

A letter from a clergyman to Miss Mary Blandy, now a prisoner in Oxford Castle; with her answer thereto : as also Miss Blandy's own narrative of the crime for which she is condemn'd to die ... To which is prefixed, a letter occasioned by reading Miss Blandy's trial.

Contributors

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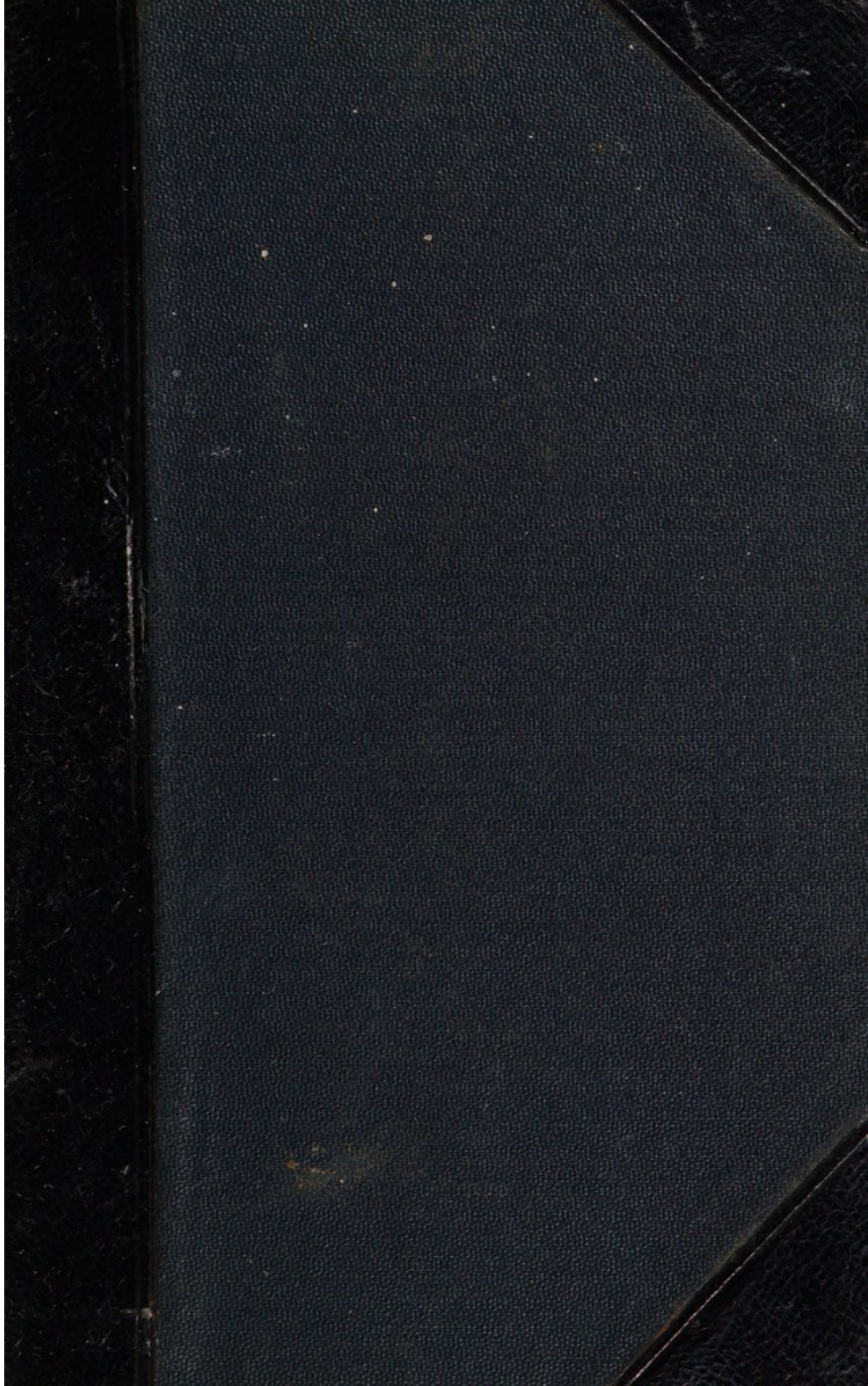
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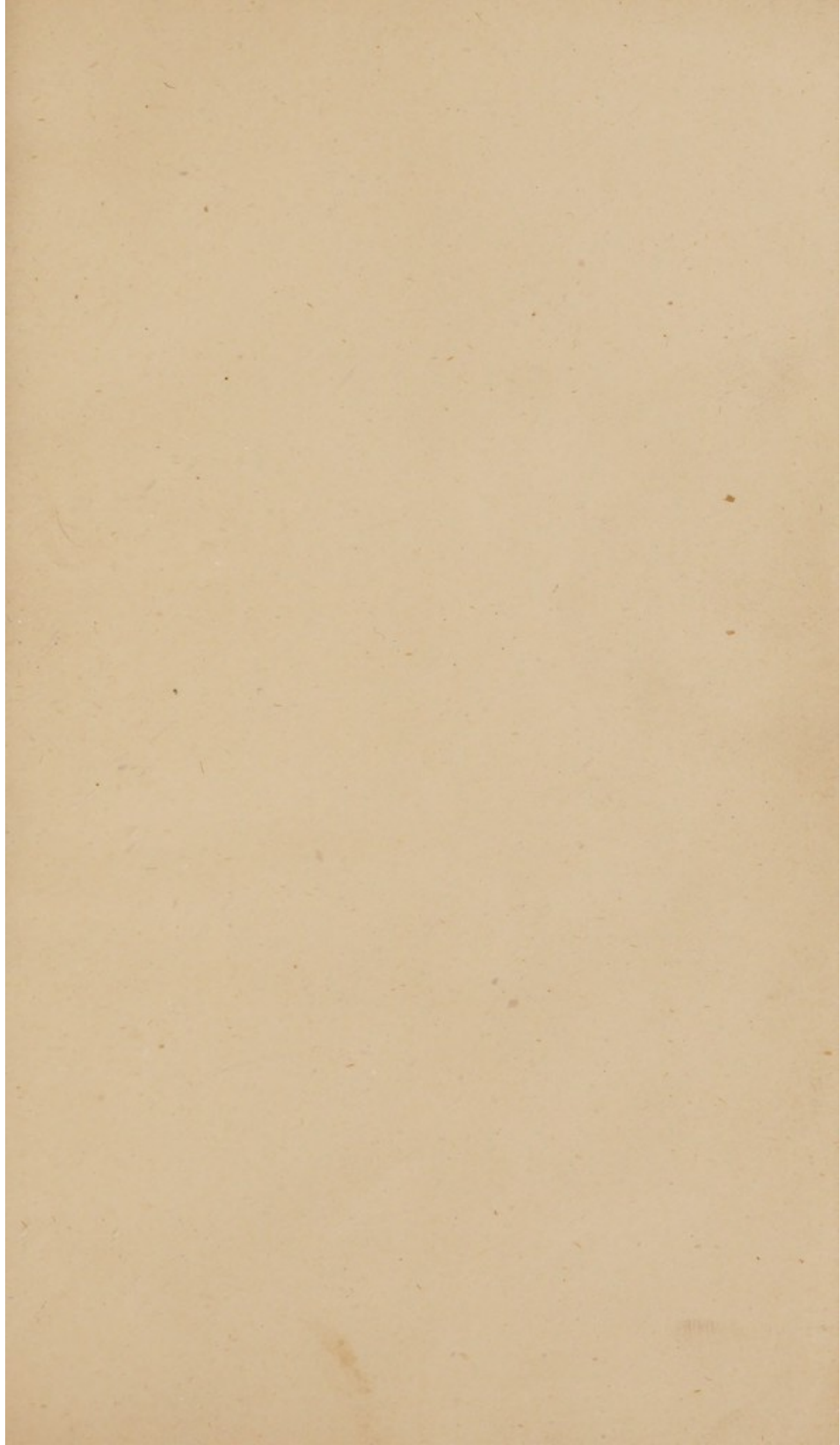
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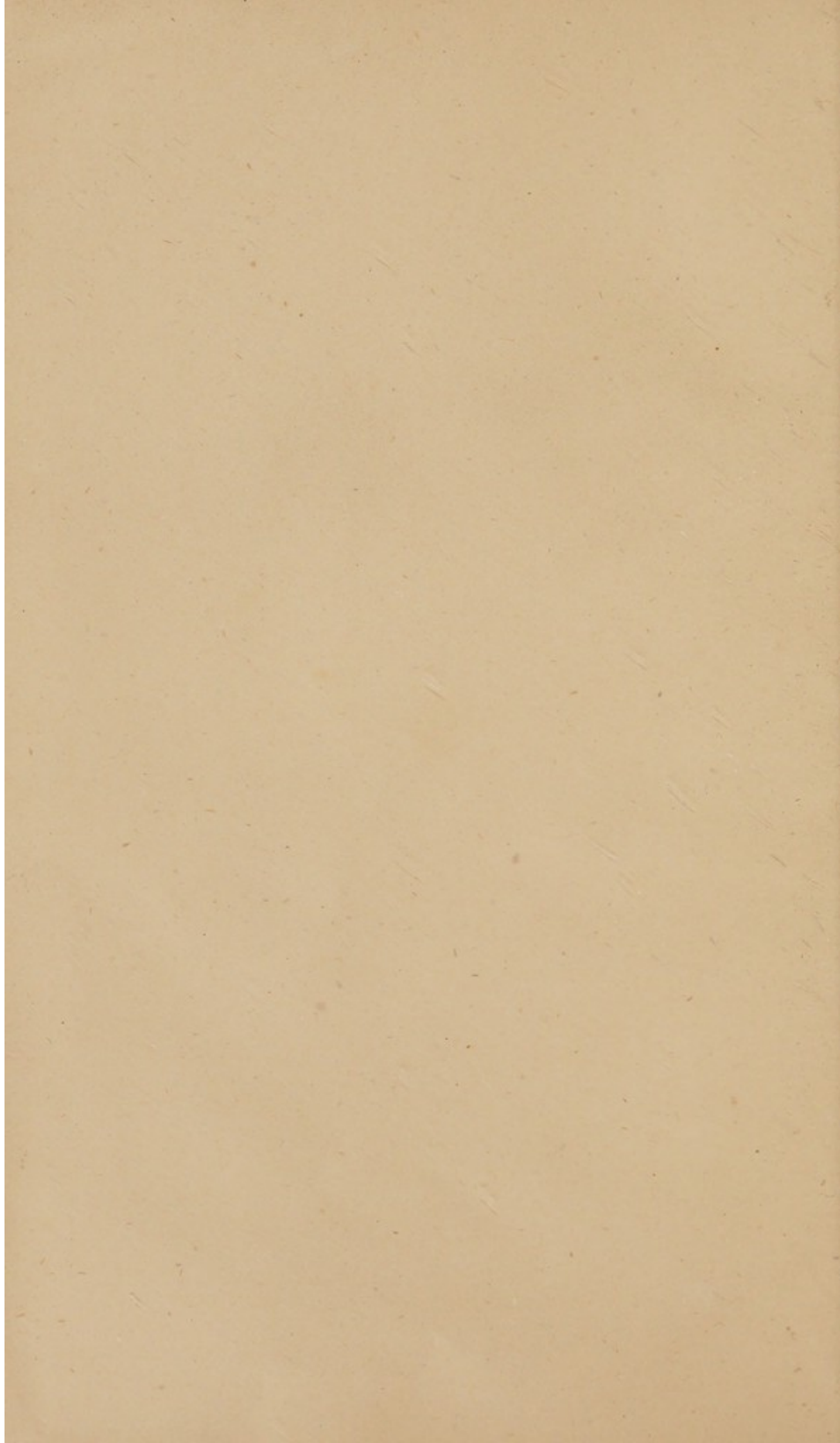




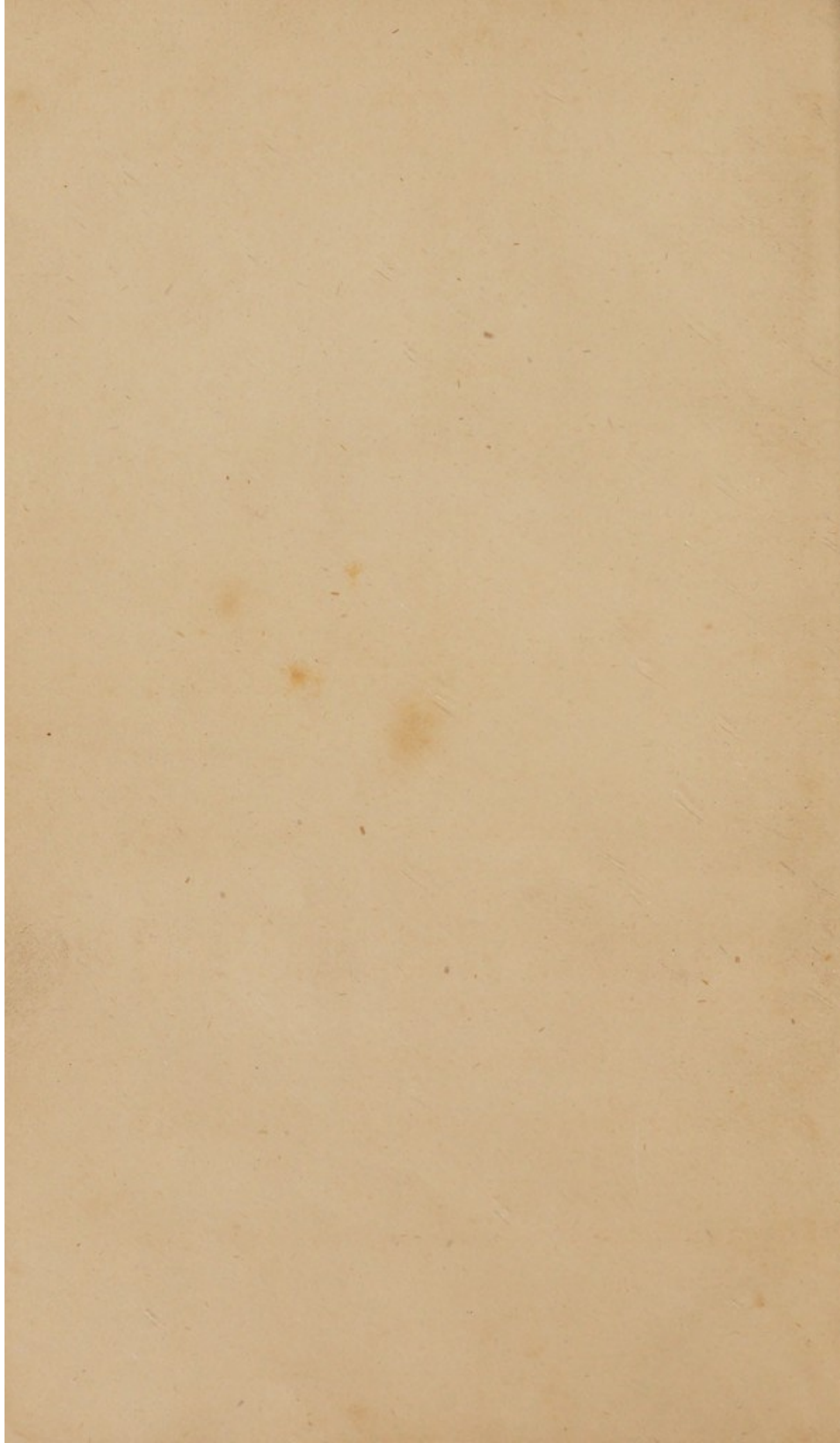


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A
L E T T E R

F R O M

A C L E R G Y M A N

T O

Miss M A R Y B L A N D Y,

Now a Prisoner in *Oxford Castle*;

W I T H

Her A N S W E R thereto.

A S A L S O

Miss B L A N D Y's own Narrative of the crime for
which she is condemned to die.

The Original Copy of this Letter in Miss *Blandy's*
own Hand-writing, for the Satisfaction of the
Public, is left with the publisher.

To which is prefixed,

A Letter Occasioned by Reading Miss *Blandy's* Trial

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Printed for M. COOPER, at the *Globe*, in *Pater-noster-row*.

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March 14. 1752.

READER,

Condemn no person rashly.----Thou hast already, perhaps, passed sentence upon this unfortunate.-----But remember, that God alone knows the secrets of the heart;---and that circumstances spring many times from Motives which is impossible for Man to discover.----

The following Letter was written to this unhappy Lady by a Clergyman, after her receiving sentence of Death.

March 16. 1722

My dear

I have your paper of the 10th
of the 10th, perhaps, passed
upon this instrument. I
remember, that God does know the
secrets of the heart; and that
the same being many times
which is impossible for
to discover.

The following letter was written
to this unhappy Lady by a Clergy
man, after her receiving sentence
of death.

L E T T E R

T O

Miss Blandy.

*Dear Miss,**March 7. 1752.*

HAD it been at my own option, I never would have chose to be the least concerned in your unhappy affair; but since divine providence, without my own seeking, has thought fit to order it otherwise, I shall, from obligations of compassion and humanity, offer some things to your serious consideration.----Your power of receiving benefit from any advice, is but of short duration; may God grant that you may rightly use this.-----That you believe in a God, in the immortal nature of the soul, in Jesus Christ, and in a future state of rewards and punishments, I am willing to persuade myself.----As to the *unworthy man* who has tempted you to your own ruin, I have good grounds to believe him to be an infidel. If he has communicated such principles to you, to render you more capable of executing his wicked purposes, your persisting therein will ruin your poor soul for ever. The moment you enter into that awful state of separation, you will be eternally convinced of your error.----The very devils believe a God, and tremble!

You will, perhaps, express surprize at my entertaining a doubt of this nature.----What? you that have been so constant at public worship, that have so frequently participated of the most sacred rite of the christian religion,

to be thought an infidel? Alas! mifs, externals are but the husks of piety; they are easy to the hypocrite.---The body may bow down in the house of God, yet the soul do homage to *Belial*.-----God forbid, that this should touch you.----

And indeed, to be sincere, when on the one hand, I view the arguments of your guilt, and, on the other, behold your strong assertions of innocence, to the hazarding of the soul, if untrue, I am greatly perplexed, I know not what to say or believe.----The alternative, I presume, is, you are either a believer, and innocent, or an infidel and guilty. But that holy religion which I profess, obliging me, in all cases of doubt, to incline to the most charitable construction; I say, that I am willingly persuaded, that you believe in the above mentioned truths, and are in some degree innocent.

You have, dear mifs, applied to temporal counsel, with regard to the determination of your body.----They have failed.---Your life is forfeited to justice.---You are already dead in the eye of the law.----Oh! mifs, the counsel which my poor understanding gives, is spiritual; may that be more successful.---May God grant that the fate of your soul may not resemble the fate of your body! may it not perish and die for ever!

Now, mifs, you must necessarily be in one of these two situations; you must either be innocent, by not designing to hurt your father; or you designed to kill your father, and are guilty, and conceal your guilt for private reasons. Permit me to offer something upon each of these heads.----

If it should be the case, that you are innocently the cause of Mr *Blandy's* death, which heaven grant! if you harboured not a thought of injuring your unhappy father, you have the greatest of all comforts to support you: You may think upon that last and awful tribunal, before which all the sons of *Adam* shall appear, and from which

no secret is hid.---There will be no injustice.---Innocence will be vindicated.-----The scheme of providence will be then unfolded.---There your patience under your sufferings, and resignation to the decrees of heaven, will be rewarded.---Your errors and failings God will pity and have mercy upon; for he remembers whereof we are made.---You may face the ignominious tree with calmness.-----Death has no stings to wound innocence. Guilt alone cloths him with terrors: [To the guilty wretch he is terrible indeed !]. And at the resurrection, and at the last day, you will joyfully behold Jesus Christ your saviour, join the triumphant multitudes of the blessed, and follow them into the everlasting mansions of Glory.

The other point I am to speak to, is upon a supposition of your guilt.---God direct me what to say ! If you repent you will be saved.---But what repentance can be adequate to such crimes ? O miss ! your infamous end is a satisfaction due to human laws.---But there is another satisfaction which God expects to be made for such a dreadful violation of laws divine.---Once, miss, you had two father's to provide for and protect you ; one by the ties of nature, the other by the bonds of grace and religion.---And now ! your earthly parent is your accuser, and your heavenly one your judge. Both are become your enemies.---Good God ! what deep distress is this ! where can misery like this find comfort and relief ? O miss ! the only anchor which can preserve your soul from perishing, is your blessed saviour.---Believe in him ; ---Whatsoever you ask in his name, believing, God will grant. For to them that believe, all things are possible.---Unburthen your whole soul.---Pour out your fervent prayers to God.---Remember, that infinite mercy is glorified in the vilest sinners.---If there are any accessaries to this horrid crime, discover them.---Make all possible reparations for the injuries you have done.---

Heartily forgive and pray for your enemies, and more particularly for all concerned in the prosecution against you.----Detest your sins truly, and resolve to do so for the time to come, and be in charity with all men. If you perform these things truly and sincerely, your life, which sets in gloomy clouds, shame and darkness, may, by the mercies of God, rise in glory, honour, and brightness.

But perhaps, *Miss*, to your everlasting hazard, you will not confess your guilt, for some private reasons.----And what must these be?

You may possibly then imagine, that if you confess your crime to God, you are not obliged to confess to the world.----Generally speaking, God is the sole confessor of man-kind; but your case is a particular exception to this rule.--You will want the assistance of God's ministers.----But how is it possible for you to receive any benefit from them, if you do not represent to them the true state of your soul without disguise? A secret of this nature, smothered in the breast, is a fire which preys upon, and consumes all quietness and repose.-----Consider too the imminent danger of a lye of this nature; consider the justice due to your accusers, to your judges, and to the world.----

But you will say, Confession of my crime cuts off all hope of royal mercy.----Dear miss, do not indulge yourself in such a thought.----Prepare for the worst.--Consider how pernicious flattery of this nature is.---Remember that God is only a God of mercy in this; in another life, he is a God of justice.----

I can hardly think that shame has any share in the concealment of your guilt; for no shame can exceed that which you have already suffered. Besides, confession is all the amends you can make; and mankind know experimentally how frail and imperfect human nature is, and will allow for it accordingly. --

And thus, dear miss, have I wrote to you, with a sincere view to your everlasting happiness.----If during this dismal twilight, this interval between life and death, I can serve you, command me.---The world generally flies the unfortunate, rejoices in evil, triumphs over distress;---Believe me glad to deviate from such inhumanity.---As the offices of friendship which you can receive from me are confined to such a short period,---Let them be such as concern your everlasting welfare.—The greatest pleasure I can receive, (if pleasure can arise from such sad potions), will be to hear that you entertain a comfortable assurance of being happy for ever. Which that you may be, is the fervent prayer of, &c.

Whether or not his gentleman, in the above letter, has not urged the affair home to miss *Blandy*, is submitted to the judgment of the public.

Here follows *verbatim* her answer.

Monday, March 9. 1752

Reverend Sir,

I Did not receive your's till *sunday* night late; and am now so ill of *body*, that nothing but gratitude to you for all your goodness could have enabled me to write. ---I have with *great care and thought* often read over your kind advice; and will, as well as the sad condition I am in will give me leave, *speake the truth*.---

The first and most material to my poor soul is, that I believe in God the father, and in his blessed son Jesus Christ, who, I verily believe, came into the world to save sinners; and that he will come again to judge the world; and that we must all give an account in our own bodies, and receive the reward of a good or ill spent life; that God is a God of justice, but of mercy too; and that by repentance all may be saved. As to the unworthy man you mention, I never heard finer lessons come from any one.----Had he, sir, shewn really what he may be, (an infidel), I never should have been so deceived; for of all crimes, that ever shocked me most.----No, sir; I owe all my misery to the appearances of virtue;---by that deceived and ruined in this world, but hope through Christ to be pardoned. I was, and never denied it, the fatal instrument; but knew not the nature of, nor had a thought those powders could hurt. Had I not destroyed his letters, all must have been convinced; but, like all the rest, hee commanded, and I obeyed, and burnt them. There is an account, as well as I was able to write, which I sent to my uncle in London.---That * I here send you. God

* *Vide* her Narrative which follows this Letter.

knows never poor soul wrote in more pain, and I now am not able hardly to hold my pen.----But will not conclude this *without explaining the true state of my mind.* As I did not give this fatal power to kill or hurt my poor father; I hope God will forgive me, with repentance for the ill use I have made of that sense he gave me, and not be for ever angry with me. Death I deserve, for not being better on my guard against my grand enemy; for loving and relying too much on the human part. I hope (when all is done that friends can do for me to save that life which God has given me, and which, if to last these hundred years, would be too short for me to repent, and make amends for the follies I have committed) I shall have such help from my God, as to convince my poor friends *I die a christian, with hopes of forgiveness through the merits of our advocate and mediator Jesus Christ.*

I beg, my dear sir, you will excuse my writing more, and will believe I am truly sensible of your goodness to me.---May God bless you, sir, and send you happiness here and hereafter.-----I beg my duty to my poor uncle pray him to forgive, and pity, and pray for me.---I beg my tenderest wishes to Mrs *Mounteny*; and if she can serve me with the B——p of W——, or any other, I know she will do it.—Pray comfort poor *Ned Hearne*, and tell him I have the same friendship for him as ever.—And pray sir, continue your friendship and good wishes to,

Reverend Sir,

Your truly affected,

much obliged humble Servant,

MARY BLANDY,

B

P. S. I beg, for very just reasons to myself and friends—that this letter and papers may soon be returned to me; that is, as soon as you have done with them.—You will oblige me, if you keep a copy of the letter; but the real letter I would have back, and the real papers, as being my own hand-writing, and may be of service to me, to my character after my death, and to my family.---

There is no occasion of hinting to the judicious reader, that in this letter it is plain that miss *Blandy* twice solemnly declares her innocence.

But let us now proceed to miss *Blandy's* own relation of an affair which has so much engrossed the attention of the public.

Miss,

Miss BLANDY'S NARRATIVE, referred to
in the foregoing Letter.

Oh! Christian Reader,

MY misfortunes have been, and are such as never
woman felt before.----Oh! let the tears of the
wretched move human minds to pity, and give ear to
my sad case, here wrote with greatest truth.----It is im-
possible indeed, in my unhappy circumstances, to re-
collect half of my misfortunes, so as to place them in a
proper light.----Let some generous breast then do that
for the miserable,----and God will reward goodness to-
wards an unhappy, deceived, ruined woman.----Think
what power man has over our sex, when we truly love!
and what woman, let her have what sense she will, can
stand the arguments and persuasions men will make use
of?---Do not think that by this I mean, that *I ever*
was, or could have been persuaded to hurt one hair of my fa-
ther's head. No;---what I mean is *C---n's* baseness
and art, in making me believe that those powders were
innocent, and would make my father love him.---He
made my father love himself more than a year before
he died,---and said, that when he gave it him, that he
C---n] had took several papers of it himself.---*I*
saw nothing of any ill effects from these powders on my fa-
ther; nor did he complain of any one disorder, more
than what he has ever been subject to above these ten
years, the gravel and the heart-burn, except when he had
the gravel coming on him; and he never was less afflic-

ted with these disorders than during the last year of his life, in which he never took one medicine from his apothecary, as he made oath in court.

Mr C——n, soon after he gave these powders to my father, said to me, do you not see that your father is kinder to me? I now will venture to tell him, that I cannot get the appeal lodged this sessions, (meaning his affair in *Scotland*); upon which he went to my father's study, and told him. They both came out together in great good humour, and my father said not one word against my waiting another sessions.

Mr C——u came to our house in the beginning of *August*, or latter end of *July*, staid with us some months, and then he said he was obliged to go for *Scotland*.—My father seemed not pleased with him at first,---but they parted in great friendship, I thought;---and I received a letter from C——n (which is now among my papers) full of respect and tenderness for my father.—But soon after he was gone, my father, who had either heard some ill of him, or was tired of so long an affair, told me to let mr C——n know, that I would wait the next sessions; but he must not come to his house till his affairs in *Scotland* were settled.—I obeyed his commands, and had a letter full of love, and seeming misery, back in answer to mine; that he found that he had lost my father's love, and feared he should mine too.—He got his mother and sisters to write to my father, and seemed to do all in his power to force him to love him.—

Some time after this he sent me word, that he had met with his old friend Mrs *Morgan* in *Scotland*, and that he would get some of those powders he had before; and begged of me, if I loved him, to give them to my father; for that they would make him kind to us again in this affair, and make him stay with patience till the next sessions; when, upon his word, the appeal should be lodged.—I wrote him back word, *I did not care for*

Doing it, least it should hurt my father's health.---He wrote me word, *That it was quite innocent, and could not hurt him; and how could I think that he would send any thing to hurt a father of mine? and that self-interest would be reason enough for him to take care of his health.*---

Now, in this place, I must beg to clear up one thing, ---That I imagined my poor father rich, and that Mr C-----n did the same.---As to myself, *it is, by all that is good, false.* I have often told Mr C-----n, *I knew my father was not worth what the world said; but that, if he lived, I did not doubt but he would provide for us and ours, as his business was so great, and life retired.*----I then supposed that Mr C-----n meant, by saying, *That his own interests would make him careful,* to refer to such Discourse.-----

Mr C-----n having then such strong reasons to know how necessary my father's life must be, and I believing his honour to be so great, and that his love was still greater; these were the reasons of my not mistrusting that the powder would hurt my father, if I mixed it with his tea. It not mixing well, I threw it away, and wrote him word, *I would not try it again, for it would be discovered.* This they bring against me. But is it not reasonable to imagine, that if any person was to discover that a powder had been given them, to force them to love any one, would not a discovery of this nature produce a very different effect? would it not fix resentment? This would have been, at that time, death to me; such was my opinion of C-----n, and for this reason I used the afore-said words.-----

But to proceed.----On my writing to Mr C-----n that it would not mix in tea, he told me to mix it in gruel. ----I received the powders in *June*; but did not put any into his gruel till the 5th of *August*; when I fatally obeyed Mr C-----n's orders, and was innocently the instru-

ment of death, as they say, to the best of father's brought disgrace to my family, and shameful death to myself, unless my hard case, here truly represented, recommends me to royal pity, clemency, and compassion. *And as I here declare, and as I look upon myself as a dying woman, I never did design to hurt my father, but thought the powder innocent, as C-----n told me it was.---* Let me be punished for my follies, but not lose my life.----Sure it is hard to die for ignorance, and too good an opinion of a villain! - - Must the fallities and malice with which I have been pursued with, prevail so far as to take away my life?----O consider my misfortunes, and indeed it will fill your eyes with tears; you must pity me, and say, Never was poor soul so hardly used.----But peace, my heart.-----I gave my father the powder on *Munday* night; on *Tuesday* he complained.----I sent for the apothecary; who came, and said he would send him some physick. In the evening my father said he would have some water-gruel.----I never went out to order this and knew not whether it was the same or no as he had on *Monday*, as that he drank on *Monday* was made either on *Saturday* or *Sunday*.----However, on the *Wednesday* my father took physick, and was better; came all *Thursday* down into the parlour, as also on *Friday*;----*Mr Norton*, by my desire, all this time attending him very often.-----And *Mr Norton* did in the court declare, that I was the person that did send for a physician, and would have sent before, if thought necessary.----When I found my father so ill, I sent, unknown to him, for *Dr Addington*. The doctor, said, he believed he was in great danger.----I desired *Dr A-----n* to attend him, and come the next day;----which he did.----On *Monday* morning, going into my father's room early, (for though I never from his first disorder left him long in the day, yet his tenderness would not let me sit up all night with him), I was denied to see him.----This so

surprized and frightened me, that I cried out, what? not see my father? on which I heard my father reply, my dear *Polly*, you shall presently;---and some time after I did.----That meeting and parting, and the mutual love, sorrow and grief, is truly described by *Susanna Gunnel*; though poor soul, she is mistaken in some other respects.

I was after this confined in my room by Dr *Addington*'s own orders; during which confinement, as I am informed, my father wanted to see some body, and it was imagined to be me.-----But alas! I was not suffered.----The night before he died, my father sent his blessing to me, with his commands to bring that villain to justice.----I sent him answer back, I would do all in my power to hang that villain, as he rightly called him.

But the usage which I received in my father's house, unknown to him I am sure, is shocking to relate.----My going to listen at his door, the only comfort left me, to hear if he was asleep, was denied me.-----All my keys were taken from me---my letters---my very garters.----My maid-servant never came near me, helpless as I was by grief and fits.----This I bore patiently, being fearful of disturbing my father, as our rooms joined.----The man who was with me can witness to my sufferings, how often I wished for instant death to take me, and spare my dear father, whom never child loved better; whose death alone, unattended with these misfortunes, would have been an excessive shock to me.

When Dr *Addington*, and Dr *Lewis*, (who was called in it seems), came into the room, and told me, that nothing could save my ever dear father;----for a considerable time I sat like a stone image; and then told them, that I had given my poor father some powders which *C-----n* had given me, and feared those had hurt my father, though *C-----n* assured me that they would not.

It is not in human nature to declare what I suffered at that time.---God grant that no one ever may again gain.----

When my father was dead, though mistress of myself, my keys, servants, two horses in the stable, all my own;---yet I never quitted my room.----Though none dared to molest me, I never stirred.---They say, that I walked about my room for hours; but I hardly remember any thing.---much is now said of my trying to bribe my servants. How contrary to truth!----As for bribing *Betty* my cook; of all my servants she was my greatest enemy throughout my misfortunes;---And an attempt to bribe her must surely be the strongest instance of lunacy,-----of one not in her right mind.----I own I should have been glad not to have gone to jail; as who would not? but then I would with pleasure have resigned myself up at the assizes, and stood the chance of life or death. I did not at that time imagine that I had such enemies, or that human nature could be so wicked and abandoned.----On the *Thursday* my father was to be opened.----In the morning *Susanna Gunnel* sent for me, being indisposed: when I saw her, she begged that I would bring Mr *C-----n* to justice, which was the request and commands of her dying master; and that if any thing gave him concern in his last moments, it was an apprehension of his escaping, being a man of quality, and interest among the great.----I replied, that I would do all in my power,---and went down into my room again.

Soon after Dr *Lewis* came into my room, and I found by him that my poor father's body was to be opened as that morning. As soon as he was gone, I could not bear to stay in the house, but walked out.----Let reason judge whether I intended an escape.---My dress was an half-sack and peticoat, made for a hoop, and the sides very long; neither man nor horse to assist me; and, as they say, I walked as slow as foot could fall; half the

own at my heels; and but for the mercy of a woman, who sheltered me in her house, had perhaps, lost my life. ---When I was sent for back by the justices, the gentleman who conveyed me to my house, witnessed that I thanked him. Surely this cannot be interpreted an attempt to escape.

In consequence then of the words which, during these melancholy and distracting scenes, I had spoke to Dr *Maddington*, that I was innocent of the nature of the powers, but had given them to my father,---I was sent to prison, where I was till my trial, and am now in safe custody,---The untruths which have been told of me, the messengers sent after me, to see if I was safe, the putting me in Irons, (though so weak and ill, that my own body was too much to carry about), the baseness and wickedness of printing the depositions to hurt me with the jury; under all this I bore up from knowing my innocence.

But give me leave to mention what happened at my trial.----I was bought to the bar; and must do the judges, and all the gentlemen of the law, that justice, that they used me as a gentlewoman should be, though unfortunate.----I must however observe, that

When the judges read and summed up the evidence, or indeed when any thing was said in court, there was such a noise, that the jury, I am sure, could not hear the evidence; and I hope I shall be forgiven, if I say, that some of them seemed not to give that attention I think they ought.----Nay, the judges were often obliged to speak for silence in the court, and bid them for shame let the jury hear and attend. When all the witnesses were examined on both sides, the judge gave his charge like a man fit to hold the sword of justice; and my counsel and friends were in great hopes for me.—But, most surprising treatment! without going out of the

court, without being any time consulting, their verdict was,—*Guilty!*—God's will be done.—My behaviour at my trial, and when sentence was passed, I leave to the world.—My enemies, as they have done all along, may misinterpret it, and call innocence and christian courage hardened guilt.—But let them know, that nothing but innocence could stand the shock of such repeated misfortunes, and prospect of death.—

O christian reader ! remember what blessings will attend you for defending the orphan, the injured, and the deceived.—And if the dead are sensible of what the living do ;—what prayers must not my dear parents pour out before the throne of mercy for such charity,—for endeavouring to rescue their only child and much-loved daughter from a shameful—death.----Drop pen ;---my spirits, harrassed out with sorrow, fail.----God almighty preserve you and yours from such misfortunes,—and receive my poor soul into the arms of his mercy, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Whosoever thou art, whose eyes drink in this sad and moving tale, ---indulge one tear : remember the instability of sublunary things, and judge no man happy till he dies.

F I N I S

L E T T E R

Occasioned by reading of

Miss BLANDY'S trial.

SIR,

THis morning a paper was sent me inclosed, called, *The genuine trial of Mary Blandy, spinster, at Oxford, for poisoning her late father, Francis Blandy, Gent. &c.* To whom I am indebted for this favour, I know not; but when I had once read the title of the pamphlet, I was insensibly led on to read the whole: for indeed, when I was well acquainted with the reality of the fact, I had gone too far to recede. Nor was curiosity my only motive for perusing the trial; though this is a passion, for the gratification of which we often suffer great pains; as we see young people listen attentively to the stories of apparitions, notwithstanding all the terrors which such relations are seen to raise in their minds. In fact, I had another view. I read on in hopes of meeting with some circumstances that might a little alleviate the dreadful guilt imputed to the accused, and in some degree lessen those horrors which I had conceived at the first idea of a child's poisoning her father.

In this endeavour I have had some success. I know not in what light this miserable wretch may appear to others; but to me there is a circumstance of some compassion in her case: and though no man living can more

abhor her crime, yet I am not altogether without pity for the most wretched, at this day, of all human race.

Miss *Blandy* had the education of a gentlewoman. She was received as such in the country where she lived; and her behaviour and conversation was so agreeable, that ladies of great rank and fashion were fond and desirous of her acquaintance. She was amiable, spritely, and extremely good-humoured; and was esteemed as one of the principal ornaments of the polite assembly at *Reading*.

Such was her demanor in general. To her father, she was an affectionate, dutiful, respectful child. This many witnesses swore at her trial; this the witnesses against her confessed,

Till at the last a cruel spoiler came;

till that damned villain *Chranston*, as the poor father so justly called him, returned the kindest offices of hospitality by the ruin of a poor love-sick girl; by bringing the father to the grave, and the daughter to the gallows.

Here then is the cause of all that tragedy which hath happened in this little innocent family, of indeed the total destruction of a kind and tender father, of an affectionate and dutiful daughter. The villain crept into the unguarded heart of this thoughtless girl. There he first infused those poisonous sentiments, which were afterwards to convey arsenic into the veins of the best and tenderest of fathers.

For this fact we will leave the condemned criminal to the execution of that sentence, which she hath so justly received from an earthly judge; and to that mercy, which I hope a sincere penitence will obtain for her from that most awful, most tremendous tribunal where she must so shortly appear.

Let us for a moment only cast our eyes on the wretch who hath caused all this, who hath hitherto escaped the

hands of justice; perhaps to be more exquisitely punished in the state of a profligate abandoned fugitive; sent, like the first murderer, to wander over the earth, till he shall cry with *Cain*, *My punishment is greater than I can bear.*

But I will leave this wretch likewise to the horrors of his own conscience, to wandering, to beggary, to shame, to contempt. This letter is designed for the use of the loveliest, and, I sincerely think, the best part of the creation, who seldom stray but when they are misled by men; by whom they are deceived, corrupted, betrayed, and often brought to destruction, both of soul and body. In the sequel, therefore, I will treat in general of these corrupters of the innocence of women; and of the extream baseness, as well as cruelty of this practice, how favourably soever the world may please to receive it.

This base and barbarous man was, they say, an officer in the army; a sort of people who, I know not for what reason, live in an eternal state of real hostility with the female sex; and seem to think, that by destroying our enemies in war, they contract a right to destroy our wives and daughters in time of peace.

I would not be here understood to insinuate that there are many *Cranstons* to be found in the *English* army. On the contrary, I sincerely believe it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to pick out such another. Yet certain it is, that through the prevailance of custom, the ruin of a woman is far from being regarded amongst our military gentlemen, or indeed amongst others, with that abhorrence and detestation which it deserves. It is often made the subject of mirth; nay, I am deceived, if instead of being considered on the man's side as a mark of disgrace, it is not sometimes treated as a point of honour, viewed in the light of a victory, and thought to add new laurels to those which have been acquired in the field.

The reason of this, in a great measure, is the levity with which this matter hath been handled by some of our fashionable authors; who, instead of exposing so execrable a vice in its proper odious colours, have given it the soft term of gallantry; have at most endeavoured to make it the subject of ridicule; I am afraid have even represented it in an amiable light to their readers.

I will endeavour therefore to strip the monster of all its borrowed ornaments, and to display it in its native and true deformity; such as I think cannot fail of attracting all that abhorrence which is its due.

I shall at present pass by all those diswasive arguments which religion affords against this practice. these are already well known; and if they are not sufficient to deter men, the reason is but too obvious, as well as deplorable.

But though many of my gay readers may be ready enough to own that they have no faith; there are few, I believe, who will own they have no honour. If they have vanity in desiring to be thought no christians, they will at least be ashamed of being no gentlemen.

First, then, can any thing be more dishonourable than to engage in a combat with one who is greatly inferior in strength? and this is surely the case in all the attacks on the virtue of women. For, without any disparagement to the understanding of my fair countrywomen, their hearts are at least weaker than ours; and it is the heart of the woman which is aimed at in all these engagements.

And in what manner are these attacks carried on? is not the basest fraud and treachery constantly used on this occasion? doth any man, when he first aims at this conquest, fairly and openly assert his evil intentions? doth he declare war against that chastity and honour which he means to violate? On the contrary, doth he not approach with smiles and cringes, with soothing and flattery, with protestations, vows, and oaths of the tender-

st love and the sincerest friendship? By these means, the innocent heart of a poor thoughtless girl is in a manner bribed to betray its owner in the arms of her seducer.

If we consider the matter therefore in this warlike light, the assailant, instead of intitling himself to any honour by such a conquest, deserves truly an appellation which few military men will affect, namely, that of a treacherous coward.

And what shall we say of this vice, when thrown under another allegory, and that too a very familiar one to our fine gentlemen! What do we say of the gamester who throws a levant; who draws another in to play for a large stake, while he himself deposits nothing real on the other side? Would not all men allow such a person to be a cheat and a pick pocket? and what is he who engages a woman, where her innocence, honour, interest, indeed every thing valuable of which he is possessed, are at stake; while he himself plays at the risk *only of his own damnation*; which all fine gentlemen will allow to be nothing; or, as some gamester's call it, MOONSHINE?

In the last place, let me apply to the humanity of these gallants; and this the rather as the *Latins* often use the word *Humanitas* for the chief qualifications of a gentleman. Now, what man of humanity (take the sense of the word from which language you please) can bear the reflection of having, by all the means of baseless, falsehood, and treachery purchased the affections of a young, innocent, unguarded creature; of having made this creature, from her affections to him, the object of his pleasure and delight; and of having repaid those affections and this pleasure, by the utter ruin of such a creature! can he bear to see her stript of her innocence, of her reputation, of every thing lovely, every thing which might have made her happy in herself, or recommended her

to others; deserted and abandoned by the whole world; and exposed to shame, beggary, disease; in a word, to final misery and ruin! can he see all this, and know himself to be the cause of all this, without hanging himself? if he can, I heartily wish he was, as he well deserves to be, hanged by the laws.

I am,

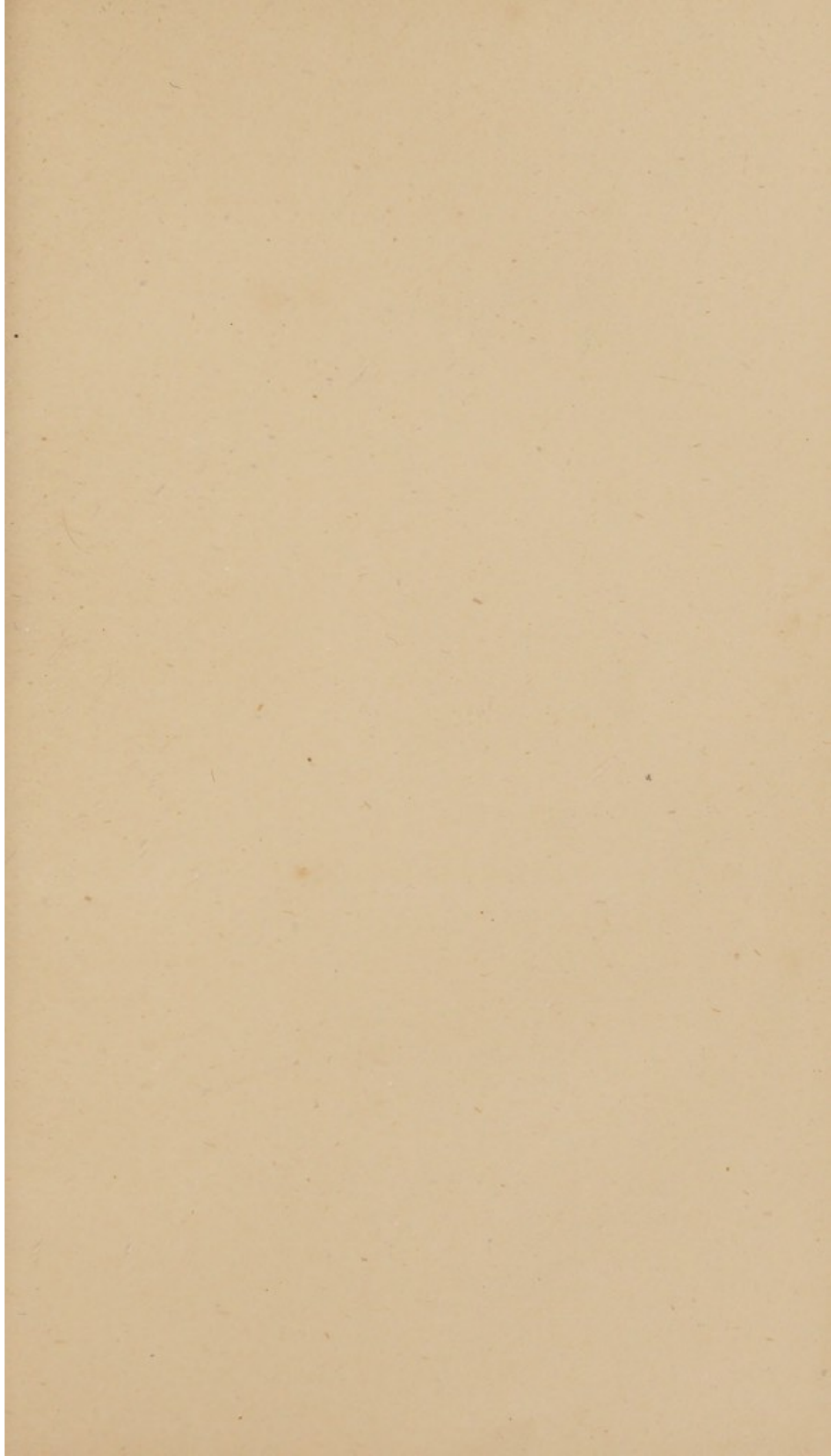
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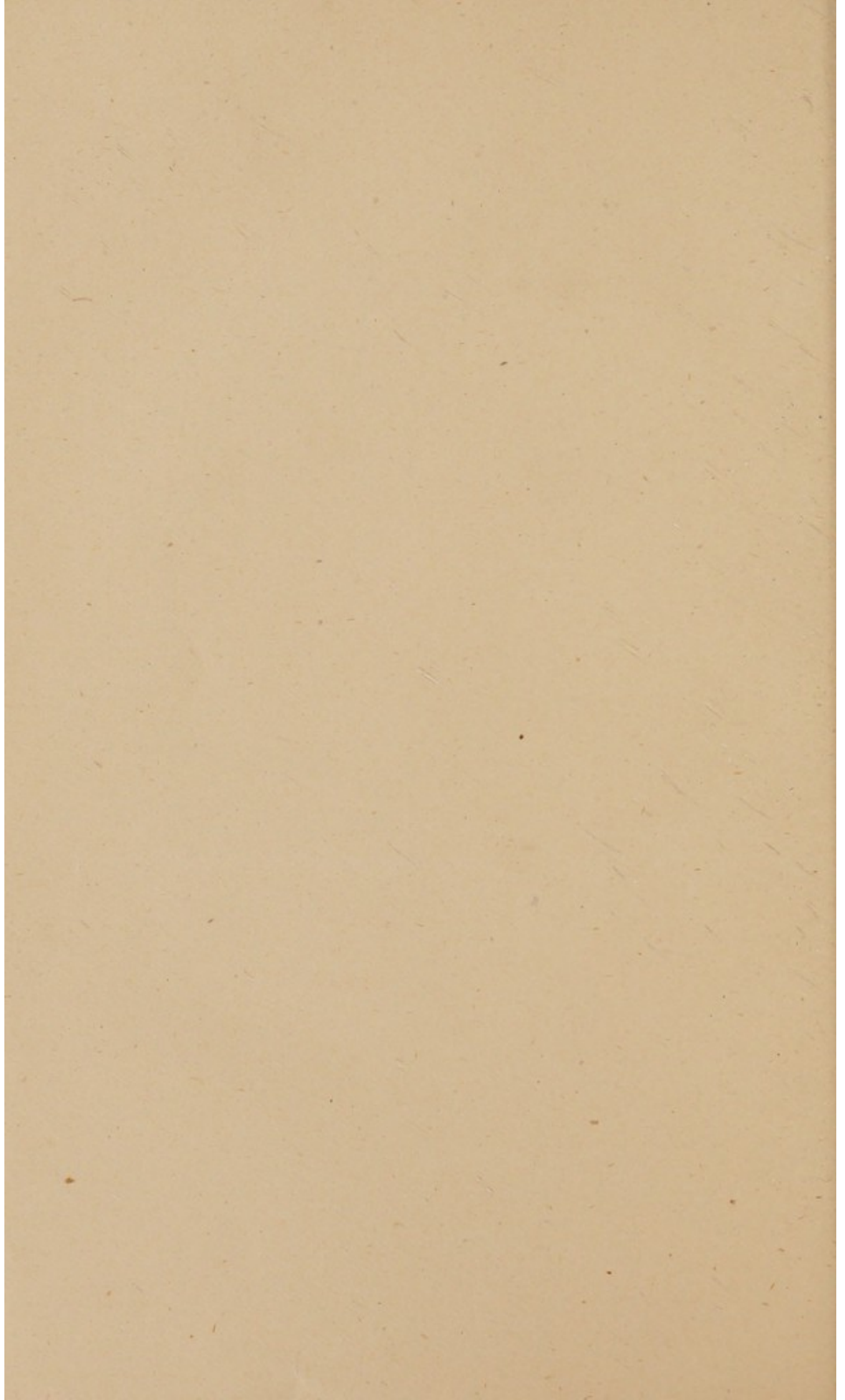
Your sincere Well-wisher,

A X Y L U S.

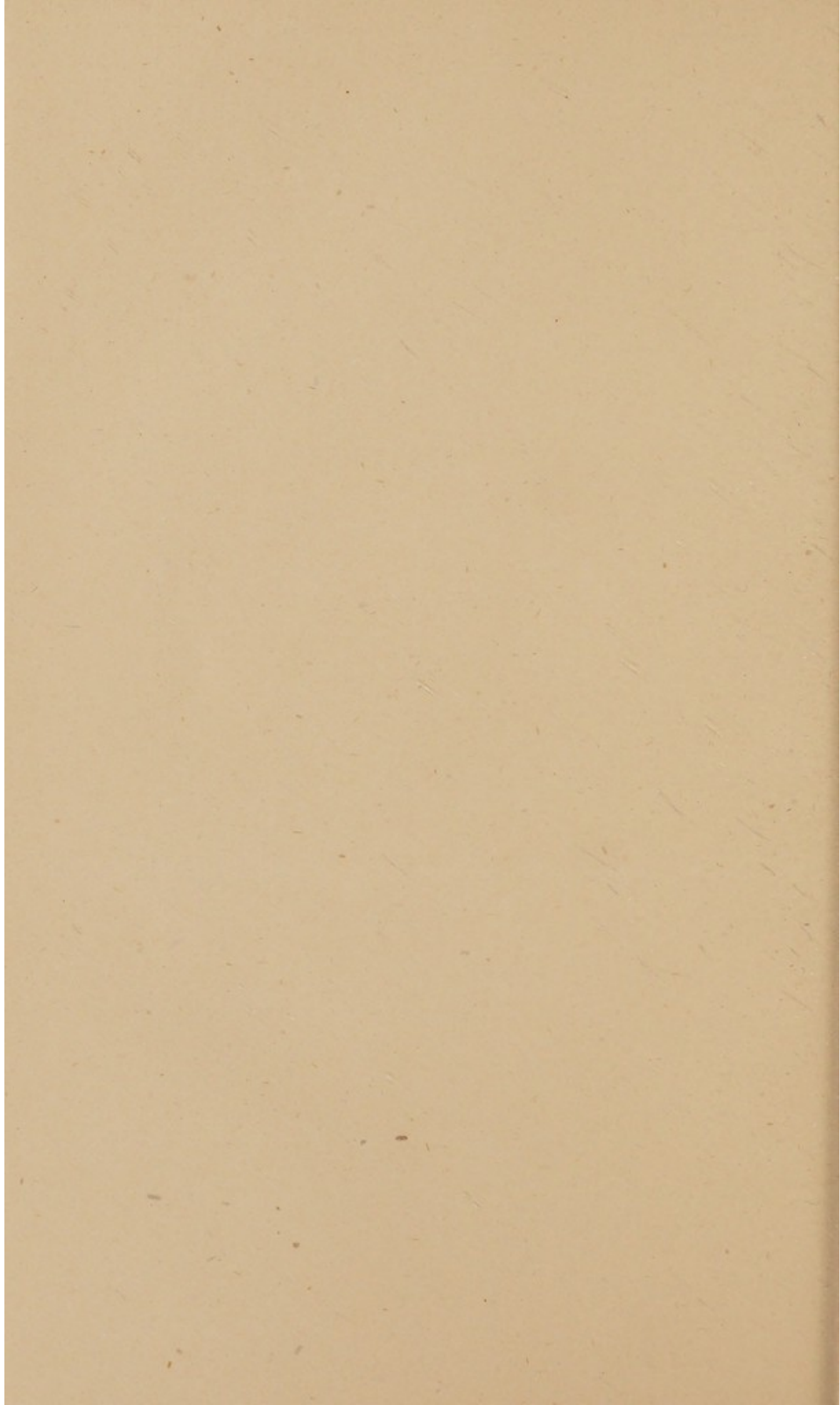




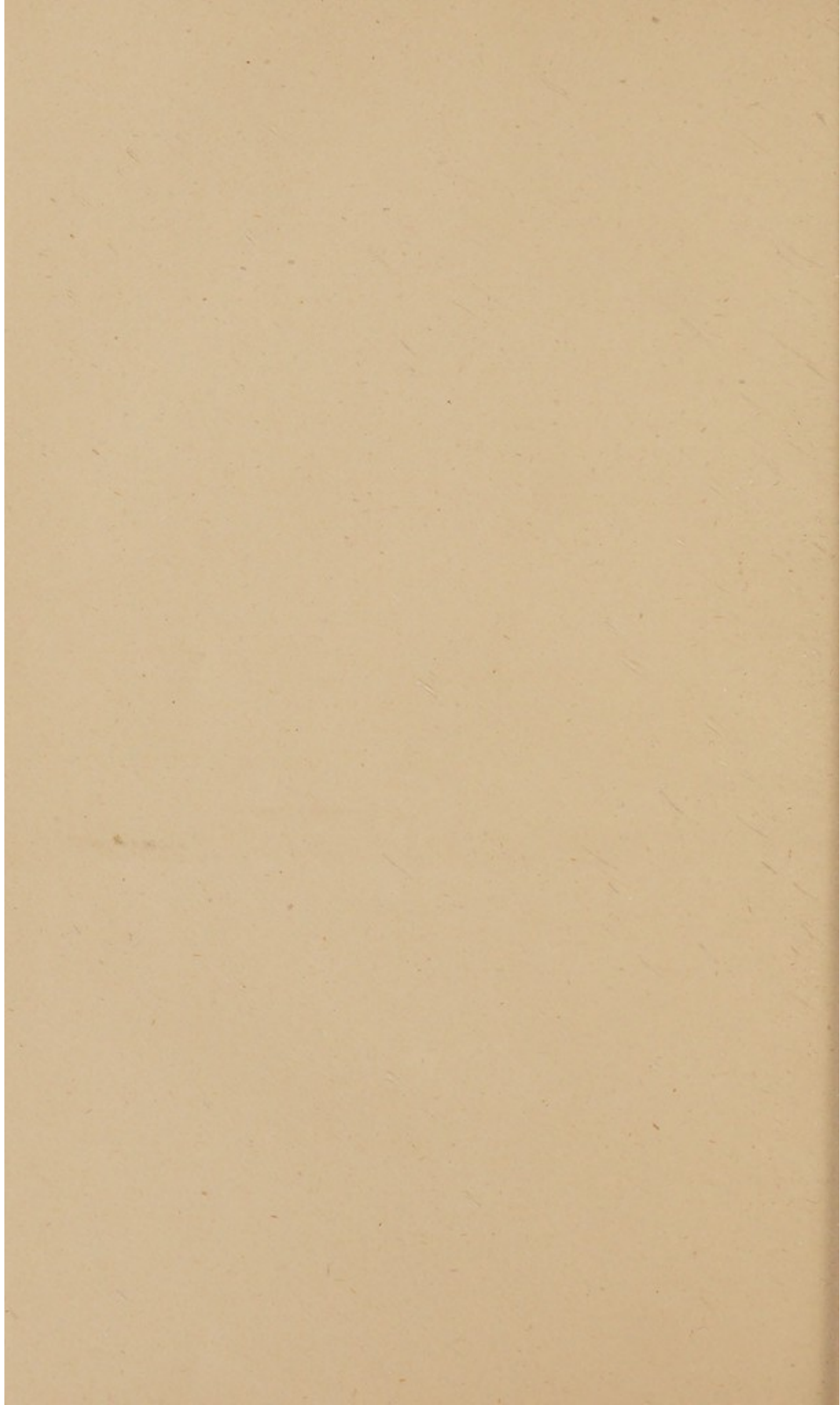








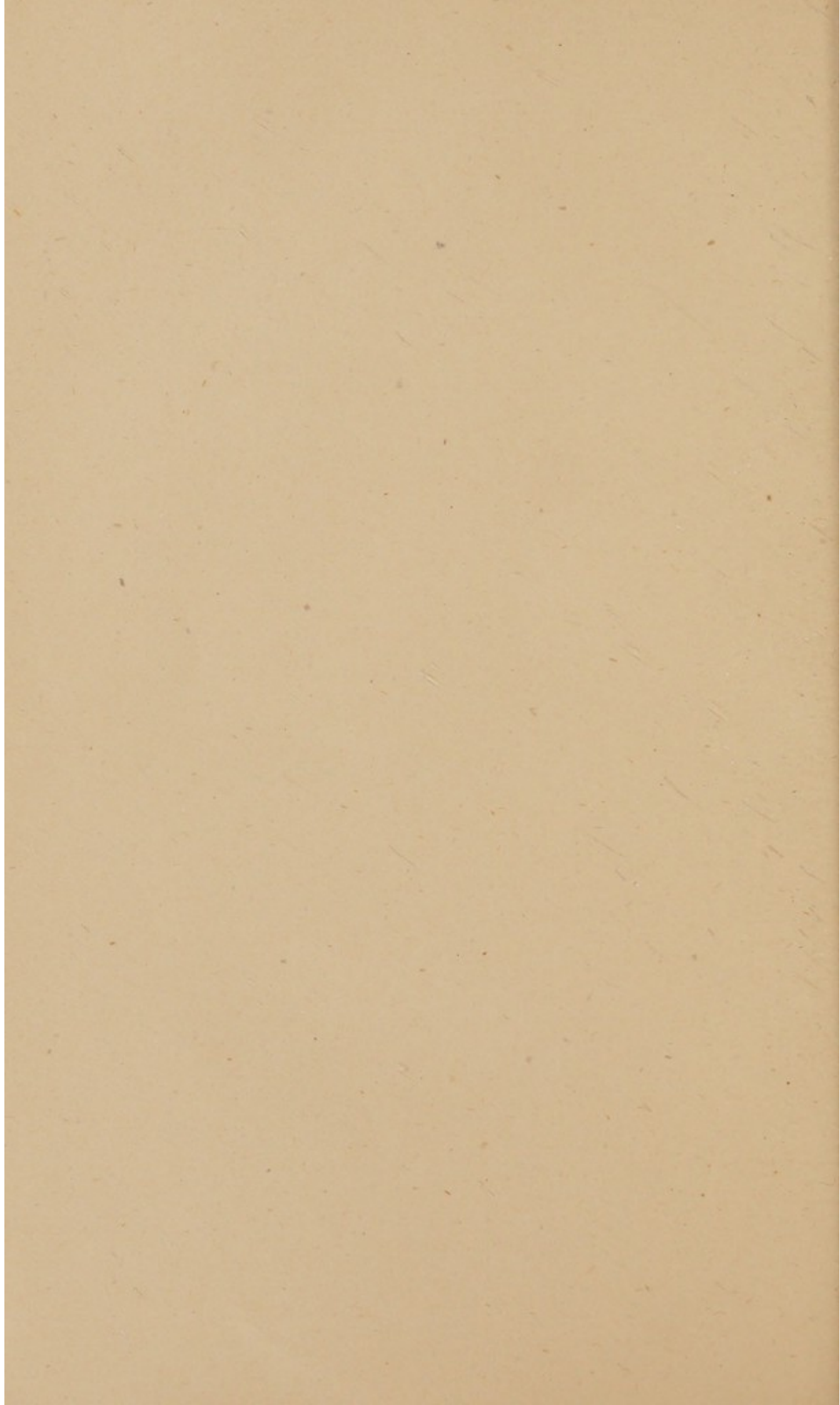




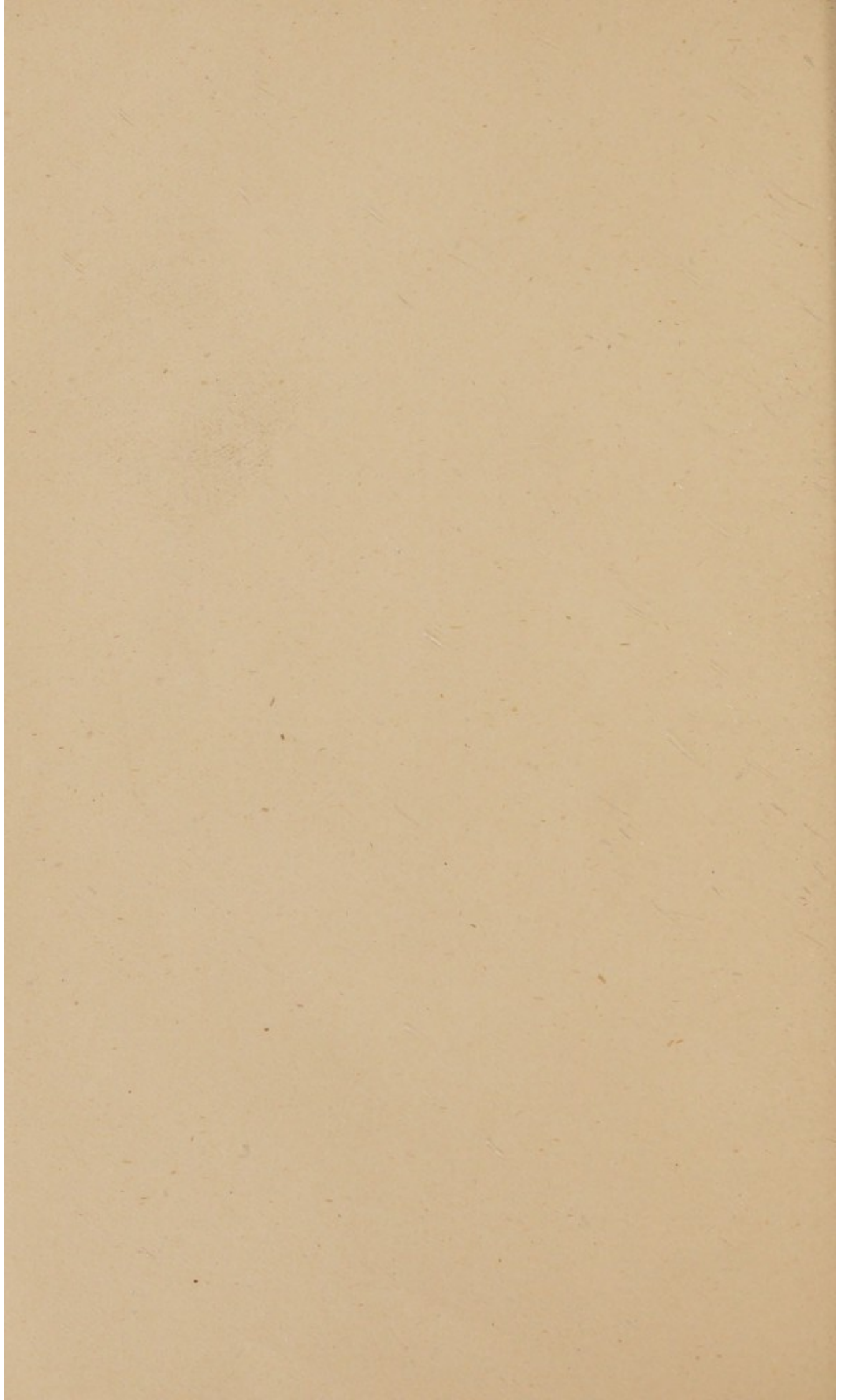


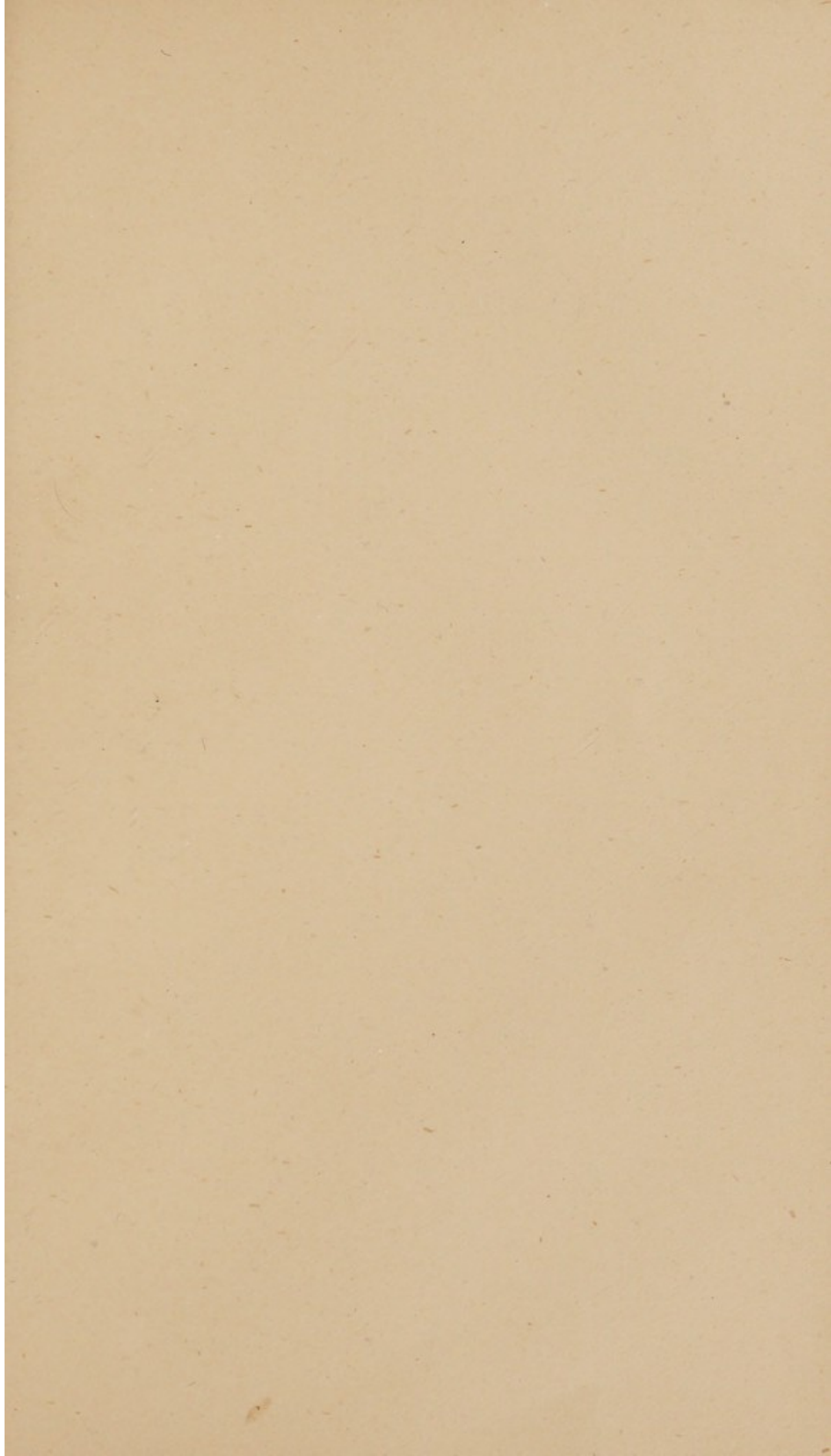


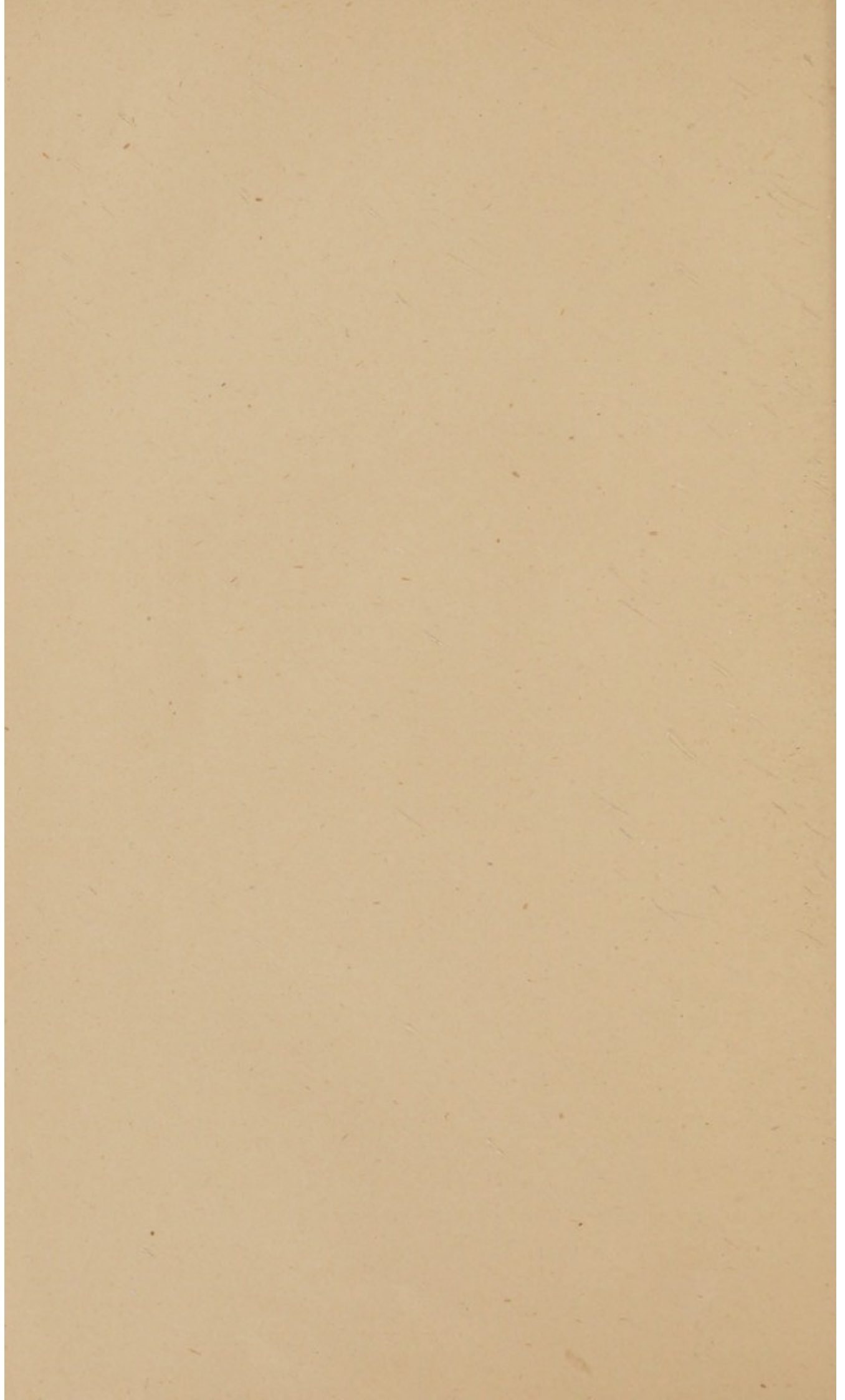








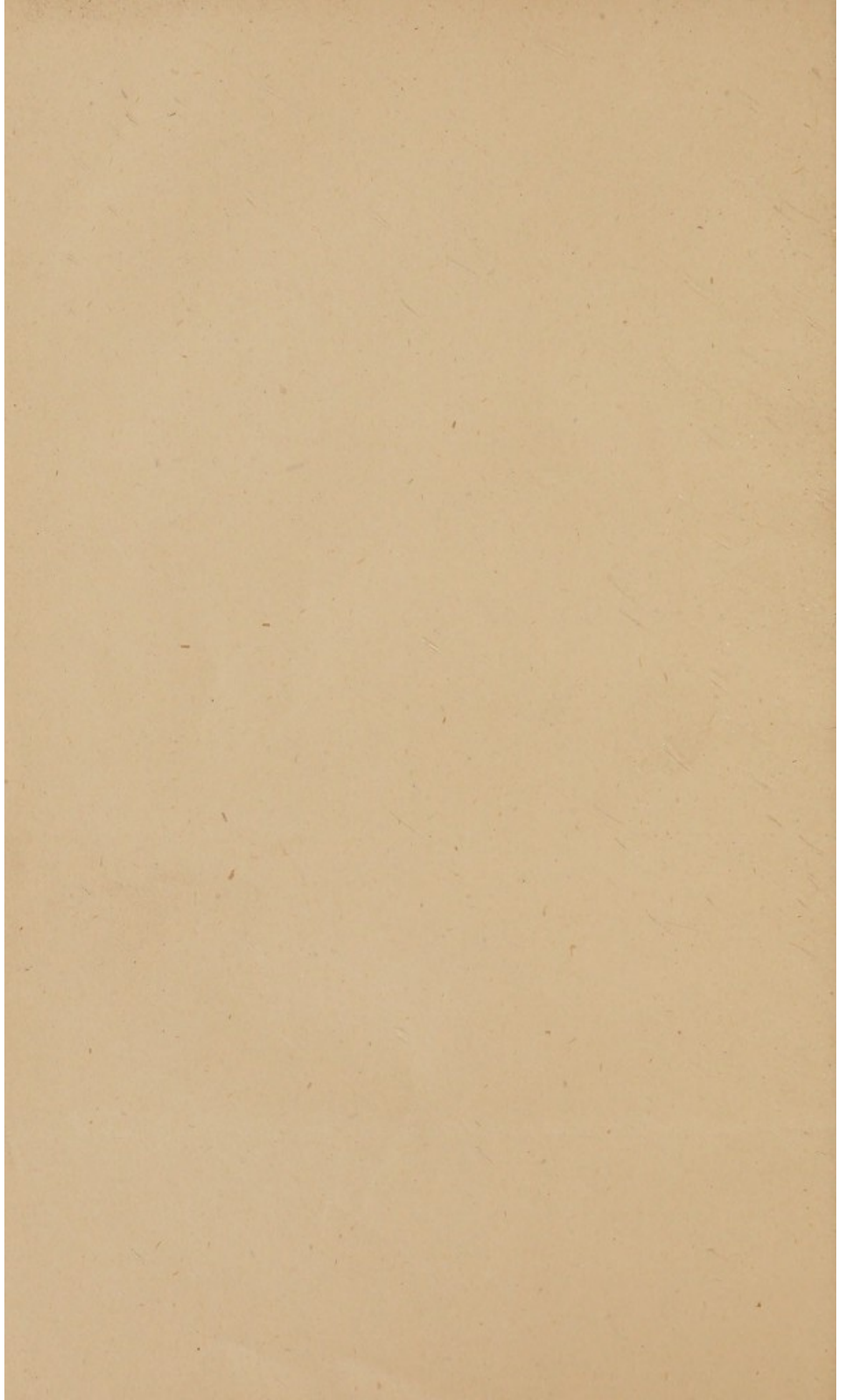












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