

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

A CORNER FOR MOTHER AND THE GIRLS

I should like to give to every woman in the land a card on which, in letters of gold, I would write:

"Be Beautiful".

"If you can't be beautiful,

Be as beautiful as you can."

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Everything that lives and grows is beautiful. The other day I saw, silhouetted against the "Eternal Hills" a peach-tree in bloom, like a bride adorned for her bridegroom; the beauty of it was like to make one's heart ache for joy. In the outline of a leafless tree against the sky, the fronds of a tiny fern, a snowflake beneath the magnifying glass, the noble proportions of a horse, the colors on a butterfly's wing, or on a snake's scales, the sheer loveliness of a flower-dotted meadow, the grave beauty of a forest tree, or the wild glory of the sea, Beauty surrounds and pursues us: should we not be in harmony with it all?

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We cannot all be good-looking, for good-looks, after all depend upon our features, and they are thrust upon us, for good or ill. But beauty is every woman's heritage, and she may grasp it—if she will work for it, and not be weary in well-doing.

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Every woman who will, may have beautiful hair, a flawless complexion, a good figure, a graceful carriage, and a pleasant expression. Without these no one can be beautiful, and with them, no one can be ill-looking.

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The first essential, of course, is freedom from organic disease. A yearly "overhauling" by your family physician is the part of wisdom. Perhaps, though you may have no definite illness, you have a "delicate nervous system." It's the best kind to have. Make up your mind to that at first. A delicately balanced machine, though it is easily put out of order, is capable of work that a coarser, sturdier one can never do. A finely constructed nervous system is a precious possession, not a disease.

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Beauty, like everything else in this world, must be bought and paid for in advance, by persistent, intelligent effort, but the price is well within our means.

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You ask, "What must I do to be beautiful?"

It would not be possible, in the short space of this Corner, to lay down a full and authoritative beauty programme which would apply in all cases, but there are a few simple rules which we are the more likely to forget because of their very simplicity.

Use plenty of water, inside and out. Drink eight glasses of water every day.

Take plenty of exercise in the open air. Housework, done with doors and windows open, is unexcelled.

Make friends with your mirror; it will help you to attain an erect and graceful carriage.

Rest. Sleep at least eight hours every night, longer if you need to, with open windows, or, better still, out-doors. Relax in bed. Relax at your work. You don't need to use every nerve and muscle in your body for each task you undertake. Watch yourself, and when you find yourself sitting with nerves tense and taut relax deliberately. Make yourself heavy, see how little effort you can exert and still work rapidly and efficiently. When you feel tired, stop, lift up your eyes, just for an instant 'unto the hills', and hum a little tune, or repeat a favorite poem. You will hardly believe, until you try it for yourself, how it will rest and 'compose' you.

Eat moderately of plain food at regular hours in leisurely fashion. Watch your weight. The man, (it must have been a man) who said, "Beauty is only skin deep" was a pompous ass. If he had said it was 'stomach-deep' he would have been nearer the mark.

See to it that the poisons that are generated by the work of that machine, your body, are thoroughly eliminated daily. Do this not by medicines, but by intelligent variety in diet and sensible exercise.

Use cosmetics sparingly. At best they are but crutches, at the worst a confession.

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DON'T WORRY. I'd like to print that in two-inch 'scare' headlines. You don't have to worry. You can trust. "The promises of God are sure" and they say "Whosoever" and "Whatsoever". That means YOU and YOUR problems.

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Cultivate beautiful thoughts and an interest in other people: there is no surer road to beauty. We all know homely folks whose lack of beauty is forgotten in the sweetness of their expression.

A low and well-modulated voice is a great help too. A pretty way of speaking is infinitely more attractive than a pretty face, and a pleasant voice more to be desired than fine clothes.

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Finally, sisters, be Happy. I don't say 'be joyful', for joy is a gift, and not the portion of all. But we may all be happy, for happiness is not dependent on any outward circumstance but is a conscious, attainable attitude of mind. I think its secret lies in three little words, "Faith, Hope, Love."

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Childhood, youth, maturity, old-age, all may be beautiful. Beautiful indeed is the unconscious grace of childhood, the fire and fervor of youth, the poise of maturity; not less beautiful the lines thought and suffering have etched on the face of age.

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Let me share with you this quotation from Madame Swetchine, clipped from some forgotten magazine years ago, and treasured ever since:

"Shall we make no account of the slackened but surer pace, the dignity, the calm, which make old age what God intended it to be—a sublime halt between a conquered world and eternity? I collect myself, O my God! at the close of life, as at the close of day, and bring to Thee my thoughts and my love. The last thoughts of a heart that loves Thee are like those last, deepest, ruddiest rays of the setting sun. Thou hast willed O my God! that life should be beautiful even to the end. Make me to grow and keep me green, make me to climb like the plant which lifts its head to Thee for the last time before it drops its seed and dies."

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Don't put it off. Start being beautiful right this very minute.

WINNOGENE.

GEO. T. WADDS

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