

# **THE ART OF RIGHT LIVING**

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The Art of Right Living by Ellen H. Richards

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**ELLEN H. RICHARDS**

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By Ellen H. Richards

"It is not birth rates that want raising,  
but Ideals."

MANKIND IN THE MAKING,  
H. G. Wells



Whitcomb & Barrows  
Boston, 1904

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A Condensation of a Course of Lectures  
Given at the Summer School of the South,  
Knoxville, Tennessee, June to July, 1904



"The problem is to retain our acquired Health, Strength,  
and Power under the conditions imposed upon us by modern  
progress."

*Dudley A. Sargent.*



## THE ART OF RIGHT LIVING

THE reading public is periodically startled by a particularly striking account of the waste of human life due to severity of climate, to accident, to contagious or infectious disease, but lapses into indifference in a remarkably short time.

The human mind seems to retain a large portion of hereditary fatalism. What is must be, and submission is commendable. The very first step made by the fathers of sanitary science was to convince the more intelligent that they were, to a great extent, arbiters of their own destiny on the earth. We can speak even more strongly at this distance of eighty years and say with confidence that at least half the deaths in any city, and one-quarter in the country, are preventable, and that in a very real sense the educated, well-informed portion of the community are *particeps criminis* in the murder of the innocents and the slow death by torture of thousands of adults.

Besides this appalling slaughter, three thousand to five thousand deaths annually in each large city, we have to consider what Mr. Wells aptly calls the partial death rate, "that dwarfing and limiting of an innumerable host of children who do, in an underfed and meager sort of way, survive." No other living thing is so weighted with the load of mere living as is the human being.

The loss in working power to the state is indicated by the undersize of the adults who have to suffer a handicap loss of from fifteen to twenty pounds in weight and three inches in height due to poor nutrition and unsanitary surroundings.

America is said to worship efficiency, but this worship has not included the human being, that self-developed machine whose "duty" is a thousand times more valuable than that of any man-made machine.

In these pages we shall consider the factors which go to make up the efficient human individual, and treat these factors also with reference to their development in school life, for it is to the formation of right habits in the child that we must look for improvement.