and the husband goes away without his usual morning kiss,—*goes* down town and is miserable all day long, and the wife stays at home and is miserable all day long; and over what? They forget the time when she was the one ideal of all that was beautiful; they forget the time when he was the one hero picked out of all the sons of earth. For a contemptible, petty little nothing they think unkindly and harshly of each other. Is a little trifle like that worth purchasing at the price of the happiness of a day? How petty it is! If people would only stop and think, they would be ashamed of themselves, and ask each other's pardon, and devote themselves to creating sunshine and peace instead of getting offended over things that are of no earthly account, looked at from any point of view."

How true are the following lines of the late Margaret Sangster:

If I had known in the morning

*How wearily all the day
 The words unkind would trouble my mind
 That I said when you went away,
 I had been more careful, darling.
 Nor given you needless pain;
 But we vex our own with look and tone
 We may never take back again.
 For though in the quiet evening
 You may give me the kiss of peace,
 Yet it well might be that never for me
 The pain of the heart should cease!
 How many go forth at morning,
 Who never come home at night!
 And hearts have broken for harsh words spoken,
 That sorrow can ne'er set right.
 We have careful thought for the stranger,
 And smiles for the sometime guest;
 But oft for "our own" the bitter tone,
 Though we love our own the best.
 Ah! lips with the curve impatient,
 Ah! brow with the shade of scorn,
 'Twere a cruel fate, were the night too late
 To undo the work of the morn!*

"You have been the best mother in the world," cried a son to his mother on her deathbed. She was a widow who had struggled hard to support her son. She took in washing and did scrubbing in order to send him to college, but this was the first time that her son had ever told her that she had been a good mother. She turned her dying eyes upon him and said, "Why didn't you say so before, John?"

Think what it would have meant to this poor, hard-working mother if her son had only shown his love and appreciation for her during her lifetime! How it would have brightened up her long, weary years!

"If folks could have their funerals when they are alive and well and struggling along, what a help it would be!" sighed Mrs. Perkins, upon returning from a funeral, wondering how poor Mrs. Brown would have felt if she could have heard what the minister said. "Poor soul, she never dreamed they set so much by her!

"Mis' Brown got discouraged. Ye see, Deacon Brown, he'd got a way of blaming everything on to her. I don't suppose the deacon meant it,—'twas just his way,—but it's awful wearing. When things wore out or broke, he acted just as if Mis' Brown did it herself on purpose; and they all caught it, like the measles or the whooping-cough."

Just think of what a woman who has a half dozen children has to endure if she is obliged to do all her work,—sewing, cooking, washing, and cleaning—without even the assistance of a hired girl. How long could a man stand this kind of an existence, shut up in a house or a little flat year in and year out, rarely ever going anywhere, with very little variety or change? How would he keep his cheer? A few days of confinement in the home is about all most men can stand, especially if their rest is disturbed at night by sick children.

Most men little realize how rapidly a woman fades and uses herself up and loses her cheer when she works like a slave all day and long into the night, caring for a large family. Just because a wife is willing to do everything she can to help her husband, is no reason why he should allow her to ruin her health and attractiveness, rob her of the zest for living, in the operation. There is nothing more wearing and exasperating, nothing which will grind life away more rapidly than monotonous, exacting housework. A man has a great variety during the day in his business; but his wife slaves at home and rarely gets any variety. How is she to keep joy in the home for the children, or for guests and friends?

She is plodding and digging all day long, year in and year out, cleaning, scrubbing, mending clothes, caring for the children,—a work which grinds life away rapidly, because of the drudgery and monotony of it.

The husband has constant change which rests and refreshes him; but to the average wife it is one dull, monotonous routine of hard, exacting, exasperating toil. And yet the wife and mother should be the fountain-head of joy in the home.

Many a man is cross and crabbed when he comes home, just because his wife is not quite as buoyant and cheerful and entertaining as he thinks she ought to be after a nerve-racking, exacting day's work. What does he do to make the evening pleasant for her? How many times during the last year has he taken his wife out to entertainments or to dinner? When did he last take her away on a little trip? How long has it been since he brought her home some flowers, confectionery, a book, or some other little gift which would tell her that he was thoughtful of her? How often has he given up his club, or the society of his companions, or his own pleasure to remain home and help his wife take care of the children, or make the evening delightful for his family?

The home has the misfortune of being a place where all the tired, cross, exhausted, played-out members of the family meet at night, often after a trying, perplexing day's work. The children are cross and tired from school or play; things have gone wrong with the father, there has been discord and trouble in the office, store, or factory. He has seen merchandise spoiled, broken, misdirected, by indifferent, blundering, careless employees. His partners were cross and crabbed because they started out wrong in the morning with disputes, friction at home. Poor business, tight money, ever-increasing competition,—all these things focus upon the father during the day, and totally unfit him to contribute his part towards the ideal home life in the evening.

In addition to all this, the husband does not feel the same restraint in the home. He has managed to be half decent during the daytime, because so many eyes were watching him; his pride and vanity have kept him from making a fool of himself before others. But when he gets home, under his own roof, he asks himself, why shouldn't he throw off his restraint and do as he feels like doing—making a kicking post of his home, making it unpleasant for everybody?

Saving only the dregs for the home, exasperated nerves and jaded energies, is a very short-sighted policy. Thousands of homes in this country are made up of shreds and patches. All we find there is the by-product of a man's occupation. Many a man gives the home what he has

left over,—the crumbs, the odds and ends. Instead of bringing to it his freshest energies, his buoyant spirits, he often comes a physical wreck. He remains in the store or office as long as there is anything left of him that is any good. Then he goes home, and he wonders why the children avoid him, why they do not run and throw their arms about his neck, delighted to see him.

The children know that when such a father reaches home their fun is pretty nearly over. They do not see anything very interesting or attractive in his long, tired face. Of course there is no spring in his dragging, hesitating steps. They know there is no vitality left for a romp with them on the floor or on the lawn.

They know they have to keep quiet or they will be sent to bed or out of the room.

Make the meal time an occasion to be looked forward to by every member of the family for a good time, for hearty laughter, and for bright, entertaining conversation. Train the children to bring their best moods and to say their brightest and best things at the table. If this practice were generally put in force it would revolutionize American homes and drive the doctors to despair.

With some families joking and funny story telling at meals has become such an established feature that it is a real joy to dine with them. The dinner hour is sure to afford a jolly good time. There is a rivalry among the members to see who can say the brightest, wittiest thing, or tell the best story. There is no dyspepsia, no nagging in such a family.

Make a business of having a good time after dinner or after supper, and during your holidays. Let your presence in the home be a signal to the children for a romp and a play and a good time generally. Just make up your mind that you are going to make your home the happiest place on earth—so happy and so attractive that your children will prefer spending an evening there to going anywhere else. Do not be afraid of a little noise, or of a little scratched or broken furniture now and then. This is infinitely better than stunted childhood, dyspepsia, and doctors' bills. The growth of many a child has been starved and stunted to save a little furniture, bric-a-brac, or clothing.

The average modern man has taken the cream off his energies during the daytime, and brings home only the skimmed milk, and this is often very sour. Then he wonders why his wife is not as bright and as agreeable as she used to be! He cannot see the poor, mean, miserable, starved part of himself that he brings to her, and he expects her to match it all with the same charm and sweetness, the same joyous response that she gave him when he brought the best part of himself to her. His weariness and depression cannot summon forth that happy response; they paralyze the children's play; they strangle the home joy.

XXI. The Power Of The Home Joy

Over the roofs of the village

Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending, Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.

There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

—Longfellow.

Some of the happiest homes I have ever known, ideal homes, where intelligence, peace, and harmony dwell, have been homes of poor people. No rich carpets covered the floors; there were no costly paintings on the walls, no piano, no library, no works of art. But there were contented minds, devoted and unselfish lives, each contributing as much as possible to the happiness of all, and endeavoring to compensate by intelligence and kindness for the poverty of their surroundings.

What a pitiable sight to see a man struggling with all his might to pile up a big fortune, and yet utterly neglecting the very thing for which he was born—self-enlargement and happiness shared with wife and children.

Gold can buy and furnish houses but no money ever yet bought or made a home; yet what wealth of tenderness, of self-sacrifice, of kindness, of peace have transformed the humblest dwellings into treasure-houses of the heart?

A young husband should remember that a woman sacrifices infinitely more for the man she loves than he does for her, and he should study to prevent early disappointments. If both husband and wife could do this for one another, the divorce courts would be without business.

Men often think that they are superior to their wives because they are the family providers ; that it requires superior ability to earn money. As a fact much of their success is due to the wife's influence, due to her tact and ability to keep her home happy and her husband in good working trim, to keep him from worrying, to keep him from dissipation, and all sorts of things which, but for her, might cripple his earning capacity and lower his efficiency.

Most men are much saner, much more normal and level-headed, economical and careful, on account of their wives. A model home is a great corrective for a man. It keeps him up to standard, and saves him from getting blue and discouraged. It develops the affectionate side of his nature and renders his character stronger and more symmetrical. Men can produce very much more because of harmony and affection in the home.

I have known and know now many women who claim nothing and who get no credit from the world, who are, none the less, the real brains behind a statesman's reputation. And there are others who assist their husbands in such secrecy that the fact that they are helping is hidden, even from the husband.

Some one has said that "marriage is an episode in the life of a man, an epoch in the life of a woman." Many men are not so firmly attached to their wives by their affection as their wives are to them. A devoted wife is apt to overlook a man's weaknesses. She does not realize that his love is more easily detached than hers, and that the same things which she was so particular about before marriage are the very things that will hold him after marriage, that these are her magic and her power.

Man does not love in the same way as a woman does. There is more selfishness in his affection. When a good woman has given her love it is for all time; and her love is less selfish and her devotion is not as dependent upon the man's attractiveness as is his for her.

It is true that married women often make the fatal mistake of not making themselves attractive in every possible way after marriage as they did before. They think that they can hold their husband's love and admiration upon their real worth, regardless of their personal charms, dress, or appearance.

If you are disappointed in your life partner examine yourself and see if you are not partly at fault. There is no encouragement to a woman to fix herself up prettily for a man who never looks at her, and never notices what she has on or how her hair is arranged, unless it be to criticise it unfavorably. It is not easy for a woman to be bright and entertaining when she talks to a man who merely grunts or scowls in reply. Single handed and alone she cannot make the home joy.

Why should you speak to your wife in a tone of voice that you would not dare to use toward another woman?

Try the praise plan, the appreciation plan, for a while. Give up fault-finding.

"Praise is a heart stimulant. Blame is a heart depressant," says Dorothy Dix.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox says: "If you knew your marital partner would be dead a year from to-day, how would you conduct yourself for the next twelve months?

"Would you lose your temper over trifles, and spoil your own and another's comfort because there was a late meal, or a mistake about the time or place you were to meet each other, and would you nag and irritate and antagonize the one you are bound to for life?

"I am sure you would not. You would be very considerate and patient and kind, knowing the face you looked upon was so soon to be hidden from your sight'—the voice you listened to so soon to be stilled. You would think of all that man's or woman's virtues; you would recall all the early days of courtship, and you would make the same excuses for shortcomings you did in that romantic era.

"Why not use the same forbearance, affection, and courtesy toward the man or woman who is liable to live twenty years as toward one who is to die very soon? If people are properly mated, the real romance begins with marriage."

The majority of men do not realize how little it takes to make a woman happy. She will put up with most everything, poverty and all sorts of hardships and make a cosy, comfortable home out of any kind of a hearth if her affections are satisfied. But if her heart is not fed, she will wither, and the best thing will die out of her, even though she live in a palace and be surrounded with regal luxuries. No amount of money will compensate a true woman for the lack of affection and appreciation expressed by her husband in a multitude of little attentions and considerations.

It should be the great aim of young married people to keep the commonplace out of their lives and maintain not only love, but the expression of it in a hundred delicate, winning ways. In happiness at home lies the strength of both.

Not sentiment alone but practical adjustments will count for harmony and satisfaction. A level-headed husband should try to avoid every possible means of friction, and there is no better way of avoiding a large part of it, than by forming an actual partnership in which the wife runs the household in her own way, just the same as he runs his business without the wife's interference. The home should be regarded as the wife's, and she should manage it to

suit herself. If she wishes to ask her husband's advice, all well and good, but there should be an understanding that the home is absolutely the wife's domain, that it is under her exclusive control, and she should be made to feel as independent in her realm, as the husband is in his. A great deal of the friction in the average home centers around financial matters, and could be avoided by a simple, definite understanding, and a business arrangement about household finances.

As a rule, it is a very rare man who can spend money for the home so wisely and with as good taste as can the wife.

Fortunately it is becoming more and more customary for men to allow their wives a certain proportion of the income every week or month, and to let them run the household as they see fit, and pay all the expenses without any question being asked as to where the money went to. The wife pays the provision bills, the servants' salaries, buys the clothing for the family and pays her own personal expenses. No questions are asked. She will delight in her independence. Disputes are not as liable to arise as when money is doled out to the wife by piecemeal.

When freedom and joy are the wife's share, they become the children's heritage. A happy childhood is an imperative preparation for a happy maturity.

Most homes are far too serious. Why not let the children dance and play to their heart's content? They will get rubs enough, knocks enough in the world; they will get enough of the hard side of life later. Resolve that they shall at least be *just as happy as you can make them* while at home, so that if they should have unfortunate experiences later, they can look back upon their home as a sweet, beautiful, charming oasis in their life; the happiest spot on earth.

It is a great thing to encourage fun in the home. There is nothing like a fun-loving home. It keeps children off the streets, it discourages vice and all that is morbid.

The home ought to be a sort of theater for fun and all sorts of sports—a place where the children should take the active parts, although the parents should come in for a share too. You will find that a little fun in the evening, romping, and playing with the children, will make you sleep better. It will clear the physical cobwebs and brain-ash from your mind. You will be fresher and brighter for it the next day. You will be surprised to see how much more work you can do, and how much more readily you can do it if you try to have all the innocent fun you can.

We have all felt the wonderful balm, the great uplift, the refreshment, the rejuvenation which have come from a jolly good time with family or friends, when we have come home after a hard, exacting day's work, when our bodies were jaded and we were brain-weary and exhausted. What magic a single hour's fun will often work in a tired soul!

Have music in the home.

Music tends to restore and preserve the mental harmony. Nervous diseases are wonderfully helped by good music. It keeps one's mind off his troubles, and gives nature a chance to heal all sorts of mental discords.

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, gayety and life to everything. It is the essence of order, and leads to all that is good, just, and beautiful," says Plato.

Happiness should begin in the home. The family gathering around the table for the evening meal should be one of chat and cheerfulness.

Swallow a lot of fun with your meals. The practice is splendid. It is the best thing in the world for your health. It is better than swallowing dyspepsia with every mouthful of food. The meal time ought to be looked forward to by every member of the family as an occasion for a good time, for hearty laughter, and for bright, entertaining conversation. The children should be trained to bring their best moods and say their brightest and best things at the table. If this practice were put in force *it would revolutionize American homes and drive the doctors to despair.*

Who could estimate what civilization owes to man's dream of a happy home of his own! What an incentive to man in all ages has been this vision of a home of his own! It is this picture which holds the youth to his task, buoys him up in times of hardship and discouragement. This picture of a home, this vision of a little cottage and some fair maiden waiting at the door—this home vision has ever been the great incentive of the struggler, the greatest incentive of mankind! It is the dream of "a home of my own" that has lifted multitudes of youths out of obscurity. There is no spur on earth which has had anything like the influence over man that this home vision has. The thought of his home and wife and children, dearer to him than life, keeps vast multitudes of men grinding away at their dreary tasks, when they see no other light in the distance.

To multitudes of people home is the only oasis in their desert life.

What will men not do for the sake of the home? They cross oceans, they explore continents. They endure the heat of the Tropics and the cold of the Arctics, they explore mines in the wilderness, cut themselves off from civilization for years for the sake of the home.

Home is the sweetest word in the language. It has ever been the favorite theme of the poet, the author, and the artist. History is packed with the achievements of men for the sake of the home. The inventor, the discoverer, in all ages has been sacrificed for the home.

Half the misery in the world would be avoided if people would make a business of having *plenty of fun at home*, instead of running everywhere else in search of it.

There is an irrepressible longing for amusement, for rollicking fun, in young people, and if these longings were more fully met in the home it would not be so difficult to keep the boy and girl under the parental roof. I always think there is something wrong when the father or the children are so very uneasy to get out of the house at night and to go off "somewhere" where they will have a good time. A happy, joyous home is a powerful magnet to child and man. The sacred memory of it has kept many a person from losing his self-respect, and from the commission of crime.

Fun is the cheapest and best medicine in the world for your children as well as for yourself. Give it to them in good large doses. It will not only save you doctors' bills, but it will also help to make your children happier, and will improve their chances in life. We should not need half so many prisons, insane asylums, and almshouses if all children had a happy childhood.

"Now for Rest and Happiness." "No Business Troubles Allowed Here." These are true home-building mottoes. The home joy is the greatest power for good in the world.

XXII. The Dangers Of Thwarted Ambition

"I hold it the duty of one who is gifted.

And specially dowered in all men's sight.

To know no rest till his life is lifted

Fully up to his great gift's height."

How often we see a bright, enthusiastic, ambitious girl, with a passion for music, and great talent, marry a business man, and become buried in a home. Her husband may love her deeply, but he may not have the least sympathy with or appreciation of his wife's special talent, or even the slightest interest in it. If, after a while, she begins to fade, and becomes depressed and despondent, he may think that a change, a trip abroad, or a better home will restore her cheerfulness, her charm. But they do not.

There is still a great hunger for which she has had practically no food, a starvation going on in her nature, which no amount of change or money will satisfy, for there is something within us which does not feed upon money or anything that we can buy. There is a gradual shriveling, a pitiful shrinking, going on in her, a great decline of values all along the line.

Everywhere we see people who have prematurely gone to seed. They seem to have no special zest in life, no great enthusiasm for anything; there is a great disappointment somewhere in their lives. Why are they so unhappy?

No one loses his interest in life, or becomes indifferent to his work unless he has been thwarted in the carrying out of his ambition or for some other reason has been unable to find his right place in life. Wherever we see discontent, unhappiness, unrest, we may be sure that the person exhibiting these conditions has not found his niche, or has not been able to carry out his ambition. For some reason his heart had been cheated of its ideal.

Women have a marvelous way of hiding their griefs, covering up their disappointments; but such disappointment may mar a whole life. A man, under such circumstances, would rebel; but women often suffer in silence while they smother their ambition.

Who can ever estimate the terrible tragedies that are being enacted in the hearts of thousands who are suffering agonies from gnawing, unsatisfied longings, but who are compelled to do the thing which they loathe because somebody else is dependent upon them, because poor invalid brothers or sisters chain them to it, and there is no possibility of escape? Like a caged eagle beating against his prison bars the pinions which were intended to lift him into the ether, they chafe against restraint; they swallow the great lump which rises in their throats, and suffer on.

How many of those whom we criticise and denounce may be undergoing constant pain from just such limitations, through imagined or real imprisonment of talent! If there is anything pitiable in this world, it is a person tormented by a great ambition which cannot be satisfied. To feel a gnawing hunger for that which one can never possess is suffering indeed. To have no chance, to see no opening to do that which we yearn to do, is one of the inexplicable problems of life. It is hard to bear pain and suffer disappointment when we are doing that which we feel we were fitted for; but it takes heroic qualities to suffer in silence, to endure with patience, to work on faithfully, when the heart has been cheated of its ideal, the ambition disappointed, and hope has gone out of the life. We long for freedom, we want to soar, to try

the wings God gave us; yet we are losing our power because we do not, cannot, exercise it. We are wasting life, losing strength in petty pursuits and enslaving drudgery.

There is no suffering, except remorse, so fatal as that which comes from the consciousness of strangled ambition, blasted hope, stifled aspiration. To be conscious that we possess decided ability for some particular calling, and to be compelled by circumstances, year after year, to be chained to drudgery which the heart loathes, requires supreme courage. To feel that there is no probability, or even possibility, of ever being able to express that great hungry longing, pent up in the heart, filling it almost to bursting, to drag through the weary years trying to be cheerful and hopeful and helpful to those we love, and yet to feel that our devotion to them has made the other thing impossible to us, to suffer in silence disappointment which makes the heart sick, is the greatest test of real manhood, of womanhood.

It is easy for us to criticise other people who have not risen in the world, as perhaps we have; but they may be heroes compared with us. We can never tell what tragedies may be going on in their hearts, or from what tortures of disappointed ambition and blasted hopes they may be suffering. To be compelled to go through life without any possibility of satisfying the great soul hunger, of realizing the infinite longings of the heart, is torture. There is no compensation for this except from the sense of duty done to others who would have suffered, had we tried to realize our ambition. And yet, may it not be that we ourselves are in some measure to blame? Have we kept alive the soul, the core, the essence of our ambition? The greatest of all victories is the victory which is wrung from apparent defeat.

Cling to your ideal. When one stifles his ambition, lets his greatest talent die within him, his whole nature may be perverted; he becomes susceptible to all sorts of temptations, and sometimes even develops criminal tendencies. The following out of our strongest bent is our greatest safeguard. It makes us more contented, steadies our aim, and tends to make the whole life normal. But no one is safe when for any reason he ceases to pursue his great passion, his highest ambition.

It takes a strong character to enable a man to stand firm and true, unless he is following his bent, or at least approximating it. There is something in the pursuit of the highest ambition, in full, complete self-expression, which satisfies the whole nature. It is to the individual what a family is to the young husband,—it is a balance wheel; it steadies his movements, makes him more contented and dignifies his whole being.

When a man is doing the work he loves he is safe from a thousand temptations which, but for it, would be likely to entice him into all sorts of things which would injure, and perhaps ruin, him.

Man was made for action. The mind must be employed, and when it is employed normally it gives a great sense of satisfaction, and increases health. The individual feels the exhilaration of constant growth, and there is no stimulant like that. It gives an uplift to the entire nature. There is no tonic, no stimulant, like that of the successful pursuit of one's highest ambition. Everywhere we see people crippled, dwarfed, emasculated, because they have been denied the pursuit of their supreme ambition. In it they would be giants; outside of it they are pygmies. There is something so utterly discouraging, disheartening, in being forced to give up the careers they long for, that the nature never entirely rallies from the shock. Everywhere we see these burned-out shells of individuals who have been robbed of their normal pursuit. They are ambitionless, restless, ineffective weaklings, mere pygmies of their possible selves.

To be conscious of having fine ability, but being powerless to use it; to feel oneself getting on in years without getting on in life; to feel the years slipping by, one by one, without any corresponding results from one's effort; to feel that the very material from which a successful

life can be made is gradually drifting beyond our grasp; to reach middle life or later without having made good, and yet to feel ambition prodding and spurring us on, and conscience upbraiding us for not seizing the opportunities that we let slip through our fingers; to see the chance and yet to be so paralyzed that we cannot grasp it; to be conscious that we are going down the decline towards the sunset of life, with nothing to show for the misspent years, for all the ineffective years—this is agony indeed.

There is nothing so important in life as to get into the right place. Then we need no spurring, no goading on, for the exhilaration and tonic which comes from the normal exercise of our highest faculties will itself hold us to our task. The love of our work is the greatest incentive. No great work is ever done from compulsion. If there is no heart in it, it lacks fire, force, everything.

The consciousness that we cannot deliver the message which runs in the blood, that the thing which we have set our heart on and the thing which our ambition craves cannot be realized, causes intense suffering, and premature old age.

To be conscious that we have the power, the ability to do some one thing superbly well, to feel that all our ability and inclination point to that one possible goal, and then to have it all thwarted, to be conscious that we must get our living by our weakness instead of by our strength, because of something we cannot control, makes the heart sick and the hair gray.

A thwarted ambition seems to wrench the whole nature out of its normal orbit. Everything seems perverted when we cannot do that which we are able to do the easiest and best. Every one is conscious that he was made to fit perfectly the work for which he was intended, and that anything else will be a misfit.

It is very easy to say that man is an adaptable creature and can adjust himself to conditions which confront him. Of course, a man can do something in a work he is not fitted for; but he cannot do it superbly well, with that zest and enthusiasm which are characteristic of excellency. He cannot find in it satisfaction.

The human mind is happiest when it is most active in performing the functions which it was intended to perform. One of man's greatest passions is that of achievement, the passion for doing things, the ambition to accomplish. This is one of the greatest satisfactions of life, and satisfaction is the chief ingredient in happiness. The consciousness of growth, which increases one's power, is one of the durable satisfactions of life.

The love of achievement is satisfied in the very act of creation, in the realization of the ideal which has haunted the brain. Ease, leisure, comfort are nothing compared with the exhilaration which comes from achievement.

Who can describe the sense of triumph that fills the inventor, the joy that thrills him when he sees for the first time the perfect mechanism or device—the work of his brain and hand—that will ameliorate the hard conditions of mankind and help to emancipate man from drudgery?

Who can imagine the satisfaction, the happiness, of the scientist who, after years of battling with poverty, criticism, and denunciation, and the tortures of being misunderstood by those dearest to him, succeeds at last in wresting some great secret from nature, in making some marvelous discovery that will push civilization forward?

The exercise of the creative faculties, the stretching of the mind over greater and greater problems, and the solving of them, constitute a powerful mental tonic and give a satisfaction which nothing else gives. Think of the tameness, the insipidity, the weakness, the mental flabbiness of the life of the inactive and purposeless man who has nothing special to do, no

great life-motive pushing him on, in comparison with that of the man who feels all the forces within him heaving and tugging away to accomplish a mighty purpose!

The idle, aimless man does not know the meaning of personal power or the satisfaction and joy which comes to the doer, the achiever.

We have an instinctive feeling that we have been set in motion by a Higher Power; that there is an invisible spring within us—the “imperious must”—which impels us to weave the pattern given us in the Mount of Transfiguration of our highest moment, to make our life-vision real. A divine impulse constantly urges us to reach our highest ideal. There is something back of our supreme ambition deeper than a mere personal gratification. There is a vital connection between it and the great plan of creation, the progress, the final goal, of the race.

XXIII. An Idle Life An Unhappy Life

In idleness alone is there perpetual despair.—Carlyle.

The *Shah* of Persia gazed in wonder at English ladies and gentlemen dancing. "Can they not hire persons to do it for them?" he said. He supposed that to look at dancing was more pleasurable than to dance.

"We think the pleasure of life is in receiving sensations—a most . . . limited idea," says Charlotte Perkins Gilman. "The main pleasures of life come through expression rather than impression. It is more pleasant to paint a picture than to look at it,—to sing than to hear singing. Supplied with every conceivable means of gratification, a human being soon exhausts the pleasure of having things, but given right avenues to employ his energies, he never exhausts the pleasure of doing things. The receiving power of an organism is not so great as its giving power. Expression is greater than impression. We fondly imagine that it is better to have things than do them,—an error carried to its natural height when acting under this mistake we seek to avoid work and look down upon the worker."

If all of the results of the workers of the world—their discoveries, their inventions, their railroads, their steamships, their telephones, and all of the facilities which they have produced— if all traces of the workers' efforts were suddenly withdrawn from this earth, and we were living at the mercy of the idlers, who would care to remain here ? What a dismal sort of a world this would be!

It is work that keeps the human race in health, in contentment, in prosperity. A! man's task is his life-preserver, as well as his most potent worry-eliminator.

I do not believe that it is possible for any able-bodied human being to be happy who lives an idle, purposeless life. It is not natural for the human machinery to remain idle. There are a thousand indications in a man's economy that he was made for work, for strong vigorous action.

Happiness comes from the normal exercise of our faculties, and whatever faculty or function is not exercised tends to deteriorate. Whatever is idle, except for rest and recuperation, is on the way to oblivion.

Man is naturally a just being, and the universal sense of justice, of fairness, is outraged when he refuses to do his part in the world's work.

One of the most discouraging phases of our modern life is the large and ever increasing number of people who have no serious purpose in life but to spend their time turning money into nothing, nothing that counts, nothing that is worth while. Their principal occupation is chasing after pleasure, and of course they are disappointed and discontented. Happiness is a product which comes from doing things worth while, from making oneself useful to the world, in doing one's share of the world's work.

It is impossible for an habitually idle rich person to be really happy, because he is all the time conscious of that inferiority which inevitably comes from unused faculties. Deterioration is the law written upon everything that is not in active use. How quickly a farm, a building, or a machine will deteriorate when unoccupied, unused. Things which are not serving any real purpose Nature takes back to the elements from which they came. The really happy person, therefore, must not only be active but he must also be conscious of doing his level best, otherwise the sense of self-reproval, self-reproach, will mar his happiness.

There certainly is a great satisfaction in achievement, in doing things, which is never experienced in an idle life. Idle people, either rich or poor, if they are able to work, are always unhappy, discontented, dissatisfied. They flit about from one thing to another, and from place to place, in their vain effort to find something which will satisfy them.

No man can be happy who is not willing to do his part in the world's work, who expects to take out of life's great granary all of the good things which the world's workers have put there, with no adequate compensation on his part. One of the principal constituents of happiness is honesty, and no one is honest who does not work according to his strength.

I have seen rich young men who never did an honest day's work in their lives, never earned enough to buy a suit of clothes, and I have heard them tell what a bore it is to travel, how they are wearied with going through the art galleries. Why, some of these idlers are tired of living. Life loses its zest to the idlers. They do not get the real flavor of life, which comes from the consciousness of doing one's part in the world's work, doing one's level best and making life worth while.

How much more we enjoy money which we have earned by hard work than that which we inherit, which we get without effort.

We are so constituted that we cannot really enjoy what we do not earn. What we achieve by our own effort, our own initiative, becomes a part of our very being.

The idler does not enjoy a day's outing as does the man who works hard, who feels that he has earned his recreation; then it means something to him; every minute of it is a joy.

There is only one price for real happiness, the satisfaction of holding one's head up and looking the world in the face. Happiness must be purchased with honest personal endeavor, with earnest effort to do one's share of the world's work. If we refuse to pay this price we cannot expect its blessings.

The time will come when human drones will be ostracized from society as nobodies, as thieves of honest men's efforts, thieves of the results of honest men's labor. The coming civilization will not tolerate these thieves of society, these lazy vagabonds who do nothing but steal the products of their labor and demoralize society by their vicious example.

The lazy, indolent, idle man cannot respect himself, for there is something inside of him that tells him that he is a thief, tells him that it is unfair, cowardly, to expect that others will be the slave of his desires, that he shall have all of the good things of life and live in idleness, while they who do all the work have almost no pleasures and are not even able to live as human beings ought to live.

Do not flatter yourself that you can be really happy unless you are useful. Happiness and usefulness were born twins. To separate them is fatal.

It is as impossible for a human being to be happy who is habitually idle as it is for a fine chronometer to be normal when not running.

Happiness is incompatible with stagnation. A man must feel his expanding power lifting, tugging away at a lofty purpose, or he will miss the joy of living.

The chief reason why a retired man is usually unhappy and discontented is because of his consciousness of deterioration, of a cessation of vigorous activity; he has a growing sense of inferior thinking and production. And when a man ceases to do things, he soon loses his confidence that he can do them.

There is no place in the universe for the idler; everything was planned and fitted for the dead-in-earnest worker. The best evidence that the idler is out of place everywhere is that he fits in nowhere. Nature begins to take away from him what he has because he does not use it. He is left empty-handed, helpless, miserable.

XXIV. Joy In Our Work

"Work is the best thing to make us love life.

—Ernest Renan.

"The man who works is the happy man."

It make all the difference in the world to our health and happiness whether we look upon our work as drudgery or whether we do it with delight. Work should be a tonic, not a grind; life a delight, not a struggle.

"Work, regarded by many as the curse sent upon man for sin, is instead God's highway to the hills of happiness."

"Not drudgery, but blessed employment, which brings all the activities into play and gives a zest to recreation."

Work is man's greatest blessing, for an occupied mind is not a tempted mind; and it is a double blessing to the weak-minded. Vast multitudes of people have been saved from useless, dissipated lives by being obliged to work.

A vocation is not only a tremendous educator, a developer, a strengthener of all our faculties, but this systematic, constant exercise of our faculties, gives us perpetual pleasure and is a great character builder, and protector.

It is the law of nature that anything that is not helpfully occupied begins to deteriorate, to go to pieces. It matters not whether it is an engine or a human brain,—exercise or deteriorate is the law of life.

Perhaps the majority of active men have lost their freshness and buoyancy of spirit in their work, have lost their mental elasticity, and they work in a mechanical, perfunctory way. They regard their work as more or less of a misfortune or a drudgery from which they would like to get away, and from which they expect to be released when they get a little farther along, a little higher up.

Most people are looking and hoping for release from work, and yet all history and all experience prove that busy people, people who are constantly occupied, are the happiest. In fact, idleness is a great human curse. It is an absolute foe of happiness. No idle man or woman has any comprehension of the word.

The most unhappy person in the world is the one without employment; no amount of money can take the place of work.

"Man must work. That is certain as the sun. But he may work grudgingly or he may work gratefully; he may work as a man, or he may work as a machine. He cannot always choose his work, but he can do it in a generous temper, and with an up-looking heart. There is no work so rude that he may not breathe a soul into it; there is no work so dull, that he may not enliven it."

God never meant labor to be a drudgery; he meant it to be a pleasure, and we find that it is so in business houses where moral sunshine, harmony, and good will prevail. It is in such places that we also find the best work done,—best both in quality and in quantity. A contented mind, a cheerful disposition are the best kind of capital and pay big dividends. If you and those about you are cheerful and happy, business will come to you—you will attract it.

We should take it for granted that no life can be entirely free from vexations, trials, troubles, sorrows, and disappointments; but we should resolve that these things shall not be allowed to disturb our peace of mind, or to destroy our happiness. It is as amazing as it is sad, that we go about largely burdening ourselves with strivings that are of no consequence, and miss the gladness and exhilaration of living. No life is successful until it is radiant with happiness.

No matter what your business may be, if you are an employer, you will find that no investment you can make will pay you so well as the effort to scatter heart sunshine through your establishment. Scolding, fault-finding, criticising, and slave-driving methods have been tried in every business from the beginning of time and have proved total failures. Many a man has strangled his business by his harsh, brutal treatment of his employees. He has crushed hope out of the most buoyant, strangled enthusiasm, killed spontaneity, and made service for every one in his establishment a dreary drudgery instead of a delight.

Many business men are beginning to discover that it pays not only to make employees comfortable but happy. They are finding that this is the best kind of an investment. Men can produce more; they are more efficient, they do their best work when happiest. Our mental attitude has everything to do with our productiveness. Our brains do not work properly, our faculties will not give up their best when the mind is discordant, troubled.

If you are an employer, do not go about your place of business as though you thought life were a wretched, miserable grind. Show yourself master of the situation, not its slave. Rise above the petty annoyances which destroy peace and harmony. Make up your mind that you are too large to be overcome by trifles. Resolve that you will be larger than your business, that you will overtop it with your manliness and cheerfulness.

To say nothing of its being your duty to make the lives of those who are helping you to carry on your business as pleasant and as full of sunshine as possible, it is the best possible policy for you to pursue. You know very well that a horse that is prodded and fretted and urged all the time by means of whip and spur and rein, will not travel nearly so far without becoming exhausted as one that is urged forward by gentleness and kind treatment. In their susceptibility to kindness, men and women are in nowise different from the lower animals. You cannot expect your employees to remain buoyant, cheerful, alert, and unwearied under the goad of scowls and the lash of a bitter tongue. Energy is only another name for enthusiasm, and how can you expect those who work for you to be enthusiastic or energetic in your service when surrounded by an atmosphere of despondency and gloom, when they expect a volley of curses and criticism every time you pass?

There is no other one thing that will contribute so much to the life that is worth while as the optimistic habit. The habit of carrying a cheerful, hopeful, optimistic outlook upon life tends to light up one's pathway.

Optimism is a grand creed. You can adopt no better life philosophy. The habit of looking for the best in our work, and of seeing the best in everybody and everything is of untold value. It is the sign of a sane, healthy mind.

"I have found my greatest happiness in labor," said Gladstone. "I early formed a habit of industry, and it has been its own reward."

Many people are pessimistic because they see no consistency or relationship between what people call the dry, dreary drudgery of life and the idea that life was intended to be a joy,^a perpetual delight. They cannot see any relation between a perpetual delight and hard work, disagreeable duties. They are unable, unlike the bee, to extract honey from the bitter flowers of life. To them labor, everything that seems a drudgery, is a curse.

The trouble is, many of us are tempted to overwork. We strain to do more than we are able. *“Do not undertake more than you can accomplish”* says Dr. Thomas R. Slicer. “The unhappiness of life lies in the fret of it; not in its work, but in its worry. Good, strong well-ordered work never killed a man; but the worry of it, the loading up of an hour with two hours’ work, the loading up of an evening with too many engagements, being avaricious of pleasure and greedy of delight, will make us unhappy. Joy ceases to be joy when it is not conveniently handled and easily carried.”

The training, the discipline, the carrying out of the great life motive are the chief objects of labor. The Creator could have spared man physical labor, but he would not have been a developed man.

Every nerve and every muscle, every fiber, every cell in our body, cries out for exercise, for work. The eye wants work, the ear wants work, the perceptions want work; every faculty of the mind calls for healthful exercise.

The perfect heaven which the old theologians and many people once pictured for themselves, would, in reality, make a hell for active, thinking people. What would we do in a place where the streets were paved with gold, the walls made of glass, and where there was perpetual rest? Every cell in our brain calls for activity, and existence in a place where the faculties were lulled to rest would be torture to normal human beings. Man is so constituted that he must be happiest when he is conscious that he is the most active in useful work.

The best thing that will ever come to a human being will come from his daily task, come in the ordinary pursuit of his vocation. The extraordinary things come to us very seldom. One’s daily life is where he uses his religion, his philosophy. This is the test of his quality, the measure of the man—the spirit in which he works and how he bears his daily task.

There is no one thing that has ever done so much for humanity, that has saved so many human beings from despair, has kept so many from suicide; no one thing that has called forth other resources, developed and strengthened other powers of mind and body as has hard work. It is unaccountable that anything which has been such a wonderful benefit to mankind as work has proved to be, should be loathed, despised, dreaded by so many people.

Miss Alma-Tadema, in her lecture on “What is Happiness?” said it took her five months to write down the definition of happiness. She says that happiness is the result of working hard and developing one’s powers to the limit. She does not believe that it is possible for a person to be very happy while he is conscious that he is developing only a small percentage of his possible ability. His happiness would be of a very low order because there would be a perpetual reprimand in him which would take the edge from his happiness if he were not doing his best to give his best to the world.

What a joy there is in an exquisitely done job, a piece of work that is done to the complete finish, that has our unqualified approval, that makes us respect ourselves more!

“Owing to ingrained habits,” said Horace Mann, “work has always been to me what water is to a fish.”

There can be no greater happiness than the normal, vigorous exercise of one’s faculties along the line of his bent. Life means little without a purpose. Once his life aim is lost, man simply exists—he does not really live. I have yet to see a human being wretched while busily occupied along the line of his talent. What can give better satisfaction than a sense of mastery in our undertakings, a consciousness of the ability to do things that are different from others about us, with consummate ease?

The exercise which comes from our work, moreover, gives an enjoyment according to the kind and quality of the faculties that are called into action in the operation. If the benevolent faculties, the unselfish faculties are called into play, we get a much higher form of enjoyment, than when the greedy, selfish faculties are exercised.

There is every indication in the nature of things that it was intended that man should find his greatest happiness, his great satisfaction in life, his chief joy, in his daily occupation. Other things we enjoy now and then, occasionally, but if we love our work we have a perpetual feast.

The satisfaction of the happiness which comes from travel, from viewing works of art, from reading a book, from social intercourse with friends, from the opera, from the theater, is a temporary thing in our life; but the man who loves his work has a daily enjoyment.

Most people merely exist, they do not really live. A man's vocation should be his joy; he should put his soul into it and find his delight in it. The conscious self-expression of ourselves, the exercise of our powers and faculties should give constant satisfaction. Merely to grind out a day's work, because we have to do it, to work under pressure, is not living.

If we are perfectly normal we should go to our work in the morning with that keen delight and anticipation that a prospective bride and bridegroom feel on the approach of their wedding day.

What glorious pictures of anticipation a young, ambitious artist feels! He can scarcely wait until he can return to his half finished picture which has haunted him since he left it the night before. What a revolution in business there would be if employees in great establishments approached their work every morning with that supreme zest, with that glorious anticipation of a Michael Angelo or a Millet!

With what keen delight does the young author go to his half finished book, to take up again the characters which have robbed him of sleep and which have filled his vision through waking hours since he left it the night before.

Every one ought to go to his work in the morning with a similar zest, with the anticipated joy that can scarcely wait until the store, the factory, or the studio opens in the morning. It would not be long before multitudes of employees found their own names over the doors of their business or profession; if every employee went to his task with such zest, with such keen delight and such vivid anticipation. How quickly we should then see the business millennium!

Instead of allowing children to grow up with the idea that earning a living is something to be dreaded, a disagreeable necessity, they should be made to feel that the bread and butter side of one's occupation is only a mere incident in one's vocation. One's occupation ought to be the calling in which he manufactures joy as well as a living. Our children should be taught that they will find their Eden of satisfaction in their vocation. They should be trained to think their life occupation is a grand privilege, which will bring supreme joy, if they find their right place in life. They should realize that there is no such thing as drudgery in the work one loves, that it is a perpetual delight, a glorious privilege.

The youth should go to his occupation every morning with as keen anticipation as he would go to the amusement which he loves best.

XXV. Turning The Water Of Life Into Wine

“If it is a dark day, never mind; you will lighten it up. If it is a bright day, you will add to the brightness. Give a word of cheer, a kindly greeting and a warm handshake to your friends. If you have enemies, look up, pass them by, forget and try to forgive. If all of us would only think how much of human happiness is made by ourselves, there would be less of human misery.”

“A certain aged woman, whose face is serene and peaceful, seems utterly above the little worries and vexations which torment the average woman and leave lines of care, though trouble has by no means passed her by. The Fretful Woman asked her one day the secret of her happiness; and the beautiful old face shone with joy,” says *The Woman's Home Companion*,

“‘My dear,’ she said, ‘I keep a Pleasure Book.’

“‘A what?’

“‘A Pleasure Book. Long ago I learned that there is no day so dark and gloomy that it does not contain some ray of light, and I have made it one business of my life to write down the little things which mean so much to a woman. I have a book marked for every day of every year since I left school. It is but a little thing: the new gown, the chat with a friend, the thoughtfulness of my husband, a flower, a book, a walk in the field, a letter, a concert, or a drive; but it all goes into my Pleasure Book, and, when I am inclined to fret, I read a few pages to see what a happy, blessed woman I am. You may see my treasures if you will.’

“‘Slowly the peevish, discontented woman turned over the book her friend brought her, reading a little here and there. One day’s entries ran thus: ‘Had a pleasant letter from mother. Saw a beautiful lily in a window. Found the pin I thought I had lost. Saw such a bright, happy girl on the street. Husband brought some roses in the evening.’

“‘Bits of verse and lines from her daily reading have gone into the Pleasure Book of this world-wise woman, until its pages are a storehouse of truth and beauty.

“‘Have you found a pleasure for every day?’ the Fretful Woman asked.

“‘For every day,’ the low voice answered; ‘I had to make my theory come true, you know.’”

“The Fretful Woman ought to have stopped there, but did not; and she found that page where it was written—‘He died with his hand in mine, and my name upon his lips.’”

Would it not be well for more of us to follow this dear old lady’s example and keep a Pleasure Book?

“Blessed are the joy makers.” Fortunately for the world there are people who take a delight in mere living, who look upon life as a priceless gift, who delight in their work; who really enjoy everybody and everything, and who always give you the impression that they feel that they were born just in the best time, and in the best place in the world.

“The cheerful man carries with him perpetually, in his presence and personality, an influence that acts upon others as summer warmth on the fields and forests. It wakes up and calls out the best that is in them. It makes them stronger, braver, and happier. Such a man makes a little spot of this world a lighter, brighter, warmer place for other people to live in. To meet him in the morning is to get inspiration which makes all the day’s struggles and tasks easier. His hearty handshake puts a thrill of new vigor into your veins. After talking with him for a

few minutes, you feel an exhilaration of spirits, a quickening of energy, a renewal of zest and interest in living, and are ready for any duty or service.”

He gets the most out of life who realizes the latent treasures invisible to most eyes, who sees beauties and graces where others see only ugliness, deformity.

We all know sweet, cheerful, inspiring characters who have the wonderful faculty of turning the common water of life into the most delicious wine. Their presence is a tonic which invigorates, which helps us to bear our burdens. Their advent in the home seems like the coming of the sun after a long arctic night. They unlock the tongue, and we speak with the gift of prophecy. They are marvelous health promoters.

“I see our brother, who has just been ill, lives on Grumbling Street,” said a keen-witted Yorkshireman. “I lived there myself for some time, and never enjoyed good health. The air was bad, the house bad, the water bad; the birds never came and sang in the street; and I was gloomy and sad enough. But I ‘flitted.’ I got into Thanksgiving avenue; and ever since then I have had good health, and so have all my family. The air is pure, the house good; the sun shines on it all day; the birds are always singing; and I am as happy as I can be. Now, I recommend our brother to ‘flit.’ There are plenty of houses to let on Thanksgiving avenue; he will find himself a new man if he will only come, and I shall be right glad to have him for a neighbor.”

A lady who was recently asked how she managed to get along so well with disagreeable people, said: “It is very simple. All I do is to try to make the most of their good qualities and pay no attention to the disagreeable ones.” The people who help us most are those who, like this lady, ignore, or rather try to eradicate, our faults, by drawing out and emphasizing our better qualities and attuning our minds to high ideals.

Few people are large enough to rise above their aches and pains and disappointments. The majority are always talking about them, projecting their dark shadows into your atmosphere, cutting off your sunshine with their clouds. Their ailments and their hard luck and misfortunes seem to be the biggest things about them. You never meet them but they thrust them into your presence.

“So to order one’s life as to keep, amid toils and suffering, the faculty of happiness, and be able to propagate it in a sort of salutary contagion among one’s fellow-men, is to do a work of fraternity in the noblest sense,” says Charles Wagner.

The man who is not big enough to rise above the things that trouble him, who cannot overtop his aches and pains, annoyances and disappointments, so that they are of little consequence in comparison with his great life aim, will never become really strong.

There is an unwritten law for people who are thoroughbred—the real gentleman and the real lady—which compels them to keep their troubles, their ailments, their sorrows, their worries, their losses, to themselves. There is a fine discipline in it. It mellows the character and sweetens the life. But when these things are not borne heroically, they mar the character and leave their ugly traces in the face; their hideous forms appear in the manner and disfigure the whole life.

Learn to consume your own smoke. If you have misfortunes, pains, diseases, losses, keep them to yourself. Bury them. Those who know you have them will love you and admire you infinitely more for this suppression. A stout heart and persistent cheerfulness will be more than a match for all your troubles.

In one of the battles of Crimea, a cannonball struck inside the fort, crashing through a beautiful garden; but from the ugly chasm there burst forth a spring of water which is still

flowing. And how beautiful it is, if our many hidden sorrows become a blessing to others, through our determination to live and to do for those who need our help. Life is not given for mourning, but for unselfish service.

Resolve that you are too large to be overcome by trifles; that you will be larger than the things that tend to annoy you; that you will overtop them with your gladness and cheerfulness.

In one of Goethe's stories there is a description of the rude fisherman's hut which was glorified by the light of a little silver lamp. The doors and roof, the floors, the furniture—everything in the hut was transformed into silver by the magic of the silver lamp. So a single sunny soul transforms many a poverty-stricken home with brightness and good cheer.

We receive more of the true fortune the world about us has to bestow, if we try to win our wealth from nature and from other personalities by an invisible cheerfulness.

"Here is a bad, disagreeable day, as we call it," says Dr. Savage. "Shall we become unhappy because we get sprinkled and the black of our boots is spotted, or shall we learn to think of the wonder of the great forces that throughout the universe are playing round our little planet, sometimes bursting through in sunshine, again draping the heavens in clouds, sometimes lifting up the waters and the dew from the ponds and the rivers and the lakes and the grass, again dropping them down in rain or sleet or snow, and so keeping the great forces of life and the changes of the world going their marvelous rounds? There is beauty in the leaden sky; there is God's wonder in every drop of rain; there are marvels that are infinite in a flake of snow. Shall we forget all this, and merely be troubled because they happen to come at a time when we who, in our egotism, would desire to manage the universe, would have had the weather a little different?"

I know a lady who has been confined to her couch in a small room for years, and can see only the tops of trees from her resting-place, yet she is so cheerful and hopeful that people go to her with their troubles and always go away comforted and encouraged.

"Oh, isn't the spring beautiful!" (or summer, autumn, or winter, as the case may be) is her exclamation to callers, even when her body is quivering with pain. Her eyes are always smiling.

Will any one say that this woman, who has brought light and cheer to all who know her, is poor, or a failure simply because she has been confined to that little room all these years? No; she is a greater success than many a rich woman. She has the wealth that is worth while,—the wealth that survives pain, sorrow, and disasters of all kinds,—that does not burn up,—which floods or droughts cannot affect,—the inexhaustible wealth of a sunny, cheerful soul.

Happiness is not an accident. It does not live in things. It does not depend, as most people think, upon having money or not having it. It is a little more convenient, a little more comfortable, we admit, to have money; but there is not such a very great difference between riding in an automobile or fine carriage and riding in a street car; not so very much difference between the comforts in a palatial home and a very modest one, if clean and neat, and love dwells there.

In fact, love is very often a stranger in palaces. There is very little comfort or happiness in any home where affection and sweet confidence are absent.

Kindness of heart, charity, helpfulness, unselfishness, love, honesty, sincerity, simplicity, sympathy—these are the most desirable things in life. These are the things we are all trying to get. If we do not have them ourselves, we are trying to get close to those who do possess them.

To save the life of a girl whom he had never seen before, Willie Rugh, a crippled newsboy of Gary, Indiana, recently offered to give his withered leg for skin grafting. The young woman was discharged from the hospital cured, but the anesthetic given to Rugh before the operation had been too much for his weak lungs; pneumonia, developed and death resulted.

As death stiffened his fingers, a rose, given him by the girl for whom he was sacrificing his life, fell from his hand upon the coverlet of the hospital cot.

"I'm glad," he had whispered a few minutes before the end. "Tell her that—that I'm jes' glad."

And then when his foster-mother knelt beside the bed and hid her face in the edge of the boy's pillow, he reached out a weak hand and stroked her hair.

"Don't cry, Mammy," he begged. "I never 'mounted to nothin' before, and now you know I done sompin' fer somebody."

Conscious to the last, he kept smiling, while the nurse and the surgeon in the room, filled with emotion, turned their faces away to hide their tears.

*"I count this thing to be grandly true,
That a noble deed is a step toward God;
Lifting the soul from the common clod
To a purer air and a broader view."*

What a wonderful world this would be to live in, if we all made a strenuous effort to obtain the things that are really worth while— things that make for an unselfish, joyous character! How quickly the millennium would come if everybody was kind, unselfish, and true, bouyant, clean, and honest! We would have no need of penitentiaries or courts of justice. The Golden Rule would everywhere be the law of life.

Next to the duty of self-denial comes the duty of delight. What ripeness is to an orange, what song is to a lark, what culture and refinement are to the intellect, happiness is to the soul. As vulgarity and ignorance betoken a neglected mind, so unhappiness and misery proclaim the neglected heart. The normal nature will keep strong and fresh the chords that vibrate joy.

A Cabinet officer once said to the late Charles A. Dana, who was fairly bubbling over with the enjoyment of his work: "Well, Mr. Dana, I don't see how you stand this infernal grind."

"Grind?" said Mr. Dana. "You never were more mistaken. I have nothing but fun."

"I have told you," says Southey, "of the Spaniard who always put on spectacles when about to eat cherries, in order that the fruit might look larger and more tempting. In like manner I make the most of my enjoyments; and though I do not cast my eyes away from my troubles, I pack them in as small a compass as I can for myself, and never let them annoy others."

We are all richer in happiness material than we think. There are a thousand unrecognized, unutilized wellsprings of joy within us. Just think what a person who has been blind and deaf from birth, with a soul in tune with the beautiful and the true, would get out of the things in our every-day life, which seem so common and sordid to us, if they were only given a temporary use of their lost eyesight and hearing! What joy they would get out of the weeds by the roadside, which are distasteful to us, and out of the sounds in the street, which only annoy our ears!

Why, we are all infinitely richer than we think! Our faculties have not been cultivated to seize, to appreciate and enjoy a tithe of the multitude of things all about us, which would entrance the souls of those who are deprived of all opportunities of education and training.

XXVI. Longevity And Happiness

“The face cannot betray the years until the mind has given its consent. The mind is the sculptor.”

“We renew our bodies by renewing our thoughts; change our bodies, our habits, by changing our thoughts.”

“Last Sunday a young man died here of extreme old age at twenty-five,” wrote John Newton.

George Meredith, on the celebration of his seventy-fourth birthday said: “I do not feel that I am growing old, either in heart or mind. I still look on life with a young man’s eye.”

You cannot tell how old people are by the calendar. You must measure the spirit, the temperament, the mental attitude, to get the age. I know young men who are in their sixties, and old men who are in their thirties. “Old age seizes upon ill-spent youth like fire upon a rotten house.”

No one is old until the interest in life is gone out of him, until his spirit becomes aged, until his heart becomes cold and unresponsive; as long as he touches life at many points he can not grow old in spirit.

“To live on without growing old, to feel alive and hold, to the last, whatever is best in youth-vigor of mind and freshness of feeling— then, when the end has come, to find in the depths of the soul the belief of earlier years, and to fall softly asleep with a sure hope, is not this an enviable lot?”

The youth cannot understand why the close of the day does not have that “wild gladness of morning”; it has riper, richer hues. The sunset is just as beautiful, and often more glorious than the sunrise. The last of life should be just as beautiful and grand as the first of life,— “The last of life—for which the first was made.”

Age has its pleasures. If the life has been well lived, the reminiscences are grand, the satisfactions beautiful. Indeed, what can give greater pleasure than to look back upon a life well spent, lived usefully, beautifully, fruitfully? When we arrive at the Port of Old Age, after a rough passage over a stormy sea, there is a feeling of rest, of completeness, of safety.

It is said that “long livers are great hopers.” If you keep your hope bright in spite of discouragements, and meet all difficulties with a cheerful face, it will be very difficult for age to trace its furrows on your brow. There is longevity in cheerfulness.

Time does not touch fine, serene characters. They can’t grow old. An aged person ought to be calm and balanced. All of the agitations and perturbations of youth ought to have ceased. A sweet dignity, a quiet repose, a calm expression should characterize people who are supposed to have had all that is richest and best out of the age in which they lived.

There is no justness or fairness in ranking people by their years. People ought to be judged old or young by their mental condition, their attitude toward life, their interest in life, their youthful or aged thought. If they face toward youth and optimism, if they are hopeful, cheerful, helpful, enthusiastic, they ought to be classed as young, no matter what their years may say.

The elixir of youth which alchemists sought so long in chemicals, lies in ourselves. The secret is in our own mentality. Perpetual rejuvenation is possible only by right thinking. We look as old as we think and feel because it is thought and feeling that change our appearance.

Mental poise means mental harmony, and harmony prolongs life. Whatever disturbs our peace of mind, or upsets our equilibrium, causes friction, and friction whittles away life's delicate machinery at a rapid rate.

Few know how to protect themselves from rasping, wearing, grinding, disintegrating influences in their environment.

Nothing else more effectually retards age than keeping in mind the bright, cheerful, optimistic, hopeful, buoyant picture of youth, in all its splendor, magnificence; the picture of the glories which belong to youth—youthful dreams, ideals, hopes, and all the qualities peculiar to young life.

“Keeping alive that spirit of youth,” Stevenson used to say, was “the perennial spring of all the mental faculties.”

What a mistake we make in associating the great joys of life with youth! Everywhere we hear people say, “Oh, let the young people enjoy themselves. They will only be young once. They will come into the troublesome part of life soon enough. Let them be happy before the clouds come.” It is estimated that the person who lives a perfectly normal life will experience infinitely greater joys and will be much happier in his seventies than in his teens.

When a man has reached middle life or later, he is largely the creature of his habits, and he cannot develop entirely new brain cells, new faculties. We enjoy the exercise of the faculties which we have been accustomed to use, the faculties which have been most dominant, active, throughout our lifetime.

One reason why many people have such a horror of old age is because they have made no provision for their occupation in their declining years. They spend all their energies in making a living, and do very little towards making a life. The curse of old age is a lack of interesting mental occupation, and it is usually due to an early lack of training for an interesting old age. “The mind that is vacant is a mind distressed.” To avoid mental old age ought to be every one's ambition. Not having formed the habit of reading, in youth, very few ever cultivate the habit and taste for reading late in life, and the result is that many people find old age extremely dreary and monotonous. A person who has always kept up the habit of improving himself, reading good books, thinking and contemplating great truths, who has developed the love of art and beauty, and who has cultivated his social faculties, finds plenty of employment for his last years.

One of the most pathetic pictures in American life is that of the old men who have retired, but had nothing to retire to, except their fortunes. They had never prepared for old age enjoyment. In their younger days they did not develop the qualities which make leisure even endurable, to say nothing of enjoyable.

Everywhere abroad we see the retired American who feels out of place and homesick, hungry for the exercise again in the office, in the store, with the customer and the check book.

He cannot talk and laugh as he used to with his old college mates and friends, for even his mirth and enthusiasms have evaporated. No matter how hard he tries to enjoy himself in the art galleries, the concert halls, the yard stick, customers and schemes for making more money keep revolving in his mind, and strangle all the efforts of the finer sentiments to assert themselves. The things which he could have once enjoyed so much now only bore him.

Some of the most disappointed men I have ever met have been men who retired after having made a fortune. Years of leisure looked enticing to them when they were struggling so hard in their earlier days to get a start and in their later days to accumulate a fortune. Their imaginations pictured a blissful condition when they could lie abed as late as they chose in

the morning, do whatever they felt like doing, instead of being prodded by that “imperious must,” which had held the lash over them for so many years. And the beginning of their retirement was so blissful that they thought they had never before really lived. But very soon the days began to drag; and they discovered that their lives were not fitted to enjoy very much outside of the routine rut between their office and the home. After retirement their faculties which had been used in mental wrestling with men and things, in the barter of trade, soon began to atrophy; that which had been their strongest hold gradually faded out and left no adequate compensation. They soon found that their real enjoyment was in the exercise of their brain cells, that when they tried to find satisfaction and real enjoyment by the use of faculties which had not been developed, which had been little used, there was no corresponding satisfaction.

In boyhood the family necessity forced many of these men to find work, and their early education was neglected. The whole train of their business lives had been in an entirely different direction, away from the things they are now trying to enjoy.

How frequently we have heard of men who after acquiring a fortune, have retired in robust health and at the very height of their mental vigor, and yet shortly after went into a decline and in a few years died.

Of what use are books and pictures and statues to him who has robbed his intellect of all that deepens and enhances life's value? There is no greater self-deception than that which impels one to give the best part of himself and the best years of his life for something which he hopes to enjoy when the fires of youth have departed and there is nothing left but the embers and ashes of age.

An observing writer has said: “How many men there are who have toiled and slaved to make money that they might be happy by and by, but who, by the time they came to be fifty or sixty years old, had used up all the enjoyable life in them! During their early life, they carried economy and frugality to the excess of stinginess, and when the time came that they expected joy, there was no joy for them.”

The man who has trained his mind, who has prepared himself for the enjoyment of his retirement in his late years is a fortunate man. If a man has richly earned his leisure by an industrious life, if he has tried to do his share in the world's work and has trained his mind for enjoyment after his retirement, he ought to be able to be very happy. There are multitudes of ways in which an educated mind can derive enjoyment.

Think of the world of pleasure which can be found in books alone to a person who loves them and knows how to appreciate them! It is hard to conceive of greater delight. This would mean very little to the man who has spent half a century plodding away in the business rut and who has perhaps never read a book through in his life.

Think of the enjoyment possible in the world of nature, of art, to a man who trained his esthetic faculties, as did Ruskin, where every natural object, every flower, every plant, every tree, every sunset, would awaken delights that would ravish an angel.

What delights await the man who has made it a life habit to improve himself, to absorb knowledge from every conceivable source! Who can imagine greater delight than that which comes from feeling one's mind expand, from pushing one's horizon of ignorance farther and farther away from him every day!

There is no satisfaction in life like that which comes from helping others to help themselves ; and the man who has kept this practice through his business career will find endless satisfaction and joy in retiring to this helpful life.

It is not only the man whose entire experience has been confined to the narrow business or professional rut that finds life very disappointing after retiring, but also the man who has had early advantages, but whose absorption in his career has shut him out of the world of books, the world of art, beauty, and travel, and closed the avenues of the social side of life, and destroyed the faculties that had found early enjoyment in these things. This has been the sad experience of men who have tried to find enjoyment after retiring, but discovered that they had lost their power of appreciation and enjoyment of things which they once loved so much. This was Darwin's experience. He was shocked to find that during his years of complete absorption in scientific studies, he had entirely lost his love for Shakespeare and music, that the faculties which presided over these things had become atrophied from disuse by nature's inexorable law, which is 'use or lose.'

We get our greatest happiness in the use of the faculties which have been long and habitually exercised. It is not an easy thing late in life to awaken new sentiments, new powers, new faculties, which have been lying dormant for so many years. It is the exercise of the faculties and powers which we have been using all our lives which is going to bring us the only happiness and satisfaction of which we are capable.

By retiring, the average business man relinquishes his hold upon the very faculties which are in any condition to give him the most satisfaction. He cannot get very much out of trying to arouse faculties which have been lying dormant for half a century, and perhaps have never been thoroughly awakened or developed.

I believe that the majority of men who retire not only fail to find happiness, but actually shorten their lives.

How often we hear of men dying, just because they have given up the only thing they could do, and can find no other stimulant to exertion to take its place,—like the horse which so interested Mr. Pickwick, which was kept up by the shafts in which it drew a carriage and collapsed when removed from them!

If you would keep young you must learn the secret of self-rejuvenation, self-refreshment, self-renewal, in your thought, in your work, in your youthful interests.

If you think of yourself as perpetually young, vigorous, robust, and buoyant, because every cell in the body is constantly being renewed, decrepitude will not get hold of you.

I believe that the average person could extend his life very materially, and especially increase his capacity for both achievement and enjoyment wonderfully by forming the habit of excluding from his mind especially before retiring, all unhappy thoughts.

In other words, if we could only learn the secret of what is called, in Eastern countries, "orienting the mind," first emptying it of everything that can mar it or cause pain, and get the right mental attitude, the attitude of love, charity, of kindliness, of magnanimity, helpfulness towards every living creature, it would revolutionize civilization.

There is something wrong when we wake up in the morning with careworn faces, when we feel cross and crabbed and out of sorts, when we feel so touchy at the breakfast table that everybody must handle us with gloves. There is something wrong, when we do not wake from sleep fresh, strong, vigorous, cheerful, bright, full of energy, vigor, ambition, eager to get to our work which is a perpetual tonic.

It is not the troubles of to-day, but those of to-morrow and next week and next year, that whiten our heads and wrinkle our faces.

One's disposition has a powerful influence upon one's longevity. People who fret and fume and worry, who nag and scold, who are touchy and sensitive, age rapidly.

How can one have lines of age or weariness or discontent when one is happy, busy, and one's spirit is ever, ever young?

I know an old lady who has such a sweet, benignant, serene nature that she has robbed old age of its ugliness.

"Frame your minds to mirth and merriment,

Which bar a thousand harms and lengthen life."

Happiness is a great vitality generator, a great strength sustainer, and a powerful health tonic.

"A very fine old gentleman of the best American type, accounting for his advanced age and his advanced happiness, said: It is quite simple. Lead a natural life, eat what you want, and walk on the sunny side of the street."

"There's a cheerful, comfortable bit of advice that does not ask you to live like an angel or die like a saint. By a natural life the old gentleman undoubtedly meant that we were not to live in excess of our incomes, turn night into day, or abuse our bodies. By avoiding these modern temptations one avoids dyspepsia, apoplexy, and nervous prostration, and so, being normally healthy, one can pretty generally eat what one wants to. As for the sunny side of the street—that is the best bit of the old gentleman's whole creed. The crowd that travels on the shady side are a bad lot. They are such questionable fellows as Worry, Melancholy, Greed, Vanity, Idleness, and Crime. On the sunny side, however, it's a jolly crew that jogs along—Mirth, Pleasure, Success, Health, Friendship, Love, good fellows all who help tremendously to halve the burdens and double the blessings of this little affair we call life, and in whose company, blow high or blow low, it's always the fairest of weather."

"Pleasures belong to youth; joys to middle life; blessedness to old age," says Lyman Abbott. "Therefore old age is best; because it is the portico to a palace beautiful, where happiness is neither withered by time nor destroyed by death. Yet one need not wait for old age. He who in the prime of life has learned this secret of immortal happiness can with Paul bid defiance to all the enemies of happiness. He welcomes troubles as contributions to his happiness because builders of his character: 'We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.' "

The greatest conqueror of age is a cheerful, hopeful, loving spirit. A man who would conquer the years must have charity for all. He must avoid worry, envy, malice, and jealousy,—all the small meannesses that feed bitterness in the heart, trace wrinkles on the brow, and dim the eye. The pure heart, a sound body, and a broad, healthy, generous mind, backed by a determination not to let the years count, constitute a fountain of youth which every one may find in himself.

"O, Youth! for years so many and sweet,

'Tis known, that thou and I were one,

I'll think it but a fond conceit—

It cannot be that thou art gone!

The vesper-bell hath not yet tolled:

And thou were aye a Master Bold!

*What strange Disguise hast now put on,
 To make believe that thou art gone?
 I see these Locks in silvery slips
 This drooping Gait, this altered Size:
 But Springtime blossoms on thy Lips,
 And Tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
 Life is but Thought: so think I will That
 Youth and I are House-mates still."*

Of those who live life to the full of usefulness, service, and enjoyment, it may be said:

*"Age cannot wither them
 Nor custom stale their infinite variety."*

THE END

I'm Julie, the woman who runs [Global Grey](#) - the website where this ebook was published. These are my own formatted editions, and I hope you enjoyed reading this particular one.

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