

THE HOME  
EDUCATION SERIES

VOLUME 4

# OURSSELVES

CHARLOTTE MASON

'Home Education' Series

VOLUME IV.

# Ourselves

By

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## Introduction

“ Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control—  
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.”

TENNYSON.

**A Dual Self.**—The whole question of self-management and self-perception implies a dual self. There is a self who reverences and a self who is revered, a self who knows and a self who is known, a self who controls and a self who is controlled. This, of a dual self, is perhaps our most intimate and our least-acknowledged consciousness. We are a little afraid of metaphysics, and are still more afraid of self-consciousness, and we do not take the trouble to analyse our fears.

It is well that we should fear to wander into regions of mind which we have no plummet to fathom, and from which we are incompetent to bring back any good thing. It is well, too, that we should dread that form of self-consciousness which makes us sensitively, or timorously, or proudly, aware of our individual peculiarities. But, for fear of Scylla and Charybdis, we have avoided unduly a channel which leads to a haven where we would be.

Our business at present is not to attempt any psychological explanation of the fact of the two selves of which each of us is aware; but, rather, to get some clear notions about that, let us call it, *objective* self, the conduct of which is the chief business of that other troublesome *subjective* self, of which we are all too much and too unpleasantly aware.

**The 'Horrid' Self.** — One of the miseries of thoughtful children and young people arises from their sense of the worthlessness of this poor, pushing, all too prominent self. They are aware that they are cross and clumsy, rude and 'horrid.' Nobody can like them. If even their mother does so, it must be because she does not quite see how disagreeable they are. Vanity, the laying of oneself out for the approbation of others, is very possible, even to children of generous temper. But I doubt if conceit is possible to any but the more commonplace minds, content to shape their opinions, even of themselves, upon what they suppose to be the opinions of those around them.

But for the uneasy young soul, whose chief business in life is the navigation of an unknown craft, some knowledge of the carrying and sailing powers of the vessel is not only beneficent in itself, but is a relief from the obsession of that tiresome other self—the subjective self, we have called it—of which we become aware in that day when we eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and leave the paradise of the unconscious child. This awakening must come to

us all, and is not necessarily in our case of the nature of guilt, but it is the cause of uneasiness and self-depreciation.

**The Great Self.**—Any attempt to define the limits of each part of the dual self baffles us. We cannot tell where one begins and the other ends. But after every effort of thought which convinces us that we are but one, we become aware again of ourselves as two. Perhaps if we say that the one is the unsatisfactory self which we produce in our lives; the other, the self of great and beautiful possibilities, which we are aware of as an integral part of us, it is all we can do towards grasping this evasive condition of our being. It may help us to regard for a moment the human soul as a vast estate which it rests with us to realise. By soul, I mean all that we are, including even the visible presentment of us, all our powers of thinking, knowing, loving, judging, appreciating, willing, achieving. There is only one authoritative estimate of the greatness of the human soul. It is put into the balances with the whole world, and the whole world, glorious and beautiful as it is, weighs as nothing in the comparison. But we lose the value of this utterance of our Lord's because we choose to think that He is speaking of a relative and not an intrinsic value. That the soul of a man is infinitely great, beautiful, and precious in itself we do not venture to think; partly, because religion, for the most part, teaches a self-abasement and effacement contrary to the spirit and the teaching of Christ.

**Emily Brontë.**—We are indebted to the Belgian sage, M. Maeterlinck, for his vindication of the greatness of the soul, a vindication the more telling because he does not approach the subject from the religious standpoint, but brings, as it were, an outside witness. He has probably added nothing to the content of philosophy; but we have great need to be reminded, and reminded again, of the things that belong to our life; and to do this for us is a service. His contention, that in Emily Brontë we have an example of the immeasurable range of the soul, seems to me a just one: that a delicate girl, brought up almost in isolation in a remote parsonage, should be able to sound the depths of human passion, conceive of human tragedy, and gather the fruits of human wisdom, is a very fair illustration of the majesty of the soul; all the more so because she was not among the great as regards either virtue or achievement. When we turn from an obscure Emily Brontë to a Shakespeare, a Newton, a Rembrandt, a Dante, a Darwin, a Howard, we begin to discern the immensity of that soul which contains a measure for all things, capacity for all men; but we leave off too soon in our appreciation of our Great; we are too shamefaced to acknowledge to ourselves that it is in our own immensity we find some sort of measure for theirs.

Are there any little men? Perhaps not. It may be that all the properties of the soul are present in everyone, developed or undeveloped, in greater or

lesser degree. So Christ seems to have taught; and many a poor and insignificant soul has been found to hold capacity for Him.

But here is a case in which the greater is blessed (or cursed?) of the less. The realised self of each of us is a distressfully poor thing, and yet upon its insight and its action depends the redemption of that greater self, whose limitations no man has discovered. It is, to use a figure, as the relation between a country and its government. The country is ever greater than the governing body; and yet, for its development, the former must depend upon the latter.

**The Governing Powers.**—What are these central governing powers, or officers, upon whose action the fulfilment of a human being depends? I cannot, as yet, go to Psychology for an answer, because she is still in the act of determining whether or no there be any spirit. Where I appear to abandon the dicta of our more ancient guide, Philosophy, it is only as I am led by common intuition. That which all men perceive to be true of themselves may be considered with a view to the conduct of the affairs of the inner life, just as it is wise to arrange our outward affairs on the belief that the sun rises at such an hour and sets at such an hour. The actual is of less immediate consequence than the apparent fact.

As I do not know of any book to recommend to parents which should help their children in the conduct of life in matters such as I have indicated, which are neither precisely ethical nor religious, I

venture to offer an outline of the sort of teaching I have in view in the form in which it might be given to intelligent children and young people of any age, from eight or nine upwards.

**How to use this Volume.**—I think that in teaching children mothers should make their own of so much as they wish to give of such teaching, and speak it, a little at a time, perhaps by way of Sunday talks. This would help to impress children with the thought that our relations with God embrace the whole of our lives. Older students of life would probably prefer to read for themselves, or with their parents, and the more advanced teaching which is suitable for them will pass over the heads of their younger brothers and sisters.

# Ourselves

## Book I.—Self-Knowledge

“Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,  
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.”

—TENNYSON

## INTRODUCTORY

### CHAPTER I

#### THE COUNTRY OF MANSOUL

**The Riches of Mansoul.**—“Do ye not like fair londes?” says King Alfred; and he answers himself: “Why should I not like fair londes? They are the fairest part of God’s creation.” And of all the fair lands which God has made, there is no country more fair than the Kingdom of Mansoul.

The soil is, almost everywhere, very fertile, and where it is cultivated there are meadows, corn-fields, and orchards with all manner of fruit. There are, too, wild nooks, with rippling streams bordered by forget-me-nots and king-cups, places where the birds nest and sing. There are hazel copses where you may gather nuts, and there are forests with mighty trees. There are wildernesses, too, marshy and un-

lovely, but these only wait for good and industrious hands to reclaim them and make them as fertile as the rest of the country. Deep under the surface lie beds of fuel to be had for the working, so that in that land there need never be a cold hearth-stone. There are many other mines, too, where diligent workers find, not only useful and necessary metals like copper and iron, but also silver and gold and very precious stones. When the workers are weary they may rest, for there are trees for shade and shelter, and pleasant playfields. And you may hear the laughter of the children, and see them at their sports.

**Its Rivers and Cities.**—There are rivers, broad and deep, good to bathe in and to swim in, and also good to bear the ships which carry those things produced by Mansoul to other countries far and near. Upon these rivers, too, sail the ships of many lands, bringing passengers and goods. There are busy cities in Mansoul; and these, also, are pleasant places; because, though there are factories where men work and make all manner of things for home use or to be sent abroad, there are also fair and beautiful buildings, palaces of delight, where are gathered the treasures of Mansoul,—galleries of precious and beautiful pictures painted by the great artists of all countries, statues of the heroes that are had in reverence there, halls with organs of noble tone which can roar like the thunder and babble like a child, and all manner of musical instruments. To these halls great musicians come and play wonderful things that they have made; the people of Mansoul listen, and great thoughts swell in them, and everyone feels as if he could get up and go and be a hero.

**Its Books and Playgrounds.**—There are libraries, too—such libraries! containing every book of delight that ever was written. When anybody sits down to read, the author who made the book comes and leans over his shoulder and talks to him. I forgot to say that in the picture-galleries the old painters do the same thing; they come and say what they meant by it all.

There is no city in Mansoul so built up but there is plenty of space for parks and cricket-grounds, playing-fields and places where people meet and are merry, dance and sing. Nobody need be poor in Mansoul; and if anybody is poor, neglected, and stunted, it is for a reason which we shall consider by and by.

**Its Churches and its Delectable Mountains.**—The best treasures of the country are kept in the fairest of its buildings, in its churches, which are always open, so that people may go in and out many times a day to talk with God, and He comes and speaks with them. But, indeed, He walks about everywhere in the land, in the workshops, in the picture-galleries, and in the fields; people consult Him about everything, little things and great, and He advises about them all.

Much remains to be said about Mansoul, but I think I have left out the chief thing—the ‘Delectable Mountains,’ where people go that they may breathe mountain air, gather the lovely mountain flowers, and brace their limbs and their lungs with the toilsome delight of climbing. From the top, they get a view that makes them solemnly glad; they see a good deal of Mansoul, and they see the borders of the land that is very far off. They see a good deal of

Mansoul, but they cannot see it all, for a curious thing is, that no map has been made of the country, because a great deal of it is yet unexplored, and men have not discovered its boundaries. This is exciting and delightful to the people, because, though here and there Mansoul is touched by another such country as itself, there are everywhere reaches which no man has seen, regions of country which may be rich and beautiful.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PERILS OF MANSOUL

**The Government to Blame.**—You are thinking, I daresay, what a rich and beautiful country Mansoul must be! But, like most other lands, it is subject to many perils. Unlike most other lands, however, Mansoul has means of escape from the perils that threaten it from time to time. In other countries, we hear the government blamed if poor people have not bread, and if rich people are annoyed by the crowing of a cock. This is usually great nonsense, but it is not nonsense to blame the government of Mansoul for the evils that occur in that country, for it has large power to prevent those evils. How the country is governed you shall hear later. Meantime, learn something of the perils which may overtake poor Mansoul and all that are in it.

**Peril of Sloth.**—Perhaps the most common evil is a sort of epidemic of sloth that spreads over the whole country. The scavengers sit with heavy eyes and folded arms, and let refuse and filth accumulate in the streets. The farmers and their labourers say, 'What's the good?' and fail to go out with the plough or to sow the seed. Fruit drops from the trees and rots because no one cares to pick it up.

The ships lie idle in the harbours because nobody wants anything from abroad. The librarians let their books be buried in dust and devoured by insects, and neglect their duty of gathering more. The pictures grow dim and tattered for want of care; and nobody in the whole country thinks it worth while to do anything at all.

Sometimes the people still care to play; but play without work becomes dull after a time, and soon comes to a stop. And so the people, whatever be their business in Mansoul, sit or lounge about with dull eyes, folded arms, and hanging heads.

**Peril of Fire.**—Another risk that Mansoul runs is that of great conflagrations. Sometimes an incendiary will land at one of its ports from some foreign country, perhaps with the express purpose of setting fire to what is best in Mansoul; but perhaps a man sets fire to things by accident because he does not know how inflammable they are. The fire once begun, the wind carries the flames over many miles of country; noble buildings, precious works of art, farmsteads with stacks of corn, everything is consumed, and ruin follows the track of the fire. Sometimes these fires arise in Mansoul itself. I have told you that the country has great beds of underlying fuel. Here and there inflammable gases break out on the surface, and a spark, dropped in the region of these gases, is sufficient to cause a wide conflagration. But Mansoul ought to be as careful as people in Switzerland are when a hot wind called the *Fohn* blows, and orders are issued that everyone is to put out his fires and lights.

**Perils of Plague, Flood, and Famine.**—Sometimes there is a visitation of the plague, because

dwelling-houses, streets, and out-buildings are not kept clean and wholesome, and the drains are allowed to get into disorder.

Sometimes the springs swell in the hills, the rivers overflow, and there is a flood; but this is not always a misfortune in the end, because much that is rotten and unclean is swept away, and lands washed by a flood are very fertile afterwards.

Again, it may happen that the crops fail, though the land has been diligently tilled and good seed sown. But neighbouring States are kind, and help Mansoul in these distressful times; and the crops of the following year are generally abundant.

**Peril of Discord.**—Another cause of occasional misery in Mansoul is that a spirit of discord breaks out now and then among the members of the community, and becomes sometimes so violent as to lead to a devastating civil war. The servants and workmen will not obey the masters, and the masters will not consider their servants, and are at feud among themselves; one member of the ministry chooses to attend to the work of some other member; all useful employments are neglected, and the people are a prey to envy and discontent.

I might tell you of some other causes of misery in Mansoul, but shall mention only one more, which is by far the worst that ever overtakes the State.

**Peril of Darkness.**—Lovely and smiling as the country is when it is well ordered, mists at times emanate from it, chilling, soaking mists, dense and black; not a ray of the sun can penetrate these mists, no light, no warmth; there is no seeing of one's way; so that the people say, 'There is no sun,' and some of the more foolish add, 'There never was a sun

in heaven, and there never will be.' When they cannot see the sun, of course they cannot see each other, and blunder against one another in the darkness. You will say that many lands, especially low lands, are subject to blinding mists, but nowhere can they be so thick and heavy, and nowhere do they lie so long, as in the Kingdom of Mansoul. One quite exceptional thing about these mists is, that they also are largely under control of the government, especially of the Prime Minister. How this can be so I cannot fully explain here, but you will understand later.

Because all these things can happen to Mansoul, we must not run away with the idea that it is an unhappy country. On the contrary, it is radiant and lovely, busy and gay, full of many interests and of joyous life,—so long as the government attends to its duties.

## CHAPTER III

### THE GOVERNMENT OF MANSOUL

**Each of us a Kingdom of Mansoul.**—I must give up attempting to talk about Mansoul in parables. I daresay you have already found it difficult to make everything fit; but, never mind; what you do not understand now you may understand some day, or you may see a meaning better and truer than that which is intended. Every human being, child or man, is a Kingdom of Mansoul; and to be born a human being is like coming into a very great estate; so much in the way of goodness, greatness, heroism, wisdom, and knowledge, is possible to us all. Therefore I have said that no one has discovered the boundaries of the Kingdom of Mansoul; for nobody knows how much is possible to any one person. Many persons go through life without recognising this. They have no notion of how much they can do and feel, know and be; and so their lives turn out poor, narrow, and disappointing.

It is, indeed, true that Mansoul is like a great and rich country, with a more or less powerful and harmonious government; because there is a part of ourselves whose business it is to manage and make the best of the rest of ourselves, and that part of ourselves we shall call the Government.

**Officers of State.**—There are many Officers of State, each with his distinct work to do in the economy of this Kingdom of Mansoul; and, if each does his own work and if all work together, Mansoul is happy and prosperous. I will give a list of a few of the great Officers of State, and later we shall consider what each has to do. To begin with the lowest, there are the Esquires of the Body, commonly called the Appetites; then come the Lords of the Exchequer, known as the Desires; the Lords of the Treasury, that is, the Affections; then the Foreign Secretary, that is, the Intellect, with his colleagues, My Lord Chief Explorer (Imagination) and My Lord President of the Arts (the aesthetic Sense); the Lord Attorney-General, that is, the Reason; the Lords of the House of Heart, the Lord Chief Justice, that is, the Conscience; the Prime Minister, that is, the Will. There are various other Officers of State, whom we cannot name now, but these are the principal. Beyond and above all these is the King; for you remember that Mansoul is a Kingdom.

**The Four Chambers.**—These various Ministers we may conceive as sitting each in the House with the ordering of whose affairs he is concerned. These Houses are, the House of Body, the House of Mind, the House of Heart, and the House of Soul.

You must not understand that all these are different *parts* of a person; but that they are different powers which every person has, and which every person must exercise, in order to make the most of that great inheritance which he is born to as a human being.

# PART I

## THE HOUSE OF BODY

### CHAPTER I

#### THE ESQUIRES OF THE BODY: HUNGER

**The Work of the Appetites.**—We will first consider the Esquires of the Body; not that they are the chief Officers of State, but in Mansoul, as in the world, a great deal depends upon the least important people; and the Esquires of the Body have it very much in their power to make all go right or all go wrong in Mansoul.

Their work is very necessary for the well-being of the State. They build up the Body, and they see to it that there shall be new Mansouls to take the place of the old when these shall pass away. If each would attend to his own business and nothing else, all would go well; but there is a great deal of rivalry in the government, and every member tries to make the Prime Minister believe that the happiness of Mansoul depends upon him. If any one of these gets things altogether into his hands, all is in disorder.

**How Hunger Behaves.**—*Esquire Hunger* is the first of the appetites that comes to our notice. He is

a most useful fellow. If he do not come down to breakfast in the morning, a poor meal is eaten, and neither work nor play goes well in Mansoul that day. If, for weeks together, Hunger do not sit down to table, thin fingers and hollow cheeks will show you what a good servant has left his post. He is easily slighted. If people say, 'I hate' bread and milk, or eggs, or mutton, or what not, and think about it and think about it, Hunger is disgusted and goes. But if they sit down to their meals without thinking about what they eat, and think of something more interesting, Hunger helps them through, bit by bit, until their plates are emptied, and new material has been taken in to build up their bodies. Hunger is not at all fond of dainties. He likes things plain and nice; and directly a person begins to feed upon dainties, like pastry, rich cake, too many sweets, Hunger goes; or rather, he changes his character and becomes Gluttony.

**Hunger a Servant, Gluttony a Ruler.**—It is as Gluttony that he tries to get the ear of the Prime Minister, saying, 'Leave it all to me, and I will make Mansoul happy. He shall want nothing but what I can give him.' Then begins a fine time. As long as Hunger was his servant, Mansoul thought nothing about his meals till the time for them came, and then he ate them with a good appetite. But Gluttony behaves differently. Gluttony leads his victim to the confectioner's windows and makes him think how nice this or that would taste: all his pocket-money goes in tarts, sweets, and toffee. He thinks at breakfast what pudding he should like for dinner, and asks for it as a favour. Indeed, he is always begging for bits of cake, and spoonfuls of jam,

and extra chocolates. He does not think much about his lessons, because he has a penny in his pocket and is considering what is the nicest thing he can buy for it; or, if he is older, perhaps he has a pound, but his thought is still the same, and Gluttony gets it all. The greedy person turns away from wholesome meals, and does not care for work or play, because Gluttony has got the ear of the Prime Minister, and almost every thought of Mansoul turns one way— 'What shall I eat?' he says. Gluttony begins with the little boy and goes with him all through life, only that, instead of caring for chocolate creams when he is a man, he cares for great dinners two hours long.

**How Gluttony affects the Body.**—But, you will say, if Hunger builds up the body, surely Gluttony must do so a great deal faster. It is true that sometimes the greedy person becomes fat, but it is muscle and not fat which makes the body strong and useful. Gluttony does not make muscle, and does cause horrid illnesses.

**How to avoid Greediness.**—The way to keep this enemy out of Mansoul is to stick to the rules which Hunger lays down. The chief of them is— Never think of your meals till they come, and, while you are eating, talk and think of something more amusing than your food. As for nice things, of course we all want nice things now and then; but let us eat what is given to us of the chocolate or fruit at table, and not think any more about it. Sweets or fruits are seldom served at school, we know, and when at school it is quite fair for a boy to allow himself to spend a certain part of his pocket-money in this way, not only for himself, but that he may have something to give away. But the boy who spends the whole, or

the greater part, of his week's money on things to eat, or who is always begging for hampers from home, is a poor fellow, the victim of Gluttony. The best plan is to want to spend your money upon something else—some sort of collection, perhaps; or to save up to buy a present or a fishing-rod or anything worth having. Gluttony lets you alone when you cease to think of him and his good things.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ESQUIRES OF THE BODY: THIRST

**Thirst likes Cold Water.**—Another most serviceable Esquire of the Body is *Thirst*. How serviceable he is you will understand when you remember that by far the greater part of a man's weight is made up of water. This water is always wasting away in one way or another, and the business of Thirst is to make up for the loss. Thirst is a simple fellow; the beverage he likes best is pure cold water; and, indeed, he is quite right, for, when you come to think of it, there is only one thing to drink in the world, though we drink it mixed with many things. Sometimes the mixing is done by nature, as in milk or grapes; sometimes by man, as in tea or coffee. Some of these mixed drinks are wholesome, because they contain food as well as drink, and by far the most wholesome of these is milk.

But Thirst himself does not care for or need anything in the water he drinks. He likes it best clear and cold, and if we lived in hot Eastern countries we should know how delicious cold water is. All little children like water, but bigger boys and girls sometimes like various things, such as lemon juice, in their water to give it a flavour. Though there is no

harm in this, it is rather a pity, because they lose their taste for water itself.

**Drunkenness craves for Alcohol.**—You would think that so simple and useful an Esquire of the Body could never be a source of danger to Mansoul. But Thirst also gets the ear of the Prime Minister; he also says, 'Leave Mansoul to me, and he shall never more want anything in the world but what I can give him.' This saying of his is quite true, only, instead of calling him *Thirst* any longer, we must call him *Drunkenness*; and once Drunkenness has a man in his grip, that man wants nothing but drink, drink, from morning till night.

The chairs and tables out of his house, his children's bread, their mother's clothes, all go to buy drink. The man's time, health, and strength are spent in drink: he becomes homeless and friendless, sick and outcast, for the sake of drink. But he does not crave for home or friends; all he wants is more drink and more drink. By far the greater part of the sin, misery, and poverty in the world is caused by Drunkenness.

**Why People Abstain.**—As you know very well, it is not pure water that causes Drunkenness. Men long ago discovered how to prepare a substance called alcohol, and this it is that ruins thousands of men and women. Many good men and women, and children, too, make a solemn vow that they will never taste ale or wine or other strong drink, unless a doctor order it by way of medicine. They do this, not only for fear that they should themselves become drunkards—though indeed there is no knowing who may fall into that terrible temptation, or at what period of life such a fall may come,—but because every little

good deed helps to stop the evil in the world by setting a good example to somebody; and perhaps there is never a good example set but someone follows it, though the person who set the example may never know.

This is one reason why it is well to keep one's taste for cold water, and to know how delicious it is.

## CHAPTER III

### ESQUIRES OF THE BODY: RESTLESSNESS AND REST

**Restlessness makes the Body Strong.**—I hardly know by what names to call the two Esquires of the Body whom I am now to introduce to you, but both are good body-servants. Perhaps *Restlessness* and *Rest* will do as well as any. You have noticed that a baby is seldom quite still when he is wide awake: he is kicking his legs about, or playing with his fingers or toes, or crawling, or clutching or throwing something down or picking it up, or laughing, or crowing, or crying. Little boys and girls, too, cannot bear to sit still long at lessons. They want to run into the garden and see what their pet frog is doing. When lessons are over a good romp is delightful, or a race, or a good deal of tumbling about head-over-heels. Later, people want to play cricket or football, or to ride bicycles, or climb mountains. They think they do all these things just because it is fun; but, really, good Esquire Restless will not let them alone, but gives them an uneasy feeling if they are not pretty often doing something which is rather hard to do and rather tiring. He is playing the part of a faithful body-servant. He is helping to make Mansoul a strong and wiry body, able to swim and

ride, to jump and run; able to walk far and to hit true and to do every service that the Prime Minister may require. In fact, the business of Restlessness is to strengthen and harden the muscles which Hunger feeds.

**But Restlessness may be a Hard Master.**—Restlessness, from being a good servant, might become a hard master; indeed, he sometimes does become so, and people do things that are too hard for them in the way of rowing or climbing, running or jumping. Worse still, the Daemon of Restlessness possesses them, and they cannot settle to any kind of work or play because they always want to be doing something else. This is a very unfortunate state to get into, because it is only by going on doing one thing steadily that we learn to do it well, whether it be cricket or algebra; so it is well to be on the watch for the moment when Restlessness, the good servant, turns into Restlessness, the unquiet Daemon who drives us about from post to pillar, and will not give us firm standing ground anywhere in life.

**Rest, a Good Servant.**—In a general way, his fellow-servant and brother, Rest, steps in with, 'It is my turn now,' and the tired person is glad to sit down and be quiet for a little, or lie on his face with a book, or, best of all, go to sleep soundly at night and wake up refreshed and ready for anything. Thus the muscles take such turns of work and rest as help them to grow and become strong.

**Sloth, a Tyrant.**—I Daresay you are glad to hear of an Esquire of the Body who is not followed by a black shadow threatening Mansoul with ruin; but, alas! We cannot be let off. Rest, too, has his Daemon, whose name is Sloth. 'A little more sleep, a little

more slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep,' is the petition with which he besieges the Prime Minister. Once Sloth is ruler in Mansoul, the person cannot wake up in the morning, dawdles over his dressing, comes down late for breakfast, hates a walk, can't bear games, dawdles over his preparation, does not want to make boats or whistles, or collect stamps, drops in all his lessons, is in the Third form when he ought to be in the Sixth, saunters about the corners of the playing-field with his hands in his pockets, never does anything for anybody, not because he is unkind or ill-natured, but because he will not take the trouble.

Poor fellow! he does not know that he is falling daily more and more under the power of a hard master. The less he exerts himself, the less he is able to exert himself, because the muscles, which Restlessness keeps firm and in good order, Sloth relaxes and weakens until it becomes a labour to raise the hand to the head or to drag one foot after another. People used to be very much afraid of Sloth and to call him one of the Seven Deadly Sins, but somehow he is less thought about now; perhaps because we find so many things to do that we cannot bear to be slothful. Still, if your friends call you idle about play or work, or, worse, indolent, or, worse still, lazy, pull yourself together without loss of time, for be sure the Daemon, Sloth, is upon you, and once you get into his clutches you are in as bad a case, and your life is as much in danger of being ruined, as if Gluttony or Drunkenness had got hold of you. But take courage, the escape is easy: Restlessness is on the alert to save you from Sloth in the beginning. Up and be doing, whether at work or play.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ESQUIRES OF THE BODY: CHASTITY

**How to Rule the Appetites.**—We have seen how each of the Appetites—Hunger, Thirst, Restlessness, Rest—is a good body-servant, and how the work of each is to build up and refresh the body. We have seen, too, how a life may be ruined by each of these so innocent-seeming appetites if it be allowed to get the mastery. To save ourselves from this fate, we must eat, drink, sleep, at regular times, and then not allow ourselves to *think* of taking our ease, of dainty things to eat, of nice things to drink, in the intervals. We should always have something worth while to think about, that we may not let our minds dwell upon unworthy matters.

**Each Appetite has its Time.**—There is another Appetite which is subject to the same rules as those we have considered. It has its time like eating and sleeping, but its time is not until people are married. Just as eating, drinking, and sleeping are designed to help to make us strong, healthy, and beautiful bodies, so this other Appetite is meant to secure that people shall have children, so that there will always be people in the world, young people growing up as old people pass away. This Appetite is connected with a certain

part of the body; and I should not speak about it now, only that one of the great duties we have in the world is to keep this part of the body pure. It is just like that tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil planted in the Garden of Eden.

**Uncleanness.**—You remember that Adam and Eve were not to take thereof, or they should surely die; and then, you remember how the tempter came and told Eve that they should not die if they took of it, but should be like gods, knowing good and evil. Well, just in the same way, I fear, you may find tempters who will do their best to make you know about things you ought not to know about, to talk about and read about and do things you ought not to talk about, or read about, or do. I daresay they will tell you these things are quite right, that you would not have such parts of your body and such feelings about them unless you were meant to think and do these things. Now it will help you to know that this is the sin of Uncleanness, the most deadly and loathsome of all sins, the sin that all nice men and women hate and shrink from more than from any other.

**Purity.**—The opposite virtue is called Purity, and Christ has said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” That does not mean, I think, ‘shall see God’ when they die, but ‘shall see’ Him with the eye of their soul, about them and beside them, and shall know, whenever temptation comes through this Appetite—‘Thou, God, seest me.’ That thought will come home to them, so that they will not be able to make themselves unclean by even a thought or a word. They will turn away their eyes from beholding evil; they will not allow themselves to read, or hear, or say a word that should cause impure thoughts.

**Glorify God in your Bodies.**—Thus they will glorify God in their bodies. Every boy or girl who realises this is a hero in the sight of God, is fighting a good fight, and is making the world better. When the pure marry, their children will be blessed, for they will be good, healthy, and happy, because they have pure parents. Remember that God puts before each of us in this matter the choice between good and evil, obedience and disobedience, which he put before Adam and Eve. They sinned, and death entered into the world. And so surely as you allow yourself in this sin of Uncleaness, even to think a thought which you could not go straight and tell your mother, death begins in you, death of body and soul. Fight the good fight, and do not let yourself, like our first parents, be the victim of unholy curiosity.

**The Appetites our Servants, not our Masters.**—Let each of the Appetites, so necessary to our bodies, be our servant and not our master, and remember, above all things, that sin and slavery to any Appetite begin in our thoughts. It is our thoughts that we must rule, and the way to rule them is very simple. We just have to think of something else when an evil thought comes, something really interesting and nice, with a prayer in our hearts to God to help us to do so.