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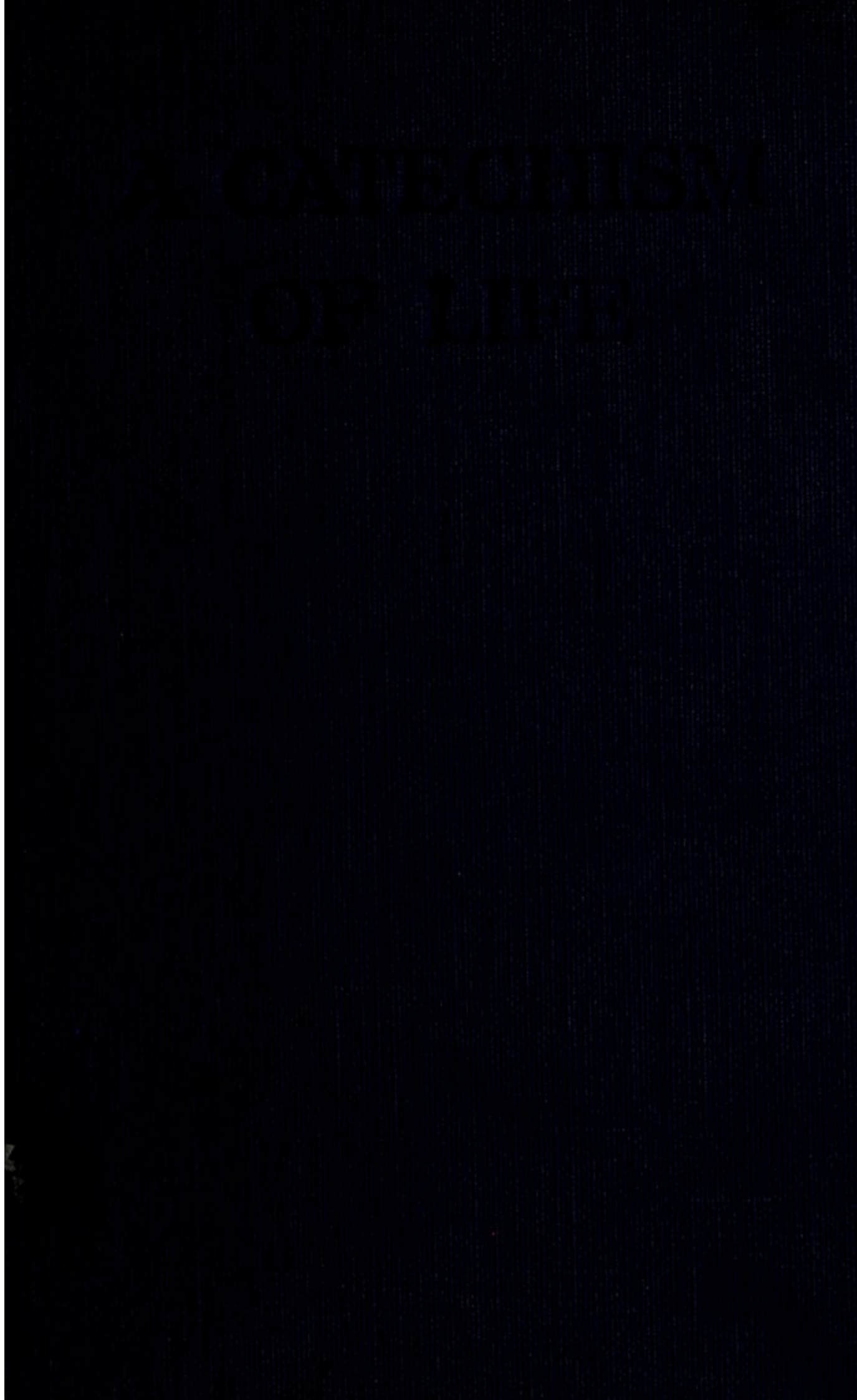
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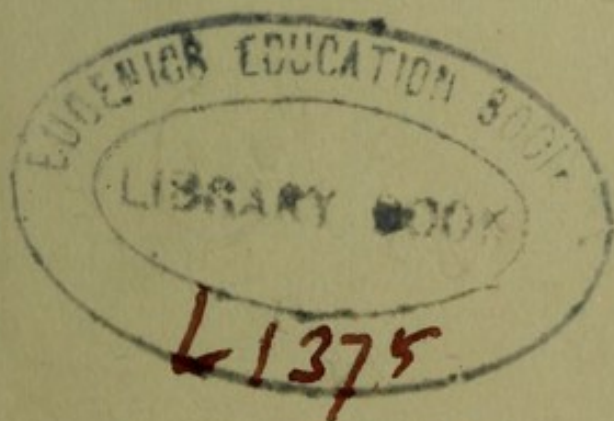
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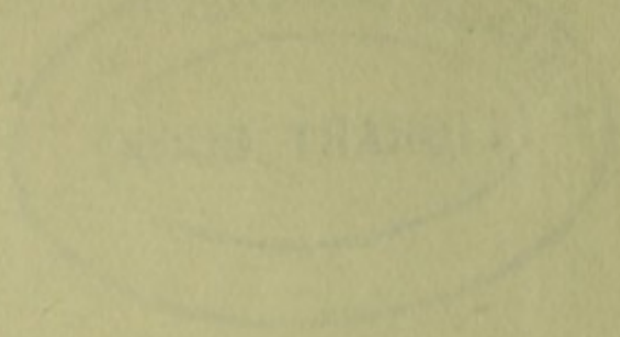
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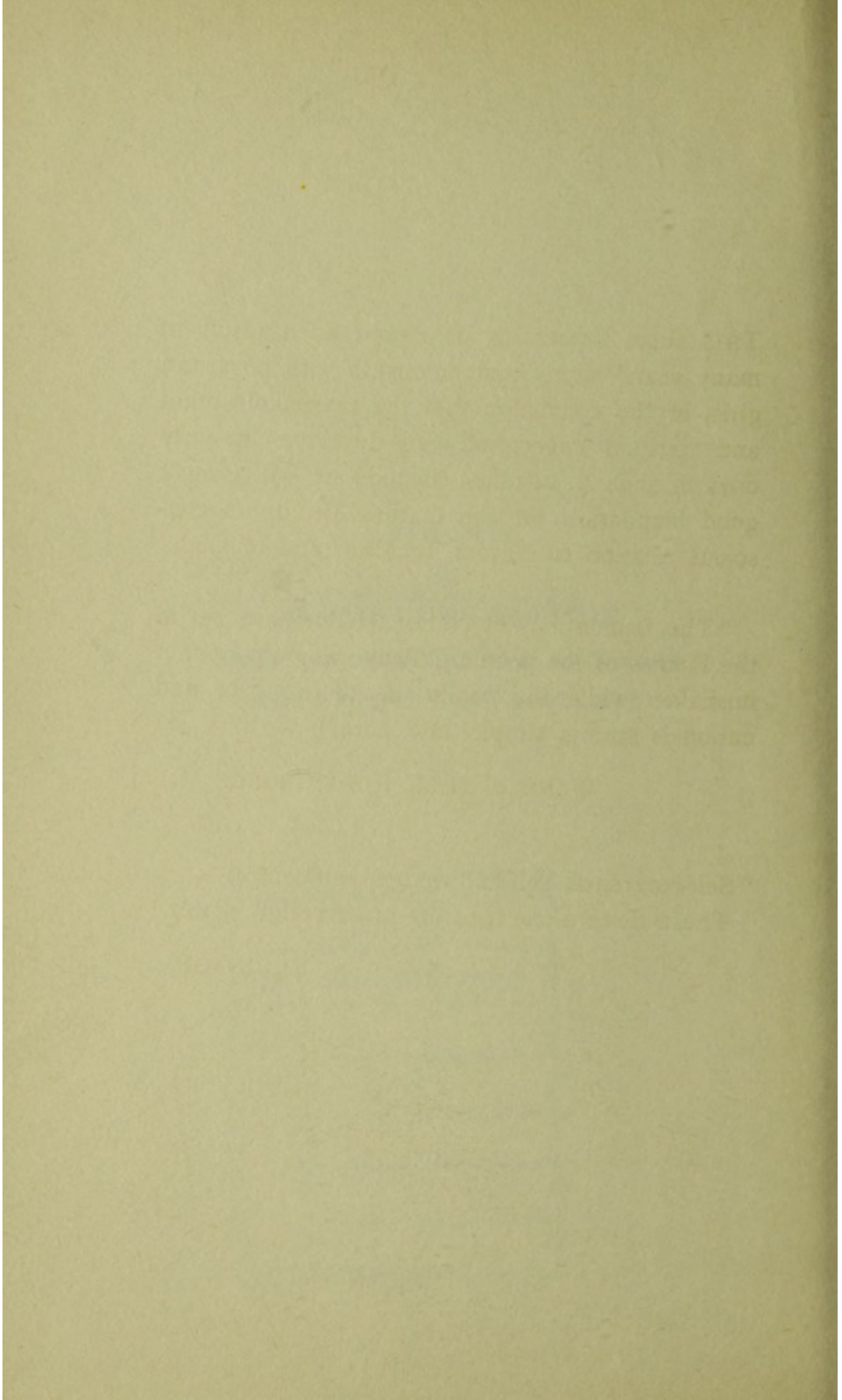
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DEDICATED
TO
MOTHERS AND FATHERS
AND TO ALL WHO RECOGNIZE AND PLACE
THE LITTLE CHILD IN THE MIDST



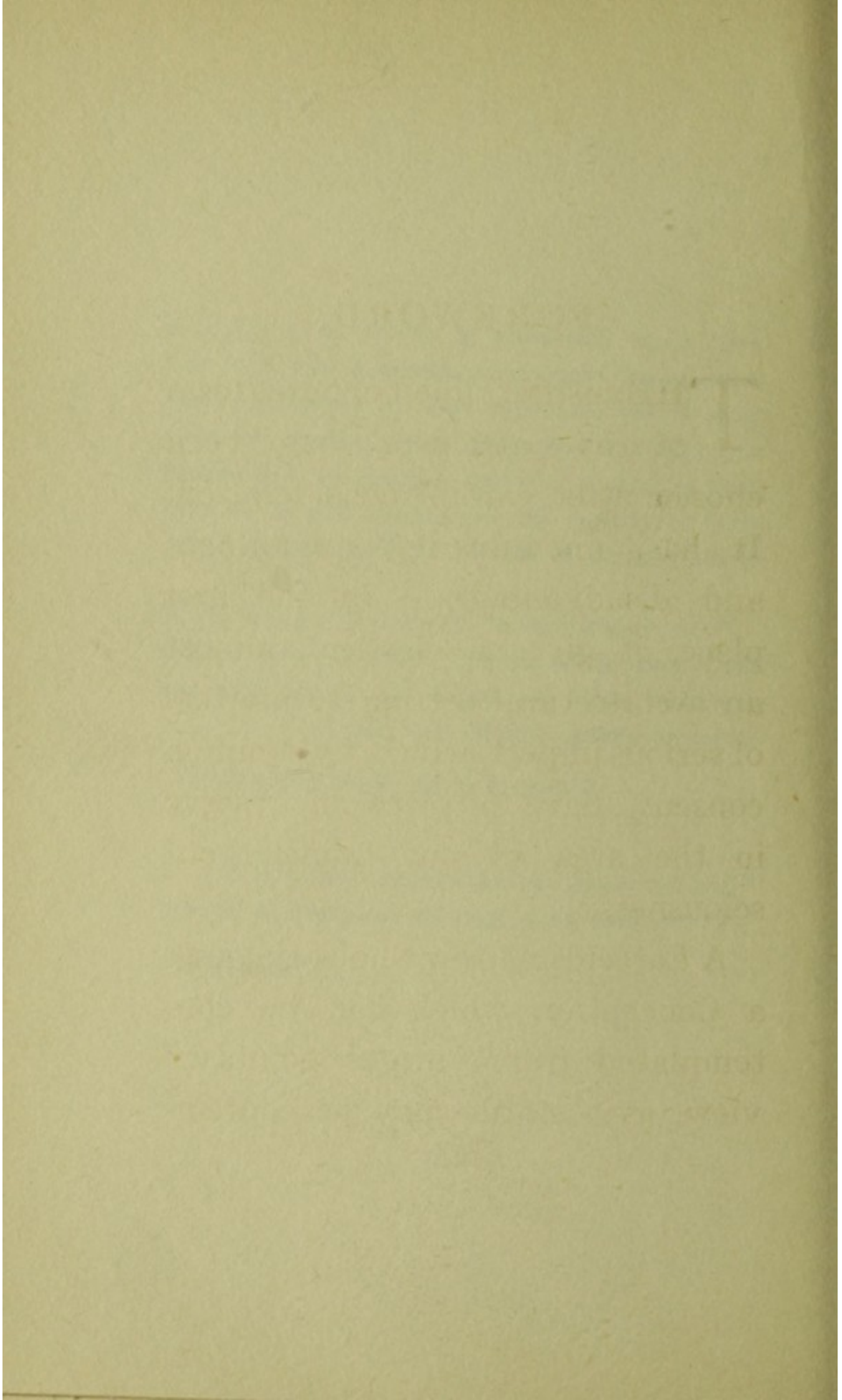
THIS short Catechism is offered as a result of many years' happy companionship with boys and girls, in the conviction that the reasonable mind and spiritual conception can develop in early days to such a steadfast attitude as will form a good foundation for the mature life, in its conscious relation to Nature, to Man, and to God.

“The foundations of National Glory are set in the Homes of the people. They will only remain unshaken while the family life of our race and nation is strong, simple, and pure.”

Words of H.M. KING GEORGE V

“Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control—
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.”

TENNYSON



FOREWORD

THE austere, time-honoured form of a Catechism has been chosen after careful consideration. It has, undoubtedly, advantages and disadvantages. In the first place, it gives a classical, almost an architectural setting to matters of serious import, which, by common consent, have a place of reserve in the area of our human consciousness.

A Catechism, as a whole, suggests a Conception which can be contemplated from various points of view, as a statue may be contem-

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plated. From every point of view, the 'attitude' of a statue is the first and more important thing. So also is it with a Catechism.

In the second place, a warning must be given as to the use of any work of this kind. The Catechism is intended throughout as a guide to the Parent and Teacher, and must in *no* case be set as an exercise. By such a misuse, its educational value will be lost. It is intended as a framework, within which the teacher can see the proportional values of the matter before him, and upon which he can develop the living flesh of his own vision. Intuition and Experience will prevent him from losing sight at any time

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of the fact that the real effect he desires can only be produced by the direct touch of 'Life upon life,' by the living contact of his mind with the mind of the child. In this lies the great secret of the Educator. It is better to be content with less logical and less complete expressions, and to speak directly to the young mind, than turn to any definitions, however satisfactory, printed in a book. It is self-evident that, in the education of the sacred sense of personality, and all the wonder, humility, and hope that this implies, every child must be seen as an individual among his comrades.

The manner of treatment therefore will be different in every case. For

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some children, plain and exact speech is the only suitable method ; for others, simple suggestion, coming often in the form of a question, will open out whole regions of Truth, where more literal speech would obscure, or even distress, a mind working by another measure. One child in a family will show interest long before another in the mysteries of life. The wise Educator will notice this, and be guided by the child's needs. Generally speaking, the satisfying of the young mind on these matters will fall to the part of the mother, with whom the child has already had the beautiful normal relations of infancy.

In a living Catechism the answer

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should be developed from the child as far as possible, his natural answer being in every case respected. If of a limited character, it should be placed gradually in fuller relation to the whole, as development proceeds.

The conception contained in each clause of the Catechism stands as a goal to which the Teacher may look—a goal which the young mind may one day be able to acclaim as a true picture of his own thought and ideals.

Thus safeguarded, the Catechism may be used in quite small parts with a child of seven. By that age, much of the material will already have been given in spontaneous

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answer to questions, and in more familiar language. In many cases the Teacher will feel inclined to use quite another range of words, while preserving the thought embodied in the text. It will readily be understood that the later clauses are intended for the guidance of children of fourteen years and upwards.

In such a Catechism, the first part of each answer may be simple; the second part more elaborate and suggestive of associations; and the whole be embodied in such language as the mature mind may come to welcome and memorize of its own initiative.

It will be seen that physiological

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and anatomical definitions have been purposely avoided. The wish has rather been to lead the child to characterize his powers and organs according to the part they play in the round of his daily life, which life is the doorway into his Kingdom.

Affirming unhesitatingly the glad and positive side of life, it has been the aim of the compiler to make a book which may be found in any household, and one which may be placed by judicious parents in the hands of boys and girls seeking exact knowledge as they leave adolescence behind, and approach the maturity of manhood and womanhood.

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An Appendix will be found at the end of the Catechism containing illustrative material, some simple explanations, and a short bibliography.

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What is your Name ?

Example—George or Grace.

What does your Name mean ? ¹

(1) Tiller of the Ground ; or,
Maker of barren places fertile.

(2) Bounteous ; or, One who
loves to give.

What are You ?

Boy, Girl, a Human Being.

Fuller answer—I am a Living
Being, of which my body is the
visible part.

¹ See note in Bibliography.

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How do you regard your Body ?

My Body is my servant. In honouring it I honour the image of my Life.

What is the end and purpose of your Body ?

The end and purpose of my Body is to help me to carry out my Will.

And what is your Will ?

To discover and acknowledge the Kingdom whose heir I am ; and to serve It and enjoy It with my fellows.

To whom was it given to prepare your Life for you ?

To those who have lived before me, but especially to my father

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and to my mother, in whose being I share, and through whom I have the privilege of this Heritage.

How may the chief parts of the Body be grouped ?

As head, trunk, members, etc. (to be elaborated as the memory of the child suggests).

For what is your sense of Sight ?

That I may know Light, and measure it from darkness ; that I may distinguish the True from the false ; worship Beauty where I see it, and faithfully minister to its creation.

For what is your sense of Sound ?

That I may hear the Voice of all things, and respond with mine.

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By listening we learn to overcome discord and to establish Harmony.

For what is your sense of Taste ?

That I may accept gladly things that are wholesome, and reject those that are unfit ; distinguish that which is sound from that which is unsound ; that which is fair from that which is foul ; that which is pure and simple from that which is artificial and base.

For what is your sense of Smell ?

That I may discern the hidden nature of things from afar ; rejoice in the free fragrance that yields delight over and above

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every use ; and learn to avoid the presence of danger.

What is the sense of Touch ?

The mother-sense of all the senses, causing the whole Body to receive with joy the things of Life and to shrink from things of Death. By Touch I become conscious of the temperature of a thing, its form and texture. By Touch I perceive the relation of things to myself, and to each other, and learn to hold among them a free and upright position.

For what are your Hands ?

My Hands are for doing and making. The Hand is the sign of one who creates, who serves, who

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protects, who blesses, who rules. It is the part of our Hands to change the places of things, that we may learn their effect on each other, and cause them to embody our thought. The Hand is one of the chief organs of expression.

For what are your Feet ?

My Feet are for standing firm and for perfect going. They are the sign of the Messenger and of the Explorer. They are the mark of freedom. They make paths for us in all regions, that the earth may reveal her resources to man, and that man may discover his bounty to the earth.

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For what is your Tongue ?

My Tongue is the Organ of Speech. It is honoured in the Singing of Praise and the Telling of Truth. By the Tongue, and its uttered word, one mind approaches another, and causes him, for his joy or his sorrow, to attend. The Tongue belongs also to the organs of Taste.

What is the Brain ?

The Brain is man's chief organ for thinking, for perceiving, and for willing. Its delicate and sensitive structure is enclosed and protected by a bony case, called the skull.

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Why do you breathe ?

I breathe that I may live. Breathing is the child's first act. The Breath is the sign of Life. It enters the Lungs by way of the nostrils, it quickens and sustains the rhythm of the Organs, it cleanses the body's impurities as by a perpetual burning, and momentarily adjusts it to its surroundings. The habit of Breathing regulates the body, awake or asleep. When man is awake, his Breathing is more or less within his Will-power. Through it he can increase his general self-control. Pure air at all times is essential to right breathing.

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What is the place and service of the Heart ?

The Heart is regarded as the centre of the Body, and the citadel of the feelings. Its steady action sends nourishment into all the organs. It reflects and responds to the Rhythm of the Universe. Its power may be influenced by the Breath.

For what are the Organs of Nourishment ?

The Organs of Nourishment are for the selecting, the assimilating and the eliminating of food. They comprise the mouth and its parts, the stomach, the smaller and larger bowel with their parts, and the kidneys.

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What do you mean by Food ?

Food is all such substance as may be absorbed into the structure of a living Body. The food of plants is provided by the simple substances of air, earth and water, rearranged by help of the Sun's light and heat ; but the food of animals is complex. It must have already combined into organic matter, vegetable or animal, before it can be absorbed. It is important that the Body be regularly supplied with good and pure Food, containing those substances which can most effectively build up its cells, and add to their growth.

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Of what service are the Teeth ?

The Teeth serve to break up and soften Food, and are a defence to the tender parts of the mouth. They are also necessary for giving clearness and tone to Speech.

What is the Saliva ?

The Saliva is a safeguard, and a natural solvent, secreted by the mouth to act upon and prepare Food descending to the stomach. It is highly responsive to suggestion, and may easily be overstimulated and wasted.

What is the Blood ?

The Blood is the Stream of Life, by which digested Food is

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carried to the different organs for their sustenance and growth, and waste materials are removed. The red particles of the Blood combine with the oxygen of the air in the Lungs, and thence carry it to all parts of the Body, maintaining thus its life and heat.

What is the Skin ?

The Skin is the firm, elastic, complete covering of the Body, within and without, by which it comes into contact with the air and other bodies. Moisture and impurities are exhaled through its pores, which must be kept clear and open.

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What are the other organs for purification ?

The kidneys and the lower bowel.

What is the result of keeping unused material in the **Body** ?

Unused material burdens the organs, hinders the natural processes of Life, and produces disease. The habit of daily cleanliness, within and without, is the first law of health. To bathe is an act of reverence.

What are the Muscles ?

The Muscles are the instruments by whose contraction we move. They are essential to the active life of man. They need

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alternations of exercise and rest to attain to the beauty of maturity, and can be developed for special purposes.

Why do you Sleep ?

I sleep that my Body and Mind may be rested and renewed. Sleep is induced by relaxation, by darkness, and by silence. It is our habit to sleep when we are tired. Sleeping and waking correspond with the great natural rhythm of Night and Day.

What is the Navel of the Body ?

The Navel is the Seal of the Body. At this centre every child was once nourished from the life

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of its mother, and shared her being. It remains as the sign of a period closed, and as a record of man's heritage of a great past.

What is the Organ of Life ?

The Organ of Life is the Treasure-house of my Strength. In it the Living Force is stored, for the realization and the quickening of my own bodily and spiritual powers ; and as an offering of joy and supreme fellowship, should I be privileged at any time to meet another who is prepared with me to undertake the responsibility of begetting and nourishing a young human life.

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How then must every Maiden regard herself ?

Every Maiden must therefore regard herself as a Guardian of Life, bearing within her body the creative Power, to be dedicated, in the transcendent Motherhood of her being, to the joy and help of her generation, whether she be called, or not, to the conception and nurturing of young human life.

How then must every Youth regard himself ?

Every Youth must therefore regard himself as the Servant of Life, bearing in his body the creative Power, to be dedicated,

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in the transcendent Manhood of his being, to the joy and service of his generation, whether he be called, or not, to the quickening and protection of young human life.

How then must every Man and Woman regard each other ?

The Man and the Woman shall regard each other with reverence and wonder, as co-partners of Life in all its works ; willing for service ; eager to seek the good of the other, and, if called upon to undertake parenthood, to accept together in equal measure that deed of love and sacrifice, and to uphold it before God and man.

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What is Passion ?

Passion is the impulse to the concentration of the energies of Life, on all or any of the planes of being. Desire on the physical plane only is lust. The increasing of the ideal elements in passion is the glory of human love. Obedient to natural law in the animal, desire is further regulated in man by his mental and spiritual conceptions, and becomes chaste. Passion fulfils its destiny in man when it is illumined by knowledge, and consecrated by its end and aim.

What is Marriage ?

Marriage is the purposeful

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interchange of Life between two individuals of complementary sex. In human marriage, each transcends individuality to achieve oneness with the other, accomplishing in the symbol of mutual surrender the highest act of self-realization, which is creation. The creative power, functioning on all or any of the planes of being, leads the mature man and woman into the Kingdom of their true inheritance.

Who may be truly said to have found the Kingdom ?

He alone may be truly said to have found the Kingdom who knows himself, who causes his

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inheritance to yield its best powers, who finds his joy in ready fellowship, and his rest in GOD.

APPENDIX

NOTES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE PARENT AND TEACHER

Sight.—Ideals of Truth and Beauty have been exalted from the earliest ages under the symbol of Light. Light is associated with the Supreme Source of Good, with the practice of Contemplation and Reflection, and with the experience of Inner Illumination.

Hearing.—Ideals of Perception and Inspiration, of Self-Expression and Command, of Co-operation and

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Harmony, are associated with the symbols of Silence and Sound.

Taste.—Taste is associated with powers of Discrimination, with Hunger, and with Sense-Enjoyment. Ideals of Chastity and of Simplicity, of Proportion and of Tact, have been embodied in the symbol of Taste.

Smell.—Ideals of Sanctification and Sacrifice, and the powers of Discrimination and pure Enjoyment are associated with the symbols of Fragrance and Smell. Compare the common use of Incense, and the term “A Sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savour.”

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Touch.—Ideals of Power and Sympathy, of Communication and Response, of rare Discrimination, of Tact and of Healing are associated with the symbols of Temperature and of Touch. Compare the manners of greeting in different countries, such as the “falling on the neck,” the kiss, the hand-clasp.

Breath. — Breathing and the Breath are closely connected with mental processes. Deep, steady Breathing is a natural habit to be cultivated at all times. It enables the individual to draw on the great resources of Life and to harmonize subconscious processes. The Breath

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is largely used for symbolic illustration by ancient Teaching, the Breath being commonly regarded as the Spirit, or the sign of the Spirit.

Muscles.—In connexion with the muscles a child may be led to observe the different aspects of physical development brought about by different occupations and professions.

Sleep.—Much may be said upon the ideal conditions for Sleep. This important subject has not been sufficiently studied in all its bearings.

The habitual attitude in Sleep is usually formed in early childhood. What is the right attitude for

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perfectly healthy Sleep? Our forefathers probably curled up in the hollows of decayed trees, and in caves. It must not be forgotten that man is still a transitional creature. He is 'becoming,' and his habits change with climate, and with his advancing ideals.

The attitude of complete Rest is undoubtedly that of full relaxation on the back, the circulation thus being symmetrically influenced by gravity all over the body.

This attitude has been taken by common consent for recumbent figures on monuments. There is much to be said, from many points of view, for the position of the hands at rest upon the breast. The lungs

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and heart are relieved, and the breathing becomes even and deep. The head will often turn to one side, and the shoulders will be slightly raised. If the pillow be neither too low nor too high (and it is generally too high), there will be no special tendency to dream. The usual argument against this attitude is the weight of the bed-clothes. These should at all times be light and warm. The sleeper should sleep with a sense of freedom and coolness. Many prefer to sleep on the right side, if any pressure is felt by the heart; but the relaxation in this attitude is not so complete.

In any case, it should be remembered that an orderly room, even

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to its casual details, as well as a calm and quietly adjusted mind, gives the best conditions for perfect Sleep. Early Sleep, before the brain and nerves feel weariness, is of great importance to all youth. The tendency to shorten the early hours of Sleep will bring serious results.

“Early to sleep and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,” is an adage which bids fair to be forgotten in the present generation. Let us recover it ere it be too late.

The process of Sleep is a mystery, and gives us possibly far more than we suspect.

Food.—It is important the child should realize that pure, good,

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and wholesome food is essential to the building up of so beautiful and wonderful an organism as the human body. The food provided for the body has a distinctly traceable influence on the temperament and general development. This subject should receive more reasonable attention in the present artificial state of civilization. Compare the Eastern habit of mind, which regards Food as holy, and its preparation as having a serious, even a religious significance.

Mouth and Teeth.—As part of the general routine of washing at night, too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of cleansing

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the mouth and teeth before sleep, with the use of some simple cleanser, such as one part of myrrh to six parts of precipitated chalk, a tonic tooth powder than which there is little, if anything, better. If at no other time in the day, it is essential that there be left no food particles to harbour destructive microbes, which, working chiefly at night, attack the teeth and undermine many a sound constitution. It is well known that a perfectly clean mouth conduces to perfect and dreamless sleep. 'First teeth' are as important as 'second teeth,' in that their condition establishes the tone of general health, and sets the habit of a sound or a feeble digestion.

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Compare on this subject the plain speaking and the unsuspected information given on page 43 of *The Hygiene of School Life*, by Ralph Crowley, M.D. (See Bibliography.)

Saliva.—The salivary and other glands, situated round the tongue, wash away and render harmless much foreign matter that enters the mouth and throat all day long. These glands and the parts of the throat should be well braced, and do their work unobserved. Cold-water sprays, lung expansion and deep breathing through the nostrils, and the practice of singing, are excellent things for old and young.

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The habit of smoking and of chewing gummy substances, leads to a wasteful habit of body, which in some races is very noticeable. They contract the constant habit of expectoration, which is both disgusting and unwholesome.

In the same category, a warning may be given to mothers who foster in their fretful infants the habit of constantly sucking and of swallowing saliva, by putting "dummies," or "comforters," into their mouths, to keep them occupied.

Blood.—In ancient Teaching the Blood is identified with and symbolizes the Life. (Compare Breath above.)

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Clothing.—Clothing is worn for the protection of the Body, and the preservation of an even temperature ; for the sake of natural modesty, and for delight.

The sense of the Beautiful has been greatly stimulated by dress. In beautiful Clothing its true purpose and origin are exalted. To dress means “ to make ready.”

FINAL REMARKS

THE first questions of a child should be recognized as evidence in him of a normal thirst for Reality,—for real things. They should be hailed as a token of Health, and must be treated with respect. To regard them as unwholesome, or as a sign of abnormality, is to create in the mind of the child a profound sense of dis-ease and dis-location, which may injure the whole of his after outlook on Life.

It has been well said that as soon as a child is old enough to ask a reasonable question he is mature enough to receive a worthy answer.

Such an answer, however simple,

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must be true, and contain within it the promise of Ultimate Truth. All process of growth is by development from the centre to the circumference, from the particular to the Universal. The child, once set upon the road, should never have to retrace his steps from false tracks to which his elders have led him.

The examination of a flower, and especially of the pollen of anthers uniting with the ovules of a seed-vessel (as seen in a lily), will help the eager child to realize the unique fact that highly evolved organisms are specialized by sex characters, through whose service the dormant life in two complementary cells produces by fusion a new and in-

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dividual life independent of both. The first facts of Fertilization, of Germination, and of Birth become thus associated with a sense of simple Beauty and Awe, which, in the free and open mind, only deepens with maturing experience. The tie between the young being and the provider of its physical wants is great; but even greater and more lasting is the tie which unites the child's mind to the guide who leads and accompanies him into the undiscovered realms of intellectual and spiritual Truth. Ideally natural is the case where these two functions are found in the person of the child's own parents—in those who presumably love him most.

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Attention must be drawn to the pitfalls of sentimental treatment. Sentimentality is unwholesome, because it falsely cultivates the appearance of appreciations which will be found to lack foundation when the trial comes.

Many well-meaning books are vitiated by the use of fanciful analogies, and by the effort to rouse feeling prematurely. In the days of childhood, the less that emotion of any sort, physical or mental, invades this ground the better.

A child's questions concerning Life usually amount to this—Where do living things come from? ourselves, animals, trees and flowers?

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The simple facts to be gradually imparted are these :—

Every living thing came from an egg. Even the seed of a tree or flower contains an egg. The egg is prepared within the mother, and begins always as a single very small cell, which has been specially reserved from any particular work in the body, and so keeps within itself the promise of the whole of Life.

In the greater number of animals and plants, the egg must be fertilized before it can produce a new young life ; that is to say, the egg-cell must become united with a different cell provided by the father. The perfect power to produce these two kinds of cells, female and male, is of

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slow growth, and is only complete with mature years. This cooperation we call Motherhood and Fatherhood, in its highest development in woman and man. In mammals, and in the higher plants, the fertilizing cells are communicated to the egg-cells within their chamber, by means of special organs prepared for that purpose, called sex-organs. This process can be readily seen in the fertilization of flowers, by which the pollen-cells enter the ovules, to "set the seed," as we say, after which, the fruit grows.¹

¹ The word 'sex' is related in its origin to the idea 'distinct,' 'separate'; and by a certain educational line of thought may be shown to have associations with the words 'sacrum,' 'sacred,' 'set apart.'

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Among mammals the young life develops for a long time, hidden and protected, and nourished by the mother within herself, until it is ready to be born. Even when born, it is so helpless that the mother tends it, and feeds it for a while from her breast with milk, which is normally secreted for the nourishment of the child for some months after its birth.

In woman, as in some mammals, a new egg-cell ripens naturally every month, and is set free into a specially reserved chamber, called the womb. Every month, also, the inner lining or tissue of the womb is shed and renewed, by a natural process. This renewal ceases at

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such times as an infant is being sustained and nourished there.

A woman bears her child for nine months before it is ready to be born. A mother-cow carries her calf for about the same length of time. A mother-bird, on the other hand, instead of protecting the young life within herself, lays it, with a store of necessary food for its rapid development, enclosed in a chalky shell, which she secretes for its protection.

As regards the question of physical Death :—

Should the child come upon some dead or dying creature, he may be shown that, whereas a living organism results from a pro-

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cess of building, the cessation of Growth (in all its forms of Youth, Maturity, and Age) brings about the natural dissolution, or Death, of that organism. We have a perfect example of natural Death in the falling leaves of autumn, in the gentle ceasing of activity at the completion of their life.

Death, or physical dissolution, may be due also to outside causes, such as violence ; or the attack of other organisms ; or the use of unwholesome food ; or the presence of poisonous surroundings. Disease is a warning of dangerous conditions. We can prevent and remove these conditions by cleanliness, by fresh air and sunlight, by good food, by

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interchange of work and play, by cheerful thoughts, and, above all, by the kindness and courage which devotes itself to others rather than to self. In this way we can cause diseased conditions to vanish, and life to attain to its hale old age.

In conclusion, stress must be laid on the mistake (not to say the serious danger) of attempting to treat the mystery of Generation and of Birth in ordinary School classes. The presence of a heterogeneous class destroys the very atmosphere in which this subject can breathe. It cannot be even duly presented, much less analysed. Experiments in this direction have not proved

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successful. Such highly sensitive centres of power are involved in the treatment of this subject, and reaction is so rapid and so subtle, that a crude and exterior handling may be productive of great harm. The daily classes of the curriculum afford to a conscientious teacher ample opportunity for developing a healthy robust attitude towards this subject, and yet leave it in its place of natural and intimate reserve. Dealing with this unique region of a child's self-realization, a realization to which he should come naturally, *without artificial stimulus*, the Educator is at pains to encourage the sense of a pure and instinctive reserve with a certain

A CATECHISM OF LIFE

proud freedom ; and this attitude it is impossible, by the very nature of the case, to develop in the presence of a number of children. The quality both of freedom and reserve is lost by such efforts at imparting.

Regarding the presence of evil in the world (which may be attributed once and for all to Mis-use, the parent of all impurity), reference to it should be of the slightest, lest the double face of prudery and shame put in its unwelcome appearance. Warnings against evil will be less and less resorted to as the world increases in faithfulness and in wisdom. Such warnings will become unnecessary in just such pro-

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portion as we may count upon the natural enthusiasm and ardour of a normal childhood—an enthusiasm and ardour which will be nourished to their maturity, not so much by romantic pictures of the Ideal as by *practical recognition of the creative powers present in every child, and of his supreme need to exercise and develop them, even from very early days.*

Only thus will he gain “self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control.” Only thus can he learn to build up, to test, and to trust his own Inner Vision. If, later on, temptation and suffering cross his path, the first sense of its presence will brace the young mind to an austerity that shall not fail him in the hour of need.

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