

A Week-end With the King.

WHAT HIS MAJESTY LIKES AND DISLIKES.

When the King pays a visit for dinner, or for a stay of a day or two, to one or other of the most distinguished of his subjects who enjoy his personal friendship, as just now he is frequently doing, he always does his utmost to make the occasion pleasant for his hosts as well as for himself.

Naturally, his own tastes have to be minutely considered, and the foremost of his desires is that the visit shall be arranged and carried through without the smallest degree of ostentation. His Majesty strongly objects to anything in the nature of flags or bunting being displayed at the entrances of the houses which he honours, and on the rare occasions when the hosts have in ignorance offended in this way they have usually had the matter brought to their notice afterwards. The most that the King will permit is a little red carpet to step upon as he proceeds from his carriage to the door.

When His Majesty desires to honour one of his friends with his presence at the dinner-table or at his country house—of course, it is not etiquette or permissible for a subject to offer an invitation spontaneously—the fact is usually intimated through a third person, and then the matter is arranged. If the King only wishes to make a call on one of his friends, a message to that effect is sent to him early in the day, and it is then an unwritten law that when His Majesty arrives there shall be no other person present, however distinguished, save the host, and, indeed, that no other member of the family shall be shown into the apartments where the King may be unless he particularly inquires for them.

In the case of dinner and house parties which the King has signified his intention of joining the host must usually submit to him a list of the other guests which it has been arranged to invite. In the majority of cases the King's predilections have been ascertained beforehand, and it is very rarely that His Majesty has to suggest any alteration of the list. Sometimes, though not often, he sends himself a few names of people he would like to see at the party, and they are, of course, invited.

His Majesty is often desirous of taking part in a game of bridge after dinner, and when this is settled upon he either suggests the names of the other two besides the host who shall be invited to make up the table, or they are suggested to him—usually the former—and the matter is thus cut-and-dried in advance.

In the same way his likes and dislikes in the matter of dishes and wines are carefully ascertained beforehand, so that nothing shall be laid upon the table which will not please his palate. It is known that he particularly prefers that the dinner shall be short, and therefore it is seldom that a host arranges for the meal to last more than an hour. Of course, it is quite permissible for the

host to attempt a little score by offering His Majesty something novel and quite exceptional in the matter of culinary dainties—as, for instance, when a certain person of distinction, who had something of a reputation as a gourmet, placed before His Majesty minute chickens on toast.

These extremely small dainties are known to the poulterers' trade as poussins, and they are amongst the most expensive things to be bought in London in the way of food. Again, it is always the duty of the host and hostess to remember that the King likes plenty of flowers upon the table, and that he does not like the serviettes to be folded in the mitre or other fancy forms, but simply to be laid flat. His Majesty always has his own footman behind his chair. If he has been making a country-house visit, it has been his custom to leave behind him a sufficient sum of money for the tipping of the servants.

Unostentatious as the King insists such a visit shall be, it does not follow that it is correspondingly inexpensive for the host, as might be imagined. The reverse is the case, for one of the chief points of etiquette, which is not exposed to public view, is that every article of furniture in the room allotted to His Majesty must be brand new, and never have been used before.

Idleness is a Curse.

"It is not all of life to live or all of death to die."

This maxim should be indelibly impressed upon every human soul, but unfortunately far too many live as if their only obligation consisted in eating, sleeping, and existing their allotted time of three score and ten years.

They seem to think that it is no fault of theirs that they are in the world, and that they are much abused in having been born to suffer, to live and die, as all mortals must, sooner or later.

This is a most absurd position, and is unworthy of anyone of intelligence, and betrays a most ungrateful spirit to Almighty God for the blessing of life, liberty, and the privilege vouchsafed to all of working out a far greater and eternal wealth of glory in that blissful world where neither sickness, death, nor sorrow can come than can be won in the great world in which we live, move and have an existence.

It was never intended that mankind should spend their lives on flowery beds of ease, but that all should work out their own eternal salvation. The parable of the talents illustrates the degree of responsibility resting upon every creature: none are guiltless who have wasted any of life's precious moments.

It is within the power of every soul to change its environment. Poverty may embarrass but cannot crush out the divine spark that is inborn in every human heart.

Innumerable difficulties may surround everyone, but if one makes untiring effort and exercises the right kind of judgment he will usually overcome everything and find himself victorious. It

may take patience, forbearance and desperate exertion, but the conditions encompassing one can be changed.

It depends absolutely upon the conception which every human being puts upon life, its responsibilities and its possibilities. If his range is limited by the few brief days of mortality and does not extend to immortality after life's fitful fever is over, he fails to appreciate its full meaning or the transcendent glory that may be achieved in this world and in the heavenly world to which we are still tending.

He who suffered as men suffer and died an ignominious death on the cross has furnished an example for the life that all creatures should imitate. "He went about doing good," revealing Himself to men that they might learn of Him "ways of pleasantness and paths of peace."

Selfishness, covetousness, penitriousness, unrighteousness, idolatry of material things, make their impression upon the human heart, and out of its fulness the mouth speaketh, the outward expression being always the reflection of the inward soul.

Who has not seen individuals in whose countenance there was a light that could only come from holy living or the innocence of childhood?

And, again, who has not had a shudder pass through him in looking upon faces distorted by crimes committed and the evil that possessed persons with hideous faces?

Some lives may be fuller than others, as some have greater talents than others, but the simplest life may be pure and undented, while the greater genius may, by his mighty power, arouse the whole world and bestow upon mankind the benefits arising from the achievements of superior ability. Behind all ambition must be a noble purpose for the good of all mankind, or it will perish in its inception.

The all-wise Creator works in no narrow channel. His plans are for the universal happiness and welfare of all His creatures, and He would that none should perish or fall short of the glory or happiness all may attain.

The innumerable moral codes laid

down for living out correctly one's life are useless if in the very beginning one's heart is not right. Be sure that all evil is rooted out of your heart and all will be well. The good will dominate and right impulses spring forth spontaneously.

Once the mind is filled with pure thoughts there is no danger of degeneracy, no matter how powerful the influences of evil may be that compass one.

The philosophical adjustment of one's self to whatever lot the fates have decreed is of primary importance to every individual and will spare them much unhappiness. The envy borne toward the rich, the effort to imitate them in their excessive extravagance, the desire to copy them in their idleness, the wish to eat and drink as the gourmands do, are the causes of much misery to hosts of people, and could they know how little of health and happiness these same rich people enjoy their envy would turn to pity.

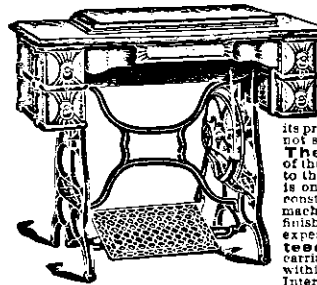
Idle-born pleasure seekers are the least to be envied of all people. They have exhausted all sources of pleasure and destroyed the fountain of health by their indolence and self-indulgent lives. Their minds are occupied with schemes for selfish gratification, and are therefore dwarfed and unproductive of good to themselves or for mankind.

Those, on the other hand, who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, as God intended all men should, are healthy and happy in the thought that they are doing something for the betterment of the world. They have no time to magnify the ills of life. They are indifferent to physical indispositions and by activity of mind and body overcome the ills that beset them.

No great human benefaction has ever been born in the brain of the indolent heir of millions.

Let every man born of woman imitate the example of Him who hath redeemed the world from the curse inflicted through Adam's fall and his life will be full of joy and usefulness, and his triumph over death and the grave the beginning of eternal life in mansions above the skies which He went to prepare for all who follow Him.

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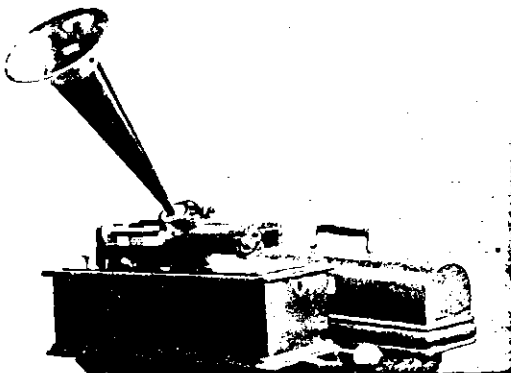
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