

Our Women Folk

CONDUCTED BY
PEARL RICHMOND HAMILTON

THE RIVER OF LIFE

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

ON the river of life, as I float along,
I see with the Spirit's sight
That many a noxious weed of wrong
Has root in a seed of right.

For evil is good that has gone astray,
And sorrow is only blindness,
And the world is always under the sway
Of a changeless law of kindness.

The commonest error a truth can make
Is shouting its sweet voice hoarse,
And sin is only the soul's mistake
In misdirecting force.

And love, the fairest of all fair things
That ever to man descended,
Grows rank with nettles and poisonous
things
Unless it is watched and tended.

There could not be anything better than
this

Old world in the way it began,
And though some matters have gone
amiss

From the great original plan;

And however dark the skies may appear,
And however souls may blunder,
I tell you it all will work out clear,
For good lies over and under.

A GEM FOR ALL TO LEARN

I FIND in an I.O.D.E. book this splendid paragraph from the pen of Mrs. W. J. Wright, of Winnipeg:

"To fit character for patriotism, the first necessity is to inculcate the idea of responsibility. The sense of responsibility together with the development of the greater and deeper imagination is essential to true loyalty. One must first be loyal to God and to the highest and best instincts and ideals of our race, before one can be fit to be a true patriot. We are all trustees for the future, and we must be made to feel our great responsibility to God and man. British loyalty at its best is imbued with this large spirit. It is founded upon loyalty to God, race, flag, throne, constitution and country. It teaches that service, not power, is the greatest thing, that to serve well the race, and the state, is the supreme ideal.

LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT WOMEN

By P.R.H.

The Women Pioneers

THEY cut a path through tangled underwood of old traditions, out to broader ways.

They lived to hear their work called brave and good,
But, oh! the thorns before the crown of
bays.

The world gives lashes to its Pioneers
Until the goal is reached—then defending
cheers.

Dr. Anna Howard Shaw says her Scottish grandmother was a remarkable woman with a dauntless soul and progressive ideas far in advance of her time. Her neighbors admired her courage, perhaps they appreciated still more what she did for them, for she spent all her leisure in the homes of the very poor, mending their clothing and teaching them to sew. Also she left behind her a path of cleanliness as definite as the line of foam that follows a ship. She was most opposed to dirt.

A character like this leaves an impres-

sion on the descendants. It is not surprising that her grand-daughter, Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, plowed through the world the furrow of feminine vote.

In referring to her father, she says: "To him an acorn was not an acorn, but a forest of young oaks." Of her mother she says: "She had a wonderful understanding of what a child likes. Our one comfort was that our mother was never afraid." Of her girlhood she says: "After I became a wage-earner I lost my desire to make a fortune, but the college dream grew with the years; and though my college career seemed as remote as the most distant star, I hitched my little wagon to that star and never afterward wholly lost sight of its friendly gleam."

Dr. Anna Howard Shaw says: "Nothing bigger can come to a human being than to love a great cause more than life itself, and to have the privilege throughout life of working for that cause."

Helen Hunt Jackson was a tenderly reared woman, yet she felt she had a mission to perform to humanity, and the more culture she had the more responsibility she owed to others. She brought cheer and hope to the Indians and their wives, and they called her "the queen." She spent her life righting the wrongs of the Indian race and changed public feeling on the Indian question. "Ramona" was her most popular book.

Lucretia Mott said: "Who can measure the power of an educated, intellectual

the women who had asked her to speak and said: "I cannot speak." The place was packed with men and women and she had expected only a few women. Disappointed, they finally arranged with a prominent statesman to jot down the facts from her lips; and then as best he could, tell the audience the experiences of the woman who had been on the battlefields, among the wounded and dying. Just as they were about to go upon the platform, the gentleman said: "Mrs. Livermore, I have heard you say at the front that you would give your all for the soldiers—a foot, a hand, or a voice. Now is the time to give your voice if you wish to do good."

She meditated a moment, and then said, "I will try."

When she arose to speak, the sea of faces before her seemed blurred. She was talking into blank darkness. She could not even hear her own voice. But as she went on, and the needs of the soldiers crowded upon her mind, she forgot all fear and for two hours held her audience spellbound. Men and women wept, and patriotism filled every heart. At eleven o'clock, eight thousand dollars were pledged, and then, at the suggestion of the presiding officer, they remained until one o'clock to perfect plans for a fair, from which they cleared sixty thousand dollars. After this, Mrs. Livermore spoke in hundreds of towns and organized many societies for aid.

Margaret Fuller loved her mother's flower garden because she said they made her want to be as beautiful and perfect as they. At fifteen she said: "I am determined on distinction, which formerly I thought to win at an easy rate; but now I see that long years of labor must be given." The majority in this world will always be mediocre because they lack high-minded ambition and the willingness to work. Her sympathy unlocked every heart to her. All classes loved her. She was always an inspiration. Emerson said of her: "The day was never long enough to exhaust her opulent memory, and I, who knew her for ten years, never saw her without surprise at her new powers."

She often said: "I hate not to be beautiful when all around is so." Her wonderful work as a teacher brought her many letters of appreciation. One man wrote her: "What I am I owe in a large measure to the stimulus you imparted. You roused my heart to high hopes; you raised my aims from paltry and vain pursuits to those which lasted and fed the soul; you inspired me with a great ambition, and made me see the worth and the meaning of life."

One time an editor returned to the father of Louisa M. Alcott some of her stories with the advice: "Tell Louisa to go on with her teaching. She can't write stories." Louisa exclaimed: "I will write stories, and he will see the day he will pay well for them." And he did.

Bonstetten said of Madame de Staël: "In seeing her, in hearing her, I feel myself electrified. She daily becomes greater and better; but souls of great talent have great sufferings; they are solitary in the world, like Mont Blanc."

Madame de Staël entertained in France in her day the most eloquent orators who borrowed from her most of their ideas and telling phrases. Most of them went forth from her door with speeches ready for the next day and with resolution to pronounce them—a courage which was also derived from her.

Rosa Bonheur had no money to buy models, so she walked miles to farms to study them.



Proudly displaying their own Handwork

So beautiful was Elizabeth Barrett Browning's character and so much reverence did her husband have for her that he never handled her prayer book without first washing his hands.

What made George Eliot a superior author? Not wealthy parentage, not congenial surroundings. She had a generous, sympathetic heart for a foundation and on this she built a scholarship few men have equalled. She loved science, philosophy, language and mathematics and grew broad enough to discuss great questions and think great thoughts. And she was affectionate, gentle and tender. She had broad charity for those whose views differed from hers. She said: "The best lesson of tolerance we have to learn, is to tolerate intolerance." She hoped for and "looked forward to the time when the impulse to help our fellows shall be as immediate and as irresistible as that which I feel to grasp something firm if I am falling."

Elizabeth Fry believed in her prison work in winning control by kindness and gentleness as she had guided her own children. When a girl of seventeen she was attractive in society and much admired, and she wrote in her journal: "Company at dinner; I must beware of not being a flirt, it is an abominable character; I hope I shall never be one, and yet I fear I am one now a little. I think I am by degrees losing many excellent qualities. I lay it to my great love of gaiety and the world. I am now seventeen, and if some kind and great circumstance does not happen to me, I shall have my talents devoured by moth and rust. They will lose their brightness, and one day they will prove a curse instead of a blessing."

One day soon after she went to hear a preacher. The notes state she sat on the front seat "with her smart boots, purple, laced with scarlet."

That day she was impressed with the need of Divine guidance, and from then on she said she never awakened in the morning without asking, "How best may I serve to-day?" Her name became known everywhere as the woman as the angel of light in prisons. She started a wave of prison reform that swept over all Europe.

Carmen Sylva says in her book, "Thoughts of a Queen": "You can never be tired of life, you are only tired of yourself." "A woman of true breeding has the same manners in the dressing-



Early Steps in Self Help

mother in the home?" Another time she said, "James and I loved each other more than ever since we worked together for a great cause." After her death someone said of her: "For such a woman as Lucretia Mott, with cultured mind, noble heart, and holy purpose, there are no sex limitations. Her field is the world."

When Mary A. Livermore, whose eloquent addresses stirred a continent, faced her first audience, she turned to