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## CONFIDENCES

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## CONFIDENCES

### TALKS WITH A YOUNG GIRL CONCERNING HERSELF

BY EDITH B. LOWRY, M.D.

CHICAGO  
1919

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*To the daughters of my friends,  
but especially to  
MARY LOUISE  
this little book is lovingly  
dedicated.*

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## **PREFACE**

No one can come in contact with children and young people without feeling the need of a united effort on the part of the parents, physicians and teachers to lessen the immoral tendencies, with their degrading effects, to which the present generation is subjected. Knowledge of the right sort will prevent many wrecked lives. Ignorance as to facts and to the best manner of presenting them prevents many a parent from daring to trespass upon such sacred ground, and the instruction is postponed from day to day until it is too late.

With the desire to aid mothers in giving the necessary instruction to their daughters, this little book has been written. The author has tried to tell in suitable language the facts that should be known by every girl from ten to fourteen years of age. The book is of such a character that it may be placed in the hands of the young girl, but better still it may be read aloud by the mother to her daughter. It is hoped this book will form the basis of a closer intimacy between mother and daughter, and that the knowledge herein set forth will forestall that which might be given in an entirely different spirit by the girl's companions.

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In all places, then, and in all seasons,  
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,  
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,  
How akin they are to human things.

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Longfellow.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **THE SECRET**

Listen, Violet, I am going to tell you a wonderful secret. And this wonderful secret is about your namesakes, the violets. Every little flower that grows is a living being, as you or I—and every plant is a household. How do I know this? The flowers told me themselves, and now I am going to let you into the secret.

Of course, I must admit that the flowers do not talk as we do. Unlike ourselves, they cannot express

themselves aloud. They must show their thoughts by their motions or by their change of expression. When a flower is thirsty, how does it tell us so? By drooping its head and looking sad. Then, if we give it a drink, how quickly it says, "Thank you!" by lifting its head and smiling at us.

If we would have the flowers tell us their secrets, we must watch them very closely so as to be able to hear what they say. Sometimes, however, we must learn from others what the plants like, for at first, until we are better acquainted, we will not be able to understand them, and might make many mistakes; so I am going to tell you a few things today.

First, we must learn something about the flower's family, and where the flower gets its food. The flowers are a part of the plant household just the same as you or any little girl is only a part of the family. You could not very well live without the rest of the family—your father and mother, who do so many things for you and take such care of you, and your brothers and sisters, who all help to make the home happy.

The flower is like a little girl and needs some one to care for her. Do you know the other members of the plant household?

First, there are the roots, whose work it is to hold the plant in place so it will not be tossed about by every wind. The roots also must draw the water and nourishment from the ground. You know when the rain comes, it soaks into the ground and then when the plant needs water the little roots suck it out of the ground just as you could draw lemonade through a straw, for every root is supplied with many hair tubes that serve as straws. These hair tubes often are so small we could not see them without a microscope, but it is through these tiny tubes the plant receives nearly all the water it uses.

Other members of the family, the leaves, are kept busy, for they must do the breathing for the plant, as well as digest the food. You know water is never quite free from mineral matter, so when the roots draw up the water from the ground, they also draw up some mineral food for the plant which is dissolved in the water. Before the plant can make use of this food, it must be digested by the leaves, much the same as your stomach must digest the food you eat. That is, it must change it into another form. But in order that the leaves may do this, they must have plenty of chlorophyll, which is the green coloring matter of the leaves. This chlorophyll will grow in the leaves if they have plenty of sunlight, and if it does not grow the leaves will not be able to digest the food and the plant will starve. So you see how necessary it is for plants to have plenty of sunshine, and why they lose their green color and then die if they are kept away from the light. They really are starved to death.

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Flowers are words  
Which even a babe may understand.

Bishop Coxe.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE FLOWER BABIES

The flower itself has many parts, just as there are many parts to your body. When the flower is a little bud, or baby, rocked by the breezes, it is closely wrapped in a little green cloak. We call this cloak the calyx, because when it opens it looks like a cup, and the word calyx means cup. After the bud is grown, it opens its cloak and throws it back. Then we see the pretty dress underneath. We call this dress the corolla. Sometimes it is all in one piece, but often it is divided into several leaf-like parts which we call petals.

If we look within the dress or corolla, we find the real body of the flower, which is called the pistil. Its shape varies greatly in different plants, but it always consists of two or three distinct parts. One of these is the cradle for the seeds, and is called the ovary. At one end of the ovary is usually a little tube leading down into it. This tube is called the style, and the opening at the other end is called the stigma. Each ovary or cradle contains one or more ovules which by and by will grow into seeds. Just outside the pistil of a flower you usually will find a row of slender, thread-like stalks, each bearing a soft, oblong body at the top, falling out of which you will see a fine yellow powder called pollen. It is a peculiar fact that these seeds never can grow into new plants unless they are fertilized, that is, unless they receive some pollen. It is another peculiar fact that although nearly every flower has this pollen growing right near the little ovules, yet they cannot be fertilized with this pollen, but must receive some from the flower of another plant family.

This pollen is carried from one plant to another by the wind or by the bees and butterflies that come visiting in search of honey. In fact, the flower coaxes the bees and butterflies to come so they may bring her the pollen. Soon after the seed is fertilized it is ripe; that is, it is ready to leave its cradle, the ovary. It is now ready to grow into a new plant. But before it can grow it must be put into a little nest in the ground. But the poor plant is so helpless that she is unable to prepare this nest herself, so all she can do is to scatter her seed babies out on the ground and hope some one will take pity on them and make a nice nest for them. Sometimes the wind helps her by blowing some dirt and dead leaves over them, for you know the seeds

cannot grow unless they are covered nice and warm. Sometimes the children and grown people help her by preparing a nice flower-bed.

For a long time the tiny seed lies very quietly in its warm nest, and if we could peek at it we could not see it move at all, but all the time it is growing very slowly, until finally some bright day it will send up its little sprouts, and then we will see that all the time the seed was lying so quietly it was growing into a baby flower.

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"So the Bluebirds have contracted, have they, for a house?  
And a nest is under way for little Mr. Wren?"  
"Hush, dear, hush! Be quiet, dear! quiet as a mouse.  
These are weighty secrets, and we must whisper them."

Susan Coolidge.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE BIRD BABIES

Today, Violet, I shall tell you another secret, but this time the secret is not about flowers, but about something else we love very dearly. I intend to tell you some secrets about the birds. I wonder if you know how much they are like the flowers?

You remember, the flowers had a language which we could understand, even if they did not talk out loud. The birds, too, have a language of their own, and they can express themselves better than the flowers, for they have a sign language, and are also able to make sounds. How much we enjoy hearing the birds sing, not only because they make beautiful music, but because they are telling us how happy they are!

If birds are in pain or in trouble, their notes are quite different from when they are singing; while, if they or their little ones are in danger, they quickly send forth a note of warning. The young birds, in calling for food, make an entirely different sound, and the answer of the mother bird is a sweet lullaby. One of the ways birds express themselves in sign language is by their feathers. If they are sick, their feathers droop. When they are well and happy, their feathers seem much brighter.

In the bird family, as in the flower family, each member has a special work to do. The mother bird and the father bird work together to build the nest, but while the mother bird lays the eggs and then must sit on them for a number of days, the father bird must bring her food and water and sometimes take his turn watching the nest while the mother goes for a little exercise. The mother bird's body resembles the plant, too, for it needs fresh air, food and water. Instead of leaves to take in the air it has lungs, which not only take in the fresh air but also send out the impure air. Instead of the little rootlets to take in the food and water from the ground, the bird has a mouth, and as the bird is not fastened to the ground, but is free to fly or move about, it goes after its food. Instead of sap, it has blood to carry the food to all parts of the body.

The birds have ovaries just the same as the flowers, and inside each ovary are a number of little seeds or ovules which by and by will grow into birdies. It takes quite a while for the ovules to ripen, just as it took quite a while for the seeds to ripen, and when they are ripe they must have a nest prepared for them, just as the flowers did. But the birds are not as helpless as the flowers, and are able to make their own nests. So when the ovules (which are called eggs when they are ripe) are ready, the parent birds select a nice place for a home.

The father and mother work very hard until the nest is finished. Often the mother will line it with some of her own feathers, so that it will be soft and warm. After the nest is ready the mother bird lays the tiny eggs in it. Then she must sit on them to keep them warm for many days, for the eggs, like the seeds, cannot grow unless they are kept good and warm. If we look at the eggs from day to day we will not be able to see any change in them, but the change is inside the shell where we cannot see it. Every day there is an alteration taking place, and the egg gradually is being transformed into the little bird. After a while, when the right time comes, the birdie will peck a tiny hole in the shell. This will keep growing larger and larger until it is large enough for the birdie to come through, then out it comes!

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A sweet, new blossom of Humanity,  
Fresh fallen from God's own home to flower on earth.

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Gerald Massey.

## CHAPTER IV

### MOTHER'S BABY

There is another wonderful secret that I have to tell you. I wonder if you can guess what this is! No, it is not about a flower, nor a bird—but, yes, you have guessed it right, for it is about a girl just like you!

Is it not queer how much alike the flowers and birds and little girls are, after all, even if they do not look at all alike?

You have lungs just the same as the bird, and breathe as it does. You have two feet, but instead of wings you have arms and hands. You have a sign language, as the flowers have, and you have a language of sounds that is even better than the bird language. When you are happy, I can tell it by the smiles on your face, and sometimes when you are a wee bit cross, I know it by a tiny frown that mars the beauty of your face. But, of course, that does not happen very often, because, you know, as we grow older, our faces do not change their expressions as easily as they do when we are young. And would it not be dreadful, if when you grew up, you always had a frown on your face and were not nice looking at all? You know the frown wrinkles try to stay, and every time we let them come out they leave a tiny mark.

When the flower took in the fresh air it made green coloring matter, but when you take in the fresh air it makes red coloring matter. So if you want to have red cheeks and red lips you must have plenty of fresh air. I know you get a great deal in the daytime when you are playing, but you must be sure to get it at night, too, or you will lose all your pretty color. Be sure that your window is open every night.

You remember, the leaves not only had to breathe but they had to digest the food for the plant, too, but the bird had a stomach to perform that work.

In this way you are like the birds, for you have a stomach which takes care of the food you eat. If you wish to grow strong and well so as to be able to run and play and also to help your mother with her work, you must eat plenty of good, nourishing food. You know some food makes muscles, but other things are not very good for people to eat. Plenty of bread and milk and cereals, also meat, potatoes and fruit, are very good things to make girls grow. You must take care of your stomach, too, and give it time to rest, for it works very hard and might get tired out. Then what would you do?

You have seen, Violet, that in a great many ways you are like the birds and flowers, but now I am going to tell you something that perhaps you did not know. Girls have ovaries just the same as flowers and birds, and inside each ovary are a great many little ovules that after a while will ripen as the seeds did, only instead of growing into flowers or birds they will grow into babies. Is that not lovely, and are you not glad that perhaps some day you will be able to have a baby all your own? But of course that will not be for a great many years yet, for you must wait until you have grown into a strong woman and have a home of your own and a husband to help take care of the baby.

When the little ovules are ripe there must be a nest prepared for them, just the same as there was one prepared for the flowers and birds. But now I shall tell you another wonderful secret. Mothers do not have to build nests, for they are already prepared for them right inside their bodies close to their hearts. The nest is called the womb. Although we do not have to build the nest, we have to take good care of it so it may grow strong.

This nest and the tiny ovules are growing constantly from the time the girls are babies, but they grow so very slowly that none of the ovules are ripe until the girl is about twelve years old. After that one ripens every month and passes to the nest or womb. At the same time an extra amount of blood is sent to the womb to provide nourishing material for the ovule to use in its growth. But the womb, or nest, is not strong enough yet to hold a healthy baby, so this extra amount of blood with the ovule is sent out of the body through the vagina, which is a muscular tube leading from the womb to the external parts (private parts). We call this flow the menstrual flow. This occurs every month and each time the womb becomes a little stronger and better able to hold a growing babe. But the womb is not fully developed until the rest of the body is matured.

Menstruation is the sign of the possibility of motherhood. Realizing this fact, one cannot fail to have a high idea of this function. Most girls, naturally, desire children. Little girls love their doll babies, and spend much time in caring for them, but as girls grow into womanhood they desire real babies. A woman who does not desire children has had her mind perverted by false ideas or fear.

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Build me straight, O worthy Master!  
Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel  
That shall laugh at all disaster,  
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!

Longfellow.

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## CHAPTER V

### THE BABY'S NEST

You remember, Violet, I told you that although mothers do not have to build nests, yet they have to take good care of them so they will grow strong.

As the natural desire of every girl is to become a mother some time, she must begin very early to prepare for it. By exercise, fresh air, and good, nourishing food, she should make her body grow strong and well. By studying she will develop her mind so as to be fitted to care for and to teach her child. Shall I tell you some ways you can make the nest grow strong?

First, I shall tell you more things about this mother nest. Although it and the tiny ovules are growing all the time, yet there are greater changes in them when the girl is from twelve to fourteen years old. About this time they grow faster than at any other time. As these organs grow, the pelvis, or the part of the body that contains them, also must grow to make room for them. So the hips begin to grow broader. Other parts of the body grow faster at this time, too, and often some parts grow so much faster than others that they are out of proportion, and the child becomes clumsy and feels awkward. But that will not last long, for after a while the parts that are growing slowly will catch up to the ones that grew fast, and then the body will be graceful again. Have you ever watched a young puppy? You know how clumsy and awkward it is while it is growing, but after a while, when it is fully grown, it will be very graceful.

We know it is not wise to run or play or work hard right after eating a large meal, for then the stomach is working very hard and needs a great deal of extra energy, so the other muscles must rest a while, in order to let it have it.

You remember, I told you, Violet, that every month, or every twenty-eight days, there was an extra amount of blood carried to the womb which it had to send out of the body. Of course that requires the womb to work very hard for a few days, so, in order to help it, we must be careful not to take any severe exercise at this time or overexert ourselves in any way, for, if we did, the womb would not be able to do its extra work properly.

You remember, I told you this flow, which we call the menstrual flow, was the sign of the possibility of motherhood, so every girl should be glad of the fact that she menstruates and should take good care of herself at that time. She should pay especial attention to cleanliness during this period. She should be provided with a circular girdle of some strong material cut upon the bias, so it may be elastic, and provided with tabs to which to pin the folded cloth. She also should have a supply of sanitary cloths made of absorbent cotton fabric, or pads made of absorbent-cotton enclosed in gauze. The latter are especially convenient for the girl who is obliged to room away from home, for they may be burned, and the cost of new ones is no greater than the laundry of cloths. These pads or cloths should be changed at least twice a day. It also is necessary that one should bathe the parts in warm water with each change, as unpleasant odors can thereby be avoided. At the close of each period she should take a bath and change all clothing. One cannot be too careful about these matters, so essential to cleanliness and health.

During this period, girls naturally have a feeling of lassitude or disinclination to do any great mental or physical work, accompanied, perhaps, by a slight feeling of uneasiness in the pelvic region (the part of the body that contains the womb and ovaries). Because so many do suffer at this time, it often is considered "natural" and allowed to continue, but now that you know so much about the body you will understand that it is not necessary to have any pains at this period. If there is pain, it shows that we are not taking proper care of ourselves. Even our stomach will give us severe pain if we do not take proper care of it or if we overload it.

The monthly discharge varies in quantity with the individual. Usually fleshy girls flow more than thin ones, and dark complexioned girls than light ones. The discharge lasts about four days, and is the only symptom that many girls experience in menstruation. This usually is the case with those who are well and whose lives are happily employed.

I wanted you to know all these things, Violet, for sometimes when little girls do not understand what this flow means they are frightened when they see the blood. Some women even dread motherhood because they do not know what to expect at that time nor how to care for themselves. All women naturally love babies and if taught correctly would want to have them. If they do not, it usually is because they have known of other women suffering through ignorance and are afraid. If they would learn more about these wonderful bodies of ours and more about the care of little babies, they would understand how to care for themselves so as to have healthy, happy babies. Not only that but they would see it was the natural and the best thing for them to have children. In any work we undertake, in everything we do, there is a possibility of an accident. So it is in motherhood. A woman in normal health whose home life is congenial, who loves children and who desires to have one, never should have any serious trouble nor great pain. Painless childbirth is a possibility if women only understood the care of themselves.

The modern athletic girl glories in her strength. She feels it a disgrace to be a frail flower that cannot enter into the best enjoyment of life. She glories in her strong, well-trained body. She walks with free yet graceful step, holding her head high, for she knows she is queen of her kingdom—her body. Her lungs are well developed and her body well cared for, so she has no fear of disease. But the modern girl does not stop there. She wants to have healthy sexual organs with room for development of the babe, and strong muscles to perform their work in expelling the babe. So she discards clothing that restricts her organs. She wears

comfortable, well-fitting clothes. The old-fashioned corsets pushed the organs out of place, but the modern ones, made to conform to nature's lines, serve only as a support. As nature did not make a waist line, the one-piece dresses are especially desirable. Besides developing every organ and muscle of her body and training her mind, the modern girl goes to a training school to prepare for the mother calling. Recently, in a few schools, a course of study has been provided for the girls in the care of children, hygiene and nursing. Even women who never become mothers themselves in this way learn general principles of psychology, hygiene and the care of the sick that they might make use of in every station of life. I hope, Violet, that after a while you will be able to learn many of these things, so that when you are a grown woman and the time comes for you to marry and have a baby you will know just how to care for it.

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Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body. As by the one, health is preserved, strengthened, and invigorated; by the other, virtue (which is the health of the mind) is kept alive, cherished, and confirmed.

Addison.

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## CHAPTER VI

### BUILDING THE NEST

Now that I have told you so many things about the mother-nest, especially about how it is growing all the time, I must tell you more about the many helpers you have who assist in its growth. This they do by providing it with food and by carrying away the waste material. We found the body was composed of many parts or organs, each one of which had its own especial work to do. If any one organ could not perform its work, some other one would have to assist it, but, although the organs are willing to help each other, it would not be fair to make one do more than its share of work, except for a short time.

You remember, the stomach had a great deal of work to do in digesting the food or preparing it so it could be taken up by the blood and carried to the womb and all parts of the body. But the stomach does not have to do this all alone. It has several helpers. One set of helpers is the teeth, which cut and grind the food into small particles. In order to do this, they must be kept in very good condition; otherwise, they could not do their work. You know if your mother would let the kitchen knives get dull or rusty, she would be unable to cut the bread, meat and other food materials with them. The same is true of the teeth. We can keep them in good condition by brushing them. It is as important to do this as to wash the dishes. Then, too, we must be careful not to break the teeth by biting nuts and other hard things. Nothing so detracts from a girl's appearance and nothing is more conducive to indigestion than poorly cared for teeth. They should be brushed at least twice daily and the mouth afterwards rinsed with a mild antiseptic solution. The teeth should be thoroughly examined by a good dentist at least every six months.

Another assistant that the stomach has is the intestines or bowels, which not only help to digest the food but also carry off the waste material. The bowels are very good, and will tell us when they have waste material to be disposed of, but sometimes people are too busy and do not pay attention. If we neglect them many times the bowels get tired of telling us, and then their work is not done. We think they are lazy and so we try to whip them up by taking a laxative. This seems to help at first, but we soon find we have to do the same thing every day. All this time the fault was our own, for we did not understand. The best way is to have a regular time of going to the toilet, say, right after breakfast. If we always go at the same time the bowels will remember it. Then we need have no trouble with constipation nor take any horrid medicine to whip the bowels. A regular daily action of the bowels is necessary to health. Constipation often may be relieved by drinking a glass of cold water upon rising, at intervals during the day, and upon retiring. Fruit at breakfast or figs taken after meals often will relieve a tendency to constipation. Regularity in going to the toilet is one of the most important measures in treating constipation. Laxatives or cathartics should not be taken except for an occasional dose or during illness, upon the advice of a physician. So common is the practice of taking daily laxatives that it has become a "national curse." People do not realize that they are slaves to this habit. So cleverly worded are the advertisements of many of the laxatives that people are led to believe that if they drink certain "waters" or "teas" they are avoiding medicine, while often these same teas and waters contain drugs more powerful and harmful than any pill.

The bowels have some one to assist them, too, for the kidneys carry off much of the waste material of the body. Indeed, they carry off so much that they sometimes are called the sewers. It often is necessary to flush the sewers of the city, that is, to send quantities of water through them to clean the system. In the same way it is necessary to flush the kidneys. We do this by drinking plenty of water. Every one should drink about two quarts of water a day.

There is another worker that helps both the kidneys and the bowels. This is the skin, which sends off waste material through the tiny pores or openings. If dirt accumulates on the skin, it clogs the pores so the skin cannot use them. So you see how necessary it is to take frequent baths to keep the pores open.

Other helpers that carry some of the waste material from the body are the lungs, which send out the impure air. The lungs also take in the pure air, which, you remember, helps to make the red coloring matter in the blood. If you want to have nice red cheeks, you must breathe in plenty of fresh air. Also you must have plenty of exercise, so as to help send the blood all over the body. You know when you run, the blood flows much faster than when you are quiet. It is a good plan to stand by an open window every morning and every evening and fill your lungs with good, pure air, taking about twenty-five deep breaths.

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I want to help you to grow as beautiful as God meant you to be when He thought of you first.

George MacDonald.

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## CHAPTER VII

### THE SIGN LANGUAGE

Do you know one way we can tell if all the organs are doing their work well? By watching for the sign language. If the blood is not carrying the skin sufficient nourishment, it will be very pale and dull looking. If the waste materials are not being carried off, they may accumulate in the skin and clog the pores. Then we will have pimples or blackheads. Each person's skin is a law unto itself, and what is beneficial to one may not be to another. Generally, though, it will be found helpful to bathe the face at night with hot water, to remove all dirt; then, if the skin is rough, massage with good cold cream. In the morning a quick rub with cold water should be taken (and do not be afraid to rub the face a little). If you are going out in the sun or wind, follow with a little good talcum or rice powder, to protect the face from the raw winds, or, if the skin is inclined to be dry, apply a little cold cream before using the powder. Any eruptions on the face show a defect in the circulation. The blood is not disposing of the waste material properly, and it is being left to clog the pores of the skin. These eruptions should not be neglected, as they sometimes indicate a serious condition of the blood or circulation.

The eyes tell if we are tired or unwell, for then they will be dull, while, if we abuse or strain them, they often are red. This not only makes them less attractive, but it shows we must attend to them. Would it not be dreadful if they became so tired or worn out that we could not see with them? The care of the eyes is very important. When you are reading or writing, the light should come over your left shoulder, and you should never try to read in a poor light. Sometimes, if the eyes are tired, it will rest them to bathe them in warm, boiled water in which some boracic acid crystals have been dissolved. You may even put a few drops of this solution right in the eye, but never put anything else in it except by the directions of a physician, as the eyes are too precious to take any risks, and sometimes they are injured by various eye waters.

The hair also shows the state of the health, and it shows if we are careless. Nothing so detracts from a girl's appearance as soiled or untidy hair. One of the most potent charms a woman can have is a well-kept, luxuriant, glossy head of hair. Just think how quickly one notices thin, dry, stiff hair on a woman's head. And as for those that carry around diseased scalps, plastered with offensive oils, they are perfectly hideous. If people only knew how much esteem they lose through such defects, they would give more attention to the matter. The hair should be shampooed often enough to keep it clean and fluffy. How often that is depends on the nature of the hair and the occupation of the owner. Usually once in two weeks is often enough, but light, oily hair may require it more frequently, for it loses much of its beauty when oily. To promote the growth of the hair, massage of the scalp usually brings very satisfactory results, stimulating a new growth and healthy appearance. The value of tonics often is in the massage. Many of the hair tonics and shampoos on the market not only are not beneficial, but are dangerous. An ordinary egg shampoo, which may be prepared at home, is perhaps the best, for it not only cleanses but nourishes the hair.

I must remind you of a part of your body that many people notice very often and by it judge if you are careless. That is your hands and nails. People who are careful about the appearance of their nails usually are careful about other things. You will find as you grow older that you are judged a good deal by the little things. It will pay you to get up half an hour earlier if necessary so as to give yourself time for those little personal attentions that help to make a girl dainty. You will be surprised at the effect on your mind of extra well-brushed hair, clear, bright complexion, polished nails and a well-put-on tie, also neat gloves and shoes.

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Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently falling on thy head.

Watts.



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## CHAPTER VII

### REST AND SLEEP

You have seen, Violet, how all the parts of the body work together, although each one has its especial part to do. You remember, we found the stomach must have a time to rest between meals. The other parts of the body require rest, too. This they usually get while we are asleep. We must not be neglectful and fail to give them enough rest, or they will soon get worn out and give us trouble. Most little girls require eight or ten hours' rest every night.

Sometimes, when people are not well or are all tired out, they find they cannot sleep well at night. There are a number of little things that can be done to induce sleep. A warm bath before retiring, followed by a gentle massage, especially along the spine, often will, by relaxing the nerves and muscles, produce very good results. A hot foot bath, which draws the blood away from the brain, frequently will be found beneficial. A glass of hot milk or cocoa, taken just before retiring, often will have the same effect. If the sleeplessness is a result of indigestion, a plain diet will relieve. Sleeping upon a hard bed without any pillow sometimes produces the desired effect. Always have plenty of fresh air in the room. Keep the mind free from the cares of the day. If they will intrude, crowd them out by repeating something else—some soothing sentence or bit of poetry. One good plan is to close the left nostril by pressing on it with the finger, then take four deep breaths through the right nostril. Then close the right nostril and take four deep breaths through the left one. Repeat this about four times. Then breathe slowly through both nostrils, but count your breaths. You seldom will count very many. Never take any sleeping powders or tablets except upon the advice of a physician, for they usually contain drugs that will injure the heart.

You will find, Violet, that you will meet a number of women who are nervous, which means they have not control of their nerves, but let them run away with them. Sometimes this is shown in palpitation of the heart, headache, backache, and many other disorders. There may be a tendency to cry at trivial things, or a feeling of having "the blues." The cause usually can be found in uncongenial surroundings or occupation, loss of friends, or real or fancied troubles. Whatever the cause, it should be removed, if possible, and measures taken to restore the worn out nerves that are crying for rest or food. Tonics help, so does nourishing food, such as eggs and milk; also a change of scene and occupation, if possible. A woman who is nervous frequently does not realize what is the cause of her condition, and considers only the symptoms. So when she has a headache, resorts to headache powders or various effervescent drinks. In taking these she only is deadening the pain and not removing the cause, so the pain is liable to return. Most of the remedies taken for headache contain some harmful drug. If you look carefully at the label, you usually will find that they contain morphine, phenacetin, or acetanilid, which are very depressing to the heart. Pain is the cry of tortured nerves, so if one suffers from headaches or backaches, she should not take any of these harmful drugs, but should hunt for the cause of the pain and remove that.

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Even from the body's purity, the mind  
Receives a secret sympathetic aid.

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Thomson.

## CHAPTER IX

### INJURY OF THE NEST

We who love birds would not do anything to injure their homes, but there are some children who have not learned to love birds or who are thoughtless and injure their nests, sometimes even tearing them to pieces or breaking off the limb of the tree.

There also are thoughtless children who do things to injure their bodies. You would think it very foolish to allow someone to put a bee on your face that would sting you and yet there are some thoughtless children who would do just that if you would let them. They might even try to tell you it would not hurt you, but of course you would know better. You, who know how necessary is every part of the body, would not allow anyone to injure any part of it, especially the part that contains the mother nest. Think how badly the mother bird must have felt when the child destroyed the nest, and think how badly you would feel, when it came time for you to marry and have a baby, if you found the nest had been so injured that you could not have any. You know, the nest as well as the rest of the body belongs to you alone, and no one has a right to injure it, but sometimes girls are as careless or as thoughtless as the boy with the bee and do things that are harmful. I

have told you how to care for this mother nest so it will grow well and strong, but now I must tell you something more. As you go out in the world you will meet some girls and some boys who have never been told these things and do not understand all the things you do. Sometimes they have very wrong ideas and will do many things that are harmful. Not only that, but they will try to get you to do them. Some little girls who do not understand what their organs are for will even play with them, for they think it gives them a pleasurable sensation. I am sure they would not do this if they understood that by so doing they were injuring the precious nest. You know if you or anyone else would put things into your eyes or ears or play with them in any way you might lose your sight or hearing. It is the same way with the mother nest and other organs. The best plan is to just keep them clean and then not touch them at any other time nor allow anyone else to do so. But in bathing the parts you must be careful to have your own towel and not use any cloths that have been used by other people, for there are some dreadful diseases, called the black plagues, that can be carried to these organs by anything that is not strictly clean, and these diseases sometimes destroy the nest and ovules. So you must be careful in all you do.

If at any time, Violet, questions come up in your mind as to what is the best thing for you to do, remember that mother will be glad to answer them or will help you obtain books that will explain things to you. Do not go to your companions, for they might not understand and would give you wrong ideas. In school we have text books and a teacher, who is older and more experienced than we, to whom we can go for help in our school problems. We know she will tell us the right solution and we know it is better to go to her than to the other pupils. So in this study of our bodies and the care of them, we must learn from some one older and more experienced, or we must study books that have been written for that purpose. Then we will be sure to obtain the right ideas.

After a while, when you are grown and it is nearing the time for you to marry, I will tell you some things about the care of the baby and how you may have a good-natured, healthy child. But now all you need to do for a number of years is to take good care of this mother nest and the rest of your body, so it will grow strong and well.

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