

**THEATRES, THEIR SAFETY
FROM FIRE AND
PANIC, THEIR COMFORT
AND HEALTHFULNESS**

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Theatres, their safety from fire and panic, their comfort and healthfulness by William Paul Gerhard

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WILLIAM PAUL GERHARD

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THEATRES

THEIR SAFETY FROM FIRE AND PANIC,
THEIR COMFORT AND HEALTHFULNESS

BY

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Their Causes and Prevention," Etc., Etc.

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PREFACE.

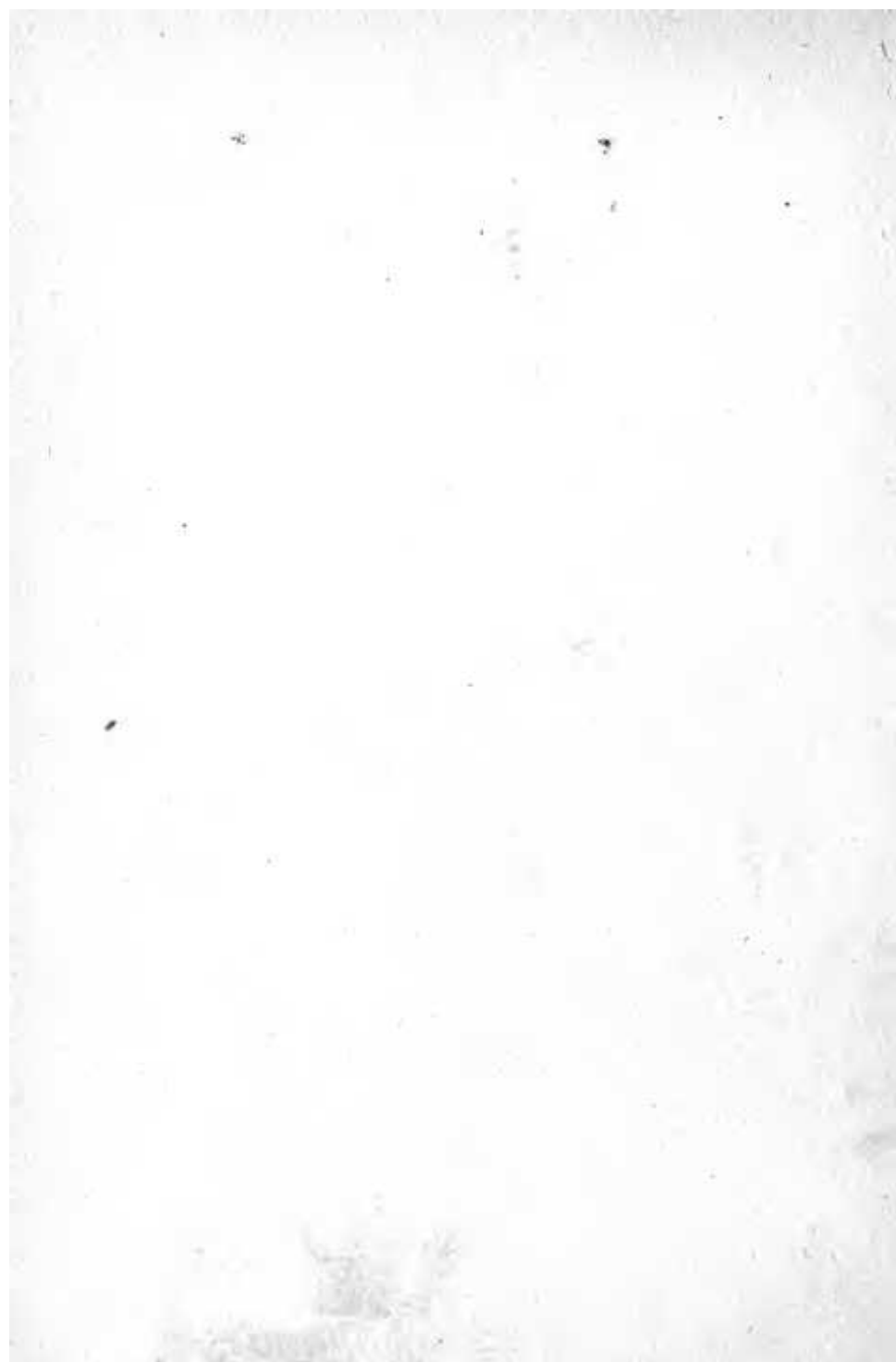
THE question of safety in the theatre is one of paramount importance, and though the subject has been often discussed, there are good reasons why it seems well to bring it up from time to time. Next to the question of safety from fire and panic, the comfort and healthfulness of theatre buildings require more attention than is usually bestowed upon them.

The matter forming the first part of this book was first contributed by the author, by request, to the publications of the British Fire Prevention Committee; a condensed abstract of the second part was written originally for *Appleton's Popular Science Monthly*.

The object of the book is to put the matter into more permanent form, and to thus render the same accessible to a larger class of readers.

THE AUTHOR.

36 UNION SQUARE, New York.
March, 1900.



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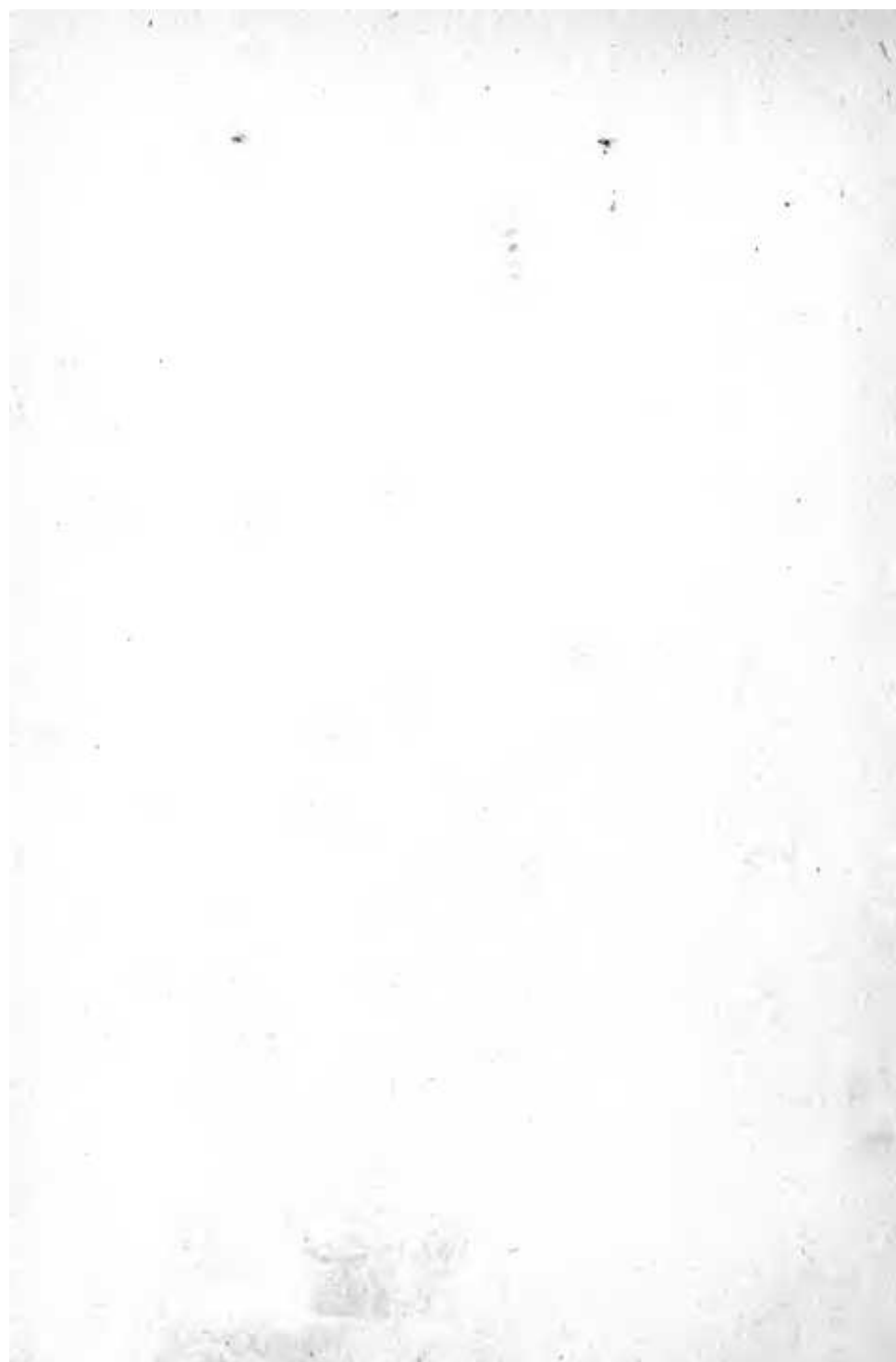
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THEATRES:
THEIR SAFETY FROM FIRE AND PANIC, THEIR
COMFORT AND HEALTHFULNESS.

I.

SAFETY FROM FIRE AND PANIC.*

Man pfercht das Brennlichste zusammen,
Da steht's dann alsobald in Flammen.
Wolfgang von Goethe, Xenien.

IN the following, I will discuss briefly the question of personal safety in theatres. I am well aware of the fact that the ground has been gone over so thoroughly by competent writers as to leave hardly a possibility of making any new or promising suggestions, yet I hold that some good must come from agitating the question over and over again. It is a matter of common observation that when a serious fire disaster has occurred—whether in a hotel, an asylum, a dwelling, or a theatre—the

* This essay was originally prepared as a paper for the Publications of the British Fire Prevention Committee in London. The editor of the publications, Mr. Edwin O. Sacha, wrote the following comments upon the paper, which I quote from the preface to the English edition:—

“ . . . The paper which the Executive presents in this publication must rank among the most important so far issued, for not only is the subject deserving of very serious consideration, but the very name of the author commands the full attention of all concerned in fire prevention throughout the world. Mr. Wm. Paul Gerhard is the leading authority