

**FARES, PLEASE! AND  
OTHER ESSAYS ON  
PRACTICAL THEMES**

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Fares, Please! And Other Essays on Practical Themes by Halford E. Luccock

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BY  
HALFORD E. LUCCOCK



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## FOREWORD

IT is a happy book whose chapters live and work together as a family of blood relatives.

This little volume cannot aspire to such felicity. Its covers open on an orphan asylum rather than a family. Like the inmates of an Orphans' Home, its chapters are many and are all small; they are dressed in but the plainest workaday gingham and calico; they are all waifs—picked up on widely scattered lanes of observation.

Yet for a' that, they are not entirely unrelated. They are on speaking terms with one another, and try, at least, to speak a common language of faith and hope. They all believe that life is an affair of great zest and great prizes, and they share together the conviction of Arthur Hugh Clough that "Life loves no lookers on at his great game."

The essays are offered simply in the hope that they may prove suggestive starting points for thought.

HALFORD E. LUCCOCK.

New Haven, Connecticut.



## I

### FARES, PLEASE!

THE smile on the face of the conductor of the 7:29 to the city every morning is a real event in the daily life of scores of commuters. His genial "Good morning" goes to make up for the lack of sunshine on cloudy days. Yet all the passengers know that behind the warmth of the smile and the unfeigned cordiality of the greeting is the stern insistence of "Fares, please, gentlemen!" For the 7:29 every day is not a charity outing; it is a pay-as-you-go enterprise.

The world greets its children with a smile and a sunny "Good morning," and some are so entranced with the smile and the "bloom o' the world" that they fail to notice with any clearness the iron demand, "Fares, please!" A recent astronomer has waxed enthusiastic over the glorious free ride nature gives us in the swing of the planet, hurtling through billions of miles of azure sky and tinted cloud at the rate of so many miles a minute. He calls it the

grandest roller coaster in the universe. He is right when he calls it glorious. He is wrong when he calls it free.

To some people the art of life largely consists in evading the fare. Paul's noble thought, "I am debtor," is still Greek to them. H. G. Wells says truly that people can go through life "fudging and evading and side-stepping, till their first contact with elemental realities is the cold sweat of their deathbed."

*Some Steal a Ride.* They evade the fare by "riding the bumpers." They go through life as "blind baggage." The world has made an investment in them to the extent of thousands of dollars for sustenance. The State has invested thousands more, to say nothing of life and blood, in their education. For this they make no return in benefits conferred. On the lowest rung of the social ladder they are called tramps. Higher up they are often called clever.

*Some Ride on a Pass.* This pass is handed to them by others, usually ancestors, in the shape of money, position, or talent. Some one else pays their way, and they accept it complacently as the proper thing. No sense of debt goes with it. Fortunately, such a free

trip in a Pullman is no longer regarded as so praiseworthy an achievement as it once was. The inheritance tax, the income tax, the corporation tax, each is a loud stentorian, "Fares, please!"

*Some Ride on a Child's Ticket.* They pay half fare. To the world's demand for a strong man's stint of work and service they pleadingly insist that they are only twelve years old and must be let off with giving to the world a half portion as their share. They do not ask to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease; all they ask is to be allowed to go in a perambulator.

*Some Pay.* These are the ones who make the world morally solvent. They take no delight in dodging. Their lives are lifted out of triviality and insignificance by the ennobling power of a great obligation. They do not attempt to discharge their debt by merely becoming effective economic producers, for the world is more than a granary, a machine shop, a storehouse of commodities. It is a moral enterprise, the scene of the kingdom of God, a progressive advance in spiritual welfare. Its capital and stock in trade is not reckoned in pig iron and corn, but in moral purposes and