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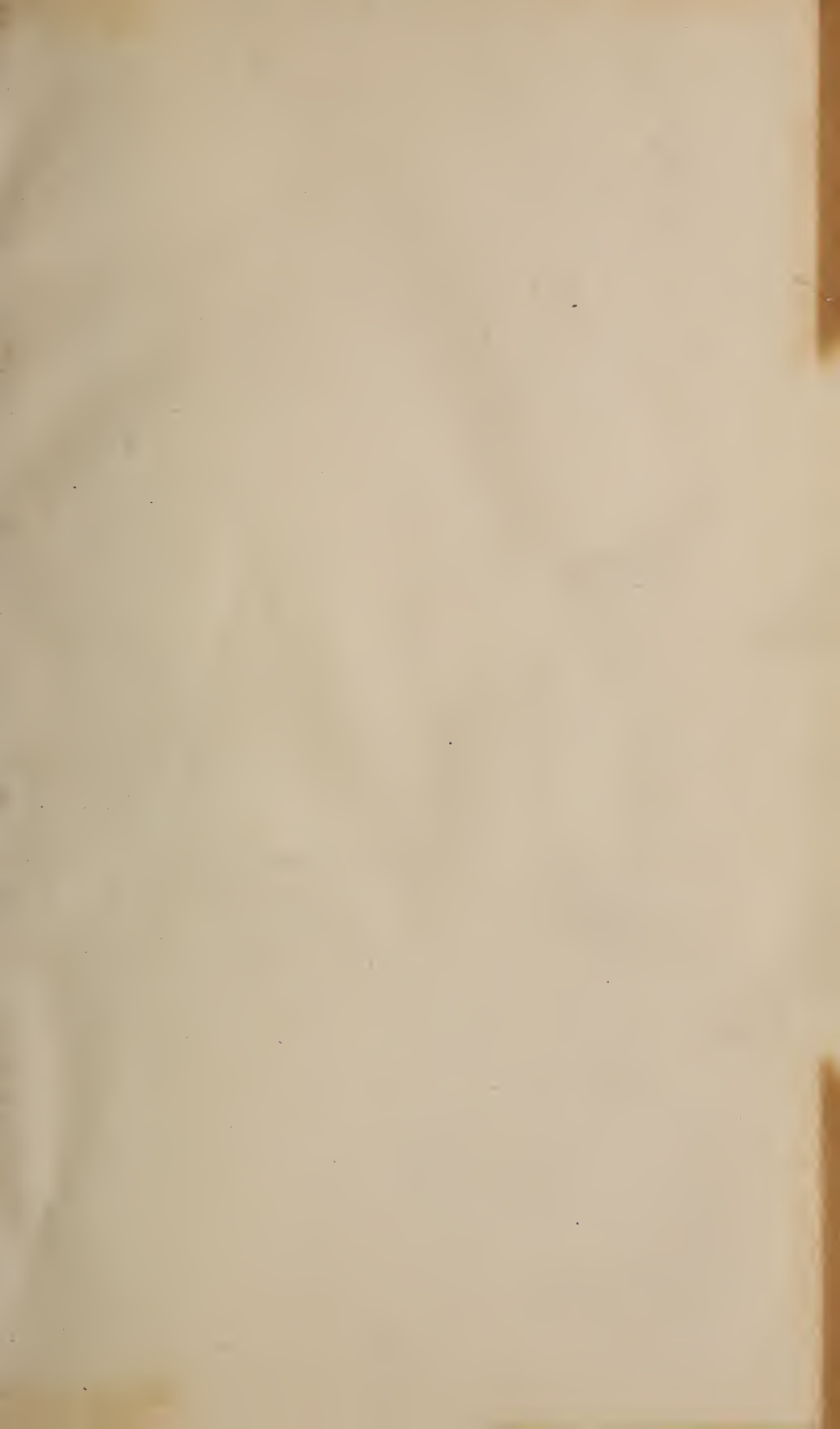
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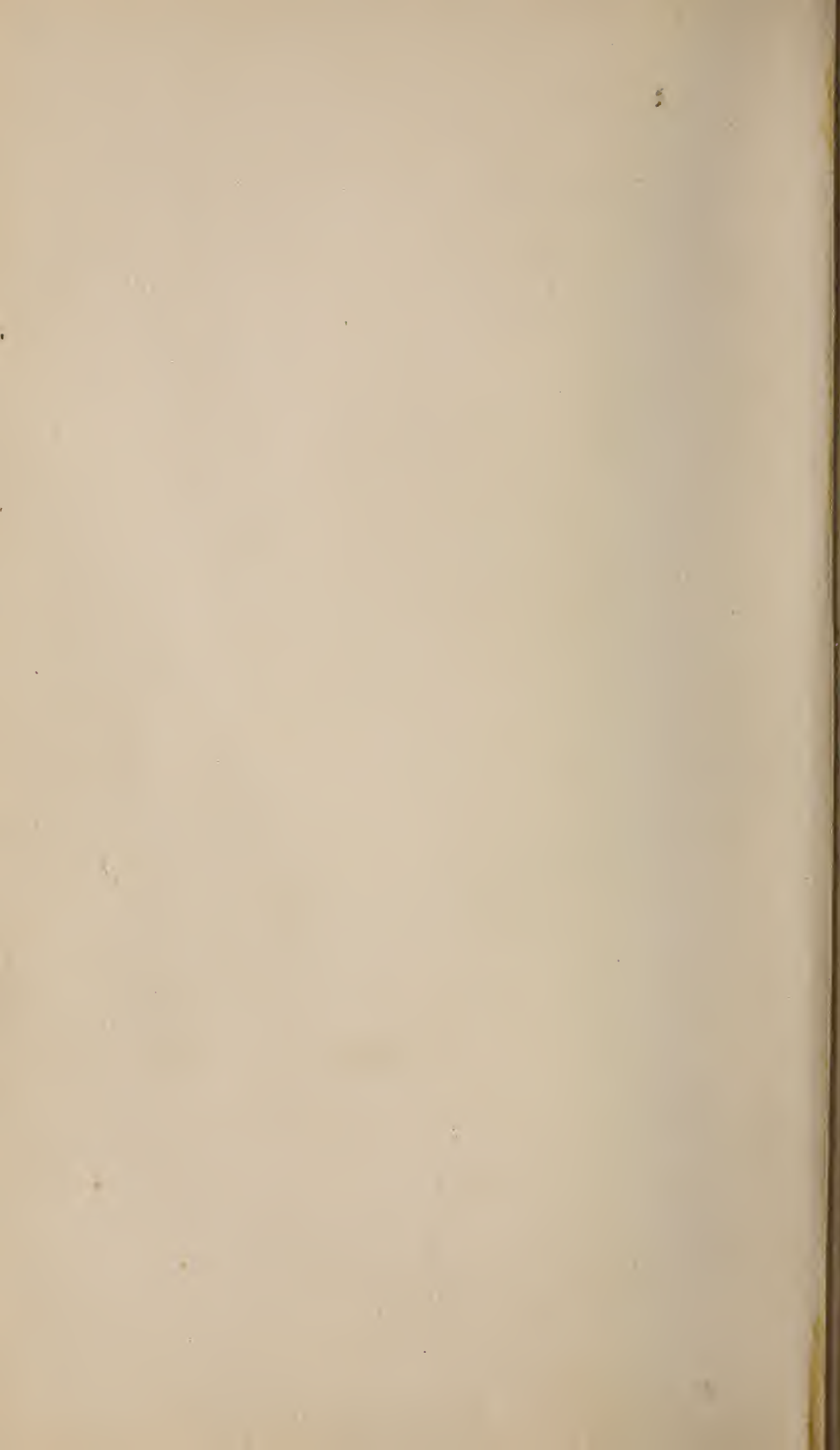
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DON'T WORRY

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NEW YORK
WARD & DRUMMOND
711 BROADWAY



DON'T WORRY

✓ BY

J. R. MILLER, D.D.

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LIFE," "THE EVERY DAY OF LIFE," "SUMMER
GATHERING FOR WINTER'S NEED," "THE
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My Dear Friend,

Will
you not read these
pages carefully and
patiently, to see if
they have any lesson
for you? If they have,
will you not try to
learn it?

Faithfully Yours,

J. R. Miller.

Philadelphia.

“Be not therefore anxious.”—*Jesus Christ.*

“In nothing be anxious.”—*St. Paul.*

“Casting all your anxiety upon Him.”—*St. Peter.*

DON'T WORRY.

DON'T worry! "Ah," says some anxious reader, "it is easy to preach, but hard to practise. No doubt it is good advice, but can we follow it?" Yes, we can learn to follow it. It comes naturally to none; it is a lesson that must be learned. Yet it can be learned.

Many people seem never to understand that they must learn how to live. They suppose that they were sent into life just as they are to go through life, and do not realize that there are a great many things in them that need to be changed, many that require to be made over altogether. It comes naturally to no one to live well, to live ideally. We have many things to overcome, faults to correct, undisciplined powers to bring under control, hindrances to subdue and change into helps.

Living is a fine art. Life is a school. We understand that we have to learn all the worthy things in education. If a man is to become an artist, he has to learn art. It

does not come to him by instinct, as a kind of skill comes to certain animals. He cannot take up a brush and some paints, and, without being taught and without practice, put a noble painting on the canvas. It takes many years of hard and most patient learning to be an artist. One cannot get music as music comes to a bird. Only after the most laborious training can one sing so as to thrill hearts, or sweep the keys of an instrument so as to hold listeners spellbound with one's music.

We all understand that before we can attain any proficiency in any pursuit, business, trade, or art, we must spend much time in learning the rules, and then in acquiring the practice necessary to give us skill. Life itself is a great deal higher art—finer, more difficult—than painting, music, architecture, navigation, or any other branch of life's work. We need to learn how to live. This is just what being a Christian is—learning from Christ to be Christlike. It is to this that Jesus calls us when He invites us to follow Him. "Come unto me, . . . learn of me," is His bidding. His word is our textbook ; He himself is our teacher ; life is our school. We are to learn by doing, by practice, just as men learn any other art.

Don't worry! That is the lesson. It is set for us in our text-book. We are not likely to live thus, naturally. We have to learn to do it, and the learning is not easy. St. Paul was an old man when he said he had learned, in whatsoever state he was, therein to be content; and his language seems to imply that the lesson had not been easily learned. Nor shall we find it less difficult. But however hard it may be, we should strive to learn it, for it is the ideal Christian life.

In the Sermon on the Mount our great Teacher devoted a large section of His instruction to the subject of *carè*. No lesson could be written out more clearly or enforced by more impressive reasons. The motive of the lesson is that we are God's children, and should trust our Father's loving thought for us. He is able to provide for us and keep us in safety and peace in all our experiences. Surely it is not fitting that the children of the heavenly Father should worry!

George MacDonald tells of a castle in which lived an old man and his son. Though they owned the castle, they were yet very poor. They could scarcely get enough bread to keep them from starving. Yet all the time there was great wealth, which, if they had known of it, would have supplied all their

wants. Through long generations there had been concealed within the castle very valuable jewels, which had been placed there by some remote ancestor, so that if he or any of his descendants should be in need there would be something in reserve.

For a long time the old man and his son suffered for want of food, not knowing of the hidden treasures. At last, however, they learned in some way of the concealed jewels, and at once found themselves in the enjoyment of great riches. Instantly their distress was ended. Yet all the years of their pinching poverty these treasures had lain there, belonging to them, ready to furnish them all the comforts of life, laid up there for this very purpose. They suffered, close to this abundant provision, because they did not know of it.

This story illustrates the case of many Christians. They are living in their Father's house, in which are stored the rich treasures of divine love. Yet many of them seem not to know of these treasures, and live in distress, as if no provision were made for their wants. There really never is any reason why a child of God should worry about anything. This is the lesson which Jesus sets for us in His wonderful teaching.

One of the reasons He gives is that anxiety about food and raiment and the world's things is serving mammon, and we cannot serve God and mammon at the same time. The mind must be centred before it can have perfect peace. It must have one motive, one aim, one allegiance, one ground of confidence. If it is divided between two interests there will be distraction, and the peace will be broken. Anxiety is a sin, because it is not trusting God fully and wholly. It is trusting money to provide for our wants, instead of trusting God. When money fails, then we are in distress. George MacDonald says again: "How often do we look upon God as our last and feeblest resource! We go to Him because we have nowhere else to go." We feel safe enough when mammon's abundance fills the pantry and the wardrobe. But when mammon's supplies are exhausted, and we have only God, we worry.

What we need is to train ourselves to such trust and confidence in God, that, though mammon's resources fail us altogether, we shall not be afraid, because we have God. A man is in a pitiful plight when mammon is his god. Money is a good thing, in its place. It is one of God's blessings. But when it gets to be a man's master it is turned into a

curse. We all need to guard ourselves from the peril of mammon-worship. There is a story of a merchant who was resolved to make money his servant, never allowing it to become his master. Once, a ship of his that was coming home was over-due. The first day he was anxious, the next day yet more worried, and the third day he found himself very sorely troubled. Then he came to himself, and, seeing what a hold earthly things had gotten upon him, he ceased to be anxious for his ship and became alarmed for his own soul. "Is it possible," he asked, "that I am coming to love money for itself, and not merely for its nobler uses?" Taking the value of the ship and its cargo, he gave it to charities, not because he wished to be rid of the money, but because only thus could he get the conquest over himself. He who has learned this lesson well will not worry. He is God's servant, God's child, and is dependent for happiness, not upon the continuance of earthly prosperity, but upon God, whose resources of provision and blessing are infinite, like Himself. Whether he has affluence or nothing, he is at peace, for God is taking care of him.

Another reason Jesus gives against worry is that God, having given us our life, is surely

able to provide for our life's passing needs. The life itself is more than its provision. What a strange, mysterious thing it is, this that we call life ! It is more wonderful than the mountains or the stars. Think of physical life, that beats in the heart and pulses in the veins, and stirs in all the fibres. Think of mental life, that knows, remembers, feels, thinks, chooses, loves, suffers ; that can dart across seas and fly to the stars ; that can create beauty, plan, reason, discover, will. Think of spiritual life, that can climb the stairways of light and commune with God ; that can worship ; that can be fashioned into the divine image ; that is capable of heavenly blessedness, and shares the immortality of God. Do not the acts of creating and bestowing a thing so marvellous as life require a more wonderful manifestation of power than the providing of the little piece of bread and the cup of water we need, day by day, to sustain the functions of life ? Why then should we be anxious for these things ?

Another reason why we should not worry, the great Teacher draws from nature. God feeds the birds and clothes the flowers. " Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns : and your heavenly Father feedeth

them. Are not ye of much more value than they?" What is the teaching? Is it that, since the birds neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, therefore we should put forth no exertion to provide for our own wants? No; the birds do the best they know. They live as they were made to live. But we are better than the birds. We are gifted for work. We are endowed with powers by which we are able, ordinarily, to provide for ourselves. Work is not part of the Adamic curse, as some people imagine. It was a divine ordinance for man from the beginning. It is not an untoiling life that Jesus enjoins in His allusion to the untoiling birds.

The teaching is that we are to fill our place as the birds fill theirs, be true to our divine vocation as they are to theirs, and then that God will provide for our wants as he does for theirs. In the prayer which Christ gave us we are taught to ask: "Give us this day our daily bread." It is our bread only after we have earned it. We ask for it even then, because it is God's bread, and we can get it with a blessing only out of His hand.

The argument which Jesus used in enforcing this part of His teaching is that we are

much better than the birds. Birds have no soul, no mental faculties. They cannot think nor reason. They do not wear God's image. They have no spiritual nature, no immortality.

"You are better than the birds," said the Teacher. Man is the crown of God's works. The great dramatist has this eulogy: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals!" Surely a man is better than a bird. Surely then, too, the God who cares for a little soulless, unthinking, dying bird will care much more thoughtfully for a noble, thinking, divinely gifted, immortal man.

Besides, God is our Father. "Your heavenly Father feedeth them." He is not the birds' Father. An earthly father will do more for his children than for his fowls. A mother will give more thought to her baby than to her canary. Our heavenly Father will provide more surely, more carefully, for His own children than for His birds.

A like lesson concerning raiment, Jesus teaches from the flowers. God clothes the

lilies in loveliness far surpassing any adornment which the finest looms or the rarest skill of art can produce. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." We are better than flowers. They live but a day, and their beauty fades. They are lovely, but they have no soul, no mind, no future. If our Father lavishes so much beauty on plants that last but a day and then perish, need we fear that He will fail to provide for us, His own children, who are to live forever? Like the lilies, we should grow wherever God plants us, not complaining, not vexing ourselves with anxious care, pouring out the fragrance of love, fulfilling God's purpose and doing God's will.

“ Yes, leave it with Him ;
The lilies all do,
And they grow ;
They grow in the rain,
And they grow in the dew—
Yes, they grow ;
They grow in the darkness, all hid in the night,
They grow in the sunshine, revealed by the light—
Still they grow.

“ They ask not your planting,
They need not your care
As they grow.

Dropped down in the valley,
The field, anywhere—

There they grow ;

They grow in their beauty, arrayed in pure white ;
They grow, clothed in glory, by heaven's own
light—

Sweetly grow.

“ The grasses are clothed
And the ravens are fed
From His store ;
But you who are loved
And guarded and led,
How much more

Will He clothe you, and feed you, and give you His
care !

Then leave it with Him ; He has, everywhere,
Ample store.

“ Yes, leave it with Him ;
'Tis more dear to His heart,
You will know,
Than the lilies that bloom,
Or the flowers that start
'Neath the snow.

Whatever you need, if you ask it in prayer,
You can leave it with Him, for you are His care,
You, you know.”

Another of the reasons our Teacher gives why we should not worry is the uselessness of it. We cannot, by being anxious about our height, for example, make ourselves any taller. A great deal of the worrying that is so common is over matters that we have no power to change. There is much fretting about the weather. There are many people who never get it just as they want it. They are always complaining and finding fault. But who ever heard of such fretting changing the weather? It were better to accept it as it comes and be cheerful, whichever way the wind blows, and whether it be hot or cold, rainy or dry.

There are many whose condition in life disappoints them. They are poor, and have to work hard to provide for those dependent upon them. They have trials and hardships to endure. Difficulties confront them. Their lot in the world is not easy. Sometimes one can change one's circumstances, better one's condition, by making an earnest effort. This should always be one's aim. God desires us to make the most of our life. He would not have us continue to live in unpleasant conditions which, with a little energy and taste, we might transform to comfort. If the roof leaks when it rains, we ought to mend it, and

not fret and chafe over it. If the fence is broken, and our neighbor's cattle get into our garden and injure our plants and flowers, we ought to repair the fence instead of worrying over the annoyance. If the chimney smokes, we ought to have the flues cleaned out or the defect remedied in some way, and not continue to sit in the smoke and breathe the sulphurous fumes. There are many worries of this class which we ought to have sense and energy enough to cure for ourselves without vexing our souls with anxiety over them.

But there are many things not just to our mind, which no thought or energy of ours can change. There are troubles or misfortunes which have already passed; why should we vex ourselves over these? We cannot help sorrowing when a loved one has been taken from us; but why should we refuse to acquiesce in the will of God? When some misfortune has taken money from us, or when some turn in affairs has hurt our worldly interests, why should we sit down and grieve over the loss? Worry will not retrieve it, nor give us back the old favorable conditions. It is a great deal more sensible thing for us to face the fact of our diminished resources, or to accept the new and changed

conditions, adjusting ourselves to them, and go right on with our life. He was a wise traveller who, when his horse died, said: "Well, I must walk now," and trudged on with cheerful energy. Yet a great many people would have sat down beside the dead horse and spent days in bemoaning their loss. The mill cannot grind with the water that is past. We cannot have the thing we lost yesterday.

Wise are we if we learn this part of the lesson, and never waste a moment in worrying over what no human power can give to us again. This is true even in sorrow. Why should we weep inconsolably over the grave that holds our friend? We cannot bring him back. We must live now without him. His work is done, but ours is not done. We must readjust our life so that we can live nobly alone. Sadness only unfits us for duty. We need all our strength in order to be faithful in our lonelier condition. Regret never helps anything. It does not restore what has been taken away. It does not undo mistakes nor wipe out sins. We would better accept what is done and is beyond any power to recall, and take life just as it is now, working out our little duty bravely and with quiet faith. Says James Whitcomb Riley :

“O heart of mine, we shouldn't
Worry so.
What we've missed of calm we couldn't
Have, you know.
What we've met of stormy pain,
And of sorrow's driving rain,
We can better meet again,
If it blow.

“We have erred in that dark hour,
We have known ;
When our tears fell with the shower
All alone.
Were not shine and shadow blent
As the gracious Master meant ?
Let us temper our content
With His own.”

There are many things in life which are not to our mind, but which we cannot alter. Young people oftentimes fret over the limitations of their life, the narrowness of their opportunity. If only they had the home and the opportunities of some envied neighbor, they would get on a great deal better, making very much more of their life. They have to work constantly on the farm or in the shop. They have no time for reading. Their home is without cheerfulness, perhaps uncongenial. They love it, of course, but it lacks the privi-

leges which they crave. It does not inspire them to their best. They grow discontented, and allow the hardnences and uncongenialities of their lot to dishearten and depress them.

But what good can ever come from worrying over such things? The nobler way, the wiser way, is to accept the conditions that are discouraging, and to live cheerfully in them. Hard work is made easier when we can sing at it. Burdens are made light when one's heart is filled with joy. When we acquiesce in any unpleasant experience we have conquered the unpleasantness. A thoughtful writer says: "The soul loses command of itself when it is impatient, whereas, when it submits without a murmur, it possesses itself in peace, and possesses God. . . . When we acquiesce in an evil it is no longer such. Why make a real calamity of it by resistance? Peace does not dwell in outward things, but within the soul. We may preserve it in the midst of bitterest pain if our will remains firm and submissive. Peace in this life springs from acquiescence even in disagreeable things, not in exemption from bearing them."

Besides, the very hardness of our condition is oftentimes that feature of it from which the greatest blessing comes. The world's best

men have not been grown in easy circumstances. Pampered, petted boys do not usually make the heroes and the great men of their generation. Hardship in early years, nine times out of ten, is that which makes a man strong and stalwart in character, and a power among men when he reaches his prime. Herodotus wrote : " It is a law of nature that faint-hearted men should be the fruit of luxurious countries ; for we never find that the same soil produces delicacies and heroes."

Therefore, instead of worrying over the rough, stern, and severe things in his environment, a hearty, wholesome boy ought to set to work to master them, and in mastering them get strength and victoriousness for his own life. A connoisseur in gems brought a large, beautiful onyx to a fine artist, and said : " See how clear, pure, and transparent this stone is. What a fine one for your skill, were it not for this one fatal blemish ! " Then he showed the lapidary at one point an underlying tinge of iron-rust, which, he said, made the stone almost worthless.

But the artist took it, and with matchless skill and delicacy wrought upon the stone, carving on it the graceful figure of a lovely goddess. By most ingenious and patient use of his engraving tool he fashioned it so that

what had seemed an irreparable blemish was made into a leopard-skin, on which rested the feet of the goddess—the contrasting colors enhancing the beauty of the cameo.

This illustrates what we may do with the hard things in our condition, what God would have us do with them. We think we can never make anything beautiful and worthy of our life, with the many discouraging things, the obstinate hindrances, there are in our lot. Really, however, we can make our life all the nobler, richer, greater, stronger, worthier, by means of the very things which, we think, ruin our chances. We can so carve the stone that the iron-rust which seems to mar it shall prove one of its finest features when mastered and wrought into its own place.

That is the way to treat hard and discouraging things in our lot. It is useless to fret over them—fretting will never remove them, and it only weakens our energy and mars our life. There is no other such enemy to noble living and heroic achievement as worrying. But if we meet the hindrances and discouragements with undismayed courage, with persistent resolve, and with unconquerable energy, we shall master them, and in mastering them carve royalty of character and noble worth for ourselves.

Another of our Teacher's reasons why we should not worry is that worrying is a sin. The Gentiles, he says—that is, heathen people—do it, but they know no better. They have never been taught about our God, that He is a Father to His children. They know only the idolater's gods, which can do nothing for their worshippers. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Gentiles are often anxious about the future, or that life's confused events perplex them. But we know God. We know that He is our Father. We have His promises. It must seem strange to the angels that Christian people, who call themselves God's children, and have such assurances of love and divine care and faithfulness as fill the Bible pages, should ever be anxious. Perhaps the very richness of God's goodness and the unbroken continuity of His favors and mercies are reasons why we fail to get all the comfort we should receive from the divine Fatherhood.

Some one has said that if only once or twice in a century God were to unveil the starry heavens, showing us the glory of their splendors, all men would look up in awe to adore and worship. But because every night the sky is unveiled to us and its wondrous beauty shown, we walk about on the dark earth and

scarcely ever see the stars. If there were breaks sometimes in the flow of God's goodness, we would better appreciate its wondrous meaning ; but living evermore beneath its benedictions, we do not realize its fulness and blessedness. Yet surely, with such a Father, caring for us more constantly and more tenderly than any human mother cares for her child, we ought never to worry. Anxiety is not merely an unhappy feverishness, an allowable weakness : it is sin, for it is doubting God.

For, as the Master tells us again, we really have nothing to do with the care of our own life. We have but one thing to do : " Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." The care of our life, then, is God's, not ours : " and all these things shall be added unto you." When soldiers enter the service of the country, they have nothing whatever to do with providing for their wants. They are to be faithful soldiers, and the government looks after their needs. So it is with Christ's followers. They devote their lives to Christ, and He cares for them. When, therefore, we grow anxious about food or raiment or shelter or safety, we are taking the care of our life out of our Father's hands.

We should learn to put the emphasis upon

duty, not upon care, for duty only is ours. We must be diligent and faithful. Nothing must be left undone. Nothing must be done out of harmony with God's law of righteousness. We must never resort to dishonesty in thought or word or deed, in seeking to provide for our wants. No matter how great the necessity, how circled about with danger the way may be, how pressing the need, how impossible it may seem for help or relief to come, we must never turn aside a hair's breadth from the course that is right. We must do ever whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are lovely, and somehow God will bless us and show us light.

“Nothing done out of our daily path of love and duty, no fretting or chafing, will turn over the next page in the story for us, because a larger, stronger hand than ours holds the leaves together; and simply in clinging to that hand must we walk straight on and never mind our longings to see the end, however intense they may be. Some day we shall read the story from first to last, and see clearly the divine meaning of the whole; see it with smiling, not streaming eyes; with folded, not struggling hands.”

At the close of His wonderful words about worry, the great Teacher gives one of the secrets of unanxious living. He says we should keep the fences up between the days. "Be not therefore anxious for the morrow, for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." We should keep each day with its needs shut off by itself. To-morrow's cares we must not bring back into to-day's little hours. There is no room for them there, nor have we strength for them. We have just room and strength enough for to-day's own duties and cares. No one ever finds one day's load too heavy; it is when we try to carry the burden of other days in addition to to-day's that we break down. It is a golden lesson, a blessed secret, this living by the day. Its beauty and its mercifulness are shown so simply, so plainly, in George Klinge's lines, that they must be given here:

" One single day
 Is not so much to look upon. There is
 some way
 Of passing hours of such a limit. We can
 face
 A single day; but place
 Too many days before sad eyes—
 Too many days for smothered sighs—

And we lose heart
Just at the start.
Years really are not long, nor lives—
The longest which survives—
And yet to look across
A future we must tread bowed by a sense
of loss,
Bearing some burden weighing down so low,
That we can scarcely go
One step ahead—this is so hard,
So stern a view to face, unstarred,
Untouched by light, so masked with dread.
If we would take a step ahead,
Be brave, and keep
The feet quite steady; feel the breath of
life sweep
Ever on our face again.
We must not look across—looking in vain—
But downward to the next close step,
And up. Eyes that have wept
Must look a little way, not far.
God broke the years to hours and days,
That hour by hour
And day by day,
Just going on a little way,
We might be able all along
To keep quite strong.
Should all the weights of life
Be laid across our shoulders, and the future,
rife

With woe and struggle, meet us face to face
At just one place,
We could not go ;
Our feet would stop. And so
God lays a little on us every day,
And never, I believe, on all the way,
Will burdens bear so deep,
Or pathways lie so steep,
But we can go, if by God's power
We only bear the burden of the hour."

Thus imperfectly has the Master's great lesson been set forth. He who learns the lesson—to live without anxiety—has mastered the art of living. He is ready now to live sweetly and most effectively. It is said that the electric dynamo is nearly perfect in its conservation of force ; that ninety-five per cent. of its power is utilized. If we could learn to live so that ninety-five per cent. of our energy should become light or power, it would be a wonderful triumph. We waste life's force in many ways, but in no way more needlessly or more uselessly than in worrying. He who has learned to live without worry has learned to live and work without waste of energy. Life is so short, and there is so much that ought to be done, that whatever enables us to hold the forces of our being in hand for true and useful

service, adds greatly to the value of our existence.

This is the lesson. Is it not worth while to learn it? It can be learned. It will not come easily—nothing really worth while comes easily. But it can be learned. It ought to be learned, too, by every follower of Christ.

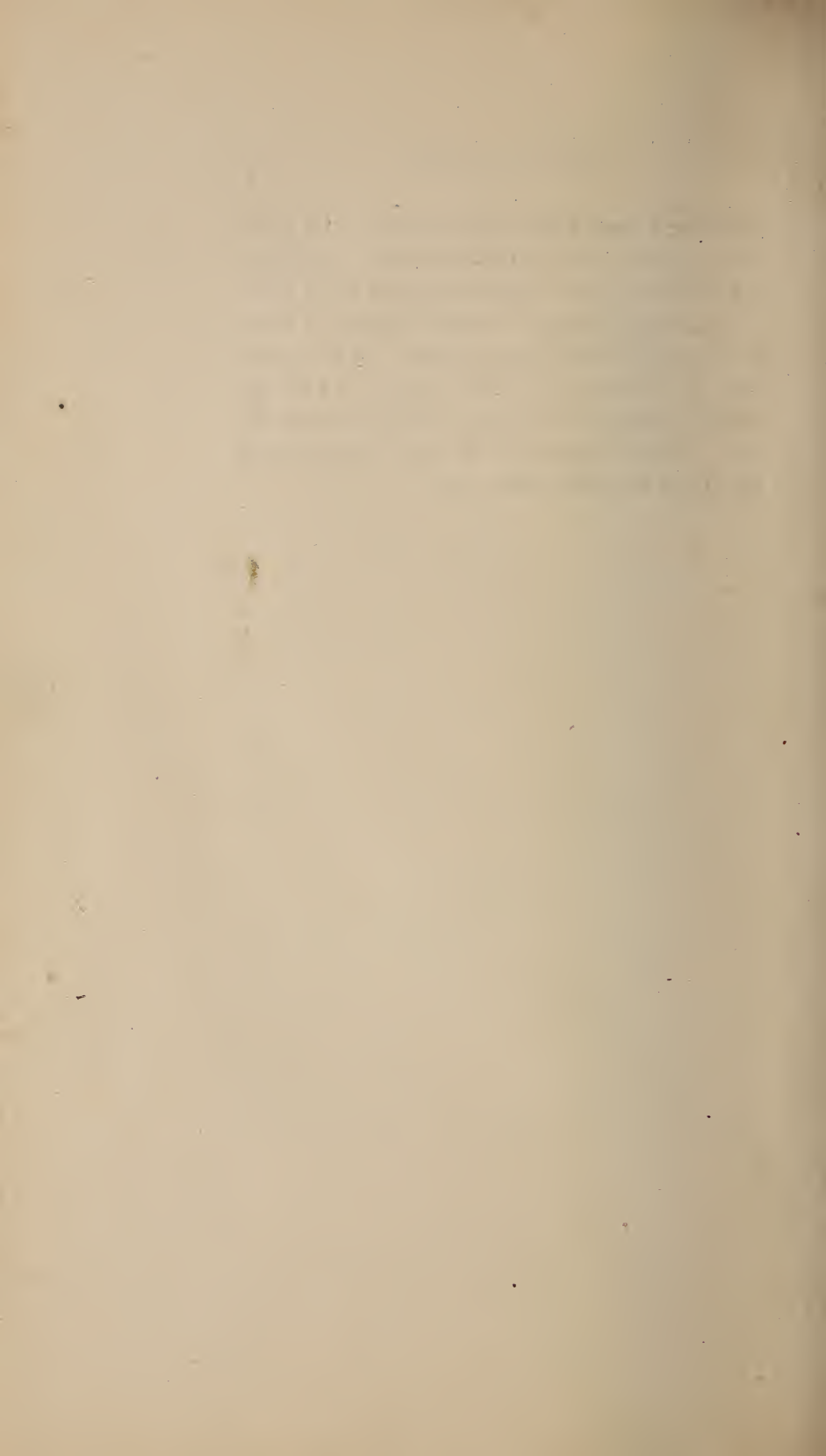
He will help us to learn it, for He understands how hard it is. Yet it is as a Teacher that He promises to give us the help. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . . Learn of me . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He would teach us how to live so that we may find this rest—which is the very blessing of which we have been thinking—the blessedness of not worrying. We cannot get the lesson in one day. He does not give it to us as a gift, passing it from His hand into ours. It is a blessing which has to be taken into our life through our own learning and doing.

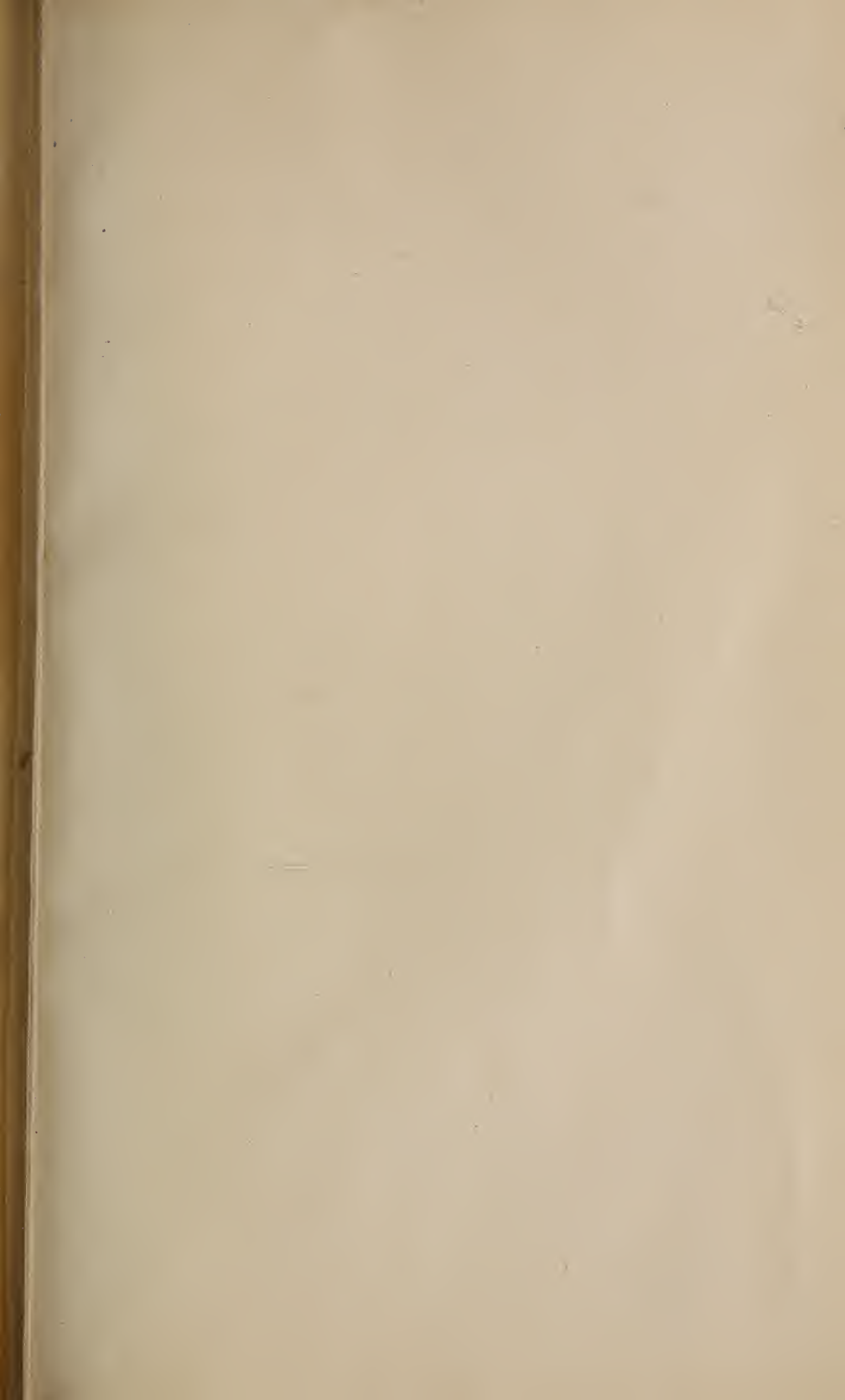
No teacher can put knowledge into a pupil's mind, or skill into his hand, save through the pupil's own striving. Even Christ cannot make our life unanxious save through our own eager desire and seeking. Prayer will help, but prayer alone will not get a child's lesson for him.

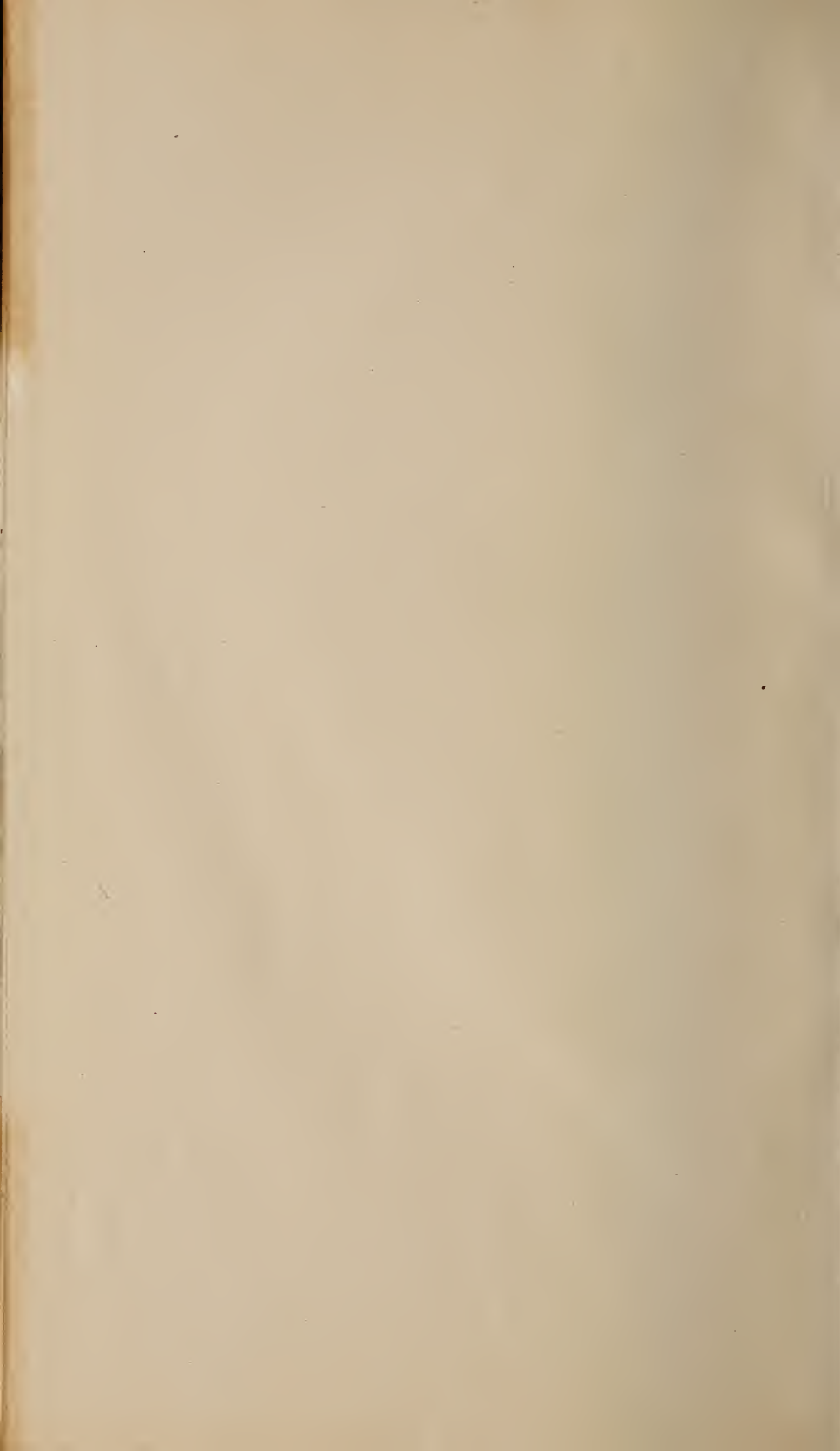
Standing before a masterpiece of art in one of the Old World's galleries, a young artist said to Ruskin: "Ah! if I could put such a dream on canvas!" "Dream on canvas!" growled the critic; "it will take ten thousand touches of the brush on the canvas to make your dream." Looking at the divine ideal of an unanxious life, as we see it, first in the words and then in the character of Jesus, we are all ready to wish we might realize it. But wishing alone will never lift us up to this holy beauty. We must toil to reach it. It will take ten thousand touches of the brush to put the dream on canvas. Mere dreaming does little. Chiselled on the tomb of a disappointed, heart-broken king, Joseph II. of Austria, in the royal cemetery at Vienna, is this pitiable epitaph: "Here lies a monarch who, with the best intentions, never carried out a single plan." Not thus can we learn our lesson. Good intentions will do nothing unless they are wrought into deeds and into character. Better far was the spirit of Joan of Arc, who, when asked the secret of the victoriousness of her famous white standard, replied: "I said to it, 'Go boldly among the English,' and then I followed it myself." Thus only can we win the splendor of a life without worry. We must have our good

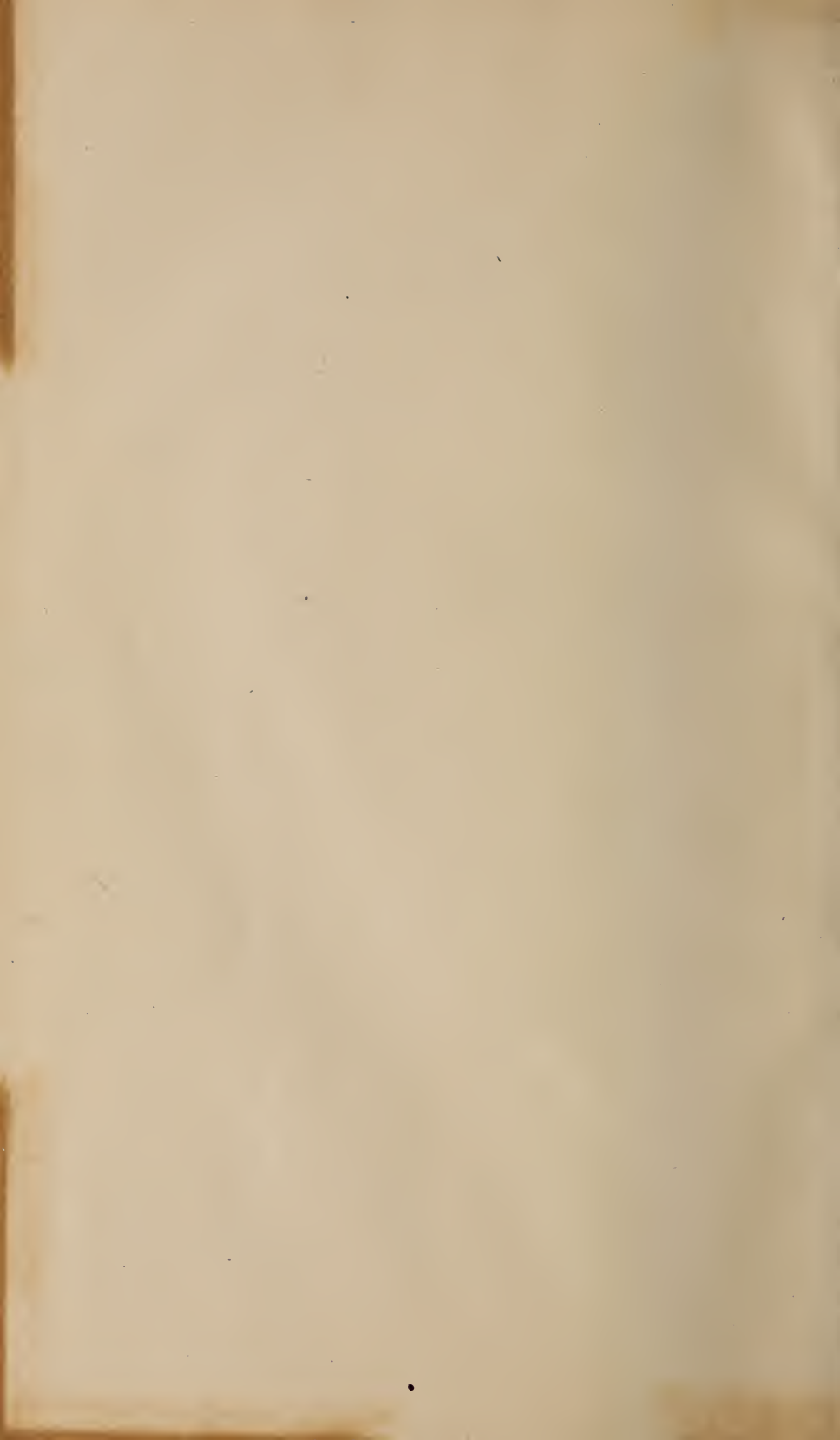
intentions, and send them forward like white banners, but we must follow them ourselves. We must put our dreams into beautiful life.

Thus day by day, "no day without a line," we may get the lesson learned. Christ will help us if we try in His name. As we go forward, He will make the struggle easier for us. He will make the dreams come true as we strive to make them real.

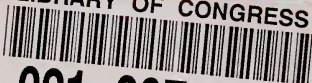








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