

PREFATORY LETTER FROM THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Written after reading Chapter III. when published serially

WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, October 18, 1902.

My Dear Mrs. Van Vorst:

I must write you a line to say how much I have appreciated your article, "The Woman Who Toils." But to me there is a most melancholy side to it, when you touch upon what is fundamentally infinitely more important than any other question in this country—that is, the question of race suicide, complete or partial.

An easy, good-natured kindness, and a desire to be "independent"—that is, to live one's life purely according to one's own desires—are in no sense substitutes for the fundamental virtues, for the practice of the strong, racial qualities without which there can be no strong races—the qualities of courage and resolution in both men and women, of scorn of what is mean, base and selfish, of eager desire to work or fight or suffer as the case may be provided the end to be gained is great enough, and the contemptuous putting aside of mere ease, mere vapid pleasure, mere avoidance of toil and worry. I do not know whether I most pity or most despise the foolish and selfish man or woman who does not understand that the only things really worth having