

saving worth, if I may so put it, of the very smallness and valuelessness of little things. In other words, we are apt to regard the pennies or fractional notes in our pockets as too small to be worth saving. We intend to save, but rarely ever find it convenient to spare a five or ten dollar bank note from our pocket-books, and deeming smaller savings hardly worth attention, we end by putting away nothing because we cannot put away a good deal, or, more truly, because we cannot put money away in what we deem worthy amounts. Now the fact is, that nearly all the saving that is done at all is done in small sums. The deposits in savings banks amount to many millions, but they consist almost wholly of very little sums of money; and so well is this principle recognized in institutions of that sort that they all make it a rule not only to accept but especially to encourage small deposits, many of them taking as little as a single dime, willingly, in spite of the fact that every deposit makes necessary an amount of clerical work which the dime would hardly pay for, even if it were given to the institution outright. As a rule, therefore, the place to begin saving is in little things. The pennies which lie loose in one's pocket should be the first objects of attention, and after these fractional currency must be considered. No one ever realizes, until he has subjected the matter to the test of experiment, how much money passes through his hands annually in very small pieces. I happened to be present one day when a man of very limited means was discussing the possibility, for he was in no doubt whatever as to the desirability, of insuring his life. He urged the fact that with all the economy he knew how to practice, he never yet had been able to count fifty dollars as spare money; he insisted that it required absolutely all the money he could make in his business, to meet the actual wants of his family, and without doubt he had always found it so. The agent replied, however, with a remark that startled all who heard it. "A policy of five thousand dollars will only cost you *ten cents*, and you can save that by wearing your boots a week longer than you usually do."

"*Ten cents*? What do you mean? The premium according to your own statement is a hundred and nine dollars a year."

"That is very true," replied the agent, "and yet you will only have to save ten cents, or at any rate you need never be conscious of saving more than that to meet the payments. I'll ex-

plain what I mean. Take a child's safe,—it will only cost you ten cents, and whenever a ten-cent note comes to you in making change, slip it into the safe. If two or three come at once and from the same person, put only one in. I'll advance the first payment myself, and when the second falls due we'll open the safe. If there isn't enough in it to pay me back, after paying the second year's premium, I'll stand the loss. And if you miss the money so put away, you needn't continue the policy."

The proposition was both novel and startling, and in accepting it the man, who was a merchant in a country place, warned his friend that he should hold him to his promise. A year later I went with the agent to see the safe opened. Instead of one there were several of the little tin receptacles, each stuffed full of fractional currency; but the merchant was confident that the aggregate could not be more than fifty dollars.

"But it is fifty dollars saved," he said, "for truly I haven't missed it anywhere."

When the boxes were opened they were found to contain just two thousand eight hundred and seventy-four bits of green paper, or two hundred and eighty-seven dollars and forty cents,—considerably more than enough to pay the two annual premiums.

The anecdote is a homely one, but it serves to point a moral. It shows the value of small sums, and their capacity to make a considerable aggregate when systematically saved.

But this is only one side, and the less important side of the matter. As small sums are more important than we are accustomed to think, and are more easily and more surely saved than large ones, so, on the other hand, it is in small things that we may, with the least effort, practice economy. Having discovered the necessity of cutting down expenses, you are pretty sure to cast about for some place of saving. You mentally run over your current expenditures in the hope that you may find some considerable item which may be reduced or cut off entirely. And the hope is nearly always disappointed, for the reason that in matters of any considerable cost, most people are already practising quite as sharp an economy as they conveniently can. Everybody wonders, now and then, where all his money goes, but not one man in a hundred ever satisfies himself on the subject. Not one man in a hundred indulges unnecessarily in things which must be paid for in a lump. When