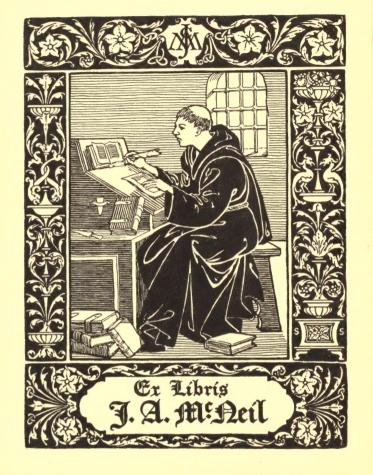
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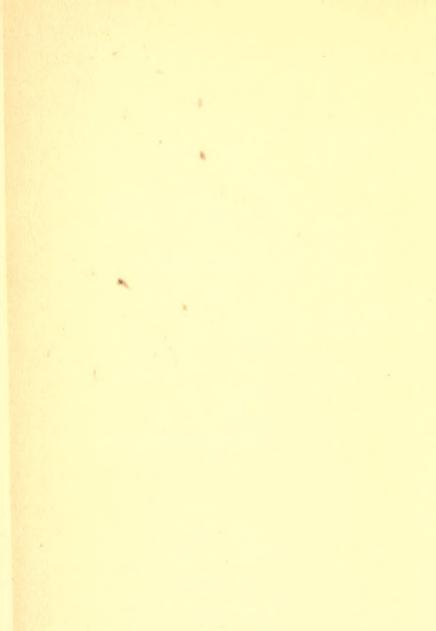
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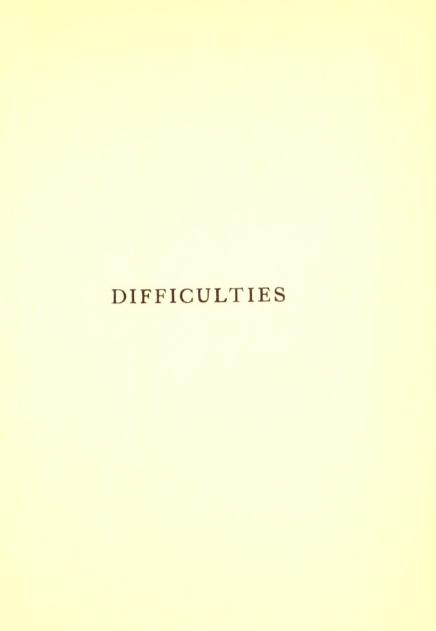
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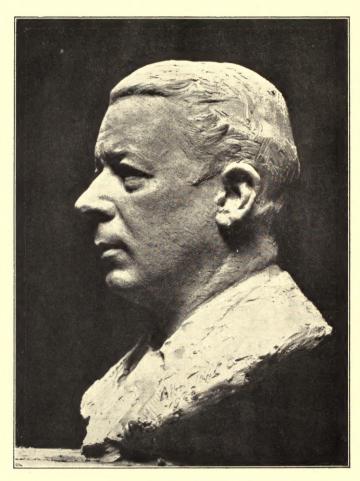
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SEYMOUR HICKS

From a Bust by Albert Toft

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DIFFICULTIES

AN ATTEMPT TO HELP

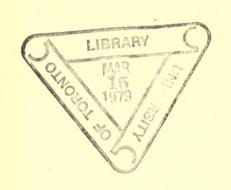
BY

SEYMOUR HICKS

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I DEDICATE

THIS BOOK TO

EVERY YOUNG MAN THAT LIVES

BUT ESPECIALLY TO

BRITISHERS & THEIR AMERICAN COUSINS

FOR IT IS ON THEIR HEALTH
WELL-BEING AND FRIENDSHIP THAT
DEPENDS THE HAPPINESS OF THE WORLD

"Be firm of Purpose in all your Ventures, and Remember that the Line of Least Resistance is only Taken by Those who are born with a Wish-bone and No Back-bone."



MY APOLOGY

SINCE writing a little book which I called If I Were Your Father, I have been repeatedly urged to compile a more elaborate version of it. I have long hesitated -not that I did not feel that common-sense advice to a young man on ordinary and dangerous everyday subjects was a want that had never been supplied, but because I felt that there were many who could do it much better. My very sketchy attempt is now three years old, and as no one has bothered to take the hint from the upstream fly I cast upon the water, I have taken my pen in hand, as the servant girl explains to her lover—though with what else she could take it, I have never been able to discover-in an endeavour to be of some use to young men going into the world, who are as a rule left to find out for themselves things which have brought them to a cure, when a word might have helped them to prevention.

I am not so presumptuous as to suppose for a moment that my limited intelligence is capable of dealing with so vast a subject as a young man's life. It would require several men of genius to do this, and then, unless they were walking Encyclopedias, they would fall short of the mark. My little chats to youth are only designed to draw its attention to the everyday stumbling-blocks that beset the path of the embryo Man of the World. I have written this book with no thought of financial gain, but simply in the hope that a word of warning may perhaps be the means of helping the thoughtless and preventing the reckless, who, while shunning a small-pox ward, knock about indiscriminately with women, and embark, unarmed, on adventures in Life's jungle, which alas! is inhabited by every form of human tiger.

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DIFFICULTIES

CHAPTER I

LEAVING HOME

The Garden of Memory and its Contents—Your Childhood—Your Home—Importance of realising True Happiness when it Comes—Wasted Opportunities.

SLIP your arm through mine, and let us saunter idly together through the garden I have made. It is many a year since I first started to plant success and failure side by side in its beds and borders. My three gardeners, Fate, Luck, and Work, set out the colour scheme that I have feasted my eyes upon so anxiously, and have led me down the crazy paths they so skilfully designed, and which wind their way on every side. Because of a brown patch here, or a withered fruit tree there, I love my garden none the less, and am grateful to the Master Gardener whose birth-day present it was to me.

I see your eyes wandering towards the shadows those elms throw — well, there is

11

nothing beneath them I have any wish to show you. For flowers of sorrow have no blossoms, but their roots grow deep, and the darkness which guards them is my very own property, so please look the other way. Cast your eyes rather at the quickset hedges that have given me sanctuary all these years. Are they not wonderful? And tell me who has a finer oak than that one, which stands protecting everything with its outstretched, loving branches. Strange, too, is it not, how like the mother is the sapling at her side. None of the flowers in the ornamental plots compare with these two marvels, for they have made my humble strip of life more to me than a wilderness of priceless orchids.

You look askance that there are weeds which try unsuccessfully to hide their heads in many a corner. No man's garden is without these wretched things, and there will be some, no doubt, on the land which you are planting, though I hope not many. Indeed that they may be few is the reason why I am asking you to stroll with me. We want no deadly hemlock in the land you sow, no crimson berries like the lips that kill. These are intruders who will creep in, perhaps. My

endeavour is to inform you how to show them out. Listen to the lark, bearing earth's message to the heavens; hark how its song of happiness sobs in its throat almost to bursting. That is the happiness I would have you know.

What shall we talk of first, then, and what, I wonder, will the breezes of my evening time bring to me on their wings of remembrance from my flowers?

I may be wrong, but personally I always think that of all the senses with which a man is endowed, the sense of smell is more closely allied to memory than any other. Sight may recall a picture, a place, or a like environment; hearing, the thought of an individual in some minor degree, and the other messengers who register conditions to the brain may help to bring back to one a sad or joyous recollection, but a perfume, I think, opens the cells in which memory has locked all her many secrets.

Bending over a moss-rose, I am nine years old again, and I see myself carrying a small bunch of these sweet flowers, wrapped up in white paper—and which have cost me my whole week's pocket money—to a little fair-haired girl of eight as an offering to her

beauty. It is not only to the large trees under which she waited for me, or the sound of her sister's laughter as she watched my timid homage, that those little flowers lead me. Borne to me on a summer breeze I can hear a school-bell ringing, and in my mind's eye I have left her unwillingly to rejoin the lads who were my playfellows all those years ago. How few still live, and how many have I never seen again! That fine fellow there, who took all the prizes, what a mess he made of things when he closed his primer and opened the book of life! The gentle youth who sat two places away on the class bench, but never below me, for I was always at the bottom of the form-what different ways have these two opposites gone! The brilliant school butterfly to perdition, the unassuming little fellow to the top of a ladder which has no more rungs for him, controlling, as he does, the destinies of an empire in an Eastern kingdom.

The scent of the roses, you see, has not chained me to one memory only, that thought of innocence and a baby face which is probably to-day beaming on the tiny children of grown men who are learning to lisp "grand-

mamma" to her. They have wafted back to me the cry of "Well done!" from a juveniles' cricket field. The shout was for my brother, who was always so much better at everything than I. How we loved each other—how we fought, and how immediately we kissed and made friends. Oh! you little roses, you are cruel to fill my eyes with tears, for long ago he left us, and the tears only remain. Tell me if you know a man brave enough to draw in to its full the terrifying odour of an arum lily, listening through his senses, as he will have to, to the epitaphs it sings so mockingly.

Sound creates echoes, but scents paint not only the comedies and tragedies of life, but bring into being the long-forgotten actors who have made or marred them. Does not the faint aroma of a pippin or a golden russet recall to you the happy faces of those who filled great baskets with you to overflowing, and also the scoldings from an apparently irate father because you lingered so long upon your return from his orchards? these being by the way given only to impress upon you that there can be no discipline if there are no clocks. And is there anything that the simple lavender which lay all those years ago between your

mother's kerchiefs cannot tell you of her if you ask it to? Can it not show you two gentle hands that stroked your hair and a pair of loving eyes which always smiled and were certain that you could do no wrong?

It is the scent of the pinks and the wild thyme struggling for supremacy in a flaming herbaceous border that span the years for me more than anything I know. They build my home, as I knew each brick of it; they people each dwelling-room with those who loved me, and whose voices long since silent I hear calling me again. Oh! if it were possible to be a lad once more, back amongst those dear ones, if only for a day, to tell them I have not met their like anywhere in the great big world I left them for. Home! how little most of us appreciate all that it means, until the fight has tired us and we cry for the sympathy we so seldom find.

One of the greatest tragedies of life is to fail to realise the wonder of things at the moment we are enjoying them. It is so easy when we are young to take happiness for granted, that it is only after wintry days set in that we suddenly wake up and say to ourselves, "This or that was more delightful than any-

thing I have ever known or indeed shall ever know again. Why didn't I appreciate such a magic hour?" This is where Fate laughs at man. It places treasures in the lap of youth, who fingers them idly instead of examining them carefully. "If I have all these jewels given me at this early age," says Youth, "how many more precious ones shall I collect when I grow older?" But this is generally the reverse.

So let me beg of you to enjoy to the full and be happy every hour of your life, and, what is much more important, understand how much and why you are enjoying it. Time rides in a six-cylinder car, and you will find that your companions who are banging their heels on a brand-new milestone with "twenty" freshly carved at its base, will, almost before you know it, be resting on another, much the same to look at, no doubt, except that on close examination you will find the diminutive pillar sadly chipped here and there. What is that scar across its face, you will inquire? Are those tear-stains on the bevelled edge? Or is it the storm that has discoloured the once highly polished surface of the mason's art? and dear, dear, look

at the numbers that your heel-banging friend has sat above. The two has turned into a four. It is then you will realise when twenty years have flown why it is that your friend is content to sit down after his fourth set of tennis, and doesn't grumble as he used to that he cannot play the whole eight.

It isn't that you won't perhaps enjoy the pleasures of your youth any the less as you grow older, but half the merriment of those happy hours lose much when you see strange faces on the other side of the net, and other forms bowling at you from the opposite wicket. Charming, perhaps, all these newcomers may be, but to you they will never equal those first dear friends who were indeed part of you, and who have either slipped silently away for ever, or whom you have lost sight of for many a day, the lost living having become notches in the log that you have been obliged to cast overboard to mark your progress. Therefore, while you are young and strong and laughter is as natural as showers in April sunshine, grasp the comrades of your youth to your heart, for be sure that they are the ones, and there will never be others quite like them. Bind each thought of your boyhood in memory's precious volume, writing it there because at the time you know how worthy it is to be written, so that when in the distant years you are perhaps all, all alone, love and remembrance will smile up at you from every page.

A boy leaves home—well, "Leaving Home" are magic and tragic words, for they mean the first break in the family circle. Leaving home to the boy means the falling away of loving shackles, the ecstasy of Freedom, Hope, and the World to conquer. To those who watch the bird on the edge of the nest preparing to fly, they spell only fear. They themselves have flown; they have suffered, and they know. How little does the fledgling realise the many hours of anxious wondering the parent birds have given in trying to decide just how much their loved one should be advised about the new life he is to enter without causing him to be disillusioned and unhappy, or how much to be warned of all the dangers which perhaps he has never heard of, and which they hesitate to put into his mind.

To sit down in cold blood and discuss intimate things with a boy who has all the

goodness of his mother's nature shining through his eyes, is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks a father has to face. In doubt as to how to do it, he has gone to his contemporaries for advice, only to find that no two agree. One is for letting the lad fight his own battles. Another argues, "You can't alter the world; you had to go your own way; hope for the best; he's a good lad; don't worry—he'll come out all right." While a third who has dined well, and has an eye that looks as if it had come straight out of a glass factory, mumbles, "If I had a son, I should tell him everything."

This is what every parent would like to do. But this is more often than not the thing he doesn't. It is easy for the bachelor or the childless to advise the steering of the direct course, but they have never heard the wonder of their first-born's cry, and so they are brave as all men can be who speak from the head and not from the heart. The girl child has the armour of instinct given her as protection. Her chastity, she knows, is a sacred thing. She faces the world armed. But the male is by nature an adventurer—a hunter, a seeker after the unknown. He plunges into the

fight to take and give blows, only after battle to realise the result of combat. Steel must be tempered, an armour fashioned for him, and it becomes a father's bounden duty to fit his son with the most perfect suit he can purchase from Experience.

But there are many inner voices which cry to him "Halt!" He is perhaps over-sensitive —he may lack the power of expression, he may be old-fashioned and unaware of all the dangers, or, what is far more likely, he knows, but is afraid to come out into the open. It is one thing to guide Youth in the everyday pitfalls of innocent childhood. It is quite another to sit down and turn the pages of the book of life and sex with a cleanminded, healthy son, who may have only thought very vaguely of hidden things, and been content to think of them no more. To tell a little is easy, but it is worse than not having spoken. But to tell all, a father for the first time must suddenly let his own flesh and blood see him as they have never before imagined him; and so he elects to let the boy take his own risks, rather than jeopardise by a decimal the love and respect he knows the lad bears him. This has been said to me a hundred times, and that is why I am writing, as a stranger, this book to youth.

There is no subject discussed in the following pages that could not have been set down better by a thousand others. The only claim I make is that I have tried to put my talks in a colloquial and downright form, using no words that obscure the real meaning. A treatise by a surgeon, a scientist, or a man of letters, while delighting the minority by its admirable phrasing and literary skill, would from these very excellences make it a closed one to Youth. The young man would feel himself back at school again and would shut the unillustrated, academic effort after reading page 1. I venture, therefore, to think that having adopted a conversational method, being spade-like in fact and discussing many things in the vernacular, I may attain the object I have in view—that of giving many a lad cause to hesitate, for he who hesitates is at any rate given the chance of not being lost.

CHAPTER II

YOURSELF

The Heart to Heart Talk—Oliver Wendell Holmes and Common Sense—Youth and Discretion—The Privacy of our Talks—Sense of Humour and Proportion—Knowledge of the Human Body.

TELL, now, my merry friend, for I take it you are a poor specimen if you are not merry, in sitting down to have a few heart to heart talks with you each evening when the day's work is done,—and if the day's work has been well done, there is no better or happier time,—I do so, not with the object of trying to put an old head on young shoulders, for that would make you the dullest of dull dogs, and rob you of the priceless possession of youth, but simply to chat as an elderly companion who has been through storm, shipwreck and battle, and to whom perhaps you are more likely to listen than you might to your more profound and austere teacher, who you have made up your mind is incapable of seeing life through broad-minded spectacles. You are probably wrong in supposing this to be the case, but it is quite natural that you should prefer some one not encircled with a privet hedge of professional respectability, who is unafraid of answering thoughts as well as questions, which are two very different things.

That great American, Oliver Wendell Holmes, was the autocrat of the breakfasttable-logical, introspective, instructive, and amazing in his analytical outlook on life. I possess none of his mighty attributes. I am, and always have been, only a looker-on at the game from the man-in-the-street standpoint. I am corn that has been ground to powder many times, but powder that remains optimistic dust. It will not be the slightest use lighting your cigarette with me, if you have at the back of your head the idea that I feel you ought not to be smoking. We must start fairly and squarely, trusting each other. If you will come to me frankly and treat me as you would your most intimate pal, I will do my utmost to help you.

If it is questions of love you ask me, I shall gravely inform you that Solomon himself was

"upside-down Doll's House," as children say, with his wives. If it is of art you would converse, I shall reply there are ill-paid critics who could turn on a machine gun of epigram to illustrate to you my profound ignorance of their own little speciality. In questions of medical knowledge, the pharmacopæia no doubt could open its pages automatically and roar septically at all my replies—and so probably with every subject that your nimble brain will be inquisitive about; but my point is this, ask me questions, and you will at any rate get a common-sense, experienced answer. It will be then for you to add it up, follow it or not, go to the expert if you like for corroboration or elaboration, and then do as you think fit.

I only want you to be sure of one thing. I shan't put you wholly wrong, and that on balance, with your own thoughts added, you will find you have not suffered in your talks with me from a mental overdraft. If at the age of eighteen or twenty—those delightful years of hope—you knew as much as your elders who have become fossilised through caution, or saintly through lack of inclination, life would be over before it began, and

nothing in my replies would ever be levelled at you in the hope of making you like they are.

The world says: "Youth has arrived at the age of discretion." I say, "No; Youth can only arrive at the age of indiscretion, and therefore wants a word or two to guide it through the undergrowth of ignorance which is so often miscalled innocence."

I know, of course, that indiscretion is really the better part of valour. But it is so apt to make the recipient of a medal the loser of a leg. Too much discretion would ultimately make the world cease to revolve. But a gentle blending of discreet indiscretion robs nothing of the man from a man; it only helps him to come out of the struggle a little less scared and battered than his more inconsequent companion who has chosen a barrel of gunpowder to strike his matches on. If in our talks we but achieve this, we shall have done something. I know there will be many questions you will ask me relating to ordinary things about which you yourself will have a very definite opinion. There will be many questions which, sitting even in a shaded light, you will hesitate to put to me, for you will not

perhaps have ever asked them of yourself. But put them and I will try to answer themthough the answers, remember, are for you alone. They are not for your sisters or Mrs. Grundy—nor for the ascetic and the female inquisitive. Our talks must be private and sacred ones, and not for the prying ears of the mudlarker or for the object of your trying to obtain knowledge to be made use of for evil purposes. Be sure that however direct or intimate the questions you put to me, my answers will be given in the earnest hope that they will help you to avoid the pitfalls in pleasure and the ignorance of daily life, both of which, although you may only accept as half a truth, until you have, as you will, experienced them for yourself-at least will give you some knowledge to dash into the sea of life with—which is better than no bathing costume, if you are swimming in mixed company.

Light your cigarette, then, my young friend, and fire away. You feel there is no time like the present, so light it—not patting the end on the back of your silver case, for that shows a lack of faith in your tobacconist, and in nine cases out of ten is a monkey trick, copied from

some acquaintance who was an expert in this brainy proceeding only.

I will not say that—to the uninitiated—the rapid appearance of some trifle of the gold-smith's art, opened with a click and closed with a snap, combined with the rapid, conventional double tap of paper and vegetable matter on a precious metal, may not convey the possession of an alert brain. But please dismiss this fallacy from your mind at once. It is a question of affect—with no cause, an attempt to impress which only ends in a dent.

Am I right in agreeing with you that there is no time like the present? Personally I think that the present is generally full of struggle, while the past, being dead, makes me plump for the future, which is crowded with hope—the only asset a bankrupt happiness has to show on its credit side. Never give up hoping, for it is the little lantern which will guide you towards the glimmer at the end of the dark tunnel, which on reaching you will find to be the day.

What do you say? Do I think smoking injurious? Well, you will get no two medical men to agree as to this. One will emphatic-

ally say, "Yes"; the other, "No." A third will venture, "In moderation I see no harm in it"; a fourth, "If you don't inhale-well"; a fifth, "A pipe, splendid; cigarettes-death." A sixth will look wise and say, "Ah!" The result being that no matter whatever class of pill-box you consult, you will be poorer by two guineas, and then failing to pass the nearest tobacconist you will purchase a brown substance with a picture of a beautiful Creole on the label who isn't even a remote cousin of the Cockney maiden who plucked the leaves in a suburban garden and rolled them in a Greek's back parlour in Bloomsbury. Realise this, then, in discussing smoking, that, as all is not gold that glitters, so not an overwhelming percentage of what is lighted is tobacco. Whether Havana has a right to turn up its nose at Hounslow I cannot say. Ours not to reason why, ours just to smoke and—live. We are none of us rich enough to have an analytical chemist always in attendance. Therefore be happy and ask no questions, or in nine cases out of ten, if you knew the truth, you would be miserable that you were puffing the brown sprout of Brussels instead of swallowing it in its greener and cooked

state. But though real tobacco is a rare product, there is one good thing about a habit in bad tobacco-we become so accustomed to it that it is impossible for familiarity to breed contempt. So smoke by all means, but take the advice of a great professor-never smoke in the open air. Give your lungs a chance. Whatever air you breathe indoors is diluted with germs from coal-dust or carpets, or from the performing bacilli of your best friend, who adds to the atmospheric disturbance by encouraging the humble moth to come into the open from your grandmother's antimacassar, which has got a 999 years' lease of the oldest chair on earth. Therefore indoors smoke, outdoors give your lungs a chance. In the open fill your lungs through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Breathe as deeply as you can, so that all the surburban crevices of the honeycomb we call lungs are given as fair a share of oxygen as the central part of your life's city.

Fresh air and sleep are life; but don't become worried if after standing on the Shakespeare cliff at Dover and breathing better ozone than the verses written by the poet of that name, you don't instantly become ruddy of hue. The complexion is by no means a sign of health. I have known teetotallers with the skin of a pomegranate. I have seen a drunkard's face with the pallor of the Tinted Venus. The eyes may be the windows of the soul, but the complexion is not always the index to the stomach. Acute indigestion often makes a man look as if he had been on a North Sea trawler for a month, for Nature is full of alibis. Therefore don't be downcast at externals. Feel well, and you are well. Also fool well and you will feel well. Envy no man his complexion. It has probably cost him much in kind that is unkind.

That smoking is a digestive is about as true as that port wine is good for the throat. Port may be good for the tongue, but the properties of tannin which it possesses would not be visible in an analysed tumbler full of Douro grapes to the naked microscrope, so get that pleasant throat cure out of your head, and be honest when you grow up and say "I like Port," but don't in drinking it think you are becoming philanthropic to your larynx. Smoking to a man who works with his head is a sedative, and links his thoughts more easily, if

possible, to the sayings of other men, helping him greatly to remember.

To the boy, smoking is at first the desire to be as his elders. In the girl it is a disgusting habit, so prettily performed that man forgets when he kisses her that he is embracing "bird's-eye" in more senses than one. To the indolent it is an occupation, to the brainless an achievement, to the worried a solace; and being an emetic to Few, why should I say, "Don't smoke?" Do. Never, though, on an empty stomach. Little before lunch, and only to your heart's content after your big meal. Never in any circumstances get into the habit of chain smoking, by which I mean the lighting of one cigarette from another, unless of course you have shares in an undertaker's business and want your family to draw an increased dividend. In agreeing with your smoking I am taking it that you have no heart trouble of an organic kind, If trouble of that susceptible organ from feminine causes is all you have acquired-smoke on; for if every male ceased puffing because of so universal a malady, the tobacco industry would cease to be.

Personally I think it would have been

better for England if Sir Walter Raleigh had made a hobby of cloak-laying instead of nicotine-spraying, and had never introduced tobacco to us at all. But there, my boy, if he had done so, there would be fewer throat specialists and "The Lost Chord" might never have been written.

I hope I have not bored you with a too elaborate dissertation on a simple everyday subject. If you notice, I have also alluded to air and port, things as essential to your knowledge as they are to the skipper of a sailing ship. Besides, as the beginning of your little viva voce examination of me, it is not to be expected, nor would it be wise until we have gained each other's confidence, for us to plunge too deeply into the really serious subjects which Youth, the Columbus, is so often sent into the world to discover for himself, his vessel unmanned, unrigged, and therefore unfit to face temptation's storm.

We must in our discussions preserve at all times our sense of humour. For humour is the guardian angel who fans us with her wings when we are mentally inclined to flush with anger or become enamoured of a settled melancholy. Drive your angel Humour away

and the world will become as empty as a theatre with the "House Full" boards at its doors. "Laugh and the world laughs with you" is often true. "Snore and you sleep alone" is not an established fact. I should advise you to cultivate the faculty of laughing at the world rather than with it. When you have mastered this very difficult art, you will have learned how to walk up and kick your troubles in the face instead of finding them strolling up to you and boxing your ears. And talking of trouble-never seek it; all in bad time it will come to you; but till the time arrives school yourself to believe there is no such thing, and in this way you will be more happy than your fellows who fit out expeditions to discover the myth which less seldom exists than their anxious minds imagine it. There is an old proverb which is full of comfort; it is this:

"To-day is the to-morrow
You were worrying about yesterday,
And it didn't happen!"

Do not, however, be trapped into the belief of the unimportance of everything. This is part of an epigram which the cynic who made it didn't himself believe. There is nothing so dangerous as to construe epigrams as truisms. The manufactories they come from are generally owned by some penny genius who would dig up his own grandmother to get a laugh, or from the decadent dilettante who earns his lunch to-day on his well-thought-out impromptu of yesterday. Don't, I beg of you, model your life on the expressions of the halfpenny cynic with which all great cities are strewn—like currants on a penny bun. Their unreal jokes are generally as false about real things as the information given by a criminal solicitor to his life-taking client, when he says to him-"Don't worry; believe me, they can't hang you!" But they always do, the next morning at five minutes to eight.

It is equally unwise, on the other hand, to believe in the importance of everything. There are few things, however black they look, that do not dissolve in the test-tube of humour. You have often been told to write your angry letter and then sleep on it. That is good advice. Equally good is the resolution never to make up your mind on any subject, either grave or gay, contained in your morning post-bag until you have washed, shaved, and dressed, for you then have your armour on.

A wire written in a dressing-gown is a thing often to be profoundly regretted. The early morning is so near a relative to the middle of the night that the entanglements of finance, or anything difficult, in fact, seem impossible to cope with at these times, and should never be considered until the sun has risen in the heavens.

When I first mentioned to you our sixth sense—the greatest of all our senses, humour— I did so having in my mind that we must both realise that our confabs won't alter the universe, and that we must always keep before us the thought that the world we live in is only a grain of sand on a super Sahara. In this way we place the midgets who inhabit so infinitesimal a space in their proper perspective. We must never forget that our alloted span of seventy years, my young friend, is about two minutes of eternity-and then I am not sure the case is not overstated; so the man who can't be humorous for two minutes, or at any rate takes himself too seriously for one minute of it, deserves neither pity nor help. Still, our two minutes are our own two minutes of vast import to the unravelling of our own particular skeins, and that is why we

are sitting together planning how you can best protect yourself in the ninety seconds of eternity you have to live.

Looking at you I see you are an ordinary, normal youth of eighteen or thereabouts. Your first few seconds of eternity have been spent in the cradle and at school. The former has been to you a period of happy, oblivious dribbling and the unconscious process of a soft brain hardening; the latter period has been irksome at times, hilarious at others. One master has been your favourite; you are sure the other has always had a grudge against you. You have found an excuse for all your defeats; Jones was the cause. For your successes you have had to thank no one but yourself. You are unique. But, my lad, you must know that the charts of all schoolboys run on the parallel lines that have been laid on the playing fields for decades. And so it is, you will find, with life. It will be many years before you realise that there is absolutely nothing new under the sun; don't dig too deeply for this knowledge early, only try not to be too cocksure about anything. The seed that falls from the bursting pod is proud that it is to grow for the first time in

the world's history. It would know better if it gave a thought to the stem from which it had fallen. Your greatest joy has been felt by millions—your greatest sin committed by the multitude.

School is not, as a rule, the quilted cradle of generosity. I doubt if there is a more unconsciously cruel community in the world than a gathering of schoolboys. For only a very few boys are blessed with that lifelong tyrant—Imagination. Their charm of thoughtlessness is a deadly weapon; their fleetness of foot giving the hardiest runner time to look over his shoulder and smile contemptuously at his struggling brother. Broad shoulders find their way through the scrimmage easily, and pay no heed to the weakling who has stumbled.

This is the school of learning, but school, never forget, is only the tailor's bench where the cutter shapes the swaddling clothes, so little to be altered if we only knew it, for the School of Life. In the Great Outside you will find the scrimmage, the race, the favourite and the bully. There is only this great difference: on the battleground of the world there is no such thing as the tolerance found

on the playground of youth. Therefore do not imagine that you will be as easily forgiven outside as you were accustomed to be within. The faults of boyhood which are wiped out by Latin verses, in manhood are often punished by an enmity which may last a lifetime.

But I am running before my pigs to market. This is no farmyard reference to you, my young friend, believe me. I had not meant to have discussed your schooldays; they are over. We may refer to a certain thing connected with them in our later talks, that it will be necessary for you to discuss with your own son. The conditions you are to meet with when you receive your first latchkey and how you are to meet them, are what we are concerned with.

Now, the first thing that strikes me about you, young man, is the way you have always been neglected, unless you have made up your mind to become a member of the medical profession, in not having been given a simple knowledge of your own body. I use the word simple advisedly, because it is quite unnecessary that a layman like yourself should attempt to diagnose disease or seek to master the mixing of medicines. What I am anxious to impress

upon you is that it is your duty to yourself to know, at the earliest possible moment in your life, those big, elementary things about your "House of Being" which you have never been taught are far more important than the getting of your blue or the winning of a double first. If you are the possessor of a motor-car you make it your business to know how to fill the tank, why the carburettor fails to function, why gears grind, and what the remedy is for slipping clutch; and in the ethics of all games you have striven hard to become proficient. But of your body, you have only a hazy notion that your heart pumps your blue or red blood as the case may be, from your toes to your finger-tips somehow, and that your kidneys are something like the things you see on toast at a restaurant. You have been told that your brain is of a grey colour. You know, of course, that you bite with your teeth, but beyond, after profound thought, you have become certain that you smell with your nose, hear with your ears, and see with your eyes, you know next to nothing of yourself. Your gears and carburettor are to you things of the highest unimportance. Some day every school in the

country will have a class hour devoted to the "boy" himself, where he can be shown on a blackboard the use of his organs and the results of the abuse of them.

Why this most essential of all subjects has for decades been neglected I can only suppose must be put down to the highly sensitive nature of our professors, who prefer Plato to physiology, and who, from the giddy height of a pile of books, elect to look down on such minor details as "life." I have often felt that the reason the Don would like to make everyone a Senior Wrangler is that he himself, being married to a nagging wife, wants them to compete successfully matrimonially rather than mathematically.

In discussing you yourself, let us begin at the very beginning. The day breaks; let us hope you are out and about by nine o'clock, or Smith, who is a clever fellow, will have answered all his letters before you have opened yours. Of the bath there are as many fallacious things said as can well be imagined. The boy is told that the cold bath is the builder of strength—that the wonderful glow that follows an icy immersion is the thing from which Hercules gained his power and

Samson his hair. Hot baths are debilitating, he is informed, and are only for the fragile feminine. Tepid baths, he hears, may be cleanly, but of no value to the physique. Let me put you right at once about the bath. Don't take hot, cold, or any other sort of bath because Jones takes it. Find out your very own sort of bath, and stick to it, and you will be as fit as a fiddle. The cold bath advised by heroic Jones may be death to you. Let your friends chaff you for taking a hot one, but take it if it suits you; don't necessarily stew in it, for excessive heat lowers the vitality, but enjoy yourself in it moderately; shave in it if you feel like it, and shampoo your head in it; none of these things will hurt you, provided you do not court the outside air before having cooled off properly.

There is a splendid bogey fostered by hair-dressers that the daily washing of the hair will cause baldness. Don't you believe it. They have lotions and greases to sell. The loss of your hair will come at its appointed time. Hot water and soap will no more take it off than they will put it on. The rubbing of the head quite dry is the unconscious massage which sends the blood to feed the roots of

nature's wig, and is therefore a great stimulant. Baldness is either hereditary or produced by the particular conditions under which we live—climatic or otherwise—or from specific disease. So wash your head and dry it every day. Greasy hair is a most objectionable thing. It leaves its mark on cushions and young lady's blouses, and don't forget that the ruin of crêpe-de-chine has been the cause of many engagements being broken off.

I would advise you every morning to pay particular attention to your nose and throat. Through them the merry microbe pays his call. If he finds a footman at your door in the shape of a mild disinfectant, he will either turn back like the coward that he is, or die in his attempt to force a passage. So each morning place an antiseptic at the gates of your citadel—ready to take on all comers. I cannot too strongly impress upon you the necessity of attention to this very important matter, and let me beg of you not to be hurried or perfunctory in attending to your teeth. Half of us think that because we use some well-known dentifrice on a hard brush as rapidly as possible, that the teeth, which are more often than not the cause of the most

serious of our stomach troubles, have been properly dealt with. Colour is charming to look at, no doubt, but the places that most need your attention are the parts of your teeth that are not visible to your glass or to your friends; I mean between the teeth—the homes of rest for stray fragments that secure an easy lease, and leisurely ferment and eat away into the enamel, making no noise in the process, until one fine day your dentist informs you, to his landlord's delight, that you are the possessor of a troglodyte's cave, to be filled immediately with his gold, which incidentally is of course yours.

If you were to use dental silk between each tooth night and morning carefully, and afterwards rinsed your mouth and gums with a mild antiseptic, you would be really doing much better than flourishing the bristles of commerce in the usual slovenly washing which is to-day so fashionable. Whatever hurry you may be in, never neglect your teeth. If you have to choose between your face and your ivories, let your face be given the miss in balk. You probably won't look any more handsome with it washed, but the teeth, apart from the loss of them, may cause

you many of the diseases Harley Street pays its rent with. Go to your dentist every three months, and if you do you will find that you won't be buying a complete set of clicking almonds at forty-five. It is the privilege of youth to forget. It is the privilege of the cavity to make you remember. That's why I have perhaps rather flogged the subject of your teeth.

I can quite easily see what is passing in your mind. You are saying, "Oh, Lord, if I have to be as careful as all this, what a jugful of advice this writer is going to give me if he proposes taking me on an anatomical journey from my scalp to my toe nails! I shall become a grandmother before I'm twenty." That's where you are wrong, my young friend. If all your daily actions were governed by what you ought to do-and the fear of the danger if you didn't-you would lose your entire dash, which is your greatest asset, and you would contemplate your physique so closely that you would be certain that you had acquired through the simplest movements every ailment in the medical dictionary, and be capable of having everything—except a baby. You will find out for

yourself all the little things I am drawing your attention to when you are five-and-twenty. All I say is, why not realise them now, and preserve yourself in a very simple way six or seven years earlier and so cheat Nature in the early stages. Remember she always gets up from Life's table the winner in the end. Don't think for a second that I want you to worry that because you cut a wart or a mole you are going to bleed to death, or if earth gets into a wounded knee you are going to die on the spot of tetanus. There is, however, no harm in suggesting to you that if trifles of this kind happen, clean water and a little Condy's fluid will obviate your being put on the sick list.

We know that a neurotic old man is a desperate bore, but a neurotic young one ought to be put in a cage and fed on apples at the end of a stick. My little bits of advice are not those of the solicitous mother who says to her first-born—"Don't ride, you may fall off; don't box, your nose may get broken; don't eat this, it will make you sick." I say, do ride, but learn to ride well. Do box, but know how to break the other fellow's nose. Eat your plum pudding and be jolly

sick, but be sure of what you have to do when you have been sick.

Observant young student that you are, of course you are nearly sure that your lungs are the things which deal with the air you breathe. As far as you know, they resemble a sponge; beyond this you have never troubled to inquire. You are quite unaware that owing to the predisposition of the inhabitants of the British Islands to tuberculosis, that seventy per cent. of all post-mortem examinations performed after fatal accidents in the street show in these organs either the active or easily lit up conditions of consumption. I do not point this out to you because I am able to say by doing this or that you can actually eliminate danger from your own breathing space, but what I ask you to remember is this—that as by a healthy life and good nutrition the pre-disposition to tubercular disease in the majority of the community becomes a negligible quantity, so by being careless the very opposite may be the result, and the commonest of national seeds sprouted into life. Therefore, without being a molly-coddle, don't for choice come in wet through, either with rain or perspiration, and sit about to let your clothes

dry on you. This is a most idiotic and dangerous practice. You may be as strong as an ox, but even oxen have a Plimsoll mark of endurance, and the continual taking of liberties with the finest of constitutional monarchies will ultimately bring it to the level of a diseased republic. Don't forget that even sterilised milk, like a long lane, has a turning, and therefore without bothering your young mind as to what might happen if you don't carefully study the compass all day long, don't ask for trouble by turning yourself into a drying cupboard, or making such welcome friends of colds and coughs that they come to you on two visits a year of six months each, and, like meddlesome relations, play havoc with your internal household.

I remember once being told by Adelina Patti that although she continually came out of overheated theatres into the night air she never contracted colds, simply because she took the very ordinary precaution of sucking a peppermint to counteract the sudden change of atmosphere. I merely quote this to show you how very simple precautions in everything may avert great ills.

Your kidneys and your liver are the janitors of your stomach. You are at perfect liberty when you are young to make them work like Trojans for you. Later on you will find they are a couple of cross-talk comedians who will give you some very nasty back-chat if you try them too high. They are not very pretty things to look at, but don't, because they are not put on post cards to be autographed, utterly despise them. You wouldn't kick your housemaid downstairs because she was polishing the household brass-well, try to think of them as you would of her, and realise that they are doing their best to keep your interior rods bright. Don't bully them or they may go on strike. If you go on a youthful "bust," as I hope you will, it is they who have to clear things up. Give them a rest sometimes. You sleep when you are tired, give them a chance to take forty winks after a birthday party or such times as Christmas. You will probably have handed them many a nutty problem to struggle with. One of the greatest kindnesses you can do them is to give them plenty of plain water. For they are both born Pussyfoots, condemned against their will to keep up other people's spirits. Drink water continually, and plenty of it. You wash your outside religiously many times a day; do the same to your interior. For the condiments manufactured by men are far more objectionable than the smuts thrown off by coal. Don't get into the trick of taking medicine for minor ailments. If you have a headache, stick it. Probably nine times out of ten you have earned it, and a good sleep will generally put it right. And so with a thousand of the smaller pains that the flesh is heir to.

Don't dramatise them, or they will grow from a poor one-act play into a bad four-act drama. Use your common sense about all the little surgical troubles that come to you. It is true that men have died from the prick of a thorn, but it is also true that an army of men have been pricked by thorns and lived to annoy the rest of their fellows for donkey's years. Oh no! please don t think I wish to advise a bath chair as a life-saver. Go and do everything, but do it in moderation. You know what your poor old liver and kidneys are for-don't play football with them, that's all. The same thing applies to your heart; if it is sound—as I am sure yours is, looking at you casually—it will answer a thousand

ridiculous calls upon it; but don't ask it too often to answer the thousand and oneth.

Rest after violent exertion. Remember that a hard-rowed race, a long-run one, or any feat of endurance calling on you for great power of resistance, is only possible to you through your kindness of heart. Well, rest after these things, and allow the old pump gradually to tick back to its regular beating before dashing about again. What it likes best is that you should lie flat on your back, for then you are giving it a real holiday. Half an hour lying at full length on the floor gives the athlete's heart and muscles greater rest than two hours in an armchair. Don't forget that a pump which has to drive fluid vertically has a far greater tax put on it than another which is driving liquid on a level plane, so that is why whenever you have a chance to repose do so with your legs up, and then the ten ounces of blood per minute that your heart sends coursing through your body will go on their journey with the minimum of strain to yourself. But perhaps you know this. Forgive me for having reminded you of it.

Remember your bowels should be as

regular as the pendulum of your grandfather's clock, and you know well enough that if that stops swinging you won't be able to tell the time. Before you set light to a new fire the ashes must be cleared from the overnight grate. You are only a human stove, and it is exactly the same with you. Never allow yourself to become careless in this. Youth is much addicted to mock modesty, but never let this be a cause of your neglecting your body's most important function. When you grow older you will learn that the most charming and delicately minded women are the most understanding. Realise when you are young that the calls of nature are the same for the whole community, and even the most obvious excuse made for the purpose of answering them is never questioned by real people, and if they are not real people whom you are with, well, why trouble about them. You, no doubt, are thinking what on earth could I do if I were in the most difficult of all places, a boat with ladies. Pull ashore and say you want to admire the scenery. Probably they would like to admire it also. Never be an ass about these things. They have cost many a man his life.

I hope I haven't bored you stiff, by discussing at such length—shall I call them, as you are a motorist, your spare parts? I don't think I have really wasted your time. I feel sure that every young man should know something about his anatomy. If, of course, you choose to say, "Hang my heart, blow my lungs, and let my liver take care of itself"; well then, that is your affair. I have tried very simply to draw your attention to the way they work for you. I can do no more. Be under no misapprehension about your general make-up. If you are a good friend to your organs in your youth, they, in return, will be grateful and good to you in your age. A little knowledge of them is anything but a dangerous thing, and is an insurance against a fullness of pain and an emptiness of pocket. So, make it your business to find out all about your vital stops, and having done so, mind that when playing upon them, you do so with your foot on the soft pedal. A man who is not his own doctor at thirty deserves everything he collects.

Therefore make it your business to take your layman's M.D. before you arrive at the postern gate of middle age, which has 30 written just above the knocker. I see you smile because I say thirty is the beginning of a new era. But you will find I am right. Up to the age of thirty we all of us jog happily along, unconscious of time. They are the tortoise years, when each Christmas is divided by twelve long months, but after thirty is passed, the months become weeks, and we find ourselves at forty-marvelling at the magic carpet that has whirled us through space. After forty life becomes a sprint. We pay our next club subscription almost before the cheque for the other one has dried. We find ourselves eating our Christmas pudding before the last one has scarce digested. At forty we have hardly dried our eyes for the loss of a contemporary before we are unfolding another handkerchief. But these are years whose ships are far away on a distant horizon, their top-gallants not visible to you, even through the finest of imaginative binoculars. So their pennants and their crews are not things with which we are concerned.

You are at the moment paddling about in a gaily painted row boat with a band playing the latest musical comedy waltz on the near pier. You have not yet put out to sea to join the fishing fleet of strugglers in the offing.

But the time is near at hand, and that is why I say to you, board your bigger craft with some knowledge of yourself. For this purpose I can recommend to you no finer book than The Laws of Life and Health, by Alexander Bryce (Melrose, 3s. 6d. net). Delightful to read, easy to understand, it will introduce you to your component parts, and make you so well acquainted with them that it will be a pleasure to you to give them the rest, the fresh air, the exercise and the many helps that are their due, and without which they will not have a chance of being your healthy and faithful friends.

CHAPTER III

YOUR FRIENDS

The Choosing of Friends—The Rarity of True Friends— Instinctive Aversions—Peculiarity of Women—Insularity— What we Owe to the Jews.

THE next most important thing to yourself is the choice of the companions you gather round you. As a help to the choosing of friends, I would advise better a dull gentleman than a brilliant cad; for while you can always be sure of what the former will do, the latter is an impossible quantity. Be careful how you select them, and be sure that you-sad as it may be to say it-will find very few real ones in your (if you can afford to keep up your policies), I hope, long life. Some you will be able to trust with your money, few with your reputation. Acquaintances by the hundred you will make, and many, many ordinary friends that you will meet daily, who saluting you with a smile will pass on; but real friends, those who would stand sentry by you, as you would stand by them—ah! young man, you will be lucky if you can count this kind on the fingers of one hand. When you find such, and are sure of them, guard them as the Crown jewels are guarded. If any man is lucky enough to have four stalwarts, he is indeed to be envied, for he can then place one of them in each of the four corners of his square of life, and setting himself in the centre, be ready for a world barrage.

It has been said that you never know your friends, the meaning of this being that so many you have trusted will, when misfortune comes, fail you. This may be true. But what is just as surprising is that when you are in trouble, you may find quite unexpectedly some staunch heart looming up out of nowhere, ready to do its all for you, and the owner of that heart will probably be some one you have given little thought to in your happy hours. Therefore never be sudden in your likes or dislikes. Men don't buy diamonds without opening the parcel, and friends to wear in your bosom are surely more precious than jewels to be worn on your loved one's finger (for I hope you yourself will

never be tempted to wear jewellery except of the simplest kind. Only the very great have been able to obtain forgiveness for this vulgarity). Dickens it was who said: "Make friends of the young; they will see you out." Would it not have been better if he had written, "Grow happily old with your contemporaries, and go out with them"? For be sure you can only be of your own decade. Age patronises Youth, and Youth tolerates Age. Stick to the men of your generation. Those whom you love, love well. And even the others for whom you have no great affection, try and think more kindly of as you notice their silver hair, for they have been part of the army you have fought the battle of life with, and are beaten soldiers marching with you to the Great Surrender.

I quite gather what you mean about taking instinctive dislikes to people. But it is not wise for a man to do this. It is permissible in women, for they have the tentacles of instinct much more highly developed—often at the expense of their reasoning power—than we have. I am not throwing bouquets at a man's reasoning power, for more often than not the mental antennæ of a woman which proceed

to probe blindly are probably more accurate in their diagnosis than the "reason" we males boast about. Therefore, as we possess a good deal of reason and little instinct, we should be careful to weigh things, friendships and people, by the measures on our limited scales. I know we are told faces are often an index to character. So indeed they may be, but, believe me, not always. True, I wouldn't advise you to pick at first sight a man with two small eyes set close together; personally I have a horror of chocolate pupils with black centres; a receding chin is not inspiring, an egg-shaped head is apt to invite criticism, and a thousand other eccentricities of nature which you notice and fancy you don't possess, may, if you don't stop to think and go only on a first impression, easily cause you to miss making a great friend, just indeed as an impulse in the other direction may cause you to take to yourself a blue-eyed, open, baby-faced lad who knows every rule at cards, and would rob you as you stood.

So be sure that the taking of first impressions, except when procuring rare prints, is a mistake. If you would prove this, go to a criminal court, and, believe me, if the

prisoner were not in the dock, and you were asked to find him in the body of that august assembly, it is quite probable that if he had not his wig on you might be excused for picking on the prosecuting counsel. I am not of course discussing the old lag, who brings the scent of Portland over the solicitor's table. But I am thinking of the inoffensivelooking baby-killer, or the financial magnate who, by some stupidity on the part of the Treasury, is being asked humiliating questions as to the whereabouts of money entrusted to him by the poor for the purpose of buying bonds which never existed. Richard Cour de Lion in a complete suit of blackmail in many cases is a most dapper and innocentlooking gentleman, while the card-sharper in high life, when accused of having five aces in his boot at a time when he is endeavouring to lick two pips off the three of diamonds so as to make a sixth, has generally the astonished, "What, me?" expression, and is as indignant on being accused of cheating as any member of Debrett, who having married an American heiress is asked if it was really for money or only for love he did it.

Oh, no; physiognomy may tell you a lot.

It may make you wary or otherwise. But remember that while it is too often the oily patch of water that conceals a dangerous rock, so too a mongrel is sometimes worth all the beauties of the show bench. Stifle your impulse of likes and dislikes. A receding chin may be counterbalanced by a fine brow, a loose lip by strong teeth; while contrariwise geniality which exudes is generally a professional crook sowing in the hope of reaping. Always have a look at the mouth under the drooping moustache, and don't be too certain that a glad hand isn't really a nobbly affair that shuts tightly in the spider's sanctum. Be sure that he who when laughing does so only with his mouth, forgetting to ask his eyes to join in the merriment, is a very dangerous fellow—he is thinking hard.

Above all, don't on meeting men of other nations be insular and prejudiced. There may be honest carpet-sellers in Cairo, just as on the Levant there may be Greeks who have not taken the stones out of the dates they sell you, and don't think that because the Portuguese ran away at Waterloo, there may not be some who walk to-day. Be quite certain that all Frenchmen don't eat frogs,

that many Spaniards wash, while a host of Germans are really most dishonourable.

You must get out of your head the timehonoured British characteristic of looking upon every one as a foreigner when you visit a strange country, and good-naturedly making up your mind that they are all wrong because they are not dressed and behave exactly as your own people do. Realise that while a pugaree would be quite out of place in Birmingham, at the same time a gaberdine, three hats, and flowers which have a seventy per scent are things you have no right to question if you visit Palestine.

I think in judging foreign personalities our peculiar insular antagonism to the Jews is the most unreasoning. I want you not to fall into the common trick when a Hebrew's name is mentioned of saying "Oh! that damn Jew fellow!" It is a meaningless comment which is not only in extraordinary bad taste, but shows a sad lack of general history knowledge. Isaac of York, you know, died some years ago.

I see your well-bred Christian eyes open. I am committing a solecism which you feel you can never pardon, I am urging you to fling away a cherished tradition—the contempt for the Jew. I am willing to risk your sneer of inexperience, because when a man has lived as long as I have, I conceive it not only a right but a duty to tell those who are following him things as he knows them really to be. I'm not going to discuss with you the Polish or Russian Jews. I know nothing of them and don't particularly want to; all of them are ugly, and most of them smell. You and I are only concerned with the Jews of the British Empire, and others whom you should know about, even if you have not hitherto troubled to do so.

Your young idea of the Jew is the usurer, the old-clothes man, the hard bargainer, and the unrelenting "pound-of-flesh" merchant of Shakespeare—well, even some of these are not wholly to be despised. But, there are others, a great multitude of others, generous, straight-forward, and brilliant members of all civilised communities. To a cultured Hebrew these remarks may seem a grave impertinence, but I am not addressing those remarks to him or to the older Christians who know. I am talking to a young man who is allowing me to try and put him right at the beginning of

his game. You wouldn't thank me, would you, for putting you on a polo pony and handing you a cricket bat to play with. You are proud, and rightly so, of being a gentleman, not only by birth, for that is an accident, but of being one in the best sense of the word. Well, my reason for saying to you, never be trapped into saying, "Oh! that damn Jew fellow!" is that among the chosen people who rejoice in names which look like a wine list of light Hocks, there are as many great gentlemen as your own Who's Who bulges with. Don't turn up your nose at them, because they cannot physically turn up their similar organ of more capacious accommodation at you. We owe them much. I know what you would say: your grandfather did, quite a lot. I've no doubt he did. I hope he paid them, for if he didn't, it is little to his credit, though I know it is a most Christian weakness to be certain that borrowed Hebrew money need never be returned. We are too apt to forget the stile it has helped us to negotiate, thereby enabling us to till the field on the other side.

But it is not the money-lender whom I am taking as an example of his creed, any more

than you would like a Christian bucket-shop keeper to be taken as the ideal representative of John Bull. All I want you to do is to realise that the word Jew to-day means what French, Italian or American or any other nationality means, and should never be in your mind a word of contempt. They have laboured and helped, don't forget, to make our Empire what it is, in Literature, in Art, in Statesmanship and in Science. Brain for brain, they are cleverer than we Christians; and if they are serving the country of their adoption, should this be for us anything but a matter for profound congratulation? If we lack the foresight with which they are blessed, let us blame our stupidity rather than damn their ingenuity. I have met them in all sorts of circumstances, and under every condition, and I can honestly say that thinking back over fifty years of a crowded life my memories of the Jewish fraternity of kindness in distress and help in trouble, equal, if they do not exceed, those of my own faith. In this I may be, you say, fortunate. Perhapsbut why should you say exceptional?

CHAPTER IV

THE WAR

Danger of Forgetfulness—British Tommies—Our Sailors—Remembrance—Loyalty to the Throne.

As we sit, to-night, conversing on many subjects, I want you to realise how it comes about that you and I are lolling back in two comfortable arm-chairs in front of this cheery fire. Have you ever stopped to think that the Great Dead have given us this comfort? You were too young to be part of the great debacle, I will not say too lucky, for I see your eyes light up. You would, I know, have been more than willing to have shouldered a rifle for your country and taken all the risks. You were not old enough to go, but a greater tragedy than Youth in those dreary days were age and illness, that stopped many a brave heart from beating or ceasing to beat gladly in the mud of Flanders.

To-day—but a few years have passed since it all ended—and yet there are thousands who

are forgetting that it ever happened, and still more thousands who are preaching a gospel of "Let us forget; we've had enough of it." This is why I want to impress upon you the fact that you must never, never, never forget. Each morning as you rise, give a grateful, loving thought to the mighty gentlemen who have given their all for you; each night remember them in your prayers, though, indeed, no saint needs them less. I want you always to remember, and to tell your children so that they may tell theirs, that all the statesmen and great ones at home, though they did their best and did it splendidly, did not win the war.

The war was won by the British Tommies who went to their death laughing and singing for you and for me. Few trained soldiers were there among them, my son; they were clerks and costermongers, cabmen and bakers, mill-hands and miners, and thousands of others from every walk in civil life, who, most of them, never even having heard a gun fired, shut up their shops and left their occupations because the land that you and I are enjoying was in danger. When men talk of wanting to forget the war, they are talking of for-

getting the greatest gentlemen that ever trod in shoe leather-a mighty host who kissed their mothers, their wives, their children and their sweethearts for the last time for you and for me. Never forget this. Raise your hat as you pass the Cenotaph—a million sightless eyes lie beneath it; so whisper a grateful "Thank you" as you journey on your way, and realise what the words of Bruce Bairnsfather's Old Bill mean when that figure of common sense pointed to the greatest of our National Monuments and said, "This country don't belong to us, boys; it's leased to us from God! And them fellers have paid the rent." Perhaps I am offending you by supposing that you could forget this small devotion. But alas! there are so many who do, that perhaps I may be forgiven for drawing your attention to things that never cease to fill my mind. If not having been part of those dreadful years it is difficult for you to realise all the sorrow with which they were crowded, let it be your business to make a pilgrimage some day to the British front in France. Stand alone on the Messines Ridge, and gaze over a silent landscape which was once an inferno; and as you see the bulrush and the iris growing in the gaping shell-holes, think that your brothers who lie in this pock-marked earth paid with their bodies the price of your life. Can any one, however brave, dare to forget this? By God, I hope not. Walk down Plug Street, and I doubt if even the potbellied profiteer who filled the petrol-tank of his Rolls-Royce with the blood of our Empire could look at the little white crosses that seem in the distance like fields of arum-lilies, without his eyes streaming with tears and wishing he were privileged to be lying beside those saviours of our homes. No; not only never forget, but always, always remember. On Passchendaele, where poppies grow as emblems of the blood that flowed, there, too, your heartstrings will be torn to ribbons, and it is right if you are British that this should be. Don't, as you sadly offer up a prayer at La Bassée, Loos, and a thousand other spots where deeds of Homeric valour were a habit, spoil your holy thoughts by thinking of the enemy who were responsible. Thousands of them, no doubt, were herded to their deaths, poor devils, and no more wanted war than the brave lace-makers of Nottingham or other peaceful citizens of our gentle land. Forgive

them if you can, though their Hohenzollerns and their statesmen never, but let no thoughts of anger mar your gratitude to your own. Just be proud that in your veins flows the blood of the first gentlemen in Europe. They will be the last to wish a legacy of hate. They thought only of their duty and did it. Remember them to your dying day and you will be doing yours.

In being privileged to tell you humbly to bend your knee to the mighty khaki dead, as I am proud to feel I always do, don't for a moment forget that you owe just as great a debt to your gallant countrymen in blue, who ploughed the seas year in and year out in those iron days. Theirs was no idle vigil in its oft enforced silence. To North, to South, to East, to West, the navy strained its eyes into that long night, watching and waiting, daring and doing, playing a gargantuan game of chess, well knowing that one false move might mean the end of Britain. Written in gold on Royal Ensign and Blue Peter are names that will live as long as Trafalgar stands for England and for Nelson's men. Heligoland, Jutland, Zeebrugge, the Falklands, and a thousand minor actions, each individually as great as these, are bracketed with the Somme, the Marne, and all of Britain's front on land. There is no sea on which you ride that must be anything but a holy place for you, even when you are on pleasure bent; for the blue oceans hold in their keeping brothers of yours who, when the great day came, embraced them gladly, and now, gently cradled by the tides, sleep their long last sleep upon the silver sands over which your craft is speeding. Lower deck and quarter-deck, cabin boy and admiral, had but one single thought, and that thought "England." So in your mind make no distinction between great captains and their humble mates. The gallant Beatty and the Cornwall boy are one, and in the tales of heroism our sons of Drake left as legacies of love to us, the Navy adds jewels to the crown of Empire on which the nations of the earth will for all time gaze with envy. Supermen each and every one were they who, placing barriers of beaten steel about our coast, gave to the humming towns security and to the aged of the gentle inland hamlets, peace. God rest the men of them who paid! God bless the men of them who live! The Cenotaph stands for Red and Blue alike, for Air Force,

Mine Sweeper and the Great Patrol, for Overseas Dominions who gave the Mother-land their bravest in her darkest hour; it stands, indeed, for every British body that smiled to its soul a long good-bye for England.

Having paid my simple and very inadequate tribute, but, believe me, the most deeply grateful and sincere one that I am capable of, to my country's soldiers and sailors, it would be very wrong of me to leave this Empire subject if I did not try to impress upon you that loyalty to your King must be for you a very real and living thing. To-day we have the spirit of Bolshevism and Republicanism abroad. It is not because you have faith in the lower classes, and know that the good honest horse sense of the nation would never at a crisis plump for anything but a solid vote for the monarchy, that you should not on all occasions make it your business by word and deed to show and foster veneration for the throne, for it has been, and always will be, the safe rallying point of the nation in the hour of danger.

The law of the land allows the unwashed to preach treason in our public places, the excuse being that pots which are allowed to boil over never explode. In this I think, with many another, that the authorities are entirely wrong. Any man who uses the power of free speech to undermine the Constitution should either be hanged on the nearest tree or put away for life; for glib and vicious tongues sow seeds which blossom into dangerous flowers in the gardens of the idle, the discontented and the fools. Make it your business, my friend, and know it to be your sacred duty, even though you are only a very minor pillar in the great structure of the State, never to allow the talking of treason to your country by the ridiculing of its Head. If argument with an offender in this way fails, you can use a bludgeon with safety. You will find he is the owner of an extremely thick head. It is an easy thing for the public-house orator to paint a picture to the mob of a royal family as "costly ornaments." You and I know they are nothing of the kind. In the first place, they give the nation the dignity it is so proud of in the assemblies of the earth; and in the second, far from being ornaments, Royalty are the hardest worked, most unselfish and the staunchest friends the masses possess.

The business man, the stockbroker and,

oddly enough, even the philanthropist has an end to his day, but those who so graciously voice the will of the people have none whatever. From early morning until late at night they work for Britain as none other of her citizens work. You or I can arrange our days to suit ourselves, in a hundred different wayswith seldom a fixture of any kind to obstruct us in our pleasures. But how very seldom can those to whom we have sworn allegiance be masters of their own time. It is your duty, therefore, whenever you hear sedition talked, to expound to the ignorant what you know to be the truth. Explain to the mob who have listened to some idiot in the parks who has shouted treason to them from the Bolshevist texts of "the land for the people" and "equal shares for all," what a nightmare a lifetime of ceremonial must be for the very human beings in whose honour "God save the King" is played from daybreak to lights out. Ask the ordinary man in the street if his work can compare with the endless round of dull festivities that the Heads of the State have to put up with, and which they accept so cheerfully; ask him how he would like to have each day mapped out for

him, with the word Duty written over everything. Ask the mob orator if this is work or play, and his insolent answer, even though it be in the brazen vernacular, will convince none of his hearers.

Never let the traitor to your country, whether in a club or in the open, pass unchallenged, or in doing so you will be worse than the traitor himself, for you ought to know better. Make loyalty to the throne your watchword, for in this you will be truly serving your country.

I know a great gentleman, a real downright Britisher, who never finishes his dinner without giving the toast of "The Duke of Lancaster, God bless him!" There is nothing formal about this little unassuming piece of loyalty, and though the pledge is always made sitting down, it means a very great deal. It means our King. Never a night passes that he does not drink this toast, even if he dines alone. This is the right national spirit, and is a habit which I would strongly commend to you, for in observing it you will be setting an example which will cause the thoughtless to wonder, and when men think imperially they are thinking well. Don't confine alle-

giance, when you practise it, only to the set you were born in. Raise your glass to it in every sort of company, and you will be teaching the wavering workers who are having rubbish continually pumped into them by red-tied republicans to become proud of their land in drinking to its Head. Teach them their duty and they will teach others, and so long as the glass is raised to "The Duke of Lancaster, God bless him!" Britain will ever be. The day we fail to observe this custom we shall get all that we deserve, so here's to the Duke of Lancaster, God bless him! who needs your loyalty so that his hand is strengthened to protect and preserve your country. Make it even your constant endeavour, by being true to him, to make our island what those who fell for it in the great war hoped it would be. Peace at home is what they fought for, but which, alas! is not yet. Remember they denied you nothing. Will you deny them their reward? There are countless thousands needing rest which can't be theirs till you have laboured for the laughter which they long to hear.

In Whitehall stands a monument of Love. Beneath, a million voices cry, "Our Country, what of her? What of our Country that we left to you?"
We have no answer to the mighty dead.
A house divided all that we can show,
The sound of turmoil all that they can hear.
Was it for this they bled, for this they gave their all?
How in their glory must they sadly smile
On those from whom remembrance fades away,
Waiting in silent patience for the Peace
For which they died, to live immortal,
Trusting in you—in me—in England.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION

Danger of Religion becoming a Mechanical Thing—The Cynic and the Atheist—Gratitude to God, and Prayer—Spiritualism—Séances and Humbug—The Presence of the Departed—Death of George Meredith.

YOU ask me of religion. My answer to you is, if you worship God, it doesn't matter whether you are a member of the Church of England, the Church of Rome, a hard-shelled Baptist, or of any faith. Worship God. For it is to Him you will turn in your hour of trial, and it is to Him you owe your many blessings.

The reason so many fellows get slack about their religion when they leave school is because it has been made irksome to them in their boyhood. It has been part of a routine. They have been preached at—and not to—and the intoning of prayer has conveyed little to them at first, and at last has come to mean nothing at all. All that religion has meant

to most boys has been the buttoning up of a collar in time to look respectable for morning prayers, and during that usually sulphonaltic service, the longing for it to be over so that the lukewarm bacon and eggs which they know are waiting will soon be in front of them.

Now an empty stomach and the thought of bacon and eggs are not conducive to the making of pious thoughts, and the thanking of God, once it becomes a routine, might just as well be left out altogether. One doesn't thank any one by rule of three, let alone one's Maker. It is far better to think a short sincere prayer in the street than to mumble a long epistle unthinkingly in a church. half the clergymen whose business it is to guide the young mind, or any other sort of mind if it comes to that, commenced their orations by saying, "Now look here, you fellows," instead of "Dearly beloved brethren," they would at once captivate their audience; and if instead of speaking in parables the clergy would be human and talk to the community as they talk to an individual, every young man would listen, would think, and say in the vernacular to themselves, "This is

the goods"; and saying so, would allow no one ever to speak lightly of the "goods." That feeling would last through a lifetime.

When you go out into the world, you will hear the cynic, the wit and the degenerate call the Bible a set of fairy-tales, the Church a comfortable profession, and religious belief merely ballast for the ignorant. Don't you ever be trapped into even listening to these things without a protest. If you do so, you will be untrue to yourself, untrue to the good woman who bore you and was lovingly anxious for you, and more than all, you will be untrue to your Maker.

Don't suppose that any midget's theories as to the origin of species, even be that midget the possessor of one of the greatest brains in our sixpenny planet, ever eliminate your God. Don't in the slightest degree be nonplussed if some would-be superior gentleman older than yourself ask you with a pitying smile, "How can you tell who created the world and the people in it?" Simply reply, "That I don't know, but at all events we owe our existence to some Great Being and that is good enough for me," and you won't go far wrong. The class of

gentlemen who put this kind of question to you, as they sip their own or more likely somebody else's port, are ninety-nine times out of a hundred bravery itself in their dinner jackets with a cigarette between their lips, and cowardice personified in their pyjamas with a thermometer in their mouths. Don't mistake me. I don't mean that the conscious certainty that there is a Supreme Being should engender fear in you of Him. Oh, no; love for Him is the feeling that always must be uppermost in your mind.

I can quite imagine one of your friends, reading these lines, saying, "The nut who has written this book is a bit pi, isn't he?" Well, you can tell him with my compliments that I'm nothing of the sort; inform him that I've done "most everything," as they say in America, but through all my many shortcomings I have always been conscious and sorry for having offended a Deity who has been merciful enough never to strike me with the heavy hand He might so justly have done. Get the thankfulness to your God well into your mind, and don't let the light talk of idiots eliminate it. When you go to bed at night say "Thank you" to Him.

It doesn't take long. Everything during the day may not have gone quite well with you, perhaps, but think how very much worse everything might have been. And in the morning be grateful that you have awakened well and strong. Men die in their sleep sometimes. Oughtn't the last thing, then, that you do consciously be the best thing—a little prayer?

Supposing you had the honour of being presented to your King, you would quite naturally fidget beforehand, and be nervous when the time arrived. Well, add it up for yourself. Oughtn't you to show greater anxiety to please, and eagerness to stand well with the Mighty Ruler before whom your earthly King himself will tremble? I won't enlarge on this, or you'll think I am reading the lessons, which I don't want to do. But, like a dear fellow, don't kick God out of your house; remember He built it for you, and before closing this subject, which I have to, as I am no theologian, don't run away with the idea that there is no hereafter. Few really great minds have ever doubted it. That is the difference between Darwin and Herbert Spencer, Shakespeare and Voltaire. In certain circles this remark will be received as very early Victorian. Well, those circles aren't worth trying to square. But I beg of you never to question this. Belief will help you to bear the bitter blow of a loved one's death, and give you strength when your time comes, for you will then be certain that there are outstretched arms and familiar loving faces to welcome you when you cross the border-land. You may be very sorry for the atheist; he must indeed be an unhappy being when he is alone with no unthinking audience to applaud his brilliant sallies—fit only for untenanted alleys, but cut him out of life's scheme of things as an arrogant fool who is to have a rude and humiliating awakening. Perhaps you may know the story of the unbeliever who, after denying God all the evening, on leaving his host, said, "Good night, and God bless you," and then hastily added, "to use a vulgar expression"; and of the other gentleman who said with innocent fervour, "I am an atheist, thank God!" I think it was the bard of Avon who made Puck say, "Lord, what fools these mortals he !"

Don't ever be tempted to try and upset the

beliefs of your neighbour because they do not coincide with your own. For instance, it is not for you to say that Spiritualism is bunkum because it is not possible of proof. The dead may return-who knows? I should personally love to feel that those who gave us affection in their lifetime are often at our side after they have died. It is a beautiful and comforting thought in this world of stress and trouble-why seek to prove this cannot be? But in using the word Spiritualism, which I do because I know of no other with which to label the presence of the departed, I am not for a moment confounding the delicate and beautiful fancy that the dead are often by us when we think lovingly of them, with the vulgar absurdities of a séance at Brixton, where an undersized man with a ginger moustache is eagerly taken in the dark for the great Duke of Wellington by neurotics, charlatans and polite lunatics, nor do I allude to the spirit photographers who develop, one might almost say blasphemous negatives in the artistic surroundings of Rochdale on the Rhine. A certain section of the community there are who honestly believe that a shadow on the bromo paper is any one

they desire it to be, and are also certain that a man with a black beard and a bass voice who answers questions from behind a screen is Aunt Tabitha who lived for eighty years in disgusting comfort at Tunbridge Wells. These people are only to be pitied when they do not bore us with newspaper controversy in which they endeavour to prove that a triangle has a fourth side. That any one can believe in another's power of summoning souls from the beyond is tantamount to saying that the Creator is a comic God who has a lending library of spirits always at the disposal of the suburban subscriber. No, no, my boy; believe in all the beautiful things with which your imagination encircles a future existence, but remember when you might safely be thankful that comfort is given us, in that loving thoughts for those who have preceded us may create a presence in our souls: to believe in the power of the Bradbury-collecting séance organiser, that he can waft back departed spirits at will, is as childish as supposing that he could replenish an empty brandy bottle by thinking hard.

Have faith, and you will possess serenity of mind which will enable you to treat death as though it were as much a natural function as life or sleep. Train yourself to look upon life as night and death as day, and by this slight inversion of the orthodox, fear will cease to exist. And he who knows not fear, though poor, is a millionaire twice over. That you may distinguish between beautiful thoughts on the journeyings of the soul and a tambourine return of a paid medium without one, may I venture to quote for your pleasure from Sir Sidney Colvin's Memories and Notes a very remarkable passage concerning the death of George Meredith? For me, its beauty robs death of all its terrors, and creates a gentleness for the poor body we are taught to look on as an ugly thing when the guardian angel has fled. Of George Meredith's funeral this was written :---

"It was on a radiant May day, a day of summer rather than of spring, that a little company of us, his friends, assembled by his cottage gate and followed his remains to the grave chosen for them in Dorking churchyard. That at least is the material account and external semblance of what happened. What, truly, to the inward and spiritual sense happened on that day, has been told by the

most devoted of his younger friends, Sir James Barrie, in words perhaps as moving as were ever written by one man of letters about another. When the coaches were gone, the cottage, to the unsealed vision, was according to Barrie not deserted. There still sat in his chair as of yore an old man, but presently his old age fell away from him ('for this is what is meant by death to such as he'). He rose and went through the door into the garden, where he found all the men and women of his creation drawn up to salute and do him reverence; thence up the garden walks into the châlet where he worked, and good and brave men will for ever bow proudly before it, but good and brave women will bow more proudly still. He went there only because he had gone so often; and this time the door was locked, he did not know why nor care. He came swinging down the path, singing lustily, and calling to his dogs, his dogs of the present and the past; and they yelped with joy, for they knew they were once again to breast the hill with him.

"He strode up the hill whirling his staff, for which he had no longer any other use. His hearing was again so acute that from far away on the Dorking Road he could hear the rumbling of a coach. It had been disputed whether he should be buried in Westminster Abbey or in a quiet churchyard, and there came to him somehow a knowledge (it was the last he ever knew of little things) that people had been at variance as to whether a casket of dust should be laid away in one hole or in another, and he flung back his head with the old glorious action, and laughed a laugh 'broad as a thousand beeves at pasture.'

"Box Hill was no longer deserted. When a great man dies—and this was one of the greatest since Shakespeare—the immortals await him at the top of the nearest hill. He looked up and saw his peers. They were all young, like himself. He waved the staff in greeting. One, a mere stripling, 'slight unspeakably,' Robert Louis Stevenson, detached himself from the others, crying gloriously, 'Here's the fellow I have been telling you about,' and ran down the hill to be the first to take his master's hand. In the meanwhile an empty coach was rolling on to Dorking."

Does not this in its beauty spell hope and happiness? I always think so.

Therefore I want you to believe properly in God and imagine Him as some great Lord whose hospitality you are anxious to enjoy, and death as just a ticket that sends you safely to Him on a happy journey. Treat all you meet with well, for if you don't the great last train you receive orders to board will stop at every station and so delay your arrival at the longed-for destination. This is the great and only punishment which this world's transgressors know—the punishment of waiting. As for Hell, there is no such thing. For if there were, how could any one believe in an all-loving God? We live, we sin, and all our sins are paid for twice before we die. How any man can be without belief, I'm sure you can't conceive; I'm sure I do not know.

CHAPTER VI

CONSIDERATION

What is a Gentleman?—Decency and Unselfishness—Betrayal of Trust—Remorse—Conscience—Your Better Self—Exteriors—Swearing—Good-temperedness and Geniality—Conversation and Risqué Stories—Good Listeners—Praise, Blame and Optimism.

If you ask me what is the greatest honour a man can have gained in his life, I should without hesitation say to have lived like a gentleman. For in having done this, you have done all things. You will have treated every one you have come in contact with as you yourself would wish to be treated, and you will have borne success with the same indifference that you have smiled at failure. You will never have known either jealousy, envy or revenge; and at the end of your long day no one you have come in contact with will watch your passing and not be a little sad. Is not this the greatest of all achievements? So he who wrote the de-

scription of a gentleman as "A man who has consideration for the feelings of others," put into one line as much as a volume on the subject could contain.

Well has it been said that if you are born in a stable you are not a horse, equally true is it that because you were born in Park Lane you are not necessarily a gentleman, or because you saw the light in Shoreditch it is a mistake to imagine you cannot be the greatest of Nature's noblemen in the land. Money, education, fame and success pale into insignificance before that one simple and beautiful word—Consideration. And therefore let me beg of you, my boy, come good, come ill, always have the beacon light of decency before you. At times through sticking to this principle you will perhaps lose money and opportunity, your unscrupulous rival will take advantage of what he may imagine to be your weakness, your enemies will laugh, your friends upbraid you for not having been as tricky as your opponent, but pay no heed. You will be conscious that you have done the right thing. Your competitor may have gained what should legitimately have been yours, but you will possess what the trickster

can never have—happiness of mind—and so you will be richer than he can ever hope to be.

The words "Consideration for others," if you live up to them, preclude you from doing wrong of any kind. It is Utopian, of course, to expect this of any one, and it can seldom be. But if you set yourself a standard and only half live up to it, it is a great deal. At any rate you won't be letting temptation lead you by the nose without protest.

You know, of course, it is not permitted that you make love to your friend's wife; you are conscious that to try and take advantage of your host's daughter is an unforgivable sin, and that to have trust placed in you and to abuse it is a low proceeding even if you are not found out. And talking of not being found out, the fact of escaping disgrace in the present will not absolve you from a far worse punishment—remorse in your later years. Most of us are eventually very often alone, and conscience has an awkward way of wagging its finger and causing us to say to ourselves, "That was a very rotten thing I did"; and though you may be deeply pained and despise yourself, you will

be facing one of the sternest of all tragedies, the knowledge that the day has long gone by when you can make reparation for a great wrong. Keep this always in your mind, and try when you are tempted to say to yourself: "I know this is easy; but even if an unknowing world thinks I am a good fellow, is it worth while in the years to come to find myself my own accuser?" Believe me, my boy, no marble-hearted judge that ever sentenced some poor wretch to penal servitude is half as hard as your own better self, who sits with you in an empty room in life's twilight and whispers: "They all think you are wonderful, don't they? but you and I know that you are despicable and a fraud."

The sentence of your own soul is a lifelong one, which makes the praise of those who you know don't really know you an indescribable humiliation. Is any passing illegitimate pleasure worth this? Let me tell you no, a thousand times no. The best of the few real pleasures in life is "peace of mind." Nothing the world holds compares with it. Suffer disappointment, defeat and poverty if they come to you; but have peace of mind and you will be the richest man in

the world, for you will then really be able to enjoy the affection of those who love you.

The older you grow the more you will realise that sincerity is the great basic fact of happiness. Be sincere and you can even risk making yourself appear grotesque; and never pretend anything, or your endeavours will be as lamentable a failure as that of youth apeing age, or age apeing youth. The one is wholly ridiculous, the other totally disgusting.

A gentleman, please remember, is not to be known by his exterior any more than the cigar by the band that encircles it. It is not necessary for me to tell you that you needn't borrow money to bet; that Mr. Flash, whose loud talk, just wrong good clothes, and aggressive attitude, is even the illegitimate descendant of Louis-Quatorze, though again he may be. But don't, on the other hand, because you see a shabby coat and a faded umbrella, imagine the owner as impossible of possessing what I hope you will possess, the great consideration. Indeed these faded belongings of his may be the certificates of his charity to others. I have known such men.

A real gentleman, you will find, never tries to impress any one. He knows all about himself. Simplicity and kindness are his watchwords. And let me draw your attention to the fact that no gentleman who is one uses bad language. This meaningless habit has of late grown out of all bounds, principally, I think, because modern young men foolishly imagine that swear words give them an added importance, and partly because (sad to relate) so many women in the drawing-room are borrowing their adjectives from the stable, and setting youth a bad example. The harmless damn has a stupid sire in its user; but, after all, there is no great harm in it if your looseness of tongue ends there, but it seldom does. Either a man swears or he doesn't. You will find few decent men who really do. The competing in this extremely easy and obnoxious pastime with the bargee is not a gentleman's job, more especially as the bargee has taken honours in it before you began and therefore puts you at an impossible handicap. All the same, the world to-day has made bad language fashionable, and if you drift into this very stupid habit, confine it, my boy, to the elementary "damn," and leave it at that. "Hell" may sound all right, but if it exists it isn't a very pleasant place from all accounts,

and there are a dozen other adjectives in daily use which your friends may patronise liberally but would not if they stopped for a moment to consider their real meaning. Swearing is all habit, so find another; the world is full of less objectionable ones.

To be as bright and good-tempered and genial as possible is as much every man's obligation as is the leading of a blind man across the street. We are all of us born with lamps of happiness to shine in the dark corners of the world. Some men may possess the thousand candle-power electric bulb, others only the farthing dip; but even the merchant with the dip has no right because he says, "I have only been given tallow," to take his bundle of long eights and lock them up in the deed-box at his bank. If all the lamps of happiness were lit in the world, it would be a place of everlasting day. It is because half of us don't trouble to ignite our torches that there is ever a night time.

But by being bright don't mistake me—don't always be bright, or you will be known as "so infernally bright," which means, "Let us run a hundred miles from him." No; be jolly in the degree that the atmosphere of a

room or a place instinctively tells you it needs. By that I mean, if you are shipwrecked, and in an open boat on a closing sea, it would be a nerve-racking performance if you tried to keep up the spirits of the assembled shiverers by warbling, "Let's all go down the Strand, have a banana!" Be certain that your distressed fellow-voyagers are quite aware that the Strand is not the first turning to the left in any ocean, and that none of them have much hope of ever again eating bananas. In urging you to forget London's busiest thoroughfare I am not, on the other hand, asking you to sing "For those in Peril on the Sea," as that would more than probably cause some nervous female to realise her position and throw her weight on the wrong side of the life-saver, its gunwale being already flush with the water's edge. I am quoting to you an extreme case, of course. What the song to be generally chosen for these occasions is I am not aware. "Abide with me" is perhaps a little risky if you are sitting next an elderly spinster, as she might take you at your word if you ultimately reach land. cheering of others in desperate moments is generally the cheer of a happy impulse, and it is therefore unnecessary to write any particular ditty on your life-belt before taking the leap—besides, ink and water blend too well.

If brightness among your fellows is not spontaneous, sit back, for manufactured geniality, like brown paper boots, is bound to come unstuck, and you will soon qualify for an honoured place along the already large majority of bores. In company never stop conversation to tell a story à propos of nothing that has preceded it. Occasions may sometimes arise when you can quite easily slip in an anecdote to amuse people, and it will be welcome, but the man who makes a practice of telling stories ought to be chloroformed out of existence. And never tell dirty ones at any time. You are sure to offend one of your listeners and let yourself down badly, even if the offended one smiles while the inane laugh. For it is only the inane or vicious who will applaud you, and in doing so gently put you on a level with themselves. The encircling of an epigram with cheap embroidery is worse than painting the lily.

If you can't talk well, listen well. You will be surprised how popular you will become. But if you can cultivate the art of

conversation, do so—it is a very important though sadly neglected part of every gentleman's education. However certain you may be as to your facts, never be didactic, or you will alienate the less well informed and annoy the fellow who knows as much as you do. In the company of your elders let your information appear inquiry. While among your own set your remarks will lose nothing by bearing the prefix, "Some one told me" or "I'm not quite sure, but I think." There is nothing so aggravating as the man who is always right, and takes a delight in thrusting the fact down other people's throats.

If you can't say anything good of a person, say nothing. You will never lose anything by doing this. And if you can say something good of another, always say it. Remember nearly all your remarks are repeated sooner or later—the bad, if you have even whispered them, being made twenty times worse. If you are gifted or cursed with a sharp tongue, use it if you must on the whales; let the poor minnows alone, any ordinary-sized fish can prey on them, and you must endeavour never to be ordinary. Cheap clarets are marked thus. The gentle art of making enemies is not

a remunerative occupation, and you will realise as you grow older that your life, travelling, as it does, in a circle, you are bound to meet friend and foe many times, and this being so, be sure he whom you slight to-day you may want badly to-morrow.

There are many people worth loving. There are few worth hating. So don't hate anybody; just wipe them off your slate, and by letting them cease to be so far as you are concerned, you will pass them by as you pass a milestone whose number you haven't been interested enough to notice. You will save yourself a great deal of annoyance by doing this. Always remember that one enemy can do you more harm than twenty friends can do you good. The great art of living is to do so with as little trouble as possible to yourself. Always try to forget, and in forgetting you will have forgiven. And, my boy, never sulk. Of all abominable things, the chewing of a grievance is one never to be indulged in; besides, it is the exclusive property of the Irish people, and who possess the genius of doing it in such a charming way that it makes them, if possible, more lovable. If you have a row, have it; get it over, apologise for your part of it, even if the other fellow doesn't—and trot on. A quick temper is like a gun firing blank cartridge—the flash may startle the onlookers, but the sigh of relief when the noise is over blows the smoke away, and the day is a summer one again. But sulks are the clouds that hang heavy overhead, and, obscuring the sun, give nothing but dulness to the surroundings.

And, my young friend, always be an optimist, for optimism is the source of effort. It is better to be an unsuccessful optimist than a successful pessimist; at any rate you will have been full of joy for more than three-quarters of the journey, while the pessimist if successful will only have been happy for the very last portion of it; and what does the end of anything amount to compared with practically the whole? The very fact of being an optimist will often enable you, even if you are less well equipped than the pessimist, to win a prize. For optimism will step in where clever pessimism fears to tread.

Before leaving this subject I would commend you to commit to memory Rudyard Kipling's "If." It will help you to look yourself in the face; the world doesn't so much matter.

CHAPTER VII

OCCUPATION

Hobbies—Their Unimportance—The Under Dog—Art as a Recreation—Shams and Highbrows—Knowledge of Art—Old Masters—Old Furniture—Antiques—Dealers—Fakes.

Let me beg of you not to be without occupation of some kind, however rich your inheritance. Work is worship, and the man with nothing to do first becomes a nuisance to his fellows, and afterwards finds that he has built for himself an empty hell to live in. I quite agree that the manufactured hobby which a rich man who has no especial desire to follow any particular calling often calls work, is more difficult to find than the choosing of a profession for the youth who has to earn his bread and butter. But difficult or not, make no mistake, the necessity of occupying your mind is as essential as the filling of your stomach.

Don't imagine that your Game book is the Bible, or that the crossing of blue setters with

cocker spaniels is an achievement; there are few animals that cannot become friendly of their own accord. The collecting of birds' eggs, the studying of the night-moth's flight, and an intimate knowledge of the habits of the ring-ouzel are all intellectual attainments, I grant you, but they are not work, for work is a thing of value, and is only of value if it contributes to the good of the community. You may answer that Maeterlinck wrote the Life of the Bee. I answer, if you are a Maeterlinck by all means write the Life of the Bug, and you will be giving mankind a feast for the brain, for up till now that sprightly insect has lived en pension so gratuitously on the human frame, that it is high time he was made to pay his footing by entertaining us in poetic prose as to the methods of his limitless excursions.

Never, because you are tempted to flirt with the things that don't matter, run away with the idea that there is no rich man's Labour Exchange where work is to be found. Look over the clerk's head as you consult him at his desk, and you will notice on the crowded shelves of the world's wants library, a volume under U. It is the stud book of

the Under Dog. Take it down and blow the dust off its upper end, as you have watched many a second-hand dealer do, and opening it at any page you like, you will read of men and women who struggle to bring up a family each week on the same amount of money that last night you paid for your bottle of Chambertin. You will read on and find that there are hospitals with two hundred beds closed for lack of funds, and at whose doors three times the number of out-patients clamour for admittance and have to be refused by sad and kindly surgeons. You will come across a chapter which will tell you of sad and suffering little city children, who have not only never seen the sea or a green field, but who have never even been to the Zoological Gardens, except perhaps through the kindness of their hospital nurses, who have stinted themselves to make it a possibility. If you are at a loss for work, I would heartily recommend you to this largest of all volumes, the Under Dog. He is ill fed, ill kennelled, and needs almost everything. Don't despise him because he is of a lower order socially than yourself. Remember what Abraham Lincoln replied when he was called a common man. "That may be so," he said, "but I think God likes common men, He made so many." And you call to mind the great Napoleon's reply to a certain French nobleman who sneered at him because he could not boast of his ancestors. The little Corsican shouted, "Sir, I am an ancestor."

For the individual with money and mediocre intelligence, there is, of course, always a Parliamentary career open—with infinite tact, no overdraft and a good chef, he can become an under-secretary to some astute plebeian; but unless he is possessed of inordinate cunning and a considerable lack of self-respect, I would not urge a limited mentality to be whipped daily out of even the Servants' Hall into an uncongenial Lobby. Party politics are not a gentleman's trade, for they compel a man to juggle with his constituents in one hand, his leader in the other, and his country in the air. But if you are really bent on politics, you who have had the advantage of having had a pipe of port laid down on your arrival to be broached only on your twenty-first birthday, go in for them by all means, for if you succeed you will have done so in spite of

being honest, and a statesman will have been born. Blue blood may not look as pretty as the red variety, but it has always been the chief ingredient in the veins of the real statesman. Don't forget that the parish is not easy for the ordinary, but the State difficult even for the extraordinary. If you have the call—go then, but let your politics be Empire politics. Drive your own chariot and harness your ideals to it; if you are not prepared to do this, you are a lost soul and will become an automatic machine into which brilliant opportunists will put their pennies and eat your chocolates.

Still assuming that you are a wealthy Japhet in search of something useful to do, shun, as you would the plague, art of any kind as a recreation. For there is only Art, which is a tremendous thing and a thing not to be trifled with. The dilettante can have as little knowledge of it as the Covent fruiterers possess of the number of pips in their finest pomegranates. Don't ever think there is such a thing as good art and bad art. There is only Art. The so-called good and bad art exists only for highbrows, who through disappointment have an abnormally developed

destructive critical faculty, which they foster in garish garments, clubbed hair and flowing ties, incubating platitudes in the hope of producing epigrams, which when hatched die at birth on the early morning air of a decadent studio. There is nothing so easy for the Highbrow as to cut up the Master's canvas with the midnight bacon and eggs, or to wash off his colour with a schooner of cheap lager. Velveteen jacketed Brown of Brixton is an expert at this in the small hours, seated with a guitar on a parquet floor ridiculing Mendelssohn's Spring Song. He can bite off the great man's quavers with every mouthful of a railway ham sandwich, and in doing so can be certain of a laugh from the couple in the dimly lighted corner, who have ceased for the moment their highbrow mental love-making. Poor things, these mayflies, who had far better never have risen from the river-bed where Nature lies, to become food for the dashing rainbow before they have insulted twice his elements by dropping on it like rudderless biplanes.

Have nothing to do with any of this gang. It is true that if you are a healthy fellow you may dive into their scented mud for a moment

and amuse yourself watching this community of successful imbeciles, and, drying yourself with common sense, forget it. But there is always a danger that if you stay too long you may return from the underworld a discoloured thing. You may remain too long, and easily get into the habit of looking at life through the wrong end of the telescope, which is all these astronomers of Death are able to do. In the white-faced lady with the black circles round her eyes, which become darker and darker as her eyelashes drip, you may grow to fancy you see a real woman, her lack of drapery assisting that thought. In the sexless youth whose brains are in his hair you may, if you linger too long, imagine him to be the proclaimed genius of to-morrow, not understanding that he is the derelict of yesterday. Believe me, it is a dangerous atmosphere to breathe unless you have a great sense of humour.

And even then if you go into this galère so armed, you are a cheat, for you are paying for the pleasures the female exotics grant you (for, give them their due, they don't take money for their bodies) by pretending to believe the things they wallow in. This is

as dishonourable as giving a post-dated cheque you know won't be met. Nor is it even fair to rob the Mendelssohn Spring Song gentleman of his flickering Indian summer of vitality by encouraging him to even greater depths of vandalism. None of these people are without something that is dangerous. They have quick wits, they have each their own particular stunt, decorative or amusing, and are either alcoholically reckless in their brilliance, or profoundly enigmatic in their dulness, as they grope for untruth through cheap incense. They are all somethings that matter in their particular environment; this kingdom of make-believe may appear to you a real world, and if this is so you're done for. You will have learned to imagine that flowers speak, that colour schemes are departed spirits, and that the bleeding heart of the winkle when stabbed by a pin is the giving back to earth the thoughts of departed centuries.

All these things are never questioned by the Highbrows, for without these profound beliefs they would be unstuck butterflies, who, having been divorced from their corks by common sense, would be blown, no one knows whither, though I have a very shrewd idea. No, my boy, directly you become conscious, if you are standing in the academy—I won't say a great exhibition—looking at some first-class, second-class pictures, that there is a long-haired man and a short-haired woman at your side, gazing at it through their own thumbs and discussing its "tone," be sure you are listening to the binders of an empty book with a highly ornate cover.

But if you want a great happiness, learn as early as possible in your life to know and appreciate the beautiful things in real art, and be sure that you try to acquire your knowledge from real people. For they will teach you to see life through the Heart of Gissing and the Eyes of Corot, and having wandered with them pleasantly through galleries and museums, you will return to inquire of the things you have not quite understood in some peaceful place where Art is guarded jealously. Not as alluring perhaps as the bizarre house of your Highbrow, where the early village cocktail has thrice done salutation to the morn. But as from one place you will retire with a good knowledge of all the things that matter, from the other you will stagger bewildered and wondering, not only if there

is anything worth while in the world, but almost doubting if there is a God. The majority of artistic degenerates die early—I won't say die before their time—either of drink, drugs, or unnatural excesses. So for Heaven's sake, if you are ever tempted to laugh at their foibles—in preference spit, and pass on.

Mind you, it is not necessary that you should strive to make a knowledge of art a burden to you, or that you should desire to become an expert. But the gaining of great pleasure without thought of turning it into profit is a thing not to be despised. A pleasant knowledge of beauty is for a gentleman a duty, and in addition to the happiness it will give you to travel through the centuries, think what a jolly time you are going to have with your own son or daughter, when they are old enough to appreciate what you have made it your business to be interested in.

It will not only be that because you can point out a Reynolds, a Gainsborough, a Zoffany or a Grisoni—or the pictures of their school—at a glance, that your pleasures will have half begun. Though knowing the

masters, you will, I hope, have a very charming acquaintance with their contemporaries. By this I mean that supposing you are standing before a Reynolds, for instance-well, it will not take any great amount of imagination on your part to say to yourself, "This very canvas in its making and at its completion was the object of criticism by Johnson and admiration by Garrick." The name of the former will open the door to Lichfield and the literature of his time, while the name of the latter will draw aside the curtains that veil the Drama of 1780, when acting was acting, and Keans and the Kembles followed the mighty Davy in rivalry and undying hatred of each other. Boswell, that most beaver-like of biographers, will whirl you away to the Hebrides and draw your attention to the multitude of bitter and witty things his master said. I take only a Reynolds for an example. Masters of other periods, if you know only little of them, are, of course, bound to lead you to a knowledge of the men and things that surrounded them. this way you will make History a novel. kingly George will conjure up for you an undefeated Brummel at Boulogne-a Colley

Cibber — man - handling the fourth folios with those two enterprising profligates, Buckingham and Rochester, in a Covent Garden tavern. You will think in amazement of the struggling Chatterton, of the comedies of Sheridan, of the anonymous lampoon of Byron, the wonder of Goldsmith, and the days when England was in terror of the Corsican ogre, and so on and so on. Names in connection with each and all will be brought to your notice, people of whom you may never have heard, but becoming friendly with whom you will find worth while.

You will in this way understand that great artists are the massive oaks from whose branches the real History of your Country may be learned. For Art is the only architect of the world we live in. The statesmen and the great of all times have been greatly honoured in that they were permitted to sit even on the edge of the Kingdom of Art. For the oratorical blossoms of the politicans wither, and the laws they frame become obsolete. But the colour of splendid canvases and the beauty of mighty structures look down good-naturedly on each succeeding century.

I, alas! am ignorant and sad, for I had no one when I was young to turn the pages of the great Book of Life with me. Let, therefore, my telling you of the deep regret I feel, be the reason that you must not miss the many things that I realise would have brought me happiness. Mind you, I am not inviting you to become a pupil at a new school. I am only giving you an invitation card to the world's switchback, on which, here travelling slowly and there more rapidly, you will, without much personal effort on your part, catch glimpses of the giants of many decades. You will become astounded if you take a period, say, from 1760, and journey with the friends of the friend you start with, how suddenly you will find yourself at 1920. A personal knowledge of some living celebrity will hark you back to another great one, who has joined those who packed their easels for another sphere twenty years before. You will make enquiries of them, and learning all there is to know, you will suddenly not only be on nodding acquaintance with Whistler or Millais, but you will be shaking hands with Wordsworth, bringing him a message from Carlyle or Ruskin, and journeying through

the Victorian and Georgian eras, you will wonder how it is you ever came to think that the Brothers Adams, Hepplewhite and Sheraton were anything but almost the contemporaries of the dealers who out-antique them to-day.

To my mind to know all that is worth anything in history is to take your hat off to the aristocracy of Brains. The doings of comic princes who have intellectually done themselves to death in butts of Malmsey, or have taken a skinful of lampreys over the Styx, though of moderate interest to a suburban tea-party, need not call for the tapping of a nerve on your part. But not to know the really great who have illuminated the reigns of many a dull monarch is to be a walking corpse.

I should most strongly urge you to add to your educational pleasure by acquiring some knowledge, however little, of furniture and things fashioned by hands which were crossed on breasts long before your grandfather was thought of, for, in obtaining this, you will be led into strange and quaint places and meet with more than ordinarily interesting folk. Why I don't know, but eighty per

cent. of small dealers always look and behave as if they had just stepped out of a page of Dickens, and are as distinct from their fashionable brothers in the city's select quarter as a bullfinch from a drain rat. The quaint personality who carries on a limited business in precious things is usually a real lover of the beautiful, and is generally profoundly sad to part with a prize he has secured. For he is a collector by birth who is compelled to become a dealer from necessity, which is by no means the same thing. Compared to him his co-professional, the brilliant auctionroom prince, is merely an astute fingerer of Bradburys.

You will hardly ever find a man with affection for old things, poor though he be, who is not possessed of an enormous store of other kinds of information. He is compelled to buy cheap, and leave himself only a narrow margin of weekly profit for his home, and therefore his highly trained critical faculty has compelled him to have a more than good knowledge of books, prints, men, and biographies, and a multitude of things which go to make him a companion with whom it is a delight to linger for many an

hour. I have such a friend in my mind who lives in Edinburgh, and with whom I have spent some of the happiest of days. Try and become well acquainted with one of these eccentrics, for there are few connoisseurs even without collars who are not great gentlemen at heart. You will pick up all sorts of unknown facts from them. You will learn to discover by touch the difference the diamondlike points of old cut glass and the soft, smooth feeling of its bastard brother, the modern blown article. You will gradually get to know the rare periods of furniture, and be able, if you have a choice, to select the wheat-ear design of Hepplewhite in preference to another. You will discover the pastels of the powder period are finer and rarer than many others you may admire, and while looking with admiration at an oval picture in this beautiful art, you will become strangely inquiring if you are asked an exorbitant price for one in a square frame.

Through pottering about, while perhaps never being able to advise a friend what to buy, you may be able to tell him what not to—which is in itself an asset. In your rambles you will also get to know the range

of fair prices, thus enabling you to smile good-humouredly if you are asked a hundred pounds in Bond Street for a Welsh dresser, when you know that its proper value is somewhere in the "roaring forties."

A bad purchase will teach you many things; that portraits on glass are of more value than happy village scenes. You will get to know that ware like lustre, which you fondly imagined comes direct from a workman's cottage, is manufactured wholesale to-day for a hungry market. Chelsea houses, and even pot lids, and a thousand other trifles in the last twenty years, are now objects of the faker's special attention. So you will pick up much knowledge and pleasure by mastering even the minor mysteries of little old shops. But you are not buying to sell; you are, I take it, a gleaner content to pick up here some small glittering thing—there a torn and very faded piece of Du Barry tapestry to hang on the walls of your Hall of Memory, and believe me, you will have no more precious possession than these delights of purely sentimental value. The millionaire has generally only had time to learn his art in a banker's parlour -but you will have graduated among charming old-world friends, up dusty winding staircases.

And now let me give you one sound piece of advice-never try to pit your knowledge against the expert, however vacant he may pretend to look. Remember he has had time to cram his mind in order to fill his stomach. So that if you saunter into a dealer's showroom and say, "I like such and such a thing, but I have little knowledge," you will be treated a thousand times more fairly than if you swagger through the door, run your hand down the leg of a table, examine an inlay, pull out the drawers of an escritoire with one hand, and the like, for you will only be doing what the man does who puts a cigar to his ear to pretend he is dating its crop. Behaviour of this kind is the gauntlet thrown down by you which it is the dealer's right to pick up, and so you will probably be done to a turn like a well-cooked snipe. Don't go looking to-day for bargains, at any rate in paintings, imagining that you can pick up a Raeburn for £3, 10s. The dirty old portrait you will discover hidden away in a corner, unframed and covered with dust, has probably only been there a few days. While the rolling

downs of Essex hanging on the wall, for which you will be asked fifty guineas, the price making it something of importance, may tempt you, and then the dealer without pledging himself will tell you that he has very grave doubts in his mind that it isn't a Constable, and his uncertainty will make you extremely enthusiastic. He will bemoan the fact that he has no picture expert to consult, and that he is sure it would fetch big money in London. You will, if you are an idiot, acquire it instantly, being confident that he is ignorant and honest; and you will take it away, soon to discover that it is not a Constable, but a copy by a very ordinary Policeman, one Mr. Dodger Hack. Pictures are the greatest traps of all, so beware of them.

I would point out to you that parts of many pieces of furniture may be all right, so that in a sense they can truly be called old, but remember that from one genuine sideboard five new-old ones often appear. If you take my advice in buying antiques to-day, buy only with a guarantee. In this way you will be paying high prices, but you will be getting something. Trusting your own judgment will cost you far more in the end. I can

assure you they have enough strips of Bonnie Prince Charlie's plaid in America which, if joined together, would reach from Sandy Hook to Southampton; the number of targes also used by this romantic figure are so great that on reflection he surely must have started fighting in the cradle for his milk.

In searching for antiques believe nothing you see and little you are told; no twentieth century belle was ever more made-up than they are. You will be much happier if you buy what really pleases you than if you purchase the things you are told you ought to have. Don't be afraid if you see a thing and like it to have it. It is you who are to live with it, and better a modern picture considered of no value, that gives you continual pleasure, than a dreary cathedral scene of Peter Neif, with painfully accurate perspective, which you will hang in your room in the hope that some knowledgeable friend will say, "Ah, a Peter Neif!" Better a Peter out, believe me.

I should like to make one suggestion to you which may be of help. If you are being shown wonderful masterpieces by their kindly owner, no doubt you will realise that the orchard or the farm is by Morland, that the

young lady with the face of fifteen clasping a dove to a bosom of twenty-three is a Greuze, that the marvellous texture of a fabric surmounted by a face that moves out of the canvas to thank you for your admiration is a Raeburn. The high-waisted maiden with abnormally long legs you cannot fail to know is a Burne-Jones, the marble setting for Greek maidens a Tadema. These are schools easy of recognition to the tyro. But if you find yourself before a Reynolds or a Gainsborough or a Lely, a master of the Holbein period, or indeed the work of any great artist of which your host is the fortunate possessor, don't, because you are ignorant, and you want to gain a knowledge of these priceless treasures, say, "Who is that?" as so many a timid young man does. Say, rather, "What is that?" This will draw a reply, "It is a soand-so of so-and-so," giving you the artist and the subject in one line. There is nothing to be ashamed of in that you cannot "place" a work of art. Remember that there are few owners of these wonders who have had the temerity to pay for them without a guarantee coupled with expert advice which is unassailable.

In purchasing jewellery, buy the weight

and quality of the stone, not the design and setting it is in; for if on some not very fine day you are forced to get rid of it, the modern goldsmith's art, however delicate, is financially of little value. Oriental pearls, round, flawless, and with a pink blush through them, are among the finest of gem investments, but don't forget that a five thousand pound string will cost your wife about eighteen shillings a day to wear. So that if it is ultimately sold by you at a good profit on the original price, this must be taken into consideration. Of course, if you can afford your loved one the pleasure of a row of the oyster's precious disease, some hundreds a year is nothing much to pay for her happiness. In buying at auction the property of, say, Nelson or some other national hero, be sure you have the credentials with it, for without them, if you later put your treasure up for sale, you will find that the watch Nelson gave to Lady Hamilton will be labelled simply "an enamelled watch." I have one, and I know I stupidly threw away the sharkskin case that held it and lost our hero's letter, and so to-day my hundred and fifty pound investment represents a pound note.

Never buy anything simply because it happens to be old; leave this for the tourists who may have new countries to furnish. Things of sentimental value are only for the rich collector, and become interesting heirlooms, but not good realisable assets. Again, never look upon a beautiful church piece as easy of re-sale. A magnificent ivory crucifix, for instance, justly admired and devotedly loved by the Roman Catholic community, is difficult to realise money on in hard times should they come, for Roman Catholics, the only likely buyers, are in a minority at home, and there are few among them who have the spare cash to afford an objet d'art however much they may want it.

To go into a treatise of what to buy, where to buy it, and how to buy it, would necessitate the compiling of a set of bulky volumes, and had I the knowledge, which I have not, it would be ridiculous to attempt such a feat. I am only putting things to you haphazard to try and make you realise how difficult and dangerous is the hobby of buying, if you are doing so as an investment, or if your means are limited. If you are extremely keen to possess something that takes your eye, you will be

saving money by paying an expert a fee to advise you. He will tell you if what you fancy is genuine, and if not, what its marketable value might be at a forced sale.

I have skated lightly over the foregoing subject, not to try and teach you anything, but just to make you wary, and in the hope that you will understand that although Queen Anne is dead, her imitators live to-day, and will be manufacturing her personal furniture a hundred years hence. Therefore, before dashing down your money, be sure that there is not the smallest item in antiques, from the handle on a seventeenth century bureau to the antediluvian worm-hole in a Cromwellian chair, that the modern fakers haven't copied with a genius that is worthy of a better cause. Frankly, I have the greatest admiration for their colossal patience and ingenuity, but you leave others to pay for their labour, my son. Be very careful of buying "grandfather's" clocks in the Cotswolds, or indeed any pieces of furniture of which the cottager can recite an elaborate history to the accompaniment of tears from an old lady of 101, to whom it was a wedding present. These antiques are more often than not recent arrivals—carriage paid.

Much of the oak panelling in the Breton cottages have their exact measurements in Soho, and a large quantity of Benares work comes from Birmingham. An original door-knocker is the grandfather of a thousand exactly like him. In fact, the dealer in antiques did not invent the game of Put and Take—it is he who first thought of Make and Fake.

CHAPTER VIII

SPORT

Choose what you Enjoy Doing—Shooting—Proper Learning of a Sport—Billiards—Golf—Good Humour—Fishing—Nature Travelling—Sport and Cruelty.

HOOSE as your pastimes the ones that really give you delight—and don't pick ones you hate simply because your friends like them. Many young men ride because they feel it is the right thing to do, but if your nervous system compels you to mount a champing steed, with a bunch of carrots in one pocket and a revolver in the other—cut this equine adventure out of your life altogether. You will only be risking your neck and damaging some splendid animal's teeth. You will be far happier on foot—watching the many amusing types of equestrians to be seen everywhere, most of whom look like a round of beef ready at any moment to leave the plate - than mingling with them in horrible uncertainty. It is an awful mistake

to be weak enough to let custom or your acquaintances choose your pleasures for you.

You probably like shooting; well, if you are not very well off, and have been given a pair of hammer guns by your father, it's not your business to be ashamed of them because your neighbour is shooting with a single trigger. All you have to think of is, that you are out to shoot straight, and while not necessarily adding a guest to the day's bag, though many would not be missed if they were hit, let me impress upon you the fact that if you take the birds that come to you as far away as you loose off at those that have gone on, you would have many more to pick up, and the next breeding season will be better.

Beware of the professional loader at a shoot. He has come up from some crack gunmaker's with but one object in view—and that is to try and get every shooter to have his guns altered, or to persuade him to purchase a new pair. So pay little attention to him when he begins to inform you of the reason you are missing this or that—or you will find yourself before you know where you are with a new stock to your 12-bore like the gnarled oak

that good King Charles hid in, and also in attending to his multifarious instructions as to height, pull, wind, velocity, and allowance, you will find yourself working out mathematical problems just as the grouse wink their near eye at you overhead on their travel to distant heather, gone perhaps never to return, for although you may have been polite enough to miss them, they may not make up their mind to pick your butt on their return journey.

There is as much humbug talked about shooting as there is about nearly everything else on our planet. Time and swing in shooting is everything. Thinking is disaster. In fact, in forms of all sport, time is as much the great factor as a judge's sentence to the convicted prisoner. It is the timing of the blow in boxing that catches your man. It is the timing of the impact between club and ball that produces the greatest length at golf. It is the timing behind you in the air that presents the dry fly naturally to the trout. It is the timing of the beat and lunge that makes your fencing friend cry "Touché." It is even time that the clock tells.

In all sport remember the sportsman is

born—he may be improved of course—but all the professors in the world will never make a duffer anything but a mediocre performer. Please do not be too disappointed because you fail to become a champion at everything. You will enjoy your life much more by knowing how to do things properly and attaining proficiency, than striving after full marks all the time. In one way you will be delighted when you bring down your bird; in the other you will be cursing yourself because you didn't, and lunch will be occupied with the thoughts of lost opportunities instead of pleasant recollections. To make amusement of any kind a business is to rob it of all its pleasure.

When you decide to take up any branch of sport for your health and amusement, be sure that in the early stages, if you have not a friend who is a first-class amateur to advise you, to go to a professional. It is a great mistake to muddle along at the beginning, thinking that later you will seek expert tuition. It is the learning of the alphabet that enables us to spell. Early training in the rudiments of anything, though it may be a little tedious, will give you style, which is

half the battle in everything. The rest is generally practice, but practice without style or knowledge seldom allows anyone to reach the level he might have done, even though he be out of the ordinary.

Take billiards, for instance—a beautiful game and a health giver mentally, because it is an enormous brain rest. How many chalkers of cues do you see, if you watch the game in a public saloon, play real billiards—exhibition shots many of them may make, but exhibition shots don't win matches. The art of billiards, as played by the great masters of the game, is to place yourself so that exhibition shots are only necessary very occasionally to relieve a difficult situation.

The ordinary amateur may have had a lesson or two—and been shown trick shots by friends—but, as I remarked before, the knowledge of tricks are not the knowledge of the basic facts that are the game itself. If you want to play billiards really well go to a teacher, and never attempt to play a game for three months. He will teach you to strike your ball in the centre and the object ball where you intend to. You will practice daily how to follow through with your cue, you

will acquire strength and touch, and, in fact, that the ordinary untaught players do not understand, that nearly all shots, with the exception of odd cannons, are to be obtained by natural angles, without side. For, although side may achieve the shot played for, it makes the getting of the leave an uncertain proposition, except to the greatly skilled. If by patient application you can master the halfball shot, you can be sure that you need not fear your friend's game, for in losing hazards and drop cannons the object balls will, being truly struck, fall into the positions you want them if the strength be right. I have mentioned billiards to you in reference to the professional instructor, as it is a game where a wrongly played shot is easy to explain to the learner, for the stabbing of your own ball destroys the natural angle, but if tried again with touch and style is sent on its journey truly.

It is easier to get positive proof of errors in billiards than many other sports, as the implements are at hand to try with over and over again, and the reason of a fault is under one's nose. It is more difficult to realise the cause of a faultily cast fly, for the backward cast, unseen by you, may have coquetted with a fickle wind. The reason for missing a bird, although known to you, is difficult to rectify with your next shot, for the conditions of height and flight of your next will probably be entirely different, and so on and so on, but be sure it is absolutely essential to start properly in all games, and not wait to have to unlearn bad tricks which may have become deeprooted and impossible habits for you to alter.

If you play golf, play it happily. Don't make each tee a declaration of war-each mashie shot an iron entering your soul-each green an Irish wake-or each putt a mind storm. Play this jolly game as if your handicap was four more than it really is, and therefore keep on surprising yourself. Why people take out a bag of clubs with the express object of turning themselves into deaf mutes on a beautiful summer's afternoon I have never really been able to understand. You can't beat life's bogey at any time, so why worry yourself about the one of wood, iron, and gutta-percha? No man gets any good out of golf who doesn't take the rough with the fair way, and is as happy when he's down as when he's up. The man who approaches this ancient pastime so seriously that the trees must cease to wave, the wind to blow, the lark to sing, and the caddie to breathe when he addresses the ball, is better in a foolish factory picking feathers out of molasses, for his sense of humour must be of the kind that horses are sent to the veterinary surgeon to be cured of. No, my young friend, most men's handicaps at golf are their clubs, and if this is so with you don't be downhearted about it. Golf isn't a religion, it is really only a sort of outdoor tiddlywinks. So enjoy it even though you know your opponent to be a descendant of Ananias and a treader in of balls.

Choose the thing you excel in as your favourite pastime, and if you are not a fisherman, might I humbly suggest that before you elect not to become one, you should think twice. I may be prejudiced about this glorious sport, insomuch as that I owe it so many hours of supreme delight, but I do hope, with all my heart, that if you are not already a disciple of Isaak Walton's gentle art you will follow in his footsteps, for if you do—through these few words from me—long after I have ceased to be, sometimes as you sit in the cool of a summer's afternoon, with a

basket of fine trout at your side, waiting for the evening rise to add another trophy to your creel, a kindly thought will enter your mind for the godfather of your pleasure; and perhaps I shall know.

There are many who look upon fishing as meaning nothing but a rod, a worm, a bottle of beer, and a state of indolent waiting. At once disabuse your mind of this. No doubt there are many drowsy drunkards who fish as an excuse for sampling malt in the open air, but there are drowsy drunkards who patronise every pastime. Trout fishing, and especially dry-fly fishing, is the overcoming of a wily opponent by a skilful artist. The well-stocked river holds a quarry versed in all the wiles of the tacklemaker's lure. It is for you, young Walton, so to present a winged insect from Bond Street to him, as if it were indeed the heedless little natural joy rider, who rises only to see the sun for a very few minutes. I do not propose to write you a treatise on the art of dry-fly fishing, any more than I have set myself up as an oracle on any subject we discuss. For first of all, although an enthusiast, I am after many years still a tyro in such company as those who have tied their own

flies at the water's edge in a gale of wind.

It is not only the delicate art of fly-fishing in itself that is so wonderful, but there are great joys in the surroundings where you will be led to practise it. These are the green fields of England and her wooded landscapes, for the gallant trout dwells far from the busy haunts of men. No newly minted silver is brighter than the element this aristocrat chooses for his home, no shamrock greener than the counterpane of shivering weeds he pulls over himself when he is bashful. The banks about him, each inch of which he knows, are shaded here by a birch, there by a weeping willow, with iris and forget-me-nots and a thousand scented herbs, which you will often see him jump out of the water to have a peep at.

I doubt if Man is ever nearer Nature or his God than when he stands silent and alone at the edge of a dry-fly stream—or fishing it knee deep, moving slowly yard by yard towards its source, with the river idly playing about his waders. There are no familiar town noises here, only the lowing of some distant herd, the call of a pheasant, or the far-off

chiming of a village bell. The angler has made a truce with all the living things that fear the footstep of the ordinary passer-by, and he is a member of a new community. The kingfisher, like a streak of flame, sails past him gaily, as though to say, "If you have lost your matches, I am here." The mother partridge, busy with her brood, shepherds them to the water's edge, and leisurely instructs them. An old brown hare lops by, nods him a how-do-you-do, and goes upon his way to the land he holds in safety till September. There on a neighbouring tuft of rushes sits a water-rat in russet coat, not hurrying for its life from yelping terriers, striving and diving against the stream, but calm, collected, and unafraid, making its toilet in a friendly presence, and looking the really pretty thing it is. There hops a rabbit with no unseemly haste—to bid his brothers of the burrow dance upon the green and have no fear. "The footsteps overhead," he whispers, "were only those of one of Walton's men." And so they come, a troup of London's astrachan—to show the tails they cannot tell. Heavy with pollen, drones on the busy bee, to give account of flowership to his queen.

From hole and crevice, briar-bush and brae, earth's family set out to pay their happy calls; some to chat over cups of water at the brook, others to talk scandal at a dandelion tea. All these things the fisherman can see, and meeting the mates that Nature meant for him, the consciousness of his own soul will make him wonder if man is right in thinking that all these God-created things have none.

I talk to you of the gentlemanly trout, but far from the southern, gliding streams, there dwell up in the tumbling rivers of the north the kingly salmon. Oh! my son, once feel him set your fly securely in his mouth! and tell me you could ever give up this pursuit, and I will answer you—then Love has ceased to be. The Kingdom over which the sportive Monarch holds his sway is not as a rule carpeted with the brazen butter-cup and modest daisy. The sunny trout is Latin with a home to match—the King a Norseman. And in seeking him you will have left a Southern Symphony orchestra, cooing Chaminade, through silver birch and quivering reed, and will find yourself when attacking the gallant salmon in surroundings as majestic as himself. There is no Chaminade quartette

here-Nature's full orchestra will play you on to his battle-ground, with the wind as the treble, a rushing torrent as the bass, and waving firs beating the rhythm of the storm. No audience but the giant rocks silently watching your brave endeavours to kill their children who have returned to them for rest from unknown oceans. Pleasures there are may equal, but none surpass, the salmon's pull —his run—his leap—his angry shake—and struggle for his life—and then his end. Your hook has held—your cast has borne the brunt of rock and stream, of jerk and tension, and skilfully gaffed, a worthy foeman, whose dying movement even is defiance, lies at your feet, looking like opal in his dusty bloom. Oh! fish, for every hour of this chase is full of hope, anticipation, regret and joy, and whether success or failure, you will have lived a lifetime in a day.

The pursuing of the angler's art will lead you from the land of Drake's Old Drum to Shakespeare's silvery Avon, from grey Northumberland streams to rivers which owe their ripple to the winds that blow so angrily o'er Scarpa, and learning manners in the fastnesses of Caithness, are educated when they reach the Helmsdale and die away at Perth. From the Dovedale to the Don—from the Thurso to the Thames, you will, taking your intervals of rest, when fishing hours are out of joint, find yourself eating a sandwich near a Roman camp, or seeking shelter from a midday sun beneath the ruins of some feudal castle, or long departed Bishop's stronghold.

I pray you do not treat these treasures as paragraphs from Baedeker, or merely footnotes from an angler's guide. With halfclosed eyes fling thought back to an England that once was well named Merrie. days of ladies with the falconed wrist-those times of bowmen with their thong and yard, when Lords were monarchs, castles were citadels, and space made counties almost foreign lands. Now can you hear the music of the hound who dared to jump and yelp at Kings, picture the jostling throng you've seen in tapestries, and being in imagination which one of them you will, buy for yourself in your mind's eye an ancestor! Remember where you now rest a stronghold stood; in your mind's eye rebuild its crumbling walls, restore the moat, the postern gate and tower, and it being yours, you will be able to link your arms with those

in armoured suits, or parti-coloured hose; bow to an Abbot, or strike with jester's folly, good Brother John, who journeys far too slowly to the pool where carp are none too eager for monastic refectories.

Learn to fish, and you'll learn to live; you will think and understand what Nature means, and you will return townwards a much more happy, gentle fellow.

As to the question of cruelty in sport, there is so much that is obviously cruel, that it would be beating the air to argue the points. The placing of brave animals against impossible odds—or causing the death of any living thing by degrees or after prolonged terror, is so unmanly that it never, to a gentleman, has been real sport. So remember there is no such thing as cruelty in sport. There is only cruelty and sport, and your own good heart will put you right about this every time.

The real sportman's instinct is to give everything a chance—be it bear or badger, rabbit or drain rat. Let low birds, like low persons, pass on, and hope that they will do better for you another day. Bear in mind it is not the fact of being able to kill that should

give a man pleasure, any fool can do this on occasions, it is the real power of being able to kill when the quarry is on equal terms with you, and his flight or pace so difficult that you can justly feel you have scored a victory, and not—opened a butcher's shop.

CHAPTER IX

GAMBLING

The Stock Exchange — Investments — Inventions — Foreign Lotteries—Racing—Betting and Professional Betters—Cards — Roulette—Chemin de Fer—Crooks and Sirens—Money-lenders.

7 HAT do I think of gambling? Well, all that can be said of it is that if you are rich enough, you can afford to make it a recreation which will cost you so much per annum, just as your shoot or your horses do. I'm not, of course, talking about your friendly bridge parties and the like, as gambling. I am referring to the games of chance played with no other object than the making of money, or obtaining excitement in the Gamblers are composed of two sets attempt. of individuals, the crooks who live by it, and the fools the crooks live on. Obviously you are not a crook. Therefore, I am sorry, but you must consider yourself, if you really gamble, the joint on which these gentlemen exist.

Of all forms of gambling the one which holds out the fairest prospects and is the most dangerous to the uninitiated is the Stock Exchange, for the Man who buys shares is camouflaged by his conscience into the belief that he is "in business," and that he is buying first-class security from affable mining magnates, when as a matter of fact he is only buying real first-class insecurity, for they have locked him up in the drawing-room of Investment Villa, long after they have deserted the ground floor. It is only when he feels chilly and rings the bell, that he finds the directors are all in another dwelling house. And really on reflection there is no reason why you should expect them to be anywhere else if you have any brains in your head. Men don't go abroad, buy claims, live dogs' lives, come home, get financed—which means in nine cases out of ten well plucked-and go through all sorts of anxieties for your sake, you know, any more than those who skin them and take their risks are to be expected to say to you:-" Hulloa, I think you are a nice-looking fellow-you have done nothing to help us, but we like your face-you shall also make all the really safe money before we go to the public." Is

it logical? Would you do it yourself? The golden hopes of twenty per cent. and a rise of ten pounds a share held out to the investor is not what the original founders worry about. They are delighted to have taken the two or three point rise, banked their profit, and given the public—you, my son—the baby to hold.

No, no, don't be lured on to the Exchange, put up with old Mr. Cautious, your family solicitor, who advises gilt-edged stock-be certain of a smaller income and secured capital. Don't envy your friend Jones who has picked up some thousands on the advice of his broker. Remember there are other shares and other brokers, and be certain that Jones will more than probably be dining with you off your small income at no very distant date—having only gaudy looking certificates in a deed box to show for his foolhardiness, which he will tell you are bound to go right some day. But the stockbrokers' "some days" are astronomical in the space which divides them from the investors' "to-morrow."

It has been said that if two men were each given a thousand pounds, and one buried it in his garden and the other invested his, the man who has performed the burial service over Bradbury will at the end of ten years be the richer of the two. This may be untrue if the investor is cautious; but caution is not what we are discussing-I think we are talking of gambling, aren't we? So let me at once tell you quick money is seldom safe money, and you must never expect to make a fortune out of another man's business, for he would have no business if he gave and didn't sell. If you are advised to buy shares for a certain rise of five pounds, be profuse in your thanks and say you are content at once to take a profit of two pounds rather than gamble, and you will find that although you have been ready to make a handsome present of three pounds on every bond to your newly-met or long-known philanthropist, that somehow you will hear no more about the matter, unless you happen to open the Financial Times a month later, when you will find the pound shares at 12s. 6d. or less.

And talking of investments, beware of the inventor and his El Dorados; before he gets to you, he will most probably have done considerable damage to nearly every staircase in Throgmorton Street. Of course you may meet men with really bright commercial ideas which will appeal to you, men who, for instance,

possess a patent polish for oranges, or a new process for manufacturing seeds for strawberry jam, or a rainproof varnish that makes even whisky unwaterable. These devices, if you are lucky enough to get in touch with them, hold out the prospect of colossal money. But apart from the merits of any invention always say to yourself: "Is this a luxury or a necessity?" Remember it is only two per cent. of the necessities in inventions that pay, and then one of them doesn't.

Of course if you are lucky enough to get into something really sound—for instance, a machine that can stop money-takers swindling you-well, grab it. Or a system that can really beat a proved mathematical problem, well, buy it—simple little things like this are always worth a flutter; but don't be persuaded to finance a new hairpin that can't come out, because you may find that it really can't, which doesn't make it a commercial proposition. Men will bring you patents for painting grouse with luminous white so that they can be shot at night time; but if you are tempted, remember that birds hate flying after dark, and that tiredshooterslove drinking port after a good dinner. No; gamble, if you must, only in your

own business, for you will have the advantage of being able to weigh up all the chances of improving a going concern.

If, again, you are thinking of investing in foreign lotteries, think twice, for believe me, a railway ticket to see the draw in Holland will be more remunerative than the lottery ticket you have thought of buying to participate in it. Your journey will have provided priceless fresh air, you will more than likely have been sick going over to the Hook, and you will, if you are fond of flowers, have been able to bring back a tulip or two. But all you'll get through buying a grand chance will be the information that Frau Fakenstein the winner, if looked up in the local Who's Who, will turn out to be the niece by marriage of the Burgomaster of Bunkemburg, who draws the lucky number in the lottery so nationally each half-year that he is probably the President of the Dutch Sketch Club.

No; be cautious, and never try to become metal for the engraver's art. By which I mean that mugs come from the master hand extremely chastened, be that hand the property of any workers in the Get-Rich-Quick factories. You must know that the engraver's

art has always held high place in the estimation of the connoisseur, and the engraving of mugs must therefore by no means be held cheaply, because it is a branch of that beautiful process worked at chiefly by bookmakers. It is a very delicate undertaking, for the quality of the mug being, as it is, of so many shapes, sizes and values, makes expert work on it a thing not to be despised. A truly happy sight for Snatchem and Grabb on the racecourse is to see the mug they have worked on so carefully step jauntily up to the rails from the Members' enclosure. In him they see a new jewel for their wife, a new motor-car for themselves, and a holiday at Margate for their children. The lad they have manufactured has a splendid pair of race-glasses, through which he is sometimes permitted to see a winner at a short price, his badge is looped in approved style through his button-hole, his hat is tilted off his forehead at a patron's angle, his hard-bitten pencil tells of many seconds, while his check trousers are turned up high off his boots on the driest day, displaying the uppers he is ultimately destined to walk on. The make-up of the fly flat is to pattern. Do not contradict me when I tell

you that you have as much chance of winning money racing as you have of finding a pearl in an oyster from a costermonger's barrow.

I hear you say, "Are there not professional backers who make a living racing?" Yes, there are a few. Let me tell you something about one I know. . . .

I knock at the door of my friend's room. A growl rather than a greeting reaches my ears. The room is in darkness, but an electric bulb illumines a chart fixed to the wall. Before it sits my friend, with a pen behind each ear and a pen in each hand.

The chart is smeared with rising and sinking lines. These lines are in various coloured inks. The red ink pen is in my friend's right hand, the green ink pen is behind his left ear, the black is in his left hand, the violet behind his right ear, and the blue between his teeth. Is he a doctor, and is this the temperature chart of some strangely fevered patient?

No; there is fever here, but the master of inks is patient and doctor too. His trouble is the fever of racing, and that brain-racking map on the wall is his guide to the winner of a flat race handicap.

The "flat" for flats is a well-known racing

term. But this man is no flat. He makes his living out of backing horses. He bets on a system, and works desperately hard at his profession. But he bitterly regrets the day he ever adopted it, so cruel a task has it proved, though being too old to learn something new, he must bet to the end of his days. True, he earns a modest income, but in his rare moments of leisure his head aches with calculations, and always before his eyes are swirling figures. Was there ever so exhausting a life as that of the professional backer? For he knows that all his calculations can be upset by a horse being left at the post, either by accident or design.

Horse-racing, you know, originated hundreds of years ago, owing to a difference of opinion; and if it were only a difference of opinion to-day as to which of two of the noble animals we lose our money on were the better, then racing would be no more of a gamble than any other game of chance. But, alas! it is not so, and for this reason it is very wrongly called the Sport of Kings, unless, of course, kings make books, which perhaps they may do, for there are certainly few among that select community who could write one.

Racing originally started in Italia as a gentleman-like and innocent sport, in some highly numbered year with B.c. before it, which to the backers of those halcyon days meant "before commission agents." The exact date, however, has slipped my memory. But it came into being as a national pastime in this way.

In Rome, which you well know is the city where the waiters come from, and other swarthy descendants of Romulus and Remus, who ply the dangerous trades their ancestors the gladiators were adepts in, such as the roasting of chestnuts and the putting of unsold ices under their beds to purvey to an unsuspecting public on the following morning. There dwelt in this year of B.C. two C3 patricians by the names of Thermos Inheritus and Vacuum Enlargus. Of brains they had little, of occupation none, being lucky enough to have been born after their fathers, who had amassed great wealth during the Hannibalian war time by supplying the Roman soldiery with non-rainproof khaki togas, and helmets which were by no means up to sample. For this and other patriotic actions, such as singing "Ave Cæsar I" (you will notice they purposely dropped the H in "ave," so that what they were doing to Cæsar would not be suspected), they had been raised to the upper chamber of Lethalos, there to warm marble seats for the intellects of their offspring, and were in addition permitted to wear strawberry leaves or the green part of any other sticky fruit they fancied on their curled and scented toupées. We are lucky that to-day our profiteers are relegated to their manufacturing centres, and that knighthood being in flower it is impossible to purchase it, or for any one to be the recipient of this great honour through doing the ridiculous things the Cæsars gave it for.

Julius was indeed a humorist, and created the palace butcher Sir Loin for contributing to the party funds, the liver pill maker Sir Osis, because he performed on the sackbut; while Sir Mon, the divine, Sir Cumspect, the morality professor, and Sir Cophant, the tragedian, all received their universal extinctions for doing things in no way connected with their own particular callings. It was for this reason that many of the javelin throwers, who had run the risk of contracting extremely bad colds through standing for five

seasons in mud up to their knees and water up to their breastplates for Cæsar, were not even slightly envious of those who had done such far more daring things for him.

But to return to Thermos and Vacuum. was towards the end of a warm July night, their baths having been taken, and the slaves, in diaphanous lingerie that would have made no great call on any drapery store, having danced themselves to a standstill, that Thermos, slipping the last ortolan's tongue past his profiteering princely tonsils, flung the toast to Vacuum, and idly wagered the rope of pearls at his neck to the egg-sized emerald on Vacuum's forehead that his blood-steed Spavin of Troy was fleeter of hoof than Vacuum's mare Ringbone of Thebes. Vacuum lazily accepted the challenge, and on the morrow Rome was agog with the information that a new sport had been invented—the pitting of two noble quadrupeds one against the other.

The city was early astir, the local hens laid more punctually than usual, so that breakfast would not be delayed, while packed chariots, whose occupants struck cymbals and sang the popular songs of the day, which, so far as my memory serves me, were "Our Lictor's such a Nice Young Man," and "In Capri where my Coal Black Mamma Drinks," filled every available Roman road that led into the open. Even the blasé Nero himself took a new interest in life, and determining not to be drunker than usual, ordered a few extra slaves to be killed, and staggered to his box on the Camptus Kemptonia, brushing quite a lot of film from his eyes, in fact nearly a whole cinema, so as to view the contest the better.

Thermos had ordered his slave Pullus to ride Spavin. Vacuum had given a jockey, by name Bribus, the mount on Ringbone. "What could be fairer than this?" shouted the patrician and the plebeian alike! Two noble animals, two honest riders, and two patrician owners, all with but a single thought —that of winning. . . . Here was a sport that could never be sullied with trickery of any kind; for while a gladiator might wink through his net or blunt his trident for a consideration, the horse, not being human, must be honest. Light-heartedly, then, did the farmer wager his corn on Spavin against the chances of Ringbone, while the fanciers of the restive Ringbone did not hesitate to risk the loss of their wives on the failure of the champing

Spavin. The race was started at a signal from Nero, who threw a golden flagon at one of his favourites, hitting her straight between the eyes. She did not see the race. A mighty shout went up of "They're off!" and then a silence fell.

Round and round galloped the sweating bays. Ringbone was leading, but as Nero had backed Spavin he shouted as they passed the post, "yet round again!" Half an hour passed, and the horses were now walking. The excitement became intense, for Spavin began to prove the better walker. It was then that Ringbone stopped, and yells rent the air—Spavin had walked in.

That evening, driving his chariot homewards, Thermos' best girl might have been seen sitting beside him wearing Vacuum's eggy emerald over her left eye. It had been a great day. True, corn had changed hands, wives had met strange husbands, while maidens had found themselves transferred to other establishments without any previous warning, or even the customary month's notice. But although many who had owned houses slept in the gutter that night, and many who had favoured the fields possessed a roof, the losers

grumbled not, for they were conscious that they had had a fair run for their denarii. Thus was the first horse-race run, and a difference of opinion settled.

But while the contented city slept, two thoughtful Romans sat with puzzled brows. An honest sport had come into being. These two were gamblers by profession, and their living, if this sort of thing obtained, would go. Shoutus Pinchus was deeply moved, as indeed was his partner, Percentius Toreus. Two horses and two men!!! Men were venal, but the horses dumb. This was a knotty problem for Pinchus and Toreus. The moon had long since sunk in the heavens, and night had knocked at the door of day before intelligence gleamed in the eyes of Pinchus. "Speak, Pinchus!" quoth Toreus, "and set my heart at rest that honesty, whom we have so long defeated, has not at last become our master." "Toreus, go to the midday hour of your sleep in peace, for I have solved this strange equation. All is well!" "Speak, oh Pinchus, that I may homeward journey and look my wife and children in the face." "'Tis this wise, Toreus. Hast thought thou of the weights of these two youths, Pullus and

Bribus, whom thou didst see man-hanging like monkeys on the necks of Spavin and the other?" "Nay, Pinchus, have I not; what of them?" Quoth Pinchus: "With the weights of the riders doth the secret lie. For instance, you grant it that a steed can't pull a house, and that a goat to market going would pass him were he tethered to a ton. Well, think on this. Weight grows in strength, as strength by distance weakens. Is not this the solving of the problem when two by nature are quite equally matched?" "I get you not, oh Pinchus." "Toreus, you are dull. Listen. Take it that for a sum Pullus, next time these noble brutes are pitted one against the other, sews in his tunic, out of sight, some weighty lumps of good Illyrian lead, how will it fare towards the journey's end with that which carries him? Will not the weights have doubled, aye trebled, and will not the fetlocks of the tiring steed answer not half so readily as t'other who is more lightly burdened? 'Tis mathematics, Toreus. 'Tis weight will equalise the speed of hare and tortoise. Tell me, good Toreus, that I have put you wise." "Most wise, oh Pinchus, opening my eyes to still far greater

combinations in our favour. These races between horses must not be for two; a third we'll add ourselves, and weight the other two to death, having the first time out let them have beaten ours by lengths, when he was carrying lumps. Then can we safely, on another day, lay odds against them and support our own, for he, owing no tonnage, will be free, and must romp home." "Steve, you have got me!" Pinchus cried, and from that hour racing ceased to be.

From that hour the game began as it is played to-day. Pinchus and Toreus trained a hundred well-tried steeds, and urged the young patricians so to do. Bribus and Pullus joined a wrestler's class and soon developed arms like twisted steel. Kind trainers were employed, who, knowing that horses of the blood are prone to drink benevolently, swilled many a favourite to its full before they sent them to the Gate of Tapes, and by a thousand like devices the opinion differences of the Romans, unknown even to themselves, all disappeared, and Pinchus and his friends made certainties of everything. The sporting Romans grumbled not, and were indeed silent and unquestioning, even when Splint of Carthage, who had run sixth to all the best for quite two years, one day ran first and beat them all by miles. Jubilli Jugus and Ahsillius Bacchus, two of the most prominent and knowledgable punters in the Roman ring, were unsuspicious and quite pleased, heartily congratulating their bookmaker, Four-to-one-on-Us, who owned the animal. True that home he swung them in his chariot of hammered gold, but this was meet that he should do so, for it was common knowledge that he had relieved them even of their sandals.

The aforegoing slice of Roman history may be crude, but it must be obvious even to your unenlightened intellect that if Pinchus and Toreus could achieve so much in circumventing honesty in one day, how much has been added to their cunning in a small matter of hundreds of years?

The man who backs his fancy is in trouble from the moment he gets up in the morning. He is backing himself to beat an unbeatable combination. First, there's the horse; he may not be quite himself, and consequently, things being equal, will not run up to his form; then there is the policy of the stable to be considered; it may not suit them to let the

noble beast be out for anything but an airing on your particular day. But supposing he is out to win, with the stable confident, there is the jockey to be thought of, for oddly enough he may have backed another animal himself in the same race, and would rather possess Bradburys than honours. But even should the jockey not be one of the Armstrong family, and really be trying to get his blood-stock home, there may be such a thing as a jockey's ring, which may have other views, and proceed to go through the small formality of shutting your fellow in and not giving him the chance to get through until the horse they favour is impossible of catching. I don't say these things are done, but conceivably they might be.

Again, there are the bookies, who may be up to the teeth with your certainty. They, too, have methods of stopping horses, for money talks in all languages, even White-chapel. Then there is the going, which may be soft when your fancy needs macadam, a circular course when your steed requires a straight mile, the draw which may put the best one out of business if he is on the extreme left of eighteen runners, and also there is dope

which dulls some and makes others frantic, and so on and so on.

Tell me, you who have bought a race card, and had a good lunch, how are you going to compete with all these things? Can't you imagine how the modern Toreus and Pinchus must laugh to see you studying form, for form only exists in the magic inner circle, and then they decide to weigh everything up from the expediency point of view of reducing weight for a future event. How delighted must be the layers who watch you with a sporting paper eagerly devouring the notes of "Our Special Correspondent at Oldmarket." They know what you don't, that that Special Correspondent never leaves his lodgings in Bloomsbury, London, England, and that all he does is to read more sporting papers than you do. Think of it—if the tipster whom you suppose infallible really had certainties, would he be writing racing twaddle at a fiver a week, when a dozen good winners would set him up in Park Lane for life? No; go racing by all means, for the sake of the fresh air, for the luncheon, for the good sorts you meet in the enclosure, for the pretty ladies in the Members' stand, and for the fun of the thing, but

don't ever be persuaded, or persuade yourself, that you are going to make money backing horses over any sort of period.

Money that bookmakers pay is only lent. It all ultimately finds its way back into their patent leather satchels. You probably have given your lady-love a charming little brooch; your means allow this and no more. Have you ever seen the diamonds on the bosom of a bookie's spouse? Look next time, and not being quite sure whether it is raining or not, you will offer her an umbrella. You perhaps come to the course in your Ford two-seater. Think how it is that the bookies lie back exhausted in their Rolls-Royces? All these things are presents to the laryngitis kings from the lineal descendants of our Roman friend Jubilli Jugus - that's you, my son. No, no; go down to the races for an outing, back a horse because he's your lucky number on the card, or because he is like one who bit you once, or because the jockey looks like a poor edition of your valet, or wears crimson colours that remind you of an Early Victorian garment you saw hanging on a clothes line, or because the owner's name is Asterisk, which reminds you of a fall you had when you

ventured on the ice last Christmas, or for a hundred other inconsequent reasons. Believe me, you will have more chance of backing the winner this way than by following the form, or the knowing ones' information. But if after my advice you still insist upon being a sport—though what this means except being a good-natured ass, I have never been able to fathom-and if you lose heavily, never go after your money, by this I mean plunge to get it back; for it is then that the real trouble begins. Rows with your father, smiles from a money-lender, more alcohol than is good for you to try and forget the coming Monday, and in fact a making of hay that may lead you into a devil's own mess before you know where you are, as the song says. If you must bet, only bet what you can afford to lose without inconvenience, and in so doing, directly you have made your wager, kiss your cheque good-bye for ever, and welcome it like the Prodigal Son if by some extraordinary luck it comes back with very short or wrong odds added to it. The backing of horses is best described as a maximum of Faith and Hope and a minimum of Charity.

Never wager on anything that can talk is a

very sound maxim, and therefore I should for this reason, if I were you, have nothing to do with betting on football. There are quite a lot of players at this game, and they have managers who can all talk in English, Irish, Scotch and Welsh. Billiards, too, is an extremely dangerous field for speculation, principally because not even a champion can permit himself to win consistently—the billiard professional's living depending as it does absolutely on nothing but a sustained public interest. This is the only hope he has of drawing full houses from the big minority of the population who think they are billiard players themselves.

When two first-class cracks, say a champion and his runner-up, visit big cities to play a match, do not forget that they are so much interested in the receipts of the hall that if Brown went away with a big lead from Jones there would hardly be a score of "fans" watching the game at the third session. The enthusiasts must witness a neck and neck struggle, with the classsic players nearly even on the last day. This ensures a packed house of enthusiasts who watch the breaks and breakdowns with elation, pain, fear, and every other

emotion known to the gullible. You will see, therefore, how dangerous it is to bet with the innocent-looking stranger whom you chance to meet in a billiard hall. He probably is a champion's brother. Think of this.

Cards!!! I will not insult your intelligence by discussing them. All I can say is, never play with strangers. If you follow this advice you will be absolutely safe, and that ends it. But in card playing mind that you do treat every one as a stranger whom you don't know well, or your intimate friends don't know well. If you fail to do this, you will find yourself, at the end of a week at sea, playing poker with a charming fellow who tells you he is going round the world, when in reality he is as much a part of the liner you are travelling on as the sailors themselves.

The foreign hotel lounge is also the home of the affable Captain Diddle, who tells you he is on his way to shoot big game in the interior, which on reflection seems a very cruel proceeding. You will find that the last thing he will ever mention is cards, even when a brother officer of his, Captain Iddle, of the 5th Jewsiliers, blows in on the third evening, and suggests penny bridge. It may be that it

will be you who will, ultimately much against his will, persuade him to make a fourth, and when he is persuaded to while away an hour simply to oblige you, you will find yourself singing "Good-bye, Summer" to your letters of credit, as you sit on your bed with the morning sun gilding your striped sleeping suit. Therefore, if you have a bad memory, when travelling, write on your looking-glass, "Cards—strangers—never."

I want you to realise that in all games of chance in which there is a declared maximum stake the Bank is unbeatable. Don't waste your time trying to find an infallible system which is to prove that the fifth proposition of Euclid is wrong. Euclid is dull, but accurate. Systems are amusing, but ruinous.

In the ordinary way, except for anything but very negligible points, make it a rule never to play games of chance in a friend's house; and for these two very good reasons—firstly, if you do, you can always get up whenever you wish to and say good-night; secondly, if you play for small stakes and win, you will not be leaving with your pockets bulging with the money of people with whom you are intimate. High stakes must only be played

for in surroundings where no quarter is asked or given. You cannot, if your host is banker, put £100 on the red, and if the red turns up, place the money in your pocket and stop; and not to be able to stop when you are winning is worse than playing against a table with a dozen zeroes you are not allowed to back.

If you are playing roulette, remember that by the law of mathematics every thirty-seventh time the wheel is spun it spins for the Bank, and be under no false impression that because the black has turned up twenty times it is anything but an even chance that it won't turn up again.

If you are, of course, content to earn a small amount of money daily, this possibly may be achieved by sitting patiently at the tables and making gambling as much of a business as book-keeping, though you may take it as an axiom that by staking less you can only lose less. Still, there is no need to discuss the petty cash gambler who plays with a phantom landlady at his elbow, and whose telegraphic address is "Bread and Butter." If you elect to gamble, never put a shilling on anything unless you can well afford to lose it; but,

having listened to what I tell you, all I can say is this: if you win at the tables get up and go. And if you lose your maximum also leave, never by any chance starting to double your money to get it back. Winning or losing at games of chance, never be tempted to take your mask off. To lose your money and your temper is the sign of really bad breeding; so if ever you see a man do this, look up his family tree, and you will probably shake something very doubtful from one of the ancestral branches. While not quite as bad, but aggravating in the extreme, is he who is hilariously delighted if he wins. If you do this in mixed company, you will make some splendid enemies. Your gains and losses are nobody's business but your own. It is therefore quite unnecessary to declare accurate results, or, what is more common practice, to lie about them. Nobody pities you because you are out of pocket, and if you are lucky, they would rather have your winnings in their own.

The most dangerous form of gambling, because of the surroundings in which it is played, is chemin de fer. In London—and in all big cities—the venue, the method of

getting there, and the conditions when you arrive, are much the same. Every gamblinghouse keeper has his touts, male and female, at the smartest restaurants and most fashionable hotels, and they receive a fee for every player they introduce to the game. You would never dream, probably, and be indignant if you were told, that the smart young man about town who says, "Let's go on and have a bit of supper at So-and-So's," and "Let's play chemie for a bit," is earning his living by that apparently indifferent remark. But it is so. Off you go and find yourself at a house in an extremely fashionable neighbourhood, where everything is perfectly done. There are men servants to wait on you, beautiful ladies to smile at you, and gathered round the green baize you will meet old friends, slight acquaintances and celebrities whom you know only by sight, but whose names are household words. You are given your supper—free, gratis and for nothing-and you can have the best cigars and vintage wines, and not be called upon to pay a sou for them. You are delighted, and you wonder how it is all done; you do not realise that you are the welcome guest of Monsieur Cagnotte-an invisible gentleman

of French extraction—who milks every coup of something like twenty per cent. before the players receive their winnings.

There is no need for cheating in these establishments. The profit to the keeper of the house is as automatic as the swing of a clock's pendulum, the only difference being that the punters and not he must, if they play long enough, eventually live on tick. The keeper of the Hell de luxe has not to depend upon whether A, B, C or the Bank wins. All he has to do, as I say, is to charge the winners anything from two shillings to four shillings on every pound thrown on the table, for the privilege of being his guest; and in a big game—and a prolonged one—I have known a house to be richer by three thousand pounds in one evening. You can work it out for yourself. If you stake a hundred pounds and win, and the percentage is ten per cent., you receive ninety pounds; therefore it is plain as a pikestaff that if a dozen players get up, neither having won or lost on the gambling itself at the end of the evening's play, they must all be out of pocket; and if they played on indefinitely, by the natural process of exhaustion—if each side won alternativelythere would ultimately be no more money left for any of them to gamble with. But the wine is excellent, the cigars admirable, and the ladies, with half-promises in their eyes, divine, make the night one on which accountants are not asked to consider a double entry or an exit.

You need have no fear of being raided in a really first-class establishment; the police not only wink, but blink, and indeed can afford to contract temporary cataract; for the keepers of gambling-houses send them to be cured of their ophthalmic troubles to a well-known oculist called Ready Money Naughty Boy. Apart from the allurements of the surroundings of these gilded halls, there is a grave danger for you if you find yourself in difficulties at the end of an evening and are unable to pay, and it is a very serious one indeed. When you become the debtor of the professional gambler, you will not at the moment be pressed by him, but will be allowed most charmingly to leave your honourable obligation to stand over for a week or maybe a fortnight. What could be more generous or more high-minded than this? But the fortnight passes, and if you are still short of money again things will apparently be made easy for

you. The gambler will explain, with a smile, that he is awfully sorry he cannot afford to wipe out the debt altogether, as indeed he would love to; but he himself has had a bad time, and needs "ready" to "pay his own obligations." The thing you will be advised to do, therefore, is to get the money from a Mr. Smith, an excellent fellow who lends it for short periods to help all and sundry who are embarrassed through losses at cards. This seems a more than kind suggestion, and affords an easy way of tiding things over. The hundred pounds you owe is lent you by Mr. Smith on a bill at three months for one hundred and fifty, not an undue percentage for money advanced without security.

I would like you to realise that Mr. Smith is really the gambler himself—who is getting it both ways: he is wiping off a debt of honour, increasing it by a third, and at the same time procuring a document he can sue you on, and which, if he did not hold, would leave you the opportunity of pleading the Gaming Act, if you were so advised; though under no circumstances, unless you are sure you have been cheated, is this ever to be thought of. Mr. Smith's method is all very

simple, isn't it? But, of course, professional gamblers are very affable and simple people.

It might also surprise you to know that the beautiful creature whose husband has left her early in her married life, and who has sat at your elbow at supper and at play, and whom you, in a moment of sympathy, have driven home to her maisonette in the early hours of the scented morning, is probably one of mine host's mistresses, who has had very definite instructions as to what jeweller you are to be taken to the next day for the purpose of purchasing some trifling gewgaw in the shape of a pendant, a ring, a gold bag or a bracelet. You are a chivalrous young sportsman, and you would bring some small pleasures into the lonely life of your fair companion, who, you have gathered, hates the night life she leads, who has never known what love means, and who longs for the country, the fresh air, and the simplicity of real things. As you sip your last brandy and soda in her tiny, highly ornate drawing-room, and crunch a plover's egg abstractedly, you will be certain to hear a sigh at the mantelpiece; some long-buried sorrow is leaving a great soul via two charming tonsils. You are a gentleman, you are

sympathetic, and almost without knowing it you are at the lady's side; perhaps you touch her hand. She will look at you with a startled expression, and you, with the limited vocabulary of inexperience, will say, "I-er-I," and she, dropping her eyes on the instalment carpet, will murmur, "Please don't." And then, of course, at once you "do." With a boldness bred of pity, your lips will touch her forehead, two of her well-salted tears will splash heavily on the already watered silk of your dress coat, and a bowed head resting almost imperceptibly against your shirt front will price your pearl studs. Poor little soul! you think, as an army corps of full-blooded microbes surge uppermost in you. You will wonder what good fairy has turned you into a Jack to slay the giant of her sorrows. Transfixed and irresolute, you will suddenly see yourself painted by Martell as a three star Galahad, and at the advanced age of twentytwo you will suddenly find that you have been wrong in thinking there was nothing in life worth living for. It is all too wonderful, whispers a far-off voice. A Bond Street perfume floats across the hermetically sealed apartment, a shaded light—two lips—caught unawaresan indignant beauty distressed beyond all telling, saying, "she had thought you not like other men." How pained and how disappointed in human nature is the gentle Phæbe! In a moment apologies rain from you; forgiveness is granted; there is an exquisite pause, and you are for the jeweller's in the morning, twenty-five per cent. of the purchase price of your gift being posted to your host of the night before five minutes after you have left the shop. And this is not all. It may be the beginning of a walk up a long garden, in which you will only be permitted to pick the flowers if the gardeners, after careful consideration, think you are more remunerative bedded in than potted out. Were I to attempt to try and explain to you the hundreds of ways you could be done by the set of people whose midday is midnight, so large a library would have to be written that no man in an ordinary lifetime could read it. These few remarks are only meant to draw your attention to the fact that the professional habitués of night clubs and gambling hells are bound together by intimate business ties, and that it is madness to think that you can take any single individual

from this galère and say he or she may have been false to others, but they will be true to me. They are all crooks, in a greater or lesser degree, for if they weren't they would starve.

I mentioned money-lenders casually just now. Let me give you one word of advice about them. Shun them as if they were the plague, and never, in any circumstances, borrow a shilling from a professional usurer. The only man who can afford to borrow money at high rates of interest is the rich man who is temporarily embarrassed, and to whom a loan even at seventy per cent. is cheap so that some pressing obligation can be met on the hour. He is able to make his plans ahead for repayment without strain. But in the case of any one with a limited income, or the individual who earns his living in a modest way, seventy per cent. are the tentacles of an octopus that will strangle him to death.

I don't say that money-lenders have not their uses as well as their abuses, or that there are not some decent fellows among them, but these are few and far between, and the majority of the fraternity are hard, cruel and exacting to the last degree. To be fair to

them they are obliged to charge heavily for accommodation, as three-quarters of their clients are for them risky investments. If they were repaid faithfully by all who borrow from them, they could afford to do business at half the rate they do. But this not being so, A's interest has to pay off the defaulting B's loan, and they are compelled to be extortionate in self-defence. They are mostly fat men who look genial, but this is only because they wear so many pounds of other people's flesh beneath their capacious waistcoats, so however accommodating they may appear to be, believe me, they are not for a young man like you. If you find yourself in a muddle and haven't a soul to whom you can go for help, it is a thousand times better to face the muddle you are in than to get out of it by adding a worse one to it in three or six months' time as the case may be.

Young men are generally tempted to dash into the early Oeztmann Reminiscence Office—choked as it is with ormulu cabinets, atrocious old masters and vile cigars, because they owe their bookmaker money. They feel that this is a debt of honour and must be met on the Monday. So it is. But if you

are unfortunate enough to have had a bad week's racing, far better that you should go to your commission agent and tell him the truth as to the difficulty you find yourself in, than discuss frenzied finance with a maggot who is making you his cheese. Bookmakers are nearly all broad-minded men of the world, and will give you time, incidentally probably respecting you for putting your cards on the table.

If you do this, however, be sure you don't bet again with any one else until your debt is paid off, and don't think for a moment that you will be able to back horses elsewhere without it being known, for the men who lay odds are obliged to stand by each other for their mutal protection, the limits of clients' powers of repayment being well agreed among themselves. You would be surprised how much racing men know regarding the possibilities and probabilities of the bank books of the smart young men to whom they say "Sir."

The only other reason for which you may be tempted to borrow money is to buy jewellery for some dolly-faced lady, or to get the wherewithal to give her a good time. Well, if the only way you can keep her affection is to purchase it, the best thing you can do is to acquire a new face and another set of brains, and then you will save yourself from being made a fool of in this direction.

I don't want to flog the question of moneylenders unnecessarily. Only let me beg you, as far as they are concerned, to apply the resolution Frederic Lemaitre, the great actor, made when he was invited to answer his critics. He said, "Jamais, jamais, jamais!"

CHAPTER X

YOUR PERSONAL FINANCE

Banking Accounts—Cheques—Lending and Borrowing—Backing a Bill—Hurry and the Making up of the Mind—Realisation of the Value of Money—Tips and Snobbery—The Self-made Man.

THIS is a most annoying theme, for the majority of mankind are in the unenviable position of knowing that their financial year ends every day. But let us suppose that you either have been left or earn the necessary. The handling of your money is a thing you should consider very carefully, or others will do it for you, and "then," as they say in the nursery rhyme, "the poor dog will have none."

Let me advise you, however large or small your income, and from whatever source you derive it, to immediately proceed to pay it into a banking account, for any appreciable amount of money loose in your pocket may mistake the lining for a sieve. When you

become the possessor of a cheque-book, don't imagine that because you sign your name in it it is a birthday book. Every time you leave a lonely little counterfoil with frayed edges divorced from its bigger half you will be the poorer by the amount, I hope you will always be careful to write across its face for reference purposes.

There is nothing so easy as to get into the trick of writing cheques. They seem to be such an easy method of payment. Just a piece of paper and pen, and the debt is discharged. Now, the way to get over this contemptuous indifference for cheque writing is to go and draw fifty pounds from your bank, and after having looked at it well and affectionately, and considered all the nice things it represents, put it at the end of your dining-room table, then go to the other end and write a cheque for that amount in favour of your valet, and ringing the bell for him he will enter at once if he is a good servant. Give him the cheque, and tell him to cash it at the far end of the mahogany. He will pick up the notes, place the cheque in their stead, and bow himself out. By this simple process you will understand by ocular demonStration what cheque writing really means. Through signing your name on an oblong piece of paper you will have paid an amount of your own money for your own autograph. Therefore, if you are ever tempted to go in for a cheque-signing competition, visualise the departure of bank notes from your cash account beforehand, and it will make you, I hope, thoughtful. Unless you are travelling never carry a cheque-book in your pocket. A loose single cheque if you like for emergencies of your own—if you carry a quantity they are for the emergencies of others.

And except to those who mean much to you, or those you know are in real distress, never lend money. Give it, but never lend it. You will seldom get it back, and you will probably destroy a charming friendship. There is nothing the average borrower resents so much as having to repay money from which he has long since parted company. If you are sorry for an acquaintance and you can help him, give him ten pounds if he has asked for a hundred, and you will have earned ninety sovereigns. And never by any chance be trapped into backing a bill. If a man has the nerve to ask you to do this, remember

that Nature has protected him with a rhinoceros hide to accept a refusal. Unless under exceptional circumstances, a man only wants his bill backed when his credit has absolutely gone and he is informed by Mr. Charles de Vere Montagu (née Abraham Isaacs) that a loan is out of the question unless a responsible person guarantees him. You see, therefore, your position in bill-backing-you are on nothing to pay something, and the danger of a man with limited means backing a bill is that he may have it presented to him at a perhaps most inconvenient time, and will have to run about to get money for himself to avoid proceedings which would destroy his credit. So don't you ever back a bill.

Cultivate as early as you can in your life the power of saying, "No. Sorry; I can't afford it." If you want a perfect reply to the would-be borrower, and feel yourself incapable of a definite curt refusal, say, "I would like a shot, but unluckily I am not master of my own finance." Not master of your own finance sounds enigmatical, profound, and paints financial impotence in excelsis.

If you are of a placid disposition, the following little bit of advice will be un-

necessary. "Festina Lente" you recognise at once as a Latinising of our motto "Make Haste Slowly." But if you are of an excitable turn of mind, remember it, and placing a curb upon your actions, buy for yourself a respirator when discussing business. In business the ear is mightier than the tongue. I do not mean to advise a stifling of your precious quality of youthful "go," for driving power is an immense asset, but the judicial use of dynamic force is infinitely different from the exhausting of it. Aimless hurry in anything denotes a lack of mind balance, which only helps to assist a similar condition at your bank. A rapidity of decision is very often as valuable, and indeed on occasion may be more so than the traction-engine method of thought; but nevertheless in matters of moment understand that reflection costs nothing, and the banishing of it may cost much. You will find that often an apparently harmless-looking document casually read and hastily signed may become a weapon of war with strongholds in it for your adversary from which it will be hard to dislodge him. Put, therefore, sign-posts on your mental highways warning you not to exceed the speed limit, and you will not regret it. Before affixing your name to any important document have it read over to you, and listen attentively, noting well the position of the commas, for legal punctuation is dangerous; a misplaced colon on paper becomes often as painful a thing as its diseased namesake in your stomach. So let your solicitor, whose bill will be so long that you are pretty sure to christen him "Woodcock," search diligently for any concealed "if's," going even so far as to hold the parchment up to the light, for there may be one of these microbes on the watermark.

It is a very difficult thing for any one who has never stood up in the world without a sixpence to realise the value of money, for if you are generous, and to be this is to possess one of the greatest of virtues, the spending of money is a supreme pleasure, especially if you spend it on others, but learn to spend it properly. By this I mean, don't pay ridiculous prices for things that, if you have any sense, you must know are worth a quarter of the sum you are asked for them. Better to go without, than earn the guffaw of Bond Street. Don't be mean with your tips. At the same time don't give a waiter ten shillings at lunch-time

when four would do, or the fair lady you are nourishing will feel that you have stolen six from her, and the waiter will be very angry the next time when you give him less. The Golden Rule for tipping waiters is to give them ten per cent. of your bill. This and no more is expected in every capital of the world. In hotels tip the people who have really waited on you, and ignore the army of porters who stand in lines hoping that you are a palmist. If you have to give away money for nothing, give it to the starving poor at the hotel gates, not the overfed brigands in hired dress clothes whose relations dwell in some Italian mountain cave with knives in their teeth.

If you are staying in a country house, don't be afraid of the early morning valet because the fitments of your dressing-case are of plate and your tooth-powder is carbolic in a shilling tin. Perhaps you can only afford merino pyjamas; it's nothing to do with you that he expects you to wear silk. We all know how difficult it is to be a rich gentleman. Don't, because you are a gentleman, make it difficult for yourself to become a poor one. Remember that no really good sorts like you less because you are not a millionaire.

A small tip, a smile and a "Thank you," will earn you more affection from a servant than a profiteer's present of a fiver with its surly "That's for you!" as it is given. Try and realise early in life that pretending anything brings no happiness to yourself, and that it deceives no one. Be yourself, and if the other fellow doesn't like it, let him lump it—you will have lost nothing. Don't ever be silly enough to be afraid to say, "I cannot afford this or that." Every one will think a great deal better of you for it. If you try to compete with the man who has more than you have, you will get no sympathy when the crash comes.

Because Jones has a Rolls-Royce and you can only run to a Ford, be very content with your Ford; it will probably pass a much more expensive car on the hill; and if you are the owner of a cheap means of conveyance, don't begin to cudgel your brains about putting a camouflage bonnet on it—this is a vile form of snobbery.

And of all things on earth, never indulge in this pestilential and unforgivable vice. Snobbism is the special perquisite of the really unpleasant person, the man who is as much use in supporting the structure of the universe as a gas bracket is to the holding up of a girder. To be a snob, you have to be certain that you yourself are absolutely all right and that the majority of your fellows are absolutely all wrong. So you start by backing a loser either way. The would-be exclusives who tolerate a snob are as limited in their intelligence as they are, thank heaven, in their numbers. The war has ironed out of existence most of society's pests, and it will not be till the profiteer's son, who never had a grandfather, has bred his father's grandson, that we shall see a return of the snob vermin whose money will bring him the happy thought that he is permitted to call some good-for-nothing peer by his "nom de restaurant." The longer you live the more you will learn that the majority of your contemporaries are good fellows if you trouble to know them, and that, far from thinking they are to be looked down on, they all have qualities which, though perhaps obscured by shyness or other causes, it will be worth your while in most cases to try and discover, and so add to your daily happiness. All men smell alike in their coffins, and I'm sure a snob must have a very

thin time with the angels when he tries to enter heaven on his card. As there is no parasite that isn't a pimp, so there is no real man who was ever a snob, even though he has lived half his lifetime at Courts as an unpaid flunkey. I have often wondered if "Real Men" could be courtiers. I am afraid they can, for I have known many really nice ones who have had to for a living.

It is a grave and common error of youth to despise the self-made man. But he is only to be added up, dissected and annihilated verbally when he flings his fat, his finance and his H's broadcast over the assembled company. This type is the legitimate prey of the unkindly wit or the cynical surgeon, for he has unblushingly bared his arrogant bosom for the javelin thrower and the acid. Let him receive his wounds and heal them if he can with the balm his pass-book holds. But when a self-made man is gently proud of it, when unostentatiously he reminisces of his early poverty and lack of education (but, mind you, not too unostentatiously, for this is a sign of the worst kind of vanity), then he is a man to be greatly respected and taken to your heart. It is no doubt natural that you who

have the blood perhaps of ten grandfathers diluted in your veins, should instinctively buckle on your armour on meeting the self-made man. Personally, the men themselves being equal, I am all for the scented patrician rather than the washed plebeian; but always remember that as ten generations back perhaps your ancestor may have been a sheep-stealer who received a baronetcy for slaying a King's unruly vassal, so your self-made man may be the respected of descendants ten generations hence for having given margarine to an Emperor and so shortened the life of a dynasty—he is the same self-murderer, only he has adopted softer methods.

The man who makes anything is better than the man who inherits something and adds nothing to that inheritance. So unless he is—as I have before said—one of those who spreads his affluent butter on his unstreaky bacon, don't turn him down simply because he is not of the Blood Café Royal.

Don't be too hard on the man who has done wrong, and who, having been found out, has been sentenced. We all do things in our lives that we should not like brought into the light of day. Therefore try and think kindly

of the unfortunate when they are suffering for their faults. Anyhow, don't purchase a crowbar for loosening paving stones to throw at him. You may be tempted to speak ill of those who have been condemned, but don't, unless they are blackmailers or effeminate degenerates (these deserve no sort of pity). For the rest, be sorry, and thank God you are not in their shoes. I do not, of course, include among my candidates for forgiveness the merry murderers or the gentlemen who add violence to burglary. But realise that there are many who have stumbled by the way who might never have done so had their circumstances been as good as yours. It is only the small men who can't take a broad human view of mankind; so buy yourself a large landscape of life, and look out on it with kindly eyes. You will lose nothing by doing this, and you may perhaps do yourself much good.

CHAPTER XI

DRINK

Teetotalism—Dangers of Drink—Pick-me-ups—Stimulants and Drugs.

A LEARNED judge, Lord Brampton I think it was, once announced to the world that not ninety-five per cent. of all the crime which had come before him during his long years on the bench should be attributed to drink, but ninety-nine per cent. of it. He may have been pulling the Long Bow Street a little, but there can be no doubt that crime and alcohol are a couple living together in most unholy matrimony.

We are not going to discuss drink in its relation to criminology; you are only inquiring whether it is better to be a teetotaller or not. Personally, I think if I had to start life all over again, I certainly would not drink anything intoxicating till I was thirty years of age. But this is a many-sided question, and although teetotalism has rabid

adherents to its cause, neither the moderate use of wine nor the abstaining from it has ever been proved to prolong or decrease life's span. Some men need a certain amount of stimulant, others do better without it. The latter are the more fortunate in one way, for the money they could save would buy them quite a respectable annuity at the age of fifty. The former, of course, have the compensation of the "after-dinner glow" for what it is worth, but if I had to choose for you, frankly I would say, "Don't drink." The question of economy through being a teetotaller can hardly be better demonstrated than by the story of the two old Scotchmen, one of whom was the possessor of a particularly highlycoloured nose. His friend looked at him critically and said, "Jock, I've been thinking it must have cost you a great deal of money to have got your nose into this condition." "Ay it has, Sandy," replied the other; "but it's not so much the initial expense as the upkeep."

However, we will assume that you see no harm in the taking of wine. Well, then, as a man who has taken alcohol, though never to excess, and found it has done me no harm, I

would advise you in this way. Drink nothing intoxicating until you are twentyone. Never touch spirits at all, and never be persuaded to drink anything but water till the dinner hour has struck. Avoid cocktails as you would a poisoned well, and let those who want to grow old before their time indulge in liqueurs. Don't run away with the idea that alcohol is a brain stimulant; it is nothing of the kind. It is quite the reverse. It only takes the ratchet off the cog-wheels of your mentality and lets them run down. The amazing rate at which they rotate may produce, as they buzz gaily, an exhilaration for the moment which is the godfather of high spirits, some creative thought and a little epigrammatic talk; but, believe me, you will generally find that the epigram of the small hours is only an adorned platitude the morrow, the creative construction more often than not very faulty, while the high spirits are sure to present a temporarily acquired cheque at your constitutional bank drawn by yourself in favour of Mr. Headache.

Your brain is your power-house. You wouldn't put sand into the works of your hundred-guinea repeater. Why, therefore,

pickle a far more priceless possession? Old men dulled by drink are not an illuminating spectacle, though they may perhaps have the excuse of loneliness, worry, loss and disappointment at their elbow, if this is an excuse; but Youth, pray Heaven, has none of these scowling companions by their side, and there is no more sad or disgusting sight than to see a brand new mirror of life breathed upon by a corpulent wine merchant. Of course in discussing this question one is bound to fall foul of half the world if you say "Don't drink," or the other half if you say "Do." I advise you to listen to neither, but if you have to make a choice join the "Dont's." If you elect to become one of the "Do's," let your watchword be Moderation, and drink only of the best, for there are as many patent wines on the market as there are patent medicines.

And mentioning medicines brings us straight in our talk on alcohol to drugs, which are the horrible cousins-german of drink. With a fatherly finger wagging at you, listen to me when I tell you that never except under medical advice are you to touch drugs of any kind. Don't let wild horses drag

you to the chemist's cleanly counter, even for the apparently innocent sleeping draught; for though this form of obtaining rest is fairly harmless and pleasantly effective to begin with, it is a most dangerous practice to indulge in. Once its action begins to wear off, it has many friends who have lived side by side with it in the apothecary's dwelling to whom it will call for aid, and whom you may in ignorance be inclined to welcome with an outstretched hand; and this is how most serious trouble may begin. If you start Pick-me-ups or nerve-bracers of any kind you are becoming an unpaid taster in Death's wine store.

It is a great temptation to many young men in their chrysalis stage to be thought awful dogs because they wander into a fashionable dispensary and ask the tired man on the other side of the soaps and scents to give them something "to pull them together." These would-be descendants of Tom and Jerry are really only dramatising a bilious attack, and are not impressing even the poor gentleman who hands them a Pink Preparation for Perfect Idiots—price one shilling. Never do this. Let the other fellow if he is fool enough to, but not

you. All patent nerve tonics, remember, are only two trembling hands stretching a piece of elastic to its utmost. The moment they release it, it becomes as it relaxes less than it was originally. Continual stretching ultimately robs it of all its elasticity, and it is a half-dead fibre, on which at last nothing can make an impression.

Without discoursing at length on the evil of drug-taking, if I draw your attention to the fact that you are the elastic I have been talking about, you need not be a transcendent genius to add up the results of the patent stimulant habit. It is better to suffer from nerves brought on by overwork or through excesses, suffering patiently and recovering slowly, than to obtain instant temporary relief through remedies that wither the roots of the tree that is your protector. Think well on this, for when the woodman's axe is laid to the heart of the old oak, what then will become of the violet that blossomed in its shade? Open air, rest and care, overcome most nerve disturbances; artificial remedies, never. Over-fatigue and excess introduces poison to the blood and makes a man easy of access to the ailments the air is charged with. Never, I beg of you, be tempted to try the effects of a drug such as

cocaine, hyoscin, morphia, and the like, for the fun of the thing. Many a man has become addicted to the habit through playing about with these deadly things as a joke in the first instance. The effects of drug stimulants are exhilaration, making the dull witty and the degenerate a very minor poet; but if you cannot be funny without a patent or a poet without poison, better be turgidly alive than brilliantly dead, and preferably be able to repeat the classics indifferently than scribble verses which even your best friends will not bother to commit to memory. Trouble is as much part of a man's life as pleasure, and must be met fairly and squarely; to drown it in drink or drugs only adds to it, for every night has a morning, and the morning is hard enough to face at any time without the hang-over of the night before. In my lifetime I have never known a drug-taker who has not become a physical wreck; and with few exceptions their end has been the asylum or suicide. Many hold that the suicide is a coward; this I do not agree to be the case. For the man in his senses who leaves the Known for the Unknown cannot be anything but a brave man. I am sure, though, that no man takes his most precious

possession—life—unless he at the moment of his act is mentally unbalanced; sane he may have been five minutes before, sane he might have been five minutes afterwards had he lived: but at the moment of his self-destruction he must, in frenzy or in melancholy, have become absolutely unhinged, or the law of self-preservation is a non-existent theory. I mention suicide to you, as it is extraordinary how Youth, which should be brave in trouble, so often discusses this least line of resistance. Drugs or drink so weaken an intellect that Jones becomes Smith, and therefore Jones is not responsible for what Smith does. This is my point in begging you as Smith never, in pain or worry, to seek artificial relief, or you will be handing all that God has given you to an unknown Jones.

There is no trouble that you cannot face if you have one good friend to thrash it out with—nothing, not even white hair, is as black as it can be painted. Never feel, whatever fault you have committed, that you are the only sinner. The best men have had lapses and done unspeakable things. So let me beg of you, whatever slip you have made, not to imagine that the end of the world has

come. By making a clean breast of everything to one who loves you, it means that you immediately become normal and able to face the danger with an ally who will advise you and whose guidance you will accept. The greatest mistake in the world is to be afraid to confess your fault. Remember that nothing you have to disclose has not been confessed before in this ramshackle old world of ours a thousand times. If ever you are in grave danger, avert it, as you will be able to nine times out of ten, by turning to your father; his love for you will survive any shock. He can help you most because he knows you are part of him, and he knows himself. But if, unfortunately, you are without your natural protector, then seek out the most understanding and cleverest man you know, be he your solicitor, your doctor, or your clergyman; or, perhaps best of all, a real man of the world, for you will never surprise him. I hope and trust no grievous trouble will be yours, but if it is, do as I say; for secrecy is like a weed in a garden: whole crops spring up about it, and the gardeners who are ultimately called in will be sure to discover in the autumn all that you might have hidden in the spring.

CHAPTER XII

YOUR MANNERS

Importance of Manners—Their Decline—The Modern Girl—Good Form—Ostentation in Dress—Behaviour to Servants—Success—Conceit—Education and Knowledge—The Gaining of Affection—After-dinner Speeches—Behaviour Abroad—Acquiring a Charming Manner.

ANNERS, one of the most important things for your welfare and advancement in life, are, alas! in this rush-a-day world thought of so little account, that if another generation or two neglects them as thoroughly as this decade is doing, they will be dim memories only to the aged, and will be discussed by them in the same breath as the lost arts. Latin and Greek, mathematics and modern languages and the like are the necessary stock in trade of those who are condemned to penal servitude at embassies or the illuminating, stuffy atmosphere of great mercantile houses, but the man with manners can hew his way with a smile to heights that his profound classical brother will never reach.

Don't mistake me; by manners I mean no bowing and scraping, no copy-book correctness of bearing or the turning of yourself into a social receptacle for the dull oratorical blossoms of the many who are assumed to be great. These are only the antics of the dancingmaster, which he purveys to middle-class respectability at so much a lesson per head. Real manners are made up of tact, a certainty of yourself while never betraying uncertainty of another, gentleness to those less well placed than you are yourself, sympathy for those in trouble, and deference to your peers (if they have attained their position by their own labour without paying for it, or those who have worthily upheld the tradition handed down to them by the centuries). And above all, the mingling of your admiration for the charm of youth with a deep respect and consideration for your elders who have learned to grow old beautifully.

Style and proper behaviour are two keys which will unlock the doors of most men's hearts, and once inside that citadel, unless you are a dunderhead, it is for you to choose its most profitable position. Brusqueness of speech and a lack of proper attention to what is

being said to you are things to avoid, for no one will take an interest in you unless you have made them perfectly sure that you are deeply interested in them. Even if this is not the case you are not being a hypocrite, for it is wise and right that you should appear to be interested in everybody. To be frank does not mean that you are to cause pain, and because you have the power of praising it does not mean that you become a time-server. To-day modern youth troubles so little to cultivate the art of conversation or a correct carriage in company, that all we meet with is the kind of young man who affects the manners of a pugilist so as to be thought a man, or the other sort who lisps womanly thoughts to his lady friends so that his male acquaintances will not mistake him for the friend of the aforementioned pugilist. The half-way house, downright, delightfully mannered young gentleman of the early nineties seems to have completely mastered the vanishing trick.

The loose talk and free-and-easy behaviour of the ought-to-be-young-lady of to-day has done much to discourage the chivalry that existed between the sexes prior to 1914. The

youths who gave their lives so ungrudgingly in the dreadful years we have just passed through were gentlemen in the very best sense of the word, and knew how to treat women because they were women. Don't, my boy, therefore allow yourself to be trapped by ill-bred, ill-behaved supper-club society butterflies into behaving carelessly in any kind of female company.

While it would be affectation to-day to make a practice of kissing a lady's hands, it is very necessary that you should not fail to open the door on her leaving the room. If you see a woman struggling with a garden seat an introduction to her is not necessary to prove that you know how to behave. Don't, because to-day so many women smoke cigarettes in taxi-cabs, and glory in the idea that because they do this they are looked upon as good fellows, imagine that they are ladies in the real sense of the word. They are not. They are the demi-sex, neither flesh, fowl, nor real good women. They are either Brixton apeing what they think is Mayfair, or Mayfair throwing goldflakes contemptuously on their grandmother's tombstones. The short-skirted, bosom-showing, shavedarmpit monstrosities of to-day are not ladies

even in the worst sense of the word. They only invite advances to glory in rejecting them, and are not as honest as their professional sisters who behave perhaps less unblushingly for pecuniary purposes. Don't allow the present-day republican spirit abroad to shame you and envelop you in its toils. Your father dressed for dinner, and wore his silk hat on occasion. He dressed for Ascot in the manner that Ascot demanded; you do likewise. Let the vulgar who preach equality of squalor turn up their noses at you. Pay no heed to Because a temporary product looks funny in a hired dress-suit, and therefore, thank Heaven, is seldom seen in it, don't forget that it is your duty to the Constitution to uphold it by displaying white gloves, a boiled shirt and a crush hat. A glorious country like ours would soon cease to be great if tradition ceased to exist. You, who have been taught to do the right thing, are as much one of its traditions as are the full-bottomed wigs of the Chancellor or the High Court Judges. Gilded youth, when it behaves itself sensibly, is one of the bulwarks of the capital of the Greatest Empire in the world, and its garments are an unofficial uniform that adds lustre to its crown.

In discussing your clothes, if you can afford it, dress as well as you can, and by this I mean, I am sure you understand, that excellent simplicity should be your only aim. To be unlike others is the summit of bad dressing, for you will attract attention, and then not only will the clothes be condemned by those who know, but also the man inside them. It is a tailor's business to invent strange garments, but it is only the idiot who accepts them without much consideration.

There are to-day, and probably always have been, two sorts of dressers, the man who knows how to dress, and the man who thinks he knows how to. The latter is a deplorable object, who unconsciously turns himself into an all-the-year-round Christmas tree. His waistcoats are not good enough; they must have slips put into them. His keys must be hanging to an always on view gold chain; he has gold collar clips for his ties, jewelled monograms on his cigarette case, a wrist watch which is almost as objectionable as a bangle, with the name of a lady on it he has never met, braid where none is necessary, and hat-bands that should never be. In fact, from the case that holds his paper money to the too

ornate top of his walking stick he is a wretched specimen, who being uncertain of himself, endeavours to create a charm of manner by calling to his aid appendages that he thinks will conceal his ill-being. Be simple even to your handkerchiefs; to be outré is to be a real cad.

New clothes are no more to be applauded than new wine. But old clothes, well pressed, worn by a well-groomed, scrupulously cleanly young man are a delight to look upon. You can generally tell a man by his hat and his boots. Genius, of course, is brainy enough to be slovenly-but, if dirty, is seldom so without intent. Its silent motto is "Un beau desordre c'est un effet de l'art," for the majority of those who possess this doubtful gift know they would never be thought supermen unless they were careless and dusty to look upon. If you happen to be a genius, be a clean, well-dressed one, for the day of the poseur has long passed, and a mildewed billycock is not the necessary covering for a great intellect.

Endeavour, even under the greatest provocation, never to lose your temper. If you are in the right, it is unnecessary; if you are in the wrong, it is dangerous; and the writ having long since taken the place of the rapier, the result will only be an unedifying wrangle which, if carried to any great length, may serve as an introduction to a County Court. You will find, if you reflect, that your temper is the least expensive thing you can keep. Unless in self defence never, in any circumstances, be tempted to strike a man. If you are capable of knocking one down, you will regret it the moment afterwards, and remember it for years; and if you are not able to perform this ignoble feat, the other fellow may arrange to introduce you to the floor, and such a humiliation is difficult to explain away even to your admirers.

The height of bad manners is to be rude to servants. They are unable to answer you back, and if they do, they ought not to be serving you. Servants have as much right to a liver as their masters, and many a man who drops a boot-tree in the early morning or the cover of a vegetable dish during dinner, must not be an object of your invective. If he is a really clumsy fellow, don't shout at him; discharge him, and let him enter the household of a millionaire who has made his money out of machinery and likes noise. Remember

that a good servant is a real gentleman and resents familiarity as much as you would an impertinence. He takes a pride in his master—don't forfeit this, or he will see no necessity to sing your praises below stairs to the valet of some money-bag whom he himself would not demean himself by waiting on.

It is quite permissible that you take a quiet pride in any achievements you have made in your poor little life, but I'm sure it is quite unnecessary that I should warn you against conceit; this is the eighth deadly sin. If you have gained success through hard work, be thankful that you have been permitted by Him who watches over our small parish to labour continually. If success in any form comes to you without hard work be doubly thankful. But don't put on airs about it. You will, if you choose to look around, find that in the past as in the present, nearly all the biggest men have always, after being victors in any walk of life, at once proceeded to thank God and not themselves for their triumph.

I hope it is not necessary to remind you that no one is successful who is so self-sufficient as to regard himself as successful.

Only one dwelling in intellectual darkness is capable of lecturing his fellows on the methods whereby he became what he is. We have all shuddered at the vulgarity of the religious fanatic who tells us how drink dragged him down and that a spiritual essence which he is not fit to mention raised him up. The instant we hear such a story we are conscious of its insincerity. No man ruined by drink ever admits that he was so ruined, and no man leading the spiritual as opposed to the carnal life ever roared about it. The man who goes to the street corner and shouts, "I'm saved, I'm saved!" is a tedious liar. And the man who goes to the press with his "How I Did It" story is a deluded bore. I know a good many so-called successful men; and warmly do I shake my left hand with my right when I reflect upon the characteristics of the majority of them. They are dull men-particularly the politicians, and when they are not dull men they are frightened men. Yes, thoroughly frightened. They are afraid to see a new face, afraid of every new development. They dread a change in their fortunes, for so rich or so powerful are they that every change means a fall. They are

artless and joyless. Their humour and their love-making are that of the bear-pit. From every natural and healthy point of view they are not successes but dismal failures!

When you read their good advice, therefore, do not say to yourself, "These are my rules of life, and yet I can hardly describe myself as a success." Say rather, "This man's rules are my rules, and yet he has failed."

"Who are they," asks the Koran, "that have lost their labour and in life mistake their aim? They who think that what they do is right." He is a fool who calls himself a success. He is a fool in spite of the fact that he is clever. Never forget that there are many thousands of clever men in the world, and less than ten that are wise. We cannot all be wise, but on our bended knees let us pray that we may never think ourselves clever. For that way madness lies and pride and ugliness.

"Not always wealth or always force
A splendid destiny commands;
The lordly vulture gnaws the corse
That rots upon yon barren sands.

"Nor want nor weakness still conspires
To bend us to a sordid state;
The fly that with a touch expires
Sips honey from the royal plate."

The real failures of life are those without humility. The successful are those who strive, whether in comfort or poverty, and are silent. Place a hemisphere between yourself and the man who in sacred or profane matters would hold himself up as an example or a pattern. Sit next those who do not speak. Shrink from those who shout. If you shout yourself, you shout yourself down. And to do that is in no other's power.

There are two kinds of conceit, arrogance and aloofness. I'm rather inclined to think the latter is the most obnoxious of the two, for contempt has ever been worse than insult. If you stumble across the class of man who cultivates either of those dreadful companions, you will find that a few well-chosen home truths administered before others may bring arrogance back to his horses. The cure for the aloof one is to let him run on aloof, for he is a dull ass who would be better as an exhibit in spirits of wine.

Never pretend anything, and never be ashamed of a condition of ignorance. Remedy it by instant inquiry. No one will think you anything but a good fellow for confessing that you do not understand. If you are not a Greek

scholar, don't think because your host quotes voluminous lines from the classic dramas of that ancient nation, that you will be considered a profound student because you murmur Bacon and Egos. This will only pass muster in Greek Street, Soho. Unless you make a practice of inquiry, and thereby become a bore, never hesitate to ask an expert in a subject the reason of this or that if you don't know it. Very few men have more than one subject at their finger-tips, and in placing yourself momentarily at their feet, you will be complimenting them subtly and earning for yourself a niche in their museum of thought, where they will set your bust, and label it "an extremely charming young man."

However great a man's position, never allow him to speak ill of your friend. It is not necessary that you jump into the arena to protect him with a bludgeon, for the great man may have been misinformed as to facts, and you may alter his opinion by a simple explanation. If, of course, he persists in what you know to be an error, then you may make up your prescription in the strength you feel it necessary to administer it, and see that he is properly shaken before it is taken. Absent friends should be sacred things. They have left their kindnesses to you as hostages, and so their defence should be ever on your tongue. You have been taught to speak well of the dead. Try always to do the same of the living, for although the dead from their places are obliged to look up to the world, the living because they are upright should not look down upon it.

Above all, let me remind you that every time you say or permit the saying of a bitter or a spiteful thing you are asking for similar treatment for yourself. You are, of course, bound to have spiteful things said of you, but don't earn them.

While it is possible to forgive the bitter shafts flung from the tongue of the clever unsuccessful man, no one whose path has been strewn with roses has any right to be anything but more than kindly to those who are his dependants, for he should remember that they are part of his success. They have been the silent, loyal, uncomplaining stepping-stones who have often been trampled on. The master who is ungracious enough to show little consideration for those who have carried out his orders, deserves nothing that he has. To instil

fear or to cultivate a sycophant is easy, but remember they are the ones who sigh with relief when your death comes; while, on the other hand, to compel affection is to cause tears to flow which will water flowers of real remembrance. Therefore make it your business to be thoughtful of the smaller fry, to whom perhaps you owe more than you know. Remember that the golden dome depends for its security on the humble mortar of the foundations We are all too apt to forget these things, and comfortably exclaim, "Alone I did it!" Therefore beware of being your own too self-opinionated biographer. It is the privilege of youth to forget; and gratitude, if it ever exists, is the most fleeting of all human emotions. As a rule, it has its birth with the gift, and dies early to shun the memory of the favour. This is sad, but it is very true. That man is human is the only explanation of this strange phenomenon. A bad turn done one is a wellpreserved member of a household cupboard; the good one a shivering thing that sleeps upon the doorstep. Vanity is gratitude's greatest enemy. The weak who need help are the most resentful of it-having accepted it gladly. And it is strange that only to big

people is given the profound pleasure of saying often and thinking always, Thank you! to their friends. Let me beg of you to cultivate remembrance of kindnesses through your life; for the man who can apologise handsomely when he is in the wrong—and is proud to say that he is indebted to another—not only earns respect and affection, but subconsciously burnishes the metal he is made of.

If you have been obliged, for instance, to borrow money from a friend, don't, as is so common, make this a cause of resentment towards him-either because you have paid it back, or because you have not. If you have been able to repay a loan, your friend is not a criminal for taking what is his own. If you have through unfortunate circumstances been unable to keep your word, don't make it your business never to mention the matter, for in this way your friend and yourself will have lost a friend, and friends are more priceless than the jewel that the Bourbons lost. A silence on the subject will manufacture a trellis which will soon become a stone wall. No, no; be manly, and say, "I'm very sorry that I can't repay you as I had hoped, but I have not forgotten, and I will do so at the earliest opportunity."

The man you have known well enough to borrow from will know you well enough to wait without a frown if you treat him as all gentlemen should be treated. And if you owe even ten pounds and can only repay it in instalments, be sure to do this. False pride may whisper, "Don't"; but do not listen, in any circumstances, to that rank impostor. He is a will o' the wisp who has led many a real man over a morass of unrealities to a precipice that is easy to fall over but impossible to climb. Let me impress on you the virtue of Gratitude; for while the possession of it strengthens you, your lack of it will not only weaken your being, but destroy the belief in human nature that he who should justly receive it has a right to expect. This will therefore be indeed killing two natures with one unnecessary stone.

It may be that as a young man you will be called upon to make a speech after dinner, or at some public function. Let me give you a word of advice as to this. There are very few witty speech-makers, a great number of polished ones, hundreds who think they can speak, and millions who ought also to be shot. Unless you are specially gifted in this rare art, first having tried hard to escape delivery of the oration and

failed, the safest thing to do is to be brief, direct and sincere. Don't interpolate a story, or much will be expected of you, and don't try to be funny on any account. Avoid personalities except in praising, and never indulge in fulsome flattery. Protect the object of your remarks by talking to the considerable percentage of the men in the room who have come to do honour to the guest of the evening, not that they think much of him, but because their wives order the same poorly-cooked dinner all the year round. The kindly-disposed will pass anything, even the port, but it is not fair to cover the man you are toasting with garlands unless you are sure that the entire company does not grudge him a single bay leaf. If your manner is diffident, all your mistakes will be forgiven you before you make them. Therefore be modest and say that you are sure you are even less adequate than your worst friends could hope. Never forget that those who know what a man has done, seldom want to hear it again, and those who don't know are quite content to remain in blissful ignorance.

You will do little in the world unless you are quite oblivious to ridicule. This is why the rhinoceros pushes his way through

apparently insurmountable obstacles. So if you are obliged to get on to your legs to propose a toast of some kind, knowing it is a thing quite out of your line, accept the conditions, and by taking the advice of the old circus proprietor who always admonished his performers to "cut the cackle and come to the horses," you will be out of the ring almost as soon as you have entered it, having had no time to create an unpleasant memory.

Our English ardour for virtue stimulates our interest in crime, but the fashionable craze for gloating over the downfall of a fellow creature is a thing to be religiously avoided. You remember, no doubt, Bunyan's remark as his eye lighted on the hangman's cart, in which stood bound a wretched felon, taking a last journey to Tyburn tree. "There," said he, "but for the grace of God, goes John Bunyan." So let your thoughts be as charitable as his were for all those that are in trouble, and rather be considered the dullest dog at a dinner table that ever breathed than talk scandal; ninety-nine times out of a hundred it has little foundation in fact, and what good is gained by repeating it if by chance the hundredth time your information

should happen to be true? Believe me, the majority of interested listeners will only hold you in contempt as a mischievous ass who brays badly because he cannot talk well. On the other hand, whenever you are pleased and can possibly do so, give praise. It is the sign of the greatest weakness not to be able to do this, even to your rival. Remember that to praise is not to become a toady, unless you become fulsome. Give sound reasons for your delight, and then your remarks, however enthusiastic, will be robbed of any suspicion of flattery, for flattery is a most insulting performance to indulge in. Always be appreciative of men and things when you can. Never forget that every fool in the world is destructive, and that the simplest constructive ability is only granted to the minority. Be sorry and sympathetic to the failures. Laugh heartily at your own troubles, but never, never, never at any one else's, even though they be men who have spoken ill of you. By being kindly in thought and deed, you will gain great happiness, and by endeavouring to gain respect you will be nearly sure to earn love.

When you are abroad, remember that you will not be judged by the foreigner as an indi-

vidual but as a nation. It is therefore your duty to be more than careful in your behaviour among strangers. Insular prejudices may be things for bedroom thought, but the customs of a country are to be respected in public. Consider that generations of Sicilian fishermen have agreed that their methods of wooing the sardine on finger threads is the correct one, and it is not for you to make a laughing-stock of your countrymen by telling them to use pike rods. In Rome do not do as the tourists do. You may not like macaroni, but the Italians have every right to. Don't push away the light clarets of the Latin and tell them they are fools not to drink beer. The sleigh is as necessary in Russia as the four-wheeler in Kensington. But don't advertise the fourwheeler in Odessa, however much you admire that home of microbes. There is more harm done to a nation by its countrymen who travel with round trip tickets than can be undone by a treaty.

It is quite a mistake to suppose that because you may be shy and do not possess an easy, charming manner, that it is impossible to acquire it. My advice to you would be to select as a model some one who possesses these invaluable qualities and who has impressed himself upon you because of them. You will observe that he is one who is popular and thought much of. Ask yourself the reason why he is an outstanding figure among his fellows, and try to analyse the qualities that go to make up his attractive personality if you can. When you have thought carefully, try and assimilate all that is best in him. It is not necessary because you take a model that you should be an imitator in the sense that you become a monkey, and don't think that you are losing anything in self-respect in that you can appreciate excellence in another and wish to graft his good qualities on to your growing tree. After all, half of life for every one is an unconscious imitation of some one else. You are only doing better, then, by giving yourself a conscious model from whom you may acquire all that you most need. Cultivate, if you would be successful, respect for your elders, a kindness to your equals, and tolerance for your inferiors.

And never forget that the keenest critics of manners are servants. They can pick out with unerring accuracy a gentleman in rags from among a dozen who are not, and who are only depending on their fancy waistcoats.

Always be punctual, and not only never miss an appointment but always be five minutes ahead of time. More men have lost splendid opportunities through keeping a patron waiting than you can imagine. And again, if you get a reputation for unpunctuality you will at last always be kept waiting yourself, which is not only one of the most aggravating things in the world, but often extremely expensive. Don't accept engagements which at the time you know you are not going to keep. This is a common weakness of supposed politeness, but it is better to say at once that you are sorry you are engaged on the following day than to write later and make some flimsy excuse which will be as little believed in by your would-be host as it is by yourself. It is strange, but very true, that a reputation for unreliability, if only in small things, loses a man many friends and makes him none.

CHAPTER XIII

BOOKS AND RECREATIONS

Hints on the Choosing of Books—Immoral Literature—Dickens and Thackeray — Holmes' Autocrat — Pepys — Boswell's Johnson — David Copperfield—Shakespeare—Letter-Writing—Diaries—Biographies—The Theatres and Amateurs.

YOUR Reading. It is difficult to advise any young man in the choosing of books for his leisure hours. Many men will agree on certain works, few on a round dozen. All I can say to you is, that as you will not hum musical trash continually, so never make a habit of reading literary rubbish, except to be certain it will add to the merriment of a well-filled grate. Never read an unmoral book of any kind; its effects will be devastating though not at first apparent. Except immoral classics which are labelled art, the majority of such concoctions are written in a third-floor back by some hungry pot-boiler who is incapable of anything better, and so elects to fill his stomach by writing thinly-veiled filth.

Such a man should be obscene but not heard. If you are ever tempted to dip into "A Demi-Mondaine and her Lovers," you may be pretty sure that you are inhaling the thoughts of some poor wretch with dirty nails and a foul breath who has never had enough attraction to practise what he is trying to preach. This knowledge in itself is a good and sufficient reason for not degrading yourself by becoming the companion of his pecuniary thoughts. I have never known a likeable man who has made a practice of reading even the immoral French classics. True, there may be the excuse that the style of the master is to be admired, but why not choose his other works? And I have yet to meet any one who makes a hobby of digging in the literary dustheap for sensations, who is anything but a contemptible mental degenerate, without a healthy thought in his make-up.

He, indeed, is only a dirty picture come to life. And in mentioning this class of cheap photogravure, neither buy nor allow any one to show you such a thing. It is not only that lewd pictures in themselves are anything but lamentable, poor and filthy, but it is the degrading effect that they will have upon you

yourself. They are only manufactured for the weak-minded who visit large cities. Also remember that when you are looking at the portraits of naked ladies in immoral positions, you are insulting the sex to which your mother and sisters belong.

Your tendency perhaps will be to read what you fancy, but by that means your equipment will never improve, and you will probably be as ignorant at eighty as you are at eighteen. If you are not to read the amusing impossibilities of the present-day novel, you will inquire as to the advisability of devouring the output of the mid-Victorian giants. Well, many Dickens lovers are cold about Thackeray, and vice versa. The lover of a Conan Doyle perhaps has no use for a Hardy or a Meredith, and so on and so on. Therefore it is impossible to say, "You ought to read this," or "You must read that." Perhaps you are not a great reader. I should be sorry to think this to be the case, for half the pleasure of life will be lost to you; but if this is a fact, and you limit yourself to a few books that you sometimes glance at before you sleep, I know if I had the choice of three books only, I would unhesitatingly plump for Holmes'

Autocrat, Poet, and Professor at the Breakfast Table.

There is no single page in any of this great man's masterpieces from which you will not gain profound and delightful knowledge, or from which you will not have opened to you a more gentle outlook on life and your fellows. Throughout their pages runs a little silver stream of kindly sympathy for the weakness of those we rub shoulders with each day, and ever and anon you will hear the beating of a great heart expressing in perfect prose many thoughts of your own which you have never been able to express. Read these works; and though you are a good fellow, you will be better in making their acquaintance and acquire a tolerance and a peace of mind which in these days of struggle for life are a very necessary buffer state.

But the days of Caxton's first press are of the ages, and there are no books printed that it is not possible for you to obtain to-day should you desire to do so. This being the case and the number being unlimited, I should require a folio to write down those I could recommend to you, with the certainty that they would give you pleasure and instruction. I do not propose, therefore, to attempt to do this, but instead I will suggest three wonderful works only, for your perusal and enlightenment, the diary of the immortal Pepys, Boswell's Johnson, and the volumes of Charles Dickens. In Pepys you will have the wordpainting of a period, a vision of London, its people and its personalities, set down by a chronicler who troubled not even to spare himself, for he worked with no critical shadow of posterity at his elbow. He wrote of his times as he thought of them, truthfully, day by day. Kings and cabbages were the same to him, and no Hogarth with a brush can transport us half so easily as the good Samuel does with his pen, to the sunlight and nighttime of the days of Charles, made up as they were of almost uncivilised indulgence and the unbridled taking of all the pleasures of that monarch's world which were at the disposal of the ignobly noble. In the pages of his diary many of the prosaic facts of nearly three hundred years ago have to-day become broadly comic by reason of the chronicler never hesitating to use spade-like description with a frankness that made friends of the first good old Anglo-Saxon noun or verb he

fancied. He does not hesitate to describe his midnight excursions across the water to houses which as a good husband should have known him not. Nor does he hesitate to relate how he returned to his wife's house "foxed again," as he labels his inebriety. In the morning he speaks of the penalty he paid for excess, quite tersely. "So I to my vomit" is all that he remarks. His social diagnosis in broad charcoal, builds surroundings in which you can place the figures history has introduced you to. Revel in Pepys, for he breathes life into his day, wine into his night, and above all, period into his contemporaries. And when you elect to allow Boswell to take you by the hand, do not set out on your journey with him having misgivings that you are in for a dull time. The wit and wisdom of Johnson will flash into your eyes polished by a stylist who spent many an hour, I suspect, in picking up the plums that fell from the sage's table and placing them dexterously into a most edible cake. The great doctor was a being who had the right to compel wonderful word-painting from any one capable of so doing, and he received the handsome treatment he deserved from this obsessed and gifted worshipper. I

would beg you to read the *Life*, and you will become happily entertained and profoundly knowledgeable if you digest it properly.

Some unfortunates there are who are not Dickens lovers. I am not for a moment saying to you, "Be a Dickensian, or you are damned"; but what I do say is this, "Give this great man a trial," even though he be of the mid-Victorian era and you of our present King. Read David Copperfield and the Pickwick Papers as a start, and if I am not mistaken you will soon be begging for an introduction to the Crummles, shedding a tear with poor Joe, frightened by Sikes, fearful of Fagin, laughing with the Dodger, and accompanying little Nell and her grandfather, and making friends with dozens of others who are the immaculate conceptions of a genius who left them to the world for all time. If, however, you read Copperfield and Pickwick, and your mentality is not such that it can ring the curtain up on life and character as the master drew them, with such humour and pathos and devastating accuracy, well, pass on to humble things, but promise me you will give these two books a fair chance of revealing to you a cavern stacked to its roof with treasure.

You may wonder that I have not shouted Shakespeare at you. I have purposely not done so, as I fear, perhaps, you have memories of him as a school task, and therefore, not having had the best of introductions to the bard, you class him in your mind with Ovid and other gentlemen who were first cousins to a good crib. If this should be so, my advice to you is to see the plays of Shakespeare acted. They will probably not be very well acted to-day, for our great actors have either died or retired, and the war has left us, with few exceptions, a rising generation of players with the technique of tom-tits and a belief that they are perfectly equipped to play anything, simply because they are photographed once a week, play indifferent golf during the day, and jazz perfectly each evening at a supper-club if their work hasn't cut too much into their evening.

Still, the scenes, costumes and arrangements of the stage business will be a tremendous help to you when you return home and begin to pore over the beauty of the language and the endless philosophy contained in Shakespeare's verse. And might I advise you, in reading the immortal William, not to search for obscure meanings in the words he so wonderfully set down?

Ninety-nine times out of a hundred he meant exactly what he said, and it is generally only rival actors who have imported new meanings into the obvious, for the purpose of promoting controversy and excusing their faulty conceptions. As an example I give you this. Shakespeare makes Hamlet say:

"I know a hawk from a herneshaw."

A very straightforward observation, is it not, differentiating as it does between two definite species, but there are some who vow the poet meant:

"I know a hawk from a herne-pshaw."

I quote this to show you how much is strained after by the highbrow artist, who being generally a mediocre performer seeks refuge in argument, knowing full well that the only real referee has long since retired to his grave, where doubtless he sought escape from the million desperate delineators of his works.

By reading the classics don't think you are wasting your time, for it is through them that you will be gaining one of the most precious of your possessions—culture. Study at school

is merely preparation, a form of mental gymnastics which will enable you to receive later the things that really matter. A rule of three is what loam is to poor soil, an enriching of the land for the seed you will sow with culture and the love of beauty, these being the most important of mindflowers, you must cultivate if you are going to do anything or be anybody. It is possible, should I suggest to you that it would be well if you sometimes read poetry, that you, being a young man about town, will rub your eyes and say, "Has the gentleman lost his senses?" If I were asking you to lunch and dine off rhyming verse, then the answer would be in the affirmative. But I am not doing this; I am only pointing out that you will gain much charming thought by appreciation of real beauty and by becoming acquainted with the wonderful things that have been imprisoned in the minds of great men, and which have only been able to gain their freedom in poetry. I have no hesitation in asking you at least to consider my suggestion. I don't say, "Commit Milton's Paradise Lost to memory," but I do say, if you are without any particular literary leaning, try yourself out with great small works, and

in doing this you may gain so much pleasure from them that you may be led on to love all that goes to make up the gems of our language.

For instance, read Rupert Brooke. He was a youth of your own age; he was not the long-haired, dreamy effeminate poet of your imagination, to be relegated to an ignominious oblivion because he thought in verse. He fought, remember, and died for your country. Therefore I pick him for you to listen to first of all. Where will you find patriotism and love of homeland more simply and exquisitely expressed than in those immortal lines:

"If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England."

Is there anything unmanly or to be ashamed of in that you learn beauty through the soul of such a one? And there are many others also who have struck their lyres to varied melodies which will delight you beyond expression and demand a profound admiration, which in giving you will subconsciously uplift yourself.

By the way, if you haven't read the Bible, do so, for apart from its religious qualities it is the most interesting book ever written; and because it is not continually asked for at the circulating library to which you belong, must only be put down to the fact that no modern author's name is on its fly-leaf. Another most instructive and little-thumbed volume is an ordinary English Dictionary. There is no page of it you turn on which you will not discover a fund of information, for you will be surprised to know how many different meanings words possess which you have only imagined had a single one. Believe me, the Dictionary is anything but dull.

Don't get into the trick of reading in bed. It is one you will find very difficult to break yourself of. It is not conducive to sleep that your mind should be working up to the last moment of consciousness. Many people find reading a help to sleep, but this is because they have made a habit of it. My advice to you is sink to slumber with the pleasant reflections of the day as a last thought. If the events of your waking hours have not been pleasant, whisper to yourself that they never occurred; and if they have to become a worry, let them be so the next morning when you are not fatigued. At night they become monsters which have never existed.

If you are really brainy and usual literature is

the weekly illustrated papers, may I beg of you not to retail the jokes beneath the pictures? You will be robbing the proprietor of the particular periodical whose living depends on it, and at the same time spoiling the pleasure of your intellectual friend who seeks literary solace from the same fountain that you drink from. Again, he may have seen the story himself, and if he is kindly, you compel him to say that he hasn't, and so put him to severe boredom for two precious minutes. If you read anything that is worth reading, read it so that you understand not only the truth it tells, but also in a manner which will give you time to appreciate its composition and its style, for in the absorbing of these rare merits you will be improving your own, even if it is only used by you for letter-writing purposes.

And please never write long letters, unless you are obliged to at the request of the receiver. The weather may always be dismissed in three words, unless you are writing to a sportsman who is to join you in a shooting or fishing excursion. Stories in letters are maddening affairs, and except to children, a detailed account of the day's doings is of no interest to any one except yourself. The embroidery

of reasons for a request or of grateful thanks, more often than not defeat the main object. The early Victorian apostle of epistles must never be emulated by you. Remember that to-day brevity is the body and soul of letterwriting.

Of love letters, no one man can advise another. Every lover makes a fool of himself on paper. All I hope and trust is that when you address the lady of your choice in black and white, you will leave out ridiculous pet names and syrup-like adjectives, for if they are ever read in open court, the world will laugh so loudly that you will be compelled to cut out the fixtures you are in the habit of attending, or buy a disguise.

If you keep a diary, which, unless it is for important reference, or for the chronicling of great events, is a ridiculous proceeding, be sure to omit from its pages all matters concerning the private business of other people. Many men who have little else to do, amuse themselves by jotting down commonplaces in an expensively-designed volume. It is a harmless form of vanity, this making of a life in half calf, but if you elect to waste your time, let it refer only to your own doings. Many a disaster

has come about through the injudicious writings of an idiot; and as for your own intimate thoughts, why commit them to writing? The delightful ones ought always to be with you, the unpleasant ones should be forgotten and never chronicled. There is, however, one virtue about the keeping of a diary—it is a good mental exercise and a habit which may probably breed in you a literary taste, which is a thing greatly to be encouraged in every one. It also permits you to state the opinion on paper you were perhaps unable, either through shyness or a poor power of expression, to give tongue to in company. Therefore I must partially withdraw the words "ridiculous proceeding," as by writing you may gain the confidence you need of putting thoughts into words

If you are interested in the biographies of famous men and women, be sure, if there is not a picture of them on the frontispiece, to make it your business to find one. To read the life of a man and to visualise him as a giant, and then to discover him to be a dwarf, is a disillusioning affair.

Talking of visualising, it is absolutely necessary, if you are studying geographical situations,

the disposition of troops on some historic field, or the planning of a motor tour, that your work should be helped by your having the best maps obtainable in front of you. Your labour will be lightened by half, and an odd river or two, combined with a range of mountains, will prepare you for difficulties and explain the reasons why historic mistakes were made, and the trials many a great man had to undergo.

Among your recreations, the theatre, I hope, will hold a high place. Of it I will say little, for, as it is my profession, it is a very serious subject to me, and I should bore you with technicalities by saying too much. While it is not incumbent on you to go to the theatre for anything but relaxation, in discussing the theatre as one of your pleasures, never forget that you can learn much by being interested in the very difficult art of acting.

Never be trapped into the belief that any distinguished amateur knows anything about it. The best of professionals are, as Henry Irving said, but children in their art, and the mere buying of wigs, wearing of costumes and the learning of lines, have as much to do with real acting as a donkey race has to do with the Derby. But the Cinderella of the arts leaving

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no trace behind her but memory, when the clock has struck twelve, even of the mighty ones who have thrilled vast audiences, it is a profession that every Tom, Dick and Harry imagines he is justified in having a shot at, the reason being that the crimes they commit leave no evidence of their guilt. If they dared to paint pictures their atrocities would live to condemn them. If they attempted to write a fugue, their discords would howl into the wilderness, and so they are afraid of these two beautiful things, which they consider more difficult (though they by no means are), and bravely and unblushingly exploit themselves in the temple of Thespis, before friends who, even if they understood, could not explain to them how bad they were. However, if it amuses you, my boy, be an amateur actor by all means, but please remember that you are only an amateur and not an actor. Forgive me if I hurt your young histrionic mind, and ask you to look upon your amusement as one which may give you a certain ease in everyday life, a little grace of gesture, and perhaps the power of leaving a room full of people without appearing awkward, even if you know they are going to tear your character to pieces directly you have closed the door. Acting is a great and difficult art, and you will only be making a jackass of yourself if you imagine that because you have money enough to buy a stall it gives you the right to dissect it. You are entitled to say you like or dislike a performance, of course, but if you endeavour to say "why" you are technically displeased to an expert, you will die the death you deserve.

Be chary, too, of making destructive criticisms at a theatre, unless, having paid your money, you feel that the play is so atrocious that coin of the realm has been obtained from you under false pretences. You, of course, may have your own ideas of Hamlet, but incidentally a great actor may also have his. Say that you do not agree with him, but not necessarily that he is wretchedly bad. Except for meeting friends and the excitement of a première, be sure that you never see a play at its best on a first night. The audience are on the watch, the critics are on the prowl, and the actors are on the rack. Poor fellows, they are painting their pictures with a crowd flattening its nose against their canvas ready to shout at the slightest error.

I doubt if even Rembrandt would have appre-

ciated one spectator nudging his elbow as he worked. How, then, can the actor be expected to give of his best, groping his way as he has to, on a first night, paralysed with fright, through a forest of friendly assassins, who are hoping for the worst and fearing for the best. Personally, I think the best time to see a play is when it has run a fortnight. In a dozen performances the actor has learned much from his audiences, and having had time to weigh the opinions of the critics, has been able to adopt many valuable suggestions, and so benefited himself and the production. But here I must stop, or I shall hear the voices of Hazlitt and Lamb moaning from their tombs.

Of your simple recreations, there is only one bit of advice I would give you. While enjoying them all, let none of them become an obsession. For instance, if you take up chess, don't eat chess, drink chess and live chess. Make it an amusement and not your master, or you will develop a chess brain, which will seek chess reasons to be applied to all the ordinary things of life, and though they may be mathematically correct and applicable in theory, will generally be found to be hopeless in practice, and lead you up a multitude of culs-de-sac.

CHAPTER XIV

MARRIAGE

Love and Passion—Wisdom in the Choosing of a Wife—Behaviour in the Home—Care of the Wife, especially during Pregnancy—The Fallacy of the Wild Oats Theory—Faithfulness and Temptation—The Tame Cat—Protecting the Home—Your Daughter—What your Son should know on leaving for School.

WE have now arrived at a point in our discussions when we find ourselves seated open-eyed and wondering at a social roulette table—Love or Passion are our chips—and the colour, the dozen and many another combination are before us to fling them on. Advise you about marriage? Well, frankly, I am quite at a loss. It is impossible for me to guide you. I can only think with you in a circle, for matrimony is as complex a thing as life itself. It is the ending of a present state and the beginning of an existence which leads no man knows whither.

Fate, the croupier, throws the ivory ball, which is yourself, on to the spinning-wheel,

and the chances of finding a winner are thirtysix to one against you. There is no system in love to be followed with surety, for affection, like mathematics, kills all systems, and levels undefeatable certainties to an odds-on chance.

All I can say to you definitely of marriage is: be sure in playing this most dangerous of all games that Love is the only counter you have a chance with, and that Passion is a certain losing stake. To choose your lifelong partner simply for her face or her body is not only the act of a madman but an unholy thing to do; madness, because there is no passion that does not burn itself out in, compared to life, a very short period. Unholy, because if marriage is to be a question of sex, all that is most wonderful in it, the great and abiding friendship between two people which is the most beautiful thing in the world, is not the first and only thing that the house of marriage should be built on. Unless you were drunk or a born gambler (which Heaven forbid!) you would hesitate to throw your all on the hazard of the die. And yet how many are there who have thrown the hazard of their lives on the attraction of a pretty ankle, a naked shoulder, or eyes of innocence that looked sensuous things. If you can stand apart, detaching yourself from yourself, and in doing so become a critic of yourself, saying, "Would the beautiful face that attracts me to-day be as dear if it were pock-marked? Would the eyes that fascinate be as adorable if they were blind?" Then you are thinking rightly, for you are considering marriage as it should be—a sacrament.

I would like you to get out of your head, if it should happen to be in it, the popular fallacy that you are obliged to sow your wild oats before settling down, as the taking of a wife is so often termed. This wild oats theory is utter bosh. Pre-nuptial immorality is no more expected of you than any other form of vice. Many and many a first-class jolly young man goes to the marriage bed as clean as when he was first put into his cradle. And the fact that you have not had affairs with women, far from making you an object of derision, earns you great respect even from the profligate. And think what happiness it must be to a wife to feel that no one has ever before possessed the man she loves. Please cut out the wild oats idea as any obligation on your part.

In choosing your companion for life it is, if

possible, essential that you search for her among those who are of your own station. To marry beneath you is to add the fire-irons and coal-scuttle to the already top weight of a Grand National crack. Oil and vinegar do assimilate, of course, but many condiments are necessary, and a deal of mixing is required to bring about this difficult result. If you are sure that it is worth while taking extra chances no power on earth is going to stop you, but if you are not carried off your feet and swept away in the flooding of love's dam, it is wise to angle in waters where clean fish are resting.

Above all things, don't go rushing into the marriage ring, for it is a championship contest, and often a fight to a finish. It may happen that your parents will be bitterly opposed to your choice. Don't, because you are met with opposition, become obstinate—a very natural jealousy is often the reason of your mother not at once taking your would-be bride to her heart. In your father's case it is anxiety for your future. Try, before you get at logger-heads with your parents, to step inside their very loving hearts. You must not imagine that because you are looking at a pretty

brilliant through love's magnifying glass that it is really the Koh-i-noor. It is your bounden duty to discuss openly and frankly your intentions with the old people. They have a life's experience, and understand many things that have not yet presented themselves on your very limited horizon. They may see in the girl you desire a hopeless housewife-their eyes may fathom her lack of brain which your love makes you certain she possesses and is your loved one's greatest asset, and a thousand other things, which, although you may not agree with, it is wise to discuss with them. For if a wife is not a helpmeet and able to share your troubles, then there will be disaster when the battle comes.

We all know that no woman is good enough for a mother's boy. The parent is handing part of herself into the care of another female, and is naturally greatly prejudiced. Make allowances for this, and listen affectionately to all that is said to you. You will have your own case to state afterwards, and if it is a good one be sure you will win over the home jury to your way of thinking, however ably the case for the prosecution has been opened. Do not behave like a wayward and unbroken colt.

Answer to the rubber bit before fitting yourself with a steel one.

A girl's mother is always a fairly good weathercock to go by, for few good mothers rear bad wives. Most good daughters are in their turn splendid mothers. Be sceptical of the young lady who looks upon children as a bore. Be certain that the one who is susceptible to flattery is the individual who will lead you into a danse macabre; and the cigarette-smoking, card-playing cocktailer, who can give you the weights of an autumn handicap before you know them yourself, is not of the feminine variety it is wise to have about your house for life.

There is no reason that short engagements should not be the prelude of long and happy marriages. There is little object in sitting among the heathens any longer than you can help, once you have made up your mind about your divinity. But be advised, take plenty of time making up your mind. In thinking of marriage, above all, let it be a love match—if possible, tempered with reason. And don't, because your father is your father, think him an old fool who doesn't understand. He does, you know; he's done it.

Adding up the question of matrimony back-

wards and forwards, I can seen no reason why a man should not marry young. A good wife will keep him out of lots of trouble; and if he is destined to purchase a disappointment he can quite as easily perform this simple feat at thirty-three as at twenty-three.

There is one very important factor about a wedding which you must never forget, and that is, that it is not an episode. It is an alltime-till-death-us-do-part contract. Therefore if during your engagement you suddenly realise that you have made a mistake, and that you have discovered the impossibility of living happily with the lady you have asked to be your wife, for Heaven's sake make no bones about it, but tell her so, whatever it costs you either in heartache or money. Be a man. True, it will be extremely difficult, but better to break off the marriage, even at the portal of the church itself, than have it broken off for you at a law court door later on. To be uncertain of your choice will only mean a living death for both parties-two ruined lives and friends and families taking opposite sides. Be under no misapprehension about the terrible sort of play you are writing if you sign the first act of the marriage comedy in

the vestry—well knowing that you are constructing the other two acts as tragedy in your newly furnished home.

There is no such thing as being a brave coward in matrimony. If you wish to win a matrimonial V.C., which stands for Very Careful, be courageous before the fatal step is taken. To be a coward is to say nothing, inflict untold suffering on yourself and the woman, and if you have children, on them, for they will only have a father or a mother, and not what is their birthright, a father and a mother.

If, of course, you have the misfortune to make a really unhappy union, far better to end a position that has become impossible than to live a life made doubly unhappy by deceit. We are only on this earth, as far as we know, once, and it is your duty to every one as well as to yourself to make your stay as pleasant as possible. There are quite enough people about, you will find, who will take a great delight in making it the reverse if they are able to.

Before leaving this great subject, which it is only possible to skim lightly over in a book of this kind, I want you to be under no misapprehension as to the meaning of "give and take" when you find yourself in double harness. With old, happily married people it becomes a charming and almost unconscious habit. But the early years of marriage being the dangerous years, it is more than necessary that a young husband should school himself to give more than he receives. Don't think it is being unmanly to be unselfish to so delicately a constructed mechanism as a woman's temperament—often, perhaps, the object of your deep affection will become a little difficult and a trifle exacting-it will be your duty to remember that there are periods in a woman's life when she is ill and in pain and therefore not really normal. If a young husband keeps this in his mind, the retort discourteous will remain in his thoughts, and the girl, subconsciously knowing this, will love him the more, and so another trellis will be erected to strengthen the arbour on which roses are to grow. Remember that an angry reply has everthrown dynasties, but while words, as the cynic has told us, were given us to conceal our thoughts, between lovers silence is often given them to show their devotion.

You must realise very thoroughly that

marriage for a young girl is a great upheaval in every possible way. The financial responsibilities may be yours, but think what it means to her, apart from the physical shock and the wonderment as to the attendant possibilities. She has a household on her shoulders for the first time, with tradesmen, servants, and those domestic ends in her hands which are often so difficult to make meet. No longer is she the member of her mother's home, which has run like clockwork, and the worries of which she has probably known little. She has anxieties besetting her at every turn that you will probably be quite unconscious of; forgetful fishmongers, absentminded butchers, cooks who alter menus to suit their own convenience, and a thousand other things, so that often the smiling face at the head of your table has had a temporary frown on its youthful brow half an hour before. Don't imagine that your house is a stage abode in which a fairy godmother turns mutton into lamb and stale bread into Vienna rolls. It is your little wife who has to control the domestic demons, so don't forget to praise her for all she does. Housekeeping is very hard work, a thing which many men are apt to forget, but it becomes doubly difficult for a woman if it is all taken for granted without affectionate comment. And don't get into the trick of grumbling, for this is a nerve-racking entertainment which will break up any home. Never try to discover how many things have gone wrong; always be thankful for the one thing that has gone right. Don't, every hour of every day, glue yourself to your better half's side. However much a woman loves a man, she appreciates his absence at times. By this don't think I am encouraging you to make your club a wifeless home, as so many men do. After all, the whole of my little bits of advice to you about your new life may be summed up in two words, "Be thoughtful," and if you do this, you will be repaid with happiness at a usurer's interest.

Many a young husband at the most critical of all times, when he is expecting to become a father, is apt, through pure thoughtlessness and ignorance, not to show the enormous amount of consideration due to a woman who is about to perform the most sacred of all functions. He himself being strong and full of life, is liable to be fretful of the invalid at

his side, who for months has been unable to share his ordinary pleasures. If for a moment he thought of the physical pain and discomfort his wife had suffered, was suffering, and was still to suffer, his tenderness would know no bounds, and even then he would not be repaying her sufficiently. But youth is very often thoughtless, and women remember at such a time, not only the smallest kindness, but the most unintentional slight.

It is man's duty to stand by them, and be ever at their side with a handclasp and a smile. For in the months that they are carrying their precious burden, they become frail barks putting out into a rough sea; and often, unknown to you, in the dark hours of the night, they lie open-eyed and wondering if the life they are to hand into your keeping is to cost them their own. Encourage them to tell you all their hopes and fears; think with them, laugh with them and suffer with them on their perilous journey—for a lifetime of regret will avail you nothing if a disaster occurs, while a lifetime of love doubled and trebled will be your reward from the angel who places her first-born in your arms, if she knows you too have suffered.

That the erring husband, has from time immemorial been a figure of fun for the multitude to guffaw at in theatres devoted to broad farce, has always been to me a matter of wonderment. The class of mentality that enjoys this is on a par with the hooligan who would shy stones at some priceless work of art. To laugh at any man's distress in being found out in an infidelity can't be funny, for if he is discovered it must be a tragedy to the woman who loves him. But human nature, I suppose, being cruel, likes to take its pleasures from the pain it can witness in security.

I have mentioned this question of the erring husband, because I want you not to treat the marriage vows lightly. The word "vow" means a pledge—of a tremendous and sacred kind, which once taken should be unbreakable so long as breath is in the body; but many a husband, not troubling to give words their proper value, throws the really serious and the totally unimportant ones into the same melting pot and purposely misquotes the old proverb and says, "To forgive is human—to err, divine." This is all wrong! If you love your wife deeply, as I hope you will, be very sure she is worth ten thousand times more

than the women who, for sport or money, but seldom for love, knowingly make hay in other people's homesteads.

Temptation will come to you, but you must take a grip on yourself, and remember that a moment of amusement may result in a lifetime of misery. If you slip—and it is possible that you will, for the best of men are only men after all-repent in earnest and strengthen yourself for future resistance. This will be necessary, for caps are set and handkerchiefs are thrown continually to a would-be loyal husband. You must also realise that apart from the love you give your home, that you owe it and its inmates protection. I don't mean this in the ordinary physical sense, I mean protection from the outside world. Never forget that the pretty young lady with whom you have fallen in love will be certain to attract both men and women, who, if they are not the right sort, may be the means, if you do not protect her from them, of upsetting your happiness very seriously. There is no harm in the men you know well, and who are fond of you, being as devoted to your missus as they are to you, but there are the others who are delightfully dishonourable, and who will very subtly and with no other thought but conquest, not hesitate if your back is turned to cast a net in the hope of catching her. My advice to you is, don't turn your back unless you are sure of your man. It is not enough that you are perfectly sure of your wife. She is probably an angel, but you have no idea how easy it is for some good-looking gentleman who is continually about the house to become necessary as a Fetch and Carrier, and how difficult it will be to dislodge him if his presence begins to worry you. You will not insult your wife by saying that he is too attentive, and you will not have any definite fact to go on if you wish to give him his congé. This class of man is extremely clever, and knowing that you are at a loss how to act, will become a fixture. I agree with you that it will be more than certain your wife would be the first to resist any serious advance from such a quarter. But, my boy, never let things drift towards such a situation, and let me advise you never to make a confidant of the apparently tame cat. If you have made some unfortunate moral slip, do not in a burst of after-dinner confidence tell him all about it,

or you will be entirely in his power. You will be between the devil and your deep friend, and when a row comes with him, as it is sure to, you will be fearful of being downright and outspoken, as is your right, in case he should turn round and give you away to the thing you love most on earth, your wife. Bear this well in mind—don't slip, but if you do, don't whisper it to any one, even to your other self. For walls have ears and doors have keyholes, in these post-Victorian days. Trust no one with the ignoble secrets of your life, unless it be one who has been tried through the fire of an abiding friendship.

I don't want you to become a cynic, but do you know the story of the Hebrew who was instructing his four-year-old son in the ways of the world? He placed the boy on a table and told him to jump off it. The little boy was afraid to do so, and became immovable. The father kept on urging his offspring to jump, but all the boy did was to cry and refuse. "Don't be frightened, Ikey," said the fond parent; "jump, your father's watching over you; jump, you're all right, Ikey; your father is at your side—jump!" And at last the little boy did and smashed his face on

the dining-room fender. He howled with pain but got no sympathy; all he heard through his bellowing was his father saying, "There, Ikey, that will teach you to trust in nobody."

Things in this Christian world of ours, I hope, are not as bad as all that, but though the Hebrew was a cynic from experience, this episode gives some food for thought. So protect your wife from the all and sundry who blow in to admire what you possess, and never forget this—that if you make absence a habit, you may wake up some morning to find that while the cat has been away the mice have merrily played.

And not only from the male rover is it your duty to protect your wife. There are many strange types of women abroad to-day who may desire her, and who are just as great pests to society as the male degenerates who consort only with their fellows. That your wife would indignantly dismiss them I have no doubt, for, thank God, the world is peopled by a great majority of clean-minded, lovely women, but knowing that these wretches have multiplied immoderately of late, all I can say to you is that the moment you are aware that

there is one of them who is trying to become a persona grata in your home—and they are as easy of recognition as blight on a rose-show her the door and bang it with no uncertainty, for these kind are more dangerous than all the men who attack your household put together. The male, however subtle, will be to your observant eyes obvious in his objective, and you will be able to challenge his behaviour with no degree of uncertainty, but a woman who seeks your wife is difficult to demand an explanation from, as her caresses may have as an excuse "sympathetic femininity," and you may hesitate to label her a Lesbian. But if you are uneasy, better to be brutal and make a mistake than have the innocent to whom you are devoted subjected to the advances of a wretch of this kind, who, if she succeeds, will wreck your home more thoroughly than you can imagine. Therefore in your early married life watch the women who approach your wife if anything more closely than you do the pleasant men who are not your friends. It will be your duty to think of your daughter's acquaintances from this angle also, and forbid her intimacy with grown women, or even companions of her own age, whom after conversation with your wife you feel you have a right to distrust. Don't bother about the initial row with your child, whom you are devoted to, because she is indignant that you put up the bar to certain of her friendships. Tell her frankly why you object to this or that individual. Don't endeavour to find reasons which are not the truth.

Girls only go wrong in an abnormal way through their parents pretending to themselves that certain things do not exist, and failing to be open in discussing a subject which is unfortunately one that owing to present-day conditions demands very direct handling. You must realise, as a protector, that the Early Victorian age is very early Victorian, and that the children of to-day are grown women in comparison with their sisters of the eighties. They are just as sweet and pure in themselves, but their contact with a world that, alas! plays battledore and shuttlecock in the drawing-room with sacred things can only be combated by open discussion on a basis of equality between you and your daughter. It is no good imagining that silence is a safeguard. Be clever and make a pal of her, remembering that there is little that is hidden to the modern

young lady with an intellect. Let her understand that there is nothing she cannot discuss with you, and she will then never want to become inquisitive about sexual subjects with strangers. As regards your daughter's relations with the young men she knows, you are in the lap of the gods, and all you can hope for is that the gods won't part their knees and drop you on the floor. However, be sure that if everything has been explained to your girl she won't go very far wrong, and also that you will never have all her love if she hasn't all your confidence. With your son be just as above-board, though, if anything, more so.

You have practically only two subjects to discuss with him on his leaving home for school for the first time: a warning against the very prevalent leaning towards unnatural practices which older boys may lead him into, and a habit he may contract, quite innocently, of self-abuse. The latter of these two evils it will be your duty to be perfectly open with him about. You will explain that if he is tempted to indulge in such a ridiculous pastime he will be draining his vitality, and that he will be handicapping himself in winning his cap at football or cricket, and losing his chances in

the school sports. It is no use with a small boy going into the question of mental damage and the attendant disasters self-abuse means from a medical point of view. This won't carry half the weight the fear of his not beating his schoolfellows in games of skill will have with him; so in advising him deal with him on these lines, which are at his tender age his "life-lines," for the fear of being defeated in athletics through a very definite cause will make more impression on him than all the lectures of a Professor of Eugenics. Explain to him exactly what it means to cause an emission unnaturally; that it means the loss of blood value which is the thing he has to rely on for his strength. Tell him that what he loses if he is stupid enough to do this thing you warn him against is to suffer what a sapling suffers if it is slashed by a hatchet, that is, the losing of the juice that feeds its extremities and enables it to grow into a mighty tree. Then he will understand. But you must speak to him in a kindly and commonsense way, explaining to him that ultimately it will be from the sap he has within him that his own child will spring, and it is therefore a thing to be doubly conserved as a very sacred

possession. You must make him realise that on its uninterfered-with strength will depend the physical power of his son and your grand-child. Teach him that what he has been granted in his body by the Creator for the propagation of species is given him only as a trustee, and that it is, in fact, the property of posterity.

Tackle your honourable little son in this way and you may be sure that not only will he not betray the trust you place in him, but that he will explain to other boys who have perhaps had nothing told them, all you have explained to him. In doing this you will not only be helping your own lad but many others who have may been left in ignorance by parents not worthy of the name. The fact of your little other self being put very wise as to the danger of abusing the life he has been given will make him doubly strong in that he will be able to repel through his own common sense any attempt of older men who would seek to pollute his mind. Alas! there are many of these worse-than-murderers to be found to-day in the most select circles and in the highest society. Arm your boy against them by explaining everything to him on this subject

of sodomy also. Don't hang back and imagine you are doing him harm. You will only be doing him an irreparable wrong if you fail to place in his hands the safeguard which it is his right to expect from you as his natural protector.

It is quite true that many a boy sent in ignorance to a public school leaves it unscathed, but it is not your duty to allow your own lad to be burdened with such a risk. If other men are such criminals as to let their sons leave the roof they have been sheltered beneath from boyhood without weapons to face attack with, don't let this ever be an excuse for you not guarding all that your wife has lived and suffered for, and all on which your hopes are centred. God and your home are the things that matter most in this world: love them both and never neglect either.

CHAPTER XV

SEX

The Sexual Impulse—Control—Exercise—The Natural Outlet
—Whom to Consort with—Syphilis and its Results—
Gonorrhœa—Aphrodisiacs and their Danger—Your Doctor.

Which I hope, as I have said, you will enter early in your life, but you are not contemplating it seriously at the moment, for you are very young. It is only natural, however, that thoughts of the other sex have begun to loom large on your life's horizon. We have, I hope, by now grown quite accustomed to each other, so there is not the slightest reason why we should not discuss the very intimate things that crop up under the head of Sex.

In the first place, these little talks of ours, being given in printed form, are open for a coin of the realm to all and sundry, the all and sundry comprising a very large majority of Mrs. Grundys, male and female, who have elected to close their eyes to realities, and will

attack without mercy any one who dares to come out into the open and call a spade a spade. If these charming idiots when disaster overcame their fellow-man were of infinite help to him, their previous silence might be entitled to a lighter sentence, but these are the very people who, if he gets in a muddle, will only throw up their hands in pious horror and brand him a pariah. I have no sympathy with their humbug, and their attacks when they come, as they are sure to do, will leave me absolutely unmoved. would be a perfectly easy matter for me to skate over the obvious and pretend it didn't exist. This would please, no doubt, a certain kind of conscience, but as it would not help you, I would rather gain the approbation of the honest minority, knowing that I was doing the right thing, than have the patronage of an entirely selfish and cowardly majority, who would preserve their plaster saints at the expense of your physical wreckage.

In every normal young man's mind it is natural that the animal within it should seek an outlet. Why should I, talking to you as one human being to another, try and disguise this fact? The Great Creator in His infinite

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wisdom has made the propagation of species the most ecstatic pleasure the world holds. Had He done otherwise, had He so ordained it that the first stage of bringing a new life into being was a negative function or a pain, the world would long since have been empty. Born in you is this great desire which you were intended to possess, not a thing to be ashamed of, mark you, but a thing to be proud of, for you are a man, and without it you would be nothing. But I want to impress upon you the fact that this possession is a sacred one, and not to be used idly, viciously and without consideration. If we lived in Utopia, at an early age you would marry, and you would look no further for your pleasure than the partner of a blessed union. But we are not living in Utopia, we are existing in a kingdom of hard facts, where lack of money, extraordinary circumstances, questions of social standing and a dozen other things may make it impossible for you to say, "I have found the woman; I can ask her to be my wife." We have, therefore, to discuss your position as regards the opposite sex during that time of waiting before you are in a position to take a partner for life.

Mind you, please don't think for a single instant in talking quite straightly about your feelings I am taking it for granted that it is by any means necessary not to resist temptation with all the strength that is in you. It is, and this should be your constant endeavour. Many and many a boy whose sexual impulses are as marked as any one else's has obtained so firm a control over himself that he can resist the passive appeal of innocent beauty as easily as the active challenge of the professional enchantress. Wouldn't you like to have that grip of yourself? Would you not be the happiest fellow in the world if you were Captain of your soul and Lord High Censor of your bad impulses? Of course you would. Can you think of any greater reward for self-denial than being able to meet the pure eyes of your mother over the breakfast-table with the knowledge that there had been nothing in your night to be ashamed of? Isn't it jolly to feel that you deserve your father's proud glance and that tender note in his voice when he indicates you to his friends? Of course it is. And by being clean yourself, it will mean that the friends you have chosen are likewise, and you will be

able to introduce them to your sisters with unblemished credentials. These things are worth more than enough, aren't they? And the joys of having achieved a mastery over what is to many an untameable animal must be a feather worth wearing in your cap.

A famous doctor once told me that the only way a young man can defeat the clamour of his body for contact with the opposite sex is by constant and even violent exercise. Therefore devote certain hours of every day to games. If it cannot be cricket or football let it be rowing or swimming. If facilities are scarce, you can always walk, and where you can walk you can run. Put up a punchball in your bedroom. Physical tiredness banishes desire and makes resistance the easier. But sexual impulse can be checked by the spirit also. You have only to think of the many priests who are faithful celibates to appreciate this. They do not get time for athletic exercise, and rule their bodies from the wheelhouse of the soul. There are, of course, many deeply religious laymen who gain strength to resist temptation through the medium of prayer—but this book is not written for such. I take you to be an average

God-fearing and God-loving fellow, whom the world enchants and challenges; well, then, fasten on to your thinking-box the flags of the two great physical and mental preventives, athletics and the misery of the aftermath. And do not imagine that by resisting temptation you are losing anything. You are storing up the greatest of all pleasures, the cleanly possessing of the woman you have fallen in love with and whom you have given your life to. For Passion and Love being two entirely different things, you can never know what the real wonder of the Divine Gift is, unless you share it with the one woman you have waited for and have been blessed with. Compared with this ideal state, ordinary sex pleasures are as far apart as summer and winter, so wait, and as a reward for waiting, you will be repaid a thousand-fold.

Still, as it is no use shutting one's eyes to the fact that you are probably often thinking of unknown pleasures, which even against your better nature you long and hope for, and however much you are advised to the contrary you may strive after and obtain, all I can do in answer to your questions is to point out the dangers you will run if you do

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not realise that Passion without Caution at the helm may steer you on to rocks and quick-sands from which you may return salved, but a hopeless wreck. In this extraordinary country of ours, where cranks and disappointed spinsters have made State supervision of the oldest of all professions an impossibility, and where prostitutes are allowed to ply for hire in broad daylight under the noses of our mothers and our sisters, the desperate risks you, as a young man, run, are incalculable, if you are not warned.

It is possible that you may, in your search for a companion, fall in with a semi-respectable, middle-class lady, who while not of easy virtue, has early become inquisitive, and has done you the honour of not rejecting your advances. From this type—or from intimates in your own sphere of life—the danger of contracting disease is reduced but by no means eliminated. But there are others who, either from desire or necessity, are promiscuous in their adventures, and who may easily do you irreparable injury.

I am quite aware that the majority of young men are alive in a remote sort of way to the presence of dangerous venereal disease in their midst, but it is amazing how ignorant they are of its nature and results, and even more so of the ordinary precautions they could take if they have strayed and are doubtful.

The word syphilis to you is, no doubt, only the name of an ailment which you have heard some friend of a friend of yours had, and has interested you little, as you have never thought it conceivable that it could come your way. It is not an epidemic, and being a hidden illness is talked of in whispers only. To the majority it is the occupant of an empty mansion of whom strange stories are told but little known. Let me hasten to open your eyes on the subject, therefore, of this scourge, in a simple way that you will understand.

In discussing this dreadful thing with you, it is difficult for me to do so calmly, for the agony I have suffered in the loss of one who was near and very dear to me through this most terrible of all diseases makes me passionate with anger. Indeed, it is the great sorrow I have suffered that first gave me the irresistible impulse to sit down and write this book, hoping, as I do from my heart of hearts, that it will save a father, a mother, a sister or a brother from the hell that I've been

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through. But my private feelings are not part of this series of little talks, though I willingly place the thoughts of my tragedy on the table, hoping with all the soul that is in me that it may be the means of warning and saving those who are ignorant of the devastating and far-reaching effects of this cruel plague as a prehistoric man, no doubt, was of astronomy or the magnetic North.

I beg of you with all my soul to think—and be careful before you either in a fit of recklessness or muddled with drink, pick up some strange woman and run the chance of not only ruining your own life—but those who, if you marry, come after you.

When I warn you not to pick up a stranger, I am perhaps discussing a situation that you may very rightly feel is one that you cannot conceive yourself to be in; but Drink—the greatest thief that Human Nature should be fearful of—may rob a very much more sane and brilliant man than you are of his power of reasoning, and what is he then but an imbecile and an animal. So although you may say to me, "Dismiss at once the thought that I run any danger from alcohol!" and are probably indignant with me for sug-

gesting such a remote contingency, I have nevertheless no hesitation in drawing your attention to this Drink condition, for it is one of the primary causes of contracting syphilis, in that through it you may mix with women whom in your sober senses you wouldn't be seen dead in a ditch with.

Well, having eliminated the what to you is an impossible equation, let me answer your first question. Which is-"How is one to be sure of any woman being free from disease? At once I say to you that it is impossible. But Nature being Nature, if you are unable to resist temptation and are obliged to obey her call, all I can say is, "Obey it like a gentleman." Don't let the baser part of you obsess your being. Do not seek the things that give pleasure to all that is most human in you, but endeavour with all your strength to avoid temptation. Work, think of your home and those womenfolk in it who respect you, and don't in remembering your nearest and dearest forget the many highminded men who would be distressed beyond measure if they thought you were trapesing about with women and thinking of little else. Respect yourself, and you will be keeping

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safe the hostages your friends have given to fortune. If you are unfortunate and stray, through overwhelming necessity—as many a better fellow than you unhappily has done—unless it is a journey into what you think is the land of real love, let it be the "Call of Nature" only that forces you to seek the other sex. All this, I know, is quite unorthodox, but the unorthodox is so often true. At any rate, in this case, without fear of contradiction, I can tell you that the advice I give you on what ought to be a most open subject between father and son, and which so seldom is—is the right advice.

Well, take it that you are a young, clean-living, thoughtful working man, and that you are not a hypocrite, and are driven to the natural outlet of your desires. Try to let it be such, for to make it anything else will weaken your will, and lead you ultimately to destruction, even if you are lucky enough to escape disease.

Well, now, you say, you permit me so much latitude, how am I to be safe? I can only reply, seek your companion as you seek your other pleasures in life. Use all the judgment that you have been blessed with.

Do not wander into public places. For there you may meet a most beautifully-dressed and charming lady who is a daily attendant at the Lock Hospital. Maids at a hotel, who are easy of conquest to you, may have been just as easy to the itinerant visitor of the night before, and who knows where his last restingplace was? Do not choose the female who is termed a good fellow, she has too many friends. I cannot tell you whom to go to, I only implore you to use your common sense as to whom not to go to. It is quite possible that you may be in the greatest danger from some unfortunate lady of your own class, for the world is full of unscrupulous gentlemen. And so, all I can say to you is, try your utmost to add up as shrewdly as you can the female whom you decide to be human with.

Do not believe that any woman speaks greater truth than you do. Do not take for granted that the most apparently simple of them may not be anything but most profound. Snow covers Etna, you know! One thing I can tell you for certain is that a woman who has a merry laugh is the least to be feared. It is very improbable she has anything on her mind. A clear eye and an unblemished skin

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is generally an indication of health. Be careful of a woman, unless you know her well, who drinks only water. Be cautious of the lady who explains away an eruption on her neck and wrists as eczema, and volunteers the information that she always gets it "at this time of the year." But the soundest advice for safety that I can give you is-never make friends with a strange woman, no matter what your inclinations may be-remember what I am saying to you; better, by far, to miss an hour of pleasure than risk the precious life your Maker has bestowed upon you. Better to have lived a healthy threescore years and ten and never have known a woman than to go to your last resting-place before your time, having suffered mental and physical anguish through the effects of grave venereal disease, the like of which runs on lines only parallel with the horrors of Dante's Inferno.

Mind you, in having suggested to you the class of woman who is more likely to be infected than her laughing sister, don't misunderstand me. It does not matter what sort of woman you consort with before your marriage, or however careful you may be, you will always be running a risk, greater

or smaller it may be—but it will always be a risk.

However, for the purposes of this conversation, let us take it that by some unforeseen and tragic happening you have met some one from whom you have contracted syphilis, this most terrible of all diseases. Let me beg of you, do not delay one hour in at once disclosing the fact to the greatest specialist you can consult. Do not be afraid of telling your father, never mind how hard a man you may think him in everyday affairs. Go at once to him, he is your father, he loves you and he understands. If you have no father-go to your mother and tell her you are in trouble. Don't think she doesn't know. She doesyou are part of her, and she will be your greatest and most sympathetic friend.

If you are abroad, or an orphan, or if you have no friend at hand, go straight to the nearest hospital—ask for the house surgeon, make a clean breast of everything, and he will, like the good fellow he is, tell you to take a taxi to the house of the best-known man at this particular job, and if you take that taxi—every hour you put up a fight will perhaps mean a year on your life. Don't

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be persuaded by some well-meaning acquaintance to waste your time and money on chemists and quack medicines. Syphilis to-day is a disease for the specialist only. It is an infection of the blood, brought about through the contact of an abrasion on your person with the disease rampant in another, and the taking of advertised patent remedies is as much use as the eating of grass for a headache.

Till quite recently syphilis was as mortal a disease as cancer, and one which science has been unable to cope with. Not, mind you, if it is taken in its early stages and the infected blood throughout your body purified by injections into the veins themselves, but the possibility of procuring satisfactory results if such remedies are not applied on the first knowledge of your condition, make the difficulties of the specialist, years after the contracting of the disease, a hopeless proposition. I can only explain to you very simply, as one layman to another, the direct effect of syphilitic poisoning on you.

The poison on entering your body (this occurring in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand through your most private parts) will produce a sore—unmis-

takable from any other, which is called a chancre. You may later have a rash on your chest and your throat will become ulcerated, these conditions having arisen from blood-poisoning pure and simple.

I use the word blood-poisoning purposely, as the action of the microbe—Spirochætes—with which the blood becomes infected, or any dissertation on the clinical side of this disorder, are matters with which you are not concerned and which obviously I am quite incapable of propounding to you except in the most inaccurate manner.

These are local conditions which may disappear at the hands of a general practitioner, but their disappearance and the placing of yourself under treatment of such a doctor, even for a lengthy period, is of no value whatsoever. It is the science of the specialist in this dread disease that you must seek. For he, attacking it directly by intravenous injections, may, while not perhaps eliminating the poison from the blood, at any rate hold in check and destroy for a considerable period, at least, the infectivity of the patient.

Should you fail to seek science at its fountainhead and be content with the outward signs

vanishing, you will be as safe as a man sitting on a barrel of gunpowder with a time fuse attached to it; that time fuse being a span of years dependent on your vitality and the virulence with which you are attacked. And for this reason; your tainted blood will, in the process of time, by passing and repassing through your nervous system, and hourly filtering through your brain, so damage the nerve tissues that a breakdown will occur, the breakdown being what is known as general paralysis of the insane. First will come delusions, then violence or melancholy, imbecility, and paralytic seizures which, according to their violence, will result in death through the bursting of the weakened aorta of the heart.

The progress of the acute symptoms having a maximum of seldom more than two years, this breakdown will more often than not start in the early forties, and once occurring is impossible to combat. Knowing this, is it necessary for me to beg of you, if you find yourself one of nature's unfortunate victims, immediately to do anything but take the advice I have given you. Crude my remarks no doubt are, but you understand them, and therefore are they not worth a dozen

text-books which you will not trouble to read?

I am not capable, nor is it the object of our talk, to try and give you a medical lecture on the reflex actions of the nerves, the lack of answering to the light of the pupil of the eye, and the many tests that help to prove a case. The blood test is the only infallible test. My endeavour is to impress on you—for God's sake have no shame about your piece of misfortune. Go straight to the healer, whose profession it is to save the lives of those infected with this dire disease.

A wit once said, "What has posterity done for me?" Think, if you are an unfortunate, what posterity may say of you—a blind woman, a lame man, a rickety child—all these may be tragic relics of your thoughtless hour. For "the sins of the father being visited on the children" is no meaningless sentence, but unfortunately it has become like many other wise modern instances only a familiar jingle, written so often in copy-books that its real meaning is never inquired into. All I can say to you is, you healthy custodian of a future generation's greatness—Be careful! be careful!

I will not pursue this dreadful subject. You have listened, you have understood, and a multitude of words are only the embroidery of a debatable theory. What I have told you in a rough-and-ready way is a fact, and plainly stated facts gain their strength in the conciseness and simplicity of their telling, and need no well-turned phrase, nor absolutely correct technical detail to prove their truth. All I repeat is, "Be careful!" not only for yourself, but for those whom you may be blessed to hear call you "Father," and whom, if you bring them into this world tainted through your reckless act, you will see wither during your lifetime and probably die before your eyes. If this happens, your last kiss, as you lay them to their rest, will be the kiss of the executioner.

Some day, please God, this terrible scourge will become as notifiable as scarlet fever or smallpox. We are indeed a comic nation. We make war on rabies and coddle a cobra. How the Humorists in Heaven must laugh to see the human ostrich bury its head in Puritanical sand.

Ofttimes a specialist in this terrible disease has been a martyr to science and lost his life through infection at the operating table, or in making an examination, and as long as the world goes round, so to the Professors who gamble with death for the benefit of their fellows such tragedies must occur. I mention this fact to impress upon you that, though comparatively rare, it is possible to contract syphilis through any part of your body if your blood becomes exposed to its poison.

Use as seldom as possible the towels and hairbrushes in public lavatories. Under no circumstances smoke a stranger's pipe, or drink out of the unwashed glass of a companion you don't know well; better to give offence than run a risk. All the apologies in the world are useless after the event. Wigs for fancy dress balls or amateur theatricals that have been worn before are dangerous to a degree, and should never be put on unless sterilised. It would, however, be quite ridiculous for you to become punctilious about everything in which a possible danger might lie. It would result in your becoming a gibbering idiot, and refusing food at restau-But there is a great difference between commercial risks and speculative uncertainties.

Kissing is one of the most common forms, apart from sexual intercourse, in the con-

tracting of syphilis. Naturally the danger is one to be considered by young girls rather than by young men; for the young man would be very unlikely to become infected by the opposite sex of practically tender years; but how grave a danger promiscuous kissing is you may gather from this authentic textbook fact, that while playing a game in which a kiss was the forfeit, paid by the losers to the winning side, seven perfectly innocent girls, ranging from fifteen to eighteen years of age, were infected and contracted syphilis from a syphilitic youth of seventeen, who had an ulcer on his lip—a tragic happening if ever there was one in this world.

I mention this only to show you how easy it is to fall a victim to terrible conditions. Think well, and be careful, I implore you.

Having discussed one of the most dreadful afflictions that men and women may be heir to, there is still another—and one more prevalent—which I must draw your attention to, and which, because it is more common, is apt to be treated lightly by youth; this is gonorrhæa, or as it is more vulgarly called, "clap." I want you to disabuse your mind at once that this is by any means an ailment

to be dealt with lightly because death or paralysis do not result from it. I want you to realise that it is an illness which, if not properly treated, may easily sow the seeds of chronic organic troubles, which, while not being fatal in themselves, will undermine and cripple the strongest of constitutions.

It is, you will find, if you trouble to consult the authorities, an undisputed fact that an enormous percentage of ordinary rheumatism is directly traceable to the effects of gonorrhœa; while in most cases the fact of children becoming blind after birth undeniably results from the presence of this distressing malady in their mother, for few children are born blindthey become so by contact with the infection as they are being brought into the world.

Gonorrhæa is not commonly a blood infection like syphilis, though, if infection should occur through the blood, it becomes a very much more serious matter, the kidneys and vital organs quite possibly becoming directly attacked. It is, as a rule, a purely local inflammation set up in the membrane of your person by the gonococcus germ, which seeks a breeding-place in the many cells of the main channel of the genital organ through

which it has obtained entry to your system. The period of incubation is from three to five days, though in extraordinary cases twenty days have been reached. If you have contracted this deplorably common disease, the first signs of it will be an inflammatory state of the infected parts, a scalding in passing your water, and then a discharge which is unmistakable.

There are many remedies which are common form to combat this distressing condition. They include cubebs and sandal oil, the use of urotropin and the injection of permanganate of potash; but let me urge you, as I urged you in the case of syphilis, immediately to seek the aid of a qualified specialist. For though you may have the good luck, through using chemists' preparations, to rid yourself of the poison which is causing you grave discomfort at any rate, as far as external signs go, the methods which you adopt, unless handled skilfully, may drive a local condition into what is known as "the deep"-which is the bladder and its regions -and then a cure becomes a thing of great difficulty, even to the expert. Go therefore at once to a specialist. He will administer injections in a way that you cannot possibly know how to. He will kill the germs and not drive them in, as you will most probably do if you inject yourself. If this happens, you may be setting up stricture or cystitis, which is inflammation of the bladder, which may easily become chronic; and also gonorrhæal rheumatism will make you in its worst form a hopeless cripple.

There are a dozen other complications; but have I not said enough to impress upon you the duty you owe to others as well as yourself?

I would like to impress on you this fact, that far from gonorrhea being the minor ailment it is light-heartedly supposed to be by the country at large, it is the disease from which nearly all cases of rheumatism and rheumatic arthritis have their being, and that it has been proved beyond a doubt that forty-five per cent. of sterility is caused by gonorrhea having been contracted by the man before marriage.

Again, an absolute cure is by no means a certain thing. The gonococcus germ may lie dormant and be awakened into activity through strain, excess, or alcohol, years after the patient may have considered himself absolutely cured. So just imagine what this means;

it means that though you be as true to your wife as any man who ever lived, you may suddenly be confronted with the fact that you have infected the woman you would lay down your life for rather than hurt.

Speaking as a man in the street, I am quite aware that to the faculty all these remarks are crude and faulty, but my object is not to make you a professor of venereal disease, any more than I am; I am simply pointing out to you the urgent necessity of not playing about with dangers which, because they are common, are considered by the ignorant majority, things not to be taken very seriously. The moment you know you have been unlucky enough to have contracted this ailment, go instantly to those whose life study it is—and turn a deaf ear to the amateur and the general practitioner.

We now come to the question of precautions and the methods to be adopted to endeavour to try and make yourself safe, after connection—you unhappily having failed to resist temptation. I understand that this advising of precautionary measures is the banner which a large class of (may I call them well-meaning) cranks hang on the outer walls of their conscience, screaming aloud that any advice of this kind is to encourage sin by making it safe. Was ever such a fallacy! One might justly say—wickedness. If, indeed, the adoption of precautionary measures was the cause of immorality, then they would be right, but as not all the advice in the world and not all the predicting of danger will alter the fact that human nature is human nature, then is it not for science to step in to save, if possible, those who are mad enough to take risks, even though they be—as one devoutly hopes they will become—a real minority.

Is there, I wonder, one of these theorists of immorality who, if they were brought face to face with a member of their own family dying a lingering death, would not have bought every precautionary measure in the world and given them it to use if the one they loved could have been spared by the using of this thing they affect from their pinnacles to despise and cry shame on? Of course they would, and how right they would have been. Because, then, the creatures who inhabit the earth cannot all be their relations, are they to be neglected? Do these people forget that there is hardly a being who breathes that is not dear to some one, and this being so, is it

not the duty of the initiated portion of the community to help save by every means in its power those who are in danger, not only for the individual's sake, but for the children who are to be born,—living after we are forgotten, and who will become the nation we now form? Of course it is; a thousand times "Of course."

If sexual intercourse were a thing of which few men and women had ever heard, well might the prude forbid anything that might draw attention to, or encourage it. But as it is the act that brings life into being, and one which young people by instinct, long before definite knowledge has come to them, are dimly conscious of, what possible argument can be put forward not to attempt to make the lives of little unborn babies safe through science. This not being a medical book in any sense of the word, I cannot, and have no wish to, go into the subject of preventive medicine. What I beg of you to do, my boy, is to buy a work by H. N. Robson, L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., called Sexual Disease and its Medical Prevention. It is published by John R. Wildman, 158 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4, and costs but two shillings. In it you will find everything you want to know explained to

you in the simplest possible language, or, if you prefer to, write to the Secretary of the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease, 143 Harley Street, W.1, who will willingly send you the literature which it is your duty, not only to yourself, but to your country, to read and understand well.

Mind you, by following the instructions you are given, you won't be absolutely safe, but there is all the difference, after shipwreck, between finding yourself in an open boat and being adrift swimming alone in an angry sea. The work of Sir Malcolm Morris on the above subject is one that every layman should read.

It may be permitted that I draw your attention to the remarks on the Society for the Prevention of Venereal Disease set down by so eminent a divine as the Right Rev. Bishop Welldon. After having said: "That it is the duty of every good citizen, man or woman, to live a chaste life; he or she who violates the law of personal chastity not only commits a sin, but does injury to the nation at large"; his Lordship writes of syphilis and gonor-rhæa: "It is impossible to overestimate the evil of such diseases prevailing on so large a

scale. For the tragic fact of sexual immorality is that its consequences are not limited to the persons who commit it, but they pass to innocent women and children who are in no manner or degree responsible for it."... "Immediate self-disinfection, like many other preventive measures, may be occasionally inoperative through misuse or delay, but this is not an argument against its efficacy, and only strengthens the hands of those who desire to instruct the public in its proper application."

Is not this testimony, coming from such a high source, enough; and if any one doubts as to which is the right or wrong of prevention, let him scan the names of the Committee of the S.P.V.D., and among them not only will he find those who possess the highest credentials, but also the names of the greatest scientists we possess.

I have hated writing these chapters on disease—much of this book has been a pleasurable toil for me to work at; the foregoing has been very difficult and a great pain. But if you are unfortunate, do as I have begged you to, and you will thank me, and your lifelong gain through following my advice will have compensated me fully for the distress I

have laboured under in speaking so plainly. The prude may be shocked, the critical be full of ironical condemnation, but a man can only do what he conceives to be his duty,—and I have stepped in boldly, trying to do my best for the young, and I care not what the minority think of me, so long as I have gained a kindly thought from high-minded good women and decent men to whose loved ones I have endeavoured to give affectionate and, I think, very sound advice.

Before leaving this very intimate sex subject, I want to warn you against the use of aphrodisiacs—that is to say, the taking of drugs to promote sexual intercourse, which is one of the most deadly and pernicious of practices. They are temporary stimulants which in time promote permanent impotence. No two men have the same sized cheque books from which they can draw on the bank of passion. from whatever cause you find your vital forces failing you, aphrodisiacs will only hasten the end of a dying fire, which after their use will be as impossible of relighting as green wood soaked by rain. They are only what pinches of gunpowder are to a glowing ember. I beg of you never to take even the most harmless

of them if you value your manhood. There comes a time in every man's life when execution turns a deaf ear to inclination. If a man is wise he will accept the situation. Fretting and endeavours to combat Nature only makes matters worse. The nerve centres are delicate things to play with, and a rested brain will, all things being equal, probably grant you your vitality again, while from a bullied one you will get as little satisfaction as you would from a belaboured mule.

The majority of men lose their life power through excess, but the temperamental subject with a finely balanced and sensitive mind, may easily become the victim of temporary incapability. The most fatal thing to do in the latter case is to worry about the condition. Great grief, overwork, financial troubles and a hundred other nerve-exhausting causes bring this about, and it is then that Nature sets her soldiers to stand guard at the portals of your being, denying your desires entry. She will withdraw her servants only when she knows that she may safely do so and not till then. Therefore do not by bribery attempt to hasten their departure, or the patient within your house will wither in the hands of the quack. Rest and food demand and receive convalescence. It is not poison that can obtain it. So if you are tempted to seek nerve stimulants of any kind, cast such a thought out of your mind on the instant. You would not ask a willing horse to drag an extra ton at the end of a long day, therefore, consider your precious life as the sacred thing it is, and remember that Nature must always call you. Don't you ever be fool enough to give orders to her.

I have made these few simple remarks on a wide subject, not with the object of propounding the ethics of the neurosist, for I am totally ignorant of so deep a study as the mechanism of the brain, but simply to show you the red light that ought to warn the ignorant, who gaily enter Dr. Aphrodisiacs's parlour and imagine him to be a magic and eternal friend. If I have put a doubt into your mind as to the worthlessness of apparently harmless concoctions, then I have achieved my purpose, for not being a fool, you will ask your doctor if what I have hinted at is true, and he, saying, "Decidedly, yes!" will, if you desire it, explain the subject to you fully, which I am quite incapable of doing.

By the way, let me impress upon you that the choosing of your medical adviser is a thing not to be embarked upon in any slap-dash, haphazard manner. Don't forget that you are placing your life in the hands of an individual, and it is, therefore, a duty to yourself, and to those who love you, to make a wise and considered choice. Only five per cent. of medical students pass out of their hospitals with honours, so make up your mind that it is from these you must make your choice, and even then you may be wrong unless you make careful inquiries about them. It is very easy for the layman to be trapped into the belief that because a man wears spectacles, has a sedate bedside manner, and looks wise under a pair of bushy eyebrows, that he is a Pasteur at his job; but don't you assume this for a moment. There is as much humbug in the profession of medicine as any other, perhaps a little more so. In choosing a doctor you are selecting a man who may or not be the means of packing you up for the nearest cemetery, and there are many who can do this without any great mental effort on their part. Let us hope that your medical man is the best in the world. But

should you, after careful thought, be in the unfortunate position of realising in a grave illness that you have backed the wrong horse, don't, for a half a second, allow the question of what is termed by the faculty "professional etiquette," to stand in the way of your calling in another opinion. You and those dear to you have only one life, so if you are in any doubt as to the capabilities of your attendant, call in a dozen specialists, and do your utmost to save yourself or your loved ones even at the cost of losing the most intimate friendship. Convalescence and friction are better than apologies and the undertaker. I cannot impress upon you too strongly the fact that there are as many idiots with brass plates upon their doors as there are idiots in any other calling without brass plates, so never make up your mind suddenly about the man who is to stand by you, when your life's candle is burning low, and a breath may blow it out.

The province of this little book is only to draw your attention to evils which you, with your good sense, will make exhaustive inquiries about, or gain deeper knowledge of from standard works.

CHAPTER XVI

BLACKMAIL

Intrigues with Married Women—Women's Methods of Blackmail; how to deal with them—Desperate Danger of Abortion—Blackmail of Men by Men.

ET me beg of you, however tempted you may be, never to get entangled with a married woman. Many a young man's life has been ruined at its commencement by finding himself the central figure of divorce proceedings; and remember, however big a ruffian her husband may be, or however unscrupulous the lady may be herself, it will always, to the outside world, be your fault, and there will be no rounds of applause coming to you either from the judge, jury, or public. More often than not, when a married woman elects to grant you her favours, she does so having fully made up her mind that you are good game either for her dresses, her card losses, or as a paying companion. Don't you run away with the idea that it is because you are such a fascinating fellow. Few women who have husbands take risks for love's sake. Some may think they do, and perhaps tell you so, but as a rule they are seeking escape from an unhappy home, and they are generally shrewd enough to seek it with some one who can be of more use to them than their disappointing partner has been.

And don't believe in the pleasantly blind husband who encourages you to take his lady wife about. This either means that he is anxious to be free-and has set a trap for you to be caught in, baited with her ladyship-or that the happy pair have arranged everything beforehand with a midnight dénouement for you to get out of, for which you will have to pay very handsomely. No, the incursions into other people's domestic arrangements mean that you are backing disaster both ways. cept under very exceptional circumstances never believe, or be frightened into the belief by a married woman or a woman older than yourself, that her delicate condition is your fault. This is a common trick for obtaining money from the young, and very often comes off.

If the tale is properly told you, buckets of tears will be poured over your flower of chivalry, and threats of suicide will alarm you considerably; but always remember that ninetynine times out of a hundred, tears being easy of access to most women, and the talk of arsenic not being a very brainy proceeding, bland, absolute incredulity on your part when you are challenged will save you from a particularly common form of blackmail. Be sure you laugh at the whole thing as impossible the very first time it is mentioned. Delay or arguments and a lack of firmness at the outset will lead you into intrigue and scheming over something with which you have more than likely had nothing whatever to do. Bear in mind that the majority of women who take a lover to themselves do so with their eyes wide open, and that there is very seldom much impulse in these things. As a rule, love affairs of grown people are well-thought-out impromptus.

You, youth that you are, would rather think anything of your friend than that she was blackmailing you; but reflect, please, that there are two sorts of blackmail—the sordid, pecuniary blackmail, and the other variety, which for purposes of argument we will term "polite." To deal with the first variety is comparatively simple; go straight to your

solicitor and put your cards on the table. He will set the police in motion, and the tears of your Queen of Hearts will dry as if by magic. But the second needs more delicate handling, as you will not be definitely or financially threatened, and therefore the law is unable to come to your assistance. The demanding of money is annoying, though I doubt if an attack on your banking is in reality half so grave a thing as an apparently distraught female with some loose silver, a pencil, and a bundle of blank telegram forms; while the frequent shrill ring of the telephone has bidden many a weakling to take refuge in a still and deeplyrunning river. You will, if you find yourself so pestered, need the help of the most knowledgeable man you know.

Blackmail of the "polite" species is a form of mental exhilaration to its creator: pleasure is found by her in watching the victim on the rack, and the knowledge that she is of vital importance to his peace of mind pleases the vanity of the dilettante, though not necessarily malignant, exponent of the art of making others suffer. You will have to decide and be very sure which of the two problems you are faced with. The first will have others

behind it, the second will be merely the caprice of a neurotic, who once saw a cat play with a sparrow. Be very sure that if you are being tormented in this way, that indifference to exposure is your soundest weapon; for nine times out of ten, if the breaking-point arrives, you will discover that a bugle for sounding the cessation of hostilities will be blown from the enemy's camp, the neurotic lady having much more to lose than you have through the light of day illuminating the happenings of a halfforgotten night. Therefore in all cases of blackmail, whatever be its form, never assume anything but a very definite and fighting attitude. In this way the climax will be reached the moment after the challenge, and you will be saved sleepless nights and an enormous amount of unnecessary worry. As Shakespeare makes one of his characters say, not in these circumstances, but in an hour of trial: "Be bloody, bold and resolute." Please do not think for one moment, however, that I am counselling you ruthlessly to wipe out a real obligation. If you are to blame, if you have unfortunately got a lady into trouble, it is your duty to stand by her whatever the consequences may be to yourself; for there should always

be as much honour among lovers as there is among thieves. But if you are certain that you are the knight of a night, let the consequences be the natural ones, and don't ever, for mercy's sake, agree to the procuring of abortion. Pay money; face all kinds of music; but never be led into being a party to the risking of a woman's life. As an ordinary surgical case in the hands of an obstetric surgeon, the getting rid of an unborn child in the early stages of pregnancy is a simple affair; but as this is not the practice of the reputable specialist, you will, if you are fool enough to get mixed up in an illegal operation, be dealing with a quack, a drunken midwife, or a disreputable and generally careless incompetent scoundrel. If any of these worthies are employed and they make a mistake, which is more than likely, general peritonitis will be set up, and your lady friend will die as surely as I am writing these lines. Then do you realise what will happen? If discovery of all the circumstances happens—which is more than certain; you will—having consented and negotiated, you will become an accessory before the fact, and will be equally chargeable with the performer of the operation. It will

be no good your pleading that you did not understand. You will find yourself in the dock at a criminal court, and although you may escape the gallows, you will be the luckiest man on earth if you are not sent into penal servitude for a long term. So never be tempted to agree to your friend's entreaty to help her to resort to illegal means as an escape from her condition. Never believe that if a tragedy occurs you are sure to be safe; remember that women in pain on their deathbeds often become delirious, that ladies-maids lose their heads, or that the principal actor in the drama may drag you in so as to try and save his own neck. The fact of your being the father of an illegitimate child may be appalling, but it does not compare with the consequences of your being made the accessory of a murderer. In urging you to be cautious of the tearful woman of the world, my object has been to put you on your guard, so that you shall not be landed as a foul-hooked fish. Remember that there are many forbidden anglers in a big city's troublous waters. So again I say, if they are to be warned off, always seek the best advice in a difficult situation The detached mind is able to divorce personalities from the issue, and can sift facts from fear and pigeon-hole them for calm and unbiased thought. Many a man gets into worse trouble by trying to hide something he is ashamed of from some one he loves. So, if there should be a third party involved, some one whom you are devoted to, and to whom you wouldn't cause pain for all the world, if you are sure of her love, don't be afraid to make a clean breast of everything to her. A good woman will fight as hard for the erring object of her affections as a she-wolf for her young.

We now come to another form of blackmail; that of men by men, which is a totally different proposition from the matters we have been talking of. These may also be divided into two sorts of methods for extorting money: one for something you have done and which you are ashamed of, and the other which you have as much knowledge of as the man in the moon.

Let us take the first form—a case in which there is something you may regret, something which you could wish for ever to remain a secret, or something in which there is a substratum of truth and which would be on circumstantial evidence difficult to refute. There are professionals who if they obtained a knowledge of your indiscretion would inevitably proceed to make capital out of it. Well, at once, truth or substratum only, face the music, and never, never, never pay for silence. The first cheque you sign will be the signing of your death warrant. Blackmail is like a nettle: crush it boldly in your hand and it fails to sting; play with it and you will be covered with blisters. Consider, after all, how many men in the world are there who have not sinned in a moment of weakness. Better frankly to confess your indiscretion, whatever it may be, to a trusted friend and gain his help than be hunted to ultimate exposure by a rabble. Never be so weak as to allow yourself to be intimidated. Always bear in mind that the scoundrel who gains his livelihood by threatening exposure is a man who himself treads on very brittle glass. Turn and attack him and he will begin furiously to think, for he knows, if you don't, that blackmail is given, with the exception of murder, the gravest sentence the law allows. So no matter whatever you have done, take the bull by the horns and fight, and with trusty followers at your side the victory will be with you.

Blackmail of another kind that is very common to-day, and which through its suddenness may frighten you and throw you off your balance completely, is the attack of some ruffian in a public lavatory, who will threaten, unless you immediately give him money, to charge you with an indecent assault. Many a simple, innocent man has been so terrified by this situation, that to escape being mixed up in a disreputable fracas he has paid willingly to escape. My advice to you, if you should fall into the hands of this particular kind of blackguard, is to hit him as hard as you can, and then immediately hand him over to the nearest policeman. It is a million to one that he is known to the authorities, and your credentials being beyond reproach, nothing he says will be believed, and your replies will not be questioned.

Big cities abound in pests of this kind, who trade on the timorous, and you owe instant and determined action not only to yourself but to the majority of your fellow-citizens, who perhaps, not having been well advised, may fall victims to these criminals of the night. It is wise never after dark to enter a public urinal unless you have a friend with you. If

you do so you will be running a grave risk, for these are the happy hunting-grounds of the shameless sodomites and blackmailers, who dare anything, having nothing whatever to lose. If, again, you are accosted late at night in the street by a male degenerate, walk straight on without comment; but if he becomes persistent and follows you, hit him anyhow, with anything, anywhere, and leave him on the pavement, hoping sincerely that he will die.

CHAPTER XVII

THE END

ND now we must bid each other farewell. The open road is before you, the tented sky is overhead, and song birds are piping you a welcome from the hedgerows. Go. The suit of armour I have given you, though poorly hammered, may be of some service, for its pauldrons are shaped and beaten from truth and the cuirass from sincerity, so at any rate the materials are not faulty, however ill their fashioning. Buckle your harness about you, and step out firmly with good faith in the common sense which is yours, being sure that so long as you do not throw it aside, all the slings and arrows will glide idly by. I hope that nothing I have said will make you think less kindly of me, and that as you journey on your way and come across the pitfalls and stumblingblocks which are strewn on Life's highway, you will remember me and say to yourself,

"He may not have been always right, but he wasn't a bad fellow that; he has made my trip a trifle easier, and I'm not sorry that I met him." If this be so, I shall be more than well repaid. For it is all I set out in a very humble way to do. It has been my province to draw your attention to many things that are unpleasant, and to warn you of the traps that many a dark corner holds. But having done so, I would not have you think that the world holds only bad things. Far from it: the world is a wonderful and enchanting place, full of love and happiness—an Aladdin's palace made for youth and age to enjoy and revel in. With all its faults I can image no better of its kind, nor could you, I'm sure, design a substitute that would please you more. The things we have discussed are those in the minority to be avoided, but there are a million joys you'll find, as lightly you laugh along, that will be showered on you, like roses flung broadcast in a southern carnival.

That you may catch them and wear them, and even when they have faded preserve them, is my earnest hope and prayer, for these little leaves will be the happy hours of your age. Laugh long and loudly as you stride away,

and be assured the answering shout that you will hear will be no echo, but a real thingsome other happy fellow laughing too. Open your eyes and seek him out, and having found him make a great duet of it. Be sorry for the people whom you pass with faces spelling nothing but eternal gloom, and hands which are outstretched ever welcoming care. Pity them if you will, but hurry by and leave their invitations unaccepted. They are the ones who thrive on sorrow, and these you must not know. If disappointment comes, as come it will to you, march on, still laughing and always forgetting. Rain of an unkindly sort may drench you to your soul, but don't forget there is a friendly sun fighting through clouds to beg forgiveness. March on gaily. Let the white snows chill, the driving hail lash angry at your cheek; heed not these trifles, but march on bravely, for he who takes shelter has half confessed defeat.

Only remember the happy yesterdays, schooling yourself to say: "The other troubled ones were never mine; they happened to some poor companion I have a vague idea I once knew slightly." In doing this you will be a wayfarer, carrying no heavier burden than a

satchel packed with hope. He who looks backwards drags a heavy basket full of dead things, and missing in his toil the wondrous present, walks crablike towards the future, striking obstacles he would otherwise have avoided. Remember that opportunities are to be made before they can be taken, and that the man who sits down waiting for fortune to fall into his lap, and calls himself "unlucky" that it doesn't, is one of those who greatly lacks understanding. Leave no legitimate stone unturned in the attaining of your object; but if you fail in your endeavour, console yourself that the "Divinity which shapes your ends rough hew them how you may" has well ordained that what you struggled for were better you did not possess. Realise apparent failure is often only the Clearing-House we are made to wait in, while Some One scans our luggage before granting us the permit to seek a fresh adventure. Therefore, whatever happens to you, never give in, and never give up, and even though your ship should founder, fade out of sight with Hope nailed to the mizzen, shouting to the world, as the waves envelop you, "You're fine! You're fine!! You're fine!!!" Flowers may wither, but

there is a coming spring. Fruit trees, though barren, have another summer when overloaded branches will cry for mercy. Therefore in vain let counsels of despair bid you cut them down as useless. Be ever certain of the most certain thing there is, that there is nothing designed for us but is for our well-being and for the best. Get this into your mind and then no javelin-thrower born will find his mark on you. Thank God through every day for the good health He gives you, for, having this, what is there that you cannot face? Without it, even the millionaire, who you at times may be inclined to envy, creeps through the world, fearful of the shadow which walks ahead and spoils his triumphant hour with glances from a pair of dulled and listless eyes set deep in parchment which warns him that his wealth at any hour may mean only five words, "The residue of my estate." Money is little. It is a token which buys everything but the one and only thing that matters, "Peace of mind," therefore it buys nothing. Happiness is the life within you and the world you walk in. Without it, be your riches those of Cræsus, you are only a pauper in a Golden Workhouse. Never let the smile on those parted lips of yours relax. There is nothing so disarming to an enemy as the magic of a smile, for it spells invulnerability and leaves him impotent to do you harm. Above all things, believe whole-heartedly in yourself; in doing this, a character is formed which makes a man stronger hour by hour. There is no vanity in this. It simply means that, while looking down on none, it is only the exceptional contemporary you will feel bound to bow to, and when you meet that man, be not ashamed to doff your cap to the qualities he possesses and which you know you lack.

Keep, then, a gentle pride for all that you achieve, for gentleness, being born of humility and thankfulness, can only be a worthy thing. Work hard; for work is worship, and through it the little penny honours which the world has in her gift will more than likely come your way. But if they don't, what matter? It is better to have done your best, satisfied your conscience, and been forgotten, than to have gained many things which in your heart you know are valueless and fill your better self with secret shame. Well, we have talked enough. Still are we lingering at

the gate; you impatient to set off, I very loth to lose you. Give me your hand to press, and let me wish you good luck in all you do. You know me better now than most men have; so one little favour I am going to ask of you. Because that I have spoken plainly you will, perhaps, hear many an unkind thing said of me. Will you reply to my detractors thus: "He wrote this little book for me because of some one that he dearly loved, who died through misadventure"? Tell the unkindly critic I was your friend—a poor, sad fellow, who spends his time smiling to hide his tears—one who set a little pen "arunning" that he might try to save one fellowcreature all the sorrow he himself has known through one sad misadventure.

A voice is silent.

No more on earth his merry laugh I'll hear—He's dead.

That's why I've written

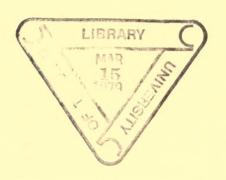
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AND
GOD BLESS YOU!

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