

## CHAPTER II

### *THE UNFOLDING OF WOMANHOOD*

**L**ONGFELLOW'S poem, entitled "Maidenhood," begins like this:

"Standing with reluctant feet,  
Where the brook and river meet,  
Womanhood and childhood fleet!"

These are beautiful words, but later on it says:

"O, thou child of many prayers,  
Life hath quicksands—Life hath snares.  
Care and age come unawares."

"Nature gives to every person and season some beauties of its own; and from morning to night, as from the cradle to the grave, is but a succession of changes so gentle and easy that we can scarcely mark their progress."

Very few children can be left to "jus' grow" as Topsy did. Their pathway must be illuminated by love and wisdom, that they may conform to, and not transgress the laws of being.

"Know thyself" is a true maxim, and especially is it important for girls. They ever want to grow up attractive and beautiful. Some girls, however, think that bright eyes, pretty hair and fine clothes, alone, make them beautiful. This is a mistake; real beauty depends upon good health, good manners and a pure mind.

In this living, moving world, it behooves us to plan an active, happy life and then look forward with hope and pleasure to its realization. Should health be blighted there would be nothing in the future but trials and discouragements.

As the happiness of our girls depends mainly upon their health, it behooves us all to guide them in such a way as to enable them to realize the highest ideal.

There is no one who stands so near the girl as the Mother. From early childhood she occupies the first place in the little one's confidence—