

**THE HOUSE OF THE
GOOD NEIGHBOR,
PP. 1-217**

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The House of the Good Neighbor, pp. 1-217 by Esther Pohl Lovejoy

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ESTHER POHL LOVEJOY

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"THE HOOVERMITE"

This little Miss Muffit has an American dress and is testing American sugar

THE HOUSE OF THE GOOD NEIGHBOR



BY

ESTHER POHL LOVEJOY

New York

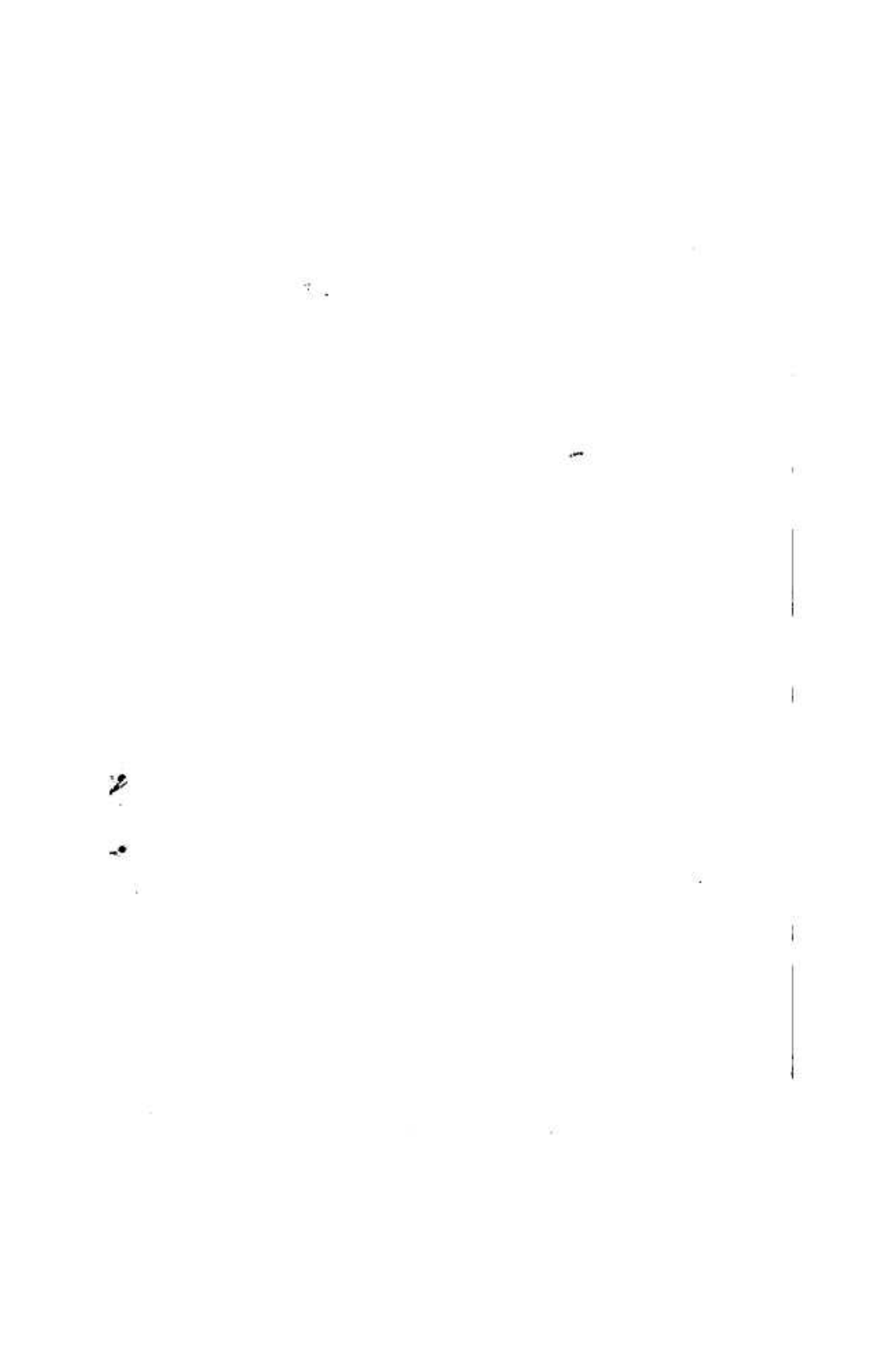
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CHAPTER I

ONE OF THE MANSIONS

TEMPERATURE is a determining factor in all forms of life. Knowing the peculiarities of a species the temperature can usually be depended upon to lead us straight to his habitat. This simple law made it easy to locate the American population in Paris during the winter months through the four long years of war. Those who knew the way to France, and had gotten there without government assistance, were accustomed to summer heat the year round, and could usually be found in the hotels where there was plenty of hot water and the radiators had not been affected by the war.

The hotel where I lived in the beginning catered to my country-folk. The radiators radiated regularly, and this was strong evidence that a large quantity of coal was being consumed to add to the comfort of the transient population. There was hot water in the pipes every day of the week and on Sundays, to be used by the guests in any quantity by merely turning on the faucet, and if the food commissioner had come to that hotel seeking evidence of national famine it certainly would not have been found. The rates were

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very high. They were more than I could afford. But who can afford to be cold and hungry when heat is for sale, and all kinds of food except grape-fruit, griddle-cakes and corn on the cob are to be had for mere money?

It was hard to leave that warm hotel and face the cold French world. The habits of a comfortable life bound me to that hostelry. But Mademoiselle Marie-Jeanne Bassot had offered to take me to a French social center, a neighborhood house in Levallois, and by making a virtue of this opportunity it was easier to give up my nice warm billet and move to that chilly factory district on the outskirts of Paris.

The home of Mademoiselle Bassot and her associates had two names. It was known officially as the *Residence Sociale*, but the people of the locality had given it a better name. Because of what it had meant to them for so many years, they had unofficially christened it, "The House of the Good Neighbor."

This *house* was the most wonderful house in the world to me. It was not large or pretentious in appearance, but it had taken fifteen years to build it. The structure was not merely a building of brick and stone, three stories high and covering a definite number of square feet of the earth's surface, but a pervasive influence that modified and ennobled the characters of the people it voluntarily served. No material limits of extension could be placed on the House of the Good Neighbor. It was more than a house. Our Father's House has many mansions, and this was one of the mansions of our Father's House. It was a spiritual essence that reached as far as any