

**MAN, WOMAN  
AND CHILD**

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Man, Woman and Child by M. J. Savage

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**M. J. SAVAGE**

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## PREFACE.

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THE demand for these discourses, as published in pamphlet, has made it seem best to reissue them at once in book form.

I had intended to prepare an introductory chapter somewhat at length. That would have enabled me to fill out and complete many points that now are only hinted at. In spoken discourse, many things are necessarily left incomplete: many positions are left apparently unguarded and open to easy attack. But, in spite of such defects, I have decided to leave them as they are. A discussion may be valuable as a provocative of thought and further study quite as much by what it does not say, or only suggests, as by an attempt at a more exhaustive treatment. The best service is rendered sometimes when people are only stirred up to think for themselves, and something is left for them to do in the way of solving their own problems.

M. J. S.

Boston, May, 1884.





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## THE MAN.

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THE most interesting as well as the most important object for human study is humanity itself. And yet, since man is the product, the flower and the fruit, of this great universe that surrounds us; since he is the last term, the result, of all the past; since he is woven as a thread into the warp and woof of the complex life of the present,—in order perfectly to comprehend him, we need to know *the all*. For no one thing in the universe exists independently of the rest, so that it can be detached and thoroughly studied and comprehended alone. Every unit is only a part of some larger aggregate. Each individual can be studied and comprehended only as he is related to the larger whole of which he is such a part.

Springing out of the total life of things and integrated into an organism by itself is the family; the true, the eternal trinity of man, woman, and child,—these three that, without any metaphysical distinctions or jugglery of terms, are really and forever one. And, in order to study the man and the woman and the child, we must consider them as parts of this larger organism. For the man is the man by virtue of the relationship in which he stands to the woman and the child; and the woman is the woman by virtue of the relationship in which she stands to the man and the child; and the child is the child by virtue of the relationship in which it stands to the man and the woman. Each is a

part of this larger whole ; and their ideal must be discovered by finding out the relation in which they stand to these other parts.

It is indeed true, and it is a beneficent law, that almost anything that is alive can adapt itself to new and strange conditions within certain limits ; and those limits are not very narrow. A man can live alone, therefore, and unrelated, to a certain extent ; so a woman or a child can live alone and unrelated. Each one has the power of becoming adapted to this changed condition of things. A man, for example, can take on certain characteristics of a woman, fulfil certain functions usually performed by a woman ; and a woman can acquire certain characteristics of a man ; and the same holds true of a child, so far as either one of them is compelled by force of circumstances or by the leadings of choice. But as far as either one thus changes, so far does that one depart from the ideal type.

To illustrate what I mean, if you had never seen a steam-engine, and I should bring to your notice some special piece of its mechanism, you would not be able to understand it. You would not know what it was for. You would say, It is a part of a larger whole, and I must find out what this larger whole is before I can comprehend it. This shows what I mean, when I say we need to know how man is related, what part he plays and the function he performs in the family and in the wider life of which he is a part.

If one part of a steam-engine is broken, damaged, or removed, the engine, of itself, has no power to supply this which is lacking. But in all living organisms there is this recuperative power, this power of one organ to become modified or changed, so as to take on the function of another organ. If we go down amid the lower life of the world, we find this marvellous fact,—that, if we tear away even a whole limb, it



will grow again, such is the recuperative power and fulness of life. But when you come up to man, to a being so highly complicated, so complex in structure, this is no longer true. And yet it is true that, if some one organ of man be taken away or injured so that it cannot fulfil its function, if there is power of life enough left in the system, some other organ will be modified and changed in its structure, and will take upon itself the office of fulfilling the function of that which is removed. There have been cases, for instance, of one entire lung being destroyed or dying out, and of the other lung growing across the chest and filling up the place and doing the work of both. So, if a man loses his eyesight, some other sense becomes sharper, keener, capable of supplying the lack within certain limits, and fulfilling functions not natural to it in a perfectly developed and balanced human system.

This illustrates what I wish you to understand concerning the function and the nature of the man and the woman. A man can become changed, if he needs or chooses, so as to fill the place and do a large part of the work of the woman. So a woman can become changed and do the work of a man. And a child, bereft of father and mother, as we often see, can become suddenly and abnormally old, lose its childishness, and do the work that would naturally be deferred for many a year. But just in so far as man or woman or child departs from the type of manhood or womanhood or childhood, just so far do they become less manly, less womanly, less childlike. In order perfectly to understand them then, we must study them as related to each other.

My task this morning is to attempt to outline the manly ideal, to describe to you the manly function in the development of the world and of civilization, and to outline a few of the great and specific manly virtues.