

sage from Arnold Bennett's *How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day*:

"When you leave your house, concentrate your mind on a subject (no matter what, to begin with). You will not have gone ten yards before your mind has skipped away under your very eyes and is larking round the corner with another subject.

"Bring it back by the scruff of the neck. Ere you have reached the station you will have brought it back about forty times. Do not despair. Continue. Keep it up. You will succeed. You cannot by any chance fail if you persevere. It is idle to pretend that your mind is incapable of concentration. Do you not remember that morning when you received a disquieting letter which demanded a very carefully-worded answer? How you kept your mind steadily on the subject of the answer, without a second's intermission, until you reached your office; whereupon you instantly sat down and wrote the answer? That was a case in which *you* were roused by circumstances to such a degree of vitality that you were able to dominate your mind like a tyrant. You would have no

trifling. You insisted that its work should be done, and its work was done." Yes, everyone can recall times when he has really concentrated, but it is difficult to follow the same procedure when the subject is not of particular interest. Bennett solves this problem when he suggests that the secret lies in the mental attitude. If I get on the bus and say to myself, "Well, now how can I make myself study?", then I am likely to spend a greater part of my time on that baffling question. However, if I simply say to myself, "What type of drama is this *Antony and Cleopatra*?" and seek to prove my answer, the time goes quickly and I really accomplish something.

I would not think of spending two hours everyday in the library merely looking around. I like to live, and so I conquer half of my drudgery on the bus when I can do nothing else.

My Father

KATHRYN ALFS

My father is five feet eleven inches tall. He has large grey-green eyes, a somewhat too-large nose, a medium sized mouth, and a very square jaw. His physique is typically middle-aged. After being teased to distraction about being built like a butter-churn, he now wears a corset with the fond delusion that it pushes his stomach into his chest and looks youthful. Aloud he swears it is for his posture. He now resembles a top-heavy butter-churn.

My father has never exacted much discipline or insisted that we profit by his mistakes. He has instilled an independence of thought and action.

My father is somewhat of an extremist. For instance, he will go along in good

humor letting us leave our house in perfect chaos over every week-end and then suddenly come home some night late, find a coat someone has neglected to hang up, and fly into a rage comparable to a five-year-old's tantrum. He will drag my sister and me out of our warm beds and insist we clean the house from cellar to attic as penance for breaking the house-keeping rules. The first few times this happened the inconsistency of his behavior made us feel very much abused. We now follow his bellowed directions with a stoic calm. He is incapable of sustained wrath.

My father's reaction to religion is passively active. I mean by that he believes in God, in heaven, and in the Bible.

He does not find it necessary to go to church every Sunday. When he does go, he has a pleasant feeling as he walks down the aisle, a pleasant feeling as he walks up the aisle, and the man on the pulpit doesn't bother him too much in between.

My father is a man's man. He has many friends and no enemies. He has the ability to "get along" with everybody. He is an excellent conversationalist. His secret, which is really no secret, being the ability to listen and to enjoy listening.

My father's status among his offspring is that of a best friend and confidential advisor. He holds more respect in this position than he could ever hold as the more austere type of father.

He is not the least bit ambitious in a monetary sense. He doesn't work very often and then only long enough to make as much money as we need. He thinks a man who makes a lot of money is the second worst thing there is, the worst being a man who is given a lot of money. He has given my grandfather strict orders not to leave him or anyone in his family any money. He thinks it would be a dirty trick. He firmly believes that the best thing that could happen to him would be to go bankrupt. He thinks then we could all go to work and be a much happier and more integrated family. I think probably he's right.

My father is human and real and well-integrated and if I may express a slightly prejudiced opinion, quite wonderful.

Teeth Tales

VIRGINIA RODMAN

False teeth and the fashion of filling teeth were known even by the ancient Egyptians, but the science of dentistry is a fairly recent one. Just as far back as colonial days when life was centered in New England, the care of teeth was very crude as compared to modern methods.

To keep teeth from rotting, New Englanders were advised to wash the mouth continually with lemon juice and rub the teeth with sage leaves. Today we read countless numbers of articles on vitamins, calories, and what to eat or what not to eat to insure healthy teeth.

The colonial lady chewed mastic (a resinous substance extracted from the mastic tree) until it was as soft as wax, then stopped the cavity with it, leaving it there until consumed. This was the

common remedy for toothache. A man could gain relief from the same ailment by wearing the tooth of a dead man about his neck. In view of the average twentieth century individual's extensive dental bill incurred while trying to suppress pains in the teeth, these earlier people may have had a decided advantage.

Magazine advertisements, radio announcements, huge signs all over the country advise us to use Colgate's Tooth Paste, Dr. Lyons Tooth Powder, Pepsodent, etc. Most of these tooth cleaners are really precipitated chalk combined with some perfume, aromatic, or antiseptic. Our ancestors scoured their teeth with compound of cuttlebone, brick dust, and pumic-stone, or coral, snuff, ashes of good