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ETHEL GORDON FENWICK, S.R.N., HON. EDITOR 1888—1947.

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Editorial.

Trifles.

IT might appear from our title that we are going to make suggestions that are not worthy of thoughtful people, but perhaps the world has no very accurate idea of the importance of "merest" trifles to turn the balance in some of the greatest events of science and discovery; nor must we allow ourselves to be discouraged by even a strong flavour of flippancy in a title or paper, until we have sifted the matter in that paper to its foundation. For we must always bear in mind that it is the "trifles," light as air, that often change the whole tenor of a life for good or evil.

To the great discoveries of science is this most particularly applicable, for what is science but systematic knowledge that can be brought to bear on things both great and small, and as I once heard a very great lady say, "Women may be thankful to science for putting the crinkle into hairpins." The same remark might apply to many of our small appliances that make our daily work so much easier for us. It is also said that art and science have their meeting place in method.

"Trifles make perfection, but perfection is no trifle." That is a very old saying but quite worthy of being re-suscitated now and again, for in every life there are certain to be incidents, often of the most trivial nature possible, which—little as we think so at the time—are destined to remain indelibly stamped on our memories! It is the little things that count, day by day, in the forming of character, and perhaps it would be as well for youth to remember that the way in which we employ our leisure time may become the way in which we shall employ our future years. Trifles of time; how often they are wasted, perhaps when waiting for that "off-duty." Many consider the 20 minutes too trifling a time in which to do anything, and they waste that time not realising that 20 minutes a day means almost four and a half days in one year, and yet given that time as a mid-term holiday, what a lot they would consider it!

"The day is done,
Its hours have run,
And Thou hast taken count of all."

As a matter of course most of us, when young, dream that we will do something worthwhile in the years to come, and we go on dreaming and building castles in the air and dreaming day dreams of the future. We overlook the vast number of little things of those self-same trifles lying all around, being overlooked and neglected because they are duties and not pleasant or picturesque to perform. We are apt to mistake our vocation by looking out of the way for occasions to exercise great and rare virtues and by stepping

over the ordinary ones that lie directly in the road before us. Yet again it is a foregone conclusion that these trifles are always at hand, and must be done now, day by day, and year by year, if we wish to get the best results out of ourselves in the future, or we too may have for our epitaph:—

"He lived a life of going to do,
And died with *nothing* done."

It is no rare thing today to come across the students who think it will be a very easy thing to have one character and disposition because they are young and apparently learning, and to assume quite a different one as they grow up. By some fantastic idea they hope to sow a crop of wild oats in youth and to reap a harvest of wheat later on, and they have a hard task before them in after years when they have to grasp the fact that as they sow—so must they reap. That which they have given to the years in age, that the "veriest trifles are the beginning of things" that may develop into "all that is worthwhile" in their future life.

Listening to a speaker who chose for her subject "Time," we heard her refer to Time as the "stuff" that Life was made up of, every moment being similar in value to every thread of gold. How wise, and is it not true that even when we are asleep the form of life never stops, and as was once quoted "the pattern which was weaving when the sun went down is weaving when it comes up in the morning! Time may be occupied, but what is important is that it is wisely occupied. Johnson says, "He who waits to do a great deal at once will never do anything."

It was once suggested that one was conforming to the divine order and will of providence when performing duties, even indifferent ones, which belonged to our condition. It is by attending to the so-called "trifles," which are in reality "duties," that we are serving in the great army which achieves the welfare of the world.

"So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low, 'Thou must,'
And youth replies, 'I can.'"

Let them begin here and now by grasping the trifles which lie all around them. A solid wall of masonry is not built at once but is built up naturally and carefully stone by stone. So a character must be formed, a trifle at a time, until it is so firmly established that it cannot be tumbled by the assaults of temptation or overthrown by storms of misfortune.

"Think naught a trifle tho' it small appear,
Sand makes the mountains,
Moments make a year,
And trifles—a Life."

MARGARET B. MACKELLAR.

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