

Brousseau, Bob.

ASK 0355

*How to have*

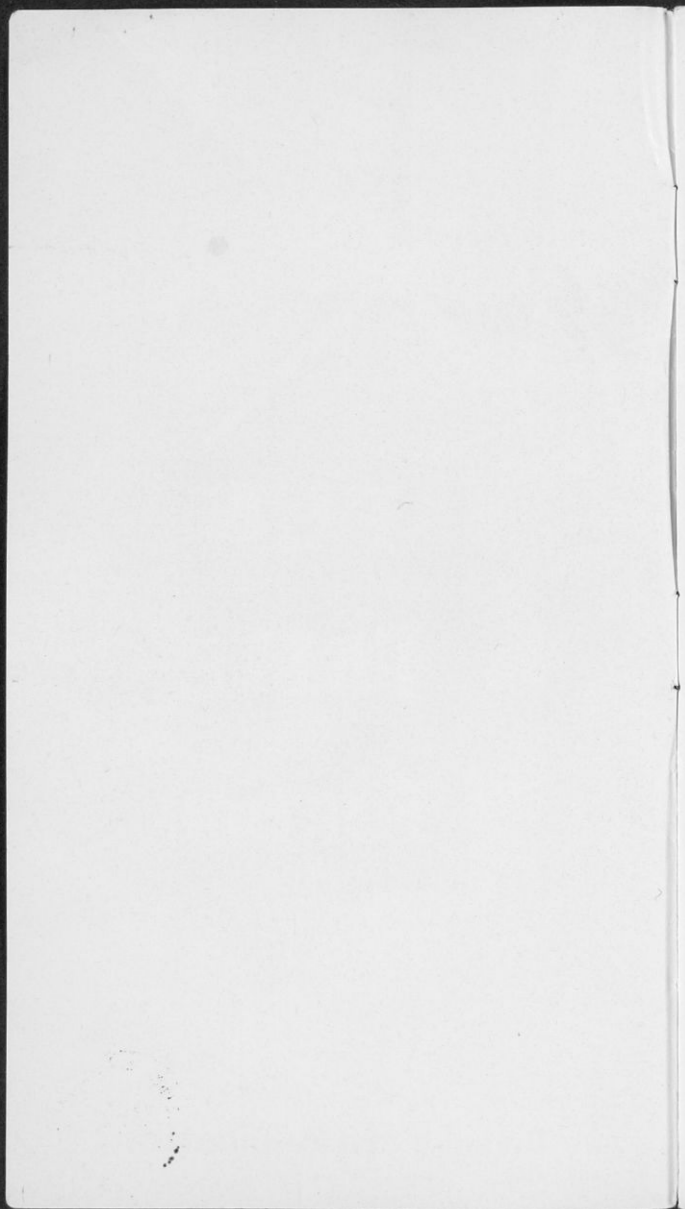
**FUN**

**FAME**

**FORTUNE**



**Divine Word Publications**



**How To Have  
Fun  
Fame  
Fortune**

by

*Rev. Robert Brousseau*

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Deacidified

## FUN

It's pretty hard to stay out in a blistering sun all day without getting a sunburn. It's pretty hard to stay out in a blinding rainstorm without getting wet. It's pretty hard to eat onions constantly without smelling like an onion. But it's even harder to live in this old world of ours without some of its filth and evil rubbing off on us.

That sounds almost unfair to this old planet of ours. After all, it's been pretty good to us in so many ways. It produces food for us. We get our homes from her great forests. We get our clothing either directly from her plant life or indirectly from the animals she nourishes. Even, so many of the medicines that restore health to us come from her great mineral resources. Really, when you think about it, the world seems like the kindest friend we have. Especially does this seem true when we all see the peaceful beauty of nature; the golden sunsets, the majestic mountains, the rolling valleys, and the mighty oceans. How is it that in one breath we can gasp at her beauty and in the next solemnly proclaim that she is one of the greatest sources of evil?

Well, when we say that the world is evil, we are not blaming the trees and flowers and waterfalls and sun and sky. These aren't evil. They are God's own creation. They are good. We are only saying that the spirit of the world is

something that leads us to evil. That's not the world's fault. It's not God's, either. Man is the culprit. Since the fall of Adam, everywhere man has gone he has left a trail of tears and sin and destruction behind him. He's kinda like the germ-bearing fly, that leaves a path of filth every place it walks. Man has criss-crossed this planet of ours so many times there is hardly a place left uncontaminated.

Don't ever try to prove that the spirit of the world is not evil. Don't try to prove that the spirit of the world won't affect you. If you believe this, you are not a dream-boat, you are a sleep-walker. The evil of this world is all around you. It's kinda like walking in a fog. The fog's above you, it's in front of you, it's behind you, it's beside you, it's even within you as you pull it into your lungs with every breath. Remember, if you are not on your guard, the spirit of the world will snow you under; you will then become a part of its very wickedness.

One of the principle ways the spirit of the world worms its way into our life is through recreation. We act like one groundhog following another. We just naturally follow other people. We see them do things and suddenly we find ourselves doing them. We read what they read; we go where they go; we end up doing the things they do. This usually happens in our recreation. Why? They seem to be having fun and we want to have fun, too. So we begin to take up

their forms of fun and fancy. Sometimes this fun and fancy are fatal.

Let's take this thing recreation and pull it apart, unroll it, unravel it, dismantle it, pick it to pieces and see what it is and the attitudes we need to have about it.

Take a good look at the word RECREATE: now chop off the prefix "re." What do you have? The word create. What does create mean? You know this. It means to build up or make from nothing. Now add "re" to create and see what you get. It means to rebuild or remake or a better word yet is restore. So now we can better understand the very purpose of recreation. It is supposed to restore to us all the mental energy and physical relaxation we have lost. You might say it gives us a new start. It helps us to go back to the same old tasks with new vim, vigor and vitality, yeah man, real zip.

The first mistake we make in regard to recreation is that we so often go to extremes. It becomes a case of either too much or too little. It's hard to stay right down the middle. It's something like tight rope walking. Too much swing or sway is the downfall; swing too far one way or sway too far the other way and you're all set for a one point landing, on your nose. In recreation we have to try to stay on the tight rope of just the right amount all of the time.

I suppose that there are a few people that don't do enough recreating, but I

don't think we can accuse the modern teenager of this extreme. Usually older people are guilty of this. Of course, if it should happen to anyone, young or old, it's still a mistake. You remember the old saying, "All work and no play will make little Mortimer a very dull boy."

Most people, however, are on the other side of the fence recreating themselves to death. This seems to be the case not only for most teenagers, but for Americans in general. The whole country seems to be working far harder at playing than at working. They will travel many hard miles in cars. They will tramp up mountains, through swamps and over desolate arid wastes. They'll work far into the night at the expense of losing sleep, injuring their eyesight or mashing their thumb with a hammer to build a boat or hotrod. They'll pour untold amounts of money into some contraption or useless rig, even to the point of doing without something they really need. For what? For recreation, man, for recreation. Don't you know a man needs time off? Don't you know a man needs to relax?

If you have been worshipping the god of recreation, then it's high time you take account of the situation. Man is not supposed to recreate to such a point that he becomes an out and out loafer. The very purpose of recreation becomes defeated. Remember we said that the purpose of recreation was to restore your mental energy and physical relaxation so



that you could go back to your tasks with more effectiveness. If you don't do anything but loaf, this purpose is defeated. You are only loafing so that you can build up enough strength to loaf more and better. The only way that type will die is rest themselves to death. Ask a teenager like that to do some work or help around the house. "Now really, mother, you don't know what you are saying. Me work? How ghastly. How unfair, and to think my own flesh and blood would ask me to cut the lawn. Don't you know I am the thinking type," (thinking of ways to get out of work, that is). And so goes the line of ole blubber Bill. The only thing he will ever be good for is to render out and sell to a soap company.

Not only can a person make a mistake about the amount of recreation but they can easily make a mistake using the wrong kind of recreation. The wrong kind can be either the kind that damages your morals or the kind that dulls your brain completely.

The wrong kind of movies and literature and television shows can do a real job on your morals. That's the very reason there is such a thing as the Legion of Decency. It wasn't set up to let you know just what the juiciest movies are so you would make sure not to miss them. It was set up to guide your recreation, to steer you away from the movies that would attack your morals. Don't try to be the big shot that says they never

bother me. Whether you notice it or not, this ole spirit of the world is bound to rub off on you. Pretty soon you will be thinking like all those soggy-headed, sex-riddled stoops that are sometimes called stars. Remember this and pack it away in the ole brain box. If you attend a movie that you know is objectionable for teenagers, you are committing a sin by putting yourself deliberately in the occasion of sin.

The same goes for television. If you know, or really suspect that a program will be suggestive, you are obligated not to watch it. The Pope has shown concern about television and the fact that it is uncensored. He even suggests that an organization something like the Legion of Decency be set up for television. All of this is to say nothing of the fact that television is so often a mind-deadener. Some teenagers have watched television so much that not only has their imagination been destroyed, but their eyes have the stars of a zombie.

One more note on brain deadeners, the comic book. I suppose if you are vitally interested in how little Ophelia Jones, of Smash Comic books escaped from the jaws of a lion without swallowing her bubble gum, that's okay. But it's another thing when a so called future-builder-of-America spends hours upon hours pouring over such trite. If you must keep up with Ophelia, then do it moderately.

You know, my dear teenager, recreation is kinda like a mirror. It pretty

well reflects the kind of person you are and the kind of adult you will be. If your recreation is sensible, you are probably sensible. If you have a useful hobby, and don't overdo it, you are probably naturally mechanical or inventive, and you probably won't be the lonesome type. If you follow the world of sports, and don't overdo it, you are probably the outdoor and active type. But brother, if your recreation tends toward the lustful side, you'll drown in immorality. If you don't do anything but recreate, you are lazy. Let your recreation be your examination of conscience. Don't be fooled by those that think that all life is just eating, drinking and being merry. They have been snagged by the spirit of the world. Sure it's hard work to walk through the mud of this world and not get some on you, but make sure you don't sink in it.

### FAME

Surely the good Lord must have a sense of humor. After all He made Giraffes, didn't He? But what must be far more amusing to Him than giraffes is mankind. True man is made to the image and likeness of God but sometimes you would think that he was God Himself the way he acts. Man is far less in comparison to God than a drop of water is to all the oceans in the world. And to think that sometimes these puny little pitiful people stand up and brazenly challenge God Himself. I think God must shake His head, so to speak, and smile

at those little idiots. He must just shake His head when He sees any of us blowing our own bagpipes about how wonderful we are or about all the things we have accomplished or how our true greatness is still undiscovered. He must be inclined sometimes to just brush all of us from the face of the earth like we would brush away a fly.

Christ must have felt something like this toward the apostles. They played the big-shot game like all of us have played it. I'm thinking of one time in particular when the apostles had a heated debate about which one was the greatest. Sounds like a bunch of teenagers trying to prove that they are best ball player or dancer or the best looking. Let me quote this little episode right straight from St. Mark's gospel. It runs like this. "And they came to Capharnaum. When He was at home, He asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they kept silence, for they had discussed which one of them was the greatest."

Now just use your imagination a little bit and try to picture this argument that Christ referred to. There they were, plowing along a dusty road toward Capharnaum. Christ was probably walking a little ahead meditating or praying to His heavenly Father. The apostles being tired and lazy, too, had dropped back. One of them had dropped a little remark about one of his rare abilities or about how really great he was. They were off

to the races. Everyone was in the thick of the discussion. Never in your life have you heard such eloquent arguments. Never did you suspect such greatness. Never did you dream of such genius. But now you know; they're telling you. The discussion gets louder. The arguments get more and more heated. All of them are talking at once. Lucky they finally got to Capharnaum; they might have come to blows.

Through it all, Christ had just kept right on walking serenely along. He could hear them in the background. He said nothing. They thought that He was unaware of the subject of their conversation. They forgot that He knew their very thoughts. They hadn't escaped, for He popped the question at them. "What were you arguing about on the way?" They stood there silently and embarrassed like a kid caught in the cookie jar. Christ didn't rack them. He was gentle but He used the opportunity to teach a lesson. Here's the way the scripture continues. "And sitting down he called the Twelve and said to them, 'If any man wishes to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all.'"

The lesson hit home. No man is supposed to set himself above anyone else. No man is supposed to pride himself in his God-given gifts. To be great, we must be little. To be first we must be willing to be last. Least of all should we brag about all that we think we are. If God wants us to be anything before men, He

will get us there but we must never seek such rank or pride ourselves in attaining it.

We may have smiled a little at the apostles and their ambitious ways, but the lesson wasn't just for them, it was for all mankind and that means teen-kind, too. How many teenagers have acted the same way when they got in big popularity scrambles that go on in school or club or neighborhood? How many times have you bragged? How many times have you back-slapped to get a vote? No, none of us should laugh at the apostles unless we want to laugh at ourselves. We've all acted the same way sometime or other. And it's a terrible thing when you see this desire for popularity get clear out of hand in a teenager. It can ruin their life and their morals.

Just look around you sometime, pick out a Jezebel or Joe that's scrambling for popularity and watch what a fool they are making out of themselves. Oh, they would be the last one to admit that they are after any special notice. But it doesn't take a fortune teller to read between the lines. Their very words and actions give them away. They are sooooo friendly, in fact, gushy. They are sooooo concerned with your problems. They are sooooo helpful to your least desire. What they never seem to realize is that all of this is sooooo noticeable. They are like the jokers on a king's court that will

dance to any tune, especially the tune you happen to be playing.

Yes, I know that we are all supposed to be helpful and concerned and friendly to everyone, but not for our own sake but for their sake. When we are doing it for our own advantage, it is a whole lot different thing than doing it for someone else's advantage. It's the difference between vice and virtue, even if it is all similar on the outside. It's vice to do something for someone when you are doing it just to become more popular; it's virtue to do something for someone when you are doing it out of love or charity. The acts may look alike but the motives are miles apart. One is dominated by self-love and the other is dominated by other-love. It's the difference between the politician and the saint.

You have to be a darn good actor to fool very many people very much for very long. The ole politician in you will squeeze out. But just let us suppose that you are a great actor, so great that you can fool everyone. We would have to congratulate you on being such a fine actor but that doesn't keep you from being a hypocrite. Why are you a hypocrite? Simply because you are thinking one way and acting another. Yeah, you might think old hypo Joe is a living doll when actually he is a lousy, low, living liar.

When you get right down to it, no matter how you look at it, Joe and Jezebel aren't hurting themselves. As we just

said, they may be living liars and that hurts them but they may be in for even greater hurts. Take this viewpoint. They want popularity so bad it becomes a kind of god for them. They will do anything to get it, just anything. That means anything often turns into everything. What does everything mean? It means going with the wrong people. It means going to wrong places. It means doing the wrong things. Sure nuff, they may get popularity but brother they pay through the nose to get it. The price they pay is so often their morals and that means they've paid the full price; the price of their souls. Yes siree, this popularity is a wonderful thing, haw, haw, haw.

One last item on the agenda is this: what do these people do when they grow old and how do they die? That's not too tough to answer if you consider the situation. The whole foundation on which they have built their castle of popularity begins to crumble. They "ain't" pretty anymore. Their muscles have turned to lard. When they smile, no more pearls, just spaces, wide open spaces. Their eyes aren't like shimmering stars anymore; they are more like burnt out light bulbs and they don't glow anymore. You see they built the whole world on themselves. Since there is nothing about them that attracts people, their world comes tumbling down. Suddenly, they find themselves alone and so often that's the way they die. It all amounts to a simple story of failure.



You can get around all this mess of the popularity-pigs by just trying to care about others. Love them for their sake and do things for their sake, or don't do them at all. To live a full life doesn't mean to live it for yourself. It means to live it for others, then if God sees fit to make you known, well that's His business. You'll be happy and you will make others happy. And, you will never grow old, not really, you will just grow mellow like a fine old wine.

### FORTUNE

Just how much is twenty five dollars? Well, it's not enough to buy an Easter outfit. It's not enough to buy a new suit. It's not enough on which to take a trip, even a short one. A good many people make that much in one day. It's enough to buy your senior ring and possibly have a little to spare. It's enough to pay one week's rent on the house or in some places maybe two weeks rent. A family of four might eat off of it for a week if they are careful how they buy. Come to think of it, it isn't very much and it's far from a fortune. It just won't buy very much.

But there was a time when that much money did buy the most precious thing in the whole world. It bought Christ. Yes, as crazy as it seems, Judas sold the life of Christ for thirty pieces of silver, which is worth about twenty five dollars or possibly a little more, now.

Now that's some trade, huh, trading

God Himself for a few lousy bucks. That makes the God of the world worth less than your senior ring. That makes Him worth no more than your week's house rent. That makes Him worth no more than a week's food for your belly. Maybe twenty five little ole stinkeroos won't buy much now, but they bought more than heaven can hold.

Makes you want to shake your head, doesn't it? Man, I can understand some things a little but I can't dig this one at all. Why? Yes, why, why, why would a guy like Judas go so far off the deep end? How could he do it?

Well, we might try to excuse him by saying that he was crazy. But Sacred Scripture doesn't even give us one hint that he was teetering on his totter. We might try to excuse him by saying that he never realized what he was doing. But there again, Sacred Scripture doesn't say that.

Remember Christ was no rank stranger to Judas. Judas had walked and talked and associated with Christ for three years. He was there when Christ had given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and speech to the mute. He was there when Christ had cleansed the leper, gave strength to the lame and forgave sins. He was there when Christ walked on the water, multiplied the loaves and the fishes, and brought calm to a raging sea. Yep, and he was there when Christ took bread, just plain unleavened bread in His hands and changed it into His own

flesh and blood. And it was the man Judas that received the first sacrilegious Communion. Oh, indeed, he knew Christ all right. So many times He had seen Christ's powerful, clear and kind eyes flash against the sunlight. So many times he had heard that beautiful and eternal voice pour out over the crowds. So many times he had seen the elegant lines of this tall, lean Christ silhouetted against the evening sky as He knelt in prayer to His Father. With all this in his mind Judas still did what he did.

There's just one conclusion that we can come to: Judas did what he did for money, nothing more. It wasn't for a fortune, just thirty pieces of silver, twenty-five bucks. The worm of the world had dug so deep into Judas that it had chewed up his very insides. He was only a shell of a man. He had no ideals or sense of love or loyalty left. He had just one god and it wasn't Christ, it was money.

It makes you feel a little sick inside, doesn't it, kids? It sounds like a bad, impossible dream. You feel like saying, "Let's talk about something else." But do you know what? That very worm called money that chewed Judas up may be chewing on you now. Maybe he hasn't gotten down to your toes yet, but he may have set up housekeeping in your heart. Think about it! Have you ever felt that worm wiggle in the world of your wishes and fond hopes?

No age and no people in history have

ever had so much of the world's goods. Poverty is rare and hunger is exceptional in this country. You are the richest teenagers that ever lived. You wear better clothes, eat better food, live in better homes and have more money to spend than any teenager in history.

I know you hate to hear these stuffy old adults say, "Well, in my day we never had it so easy." But listen, gang, for one time at least, I must agree with them. They just plain didn't have as much as you have. You don't have to go very many years back to prove it. The old clunker clicking off these lines is just thirty years old and he remembers them only too well. Some of you were already born when these conditions existed. Most adults remember well the 5c hamburger, and it had all the trimmings, too. You could buy a good pair of all leather shoes for just \$1.99. You could get into the neighborhood movie for 10c and 15c for adults. You could get a haircut for 15c. You could buy a brand new Ford or Chevy in 1941 for \$800 and things were beginning to get prosperous, then. And here are a few more prices: eggs, 12c a dozen; bread, 10c a loaf; milk, 7c a quart.

Now please don't shed any tears for me, but this old guy delivered groceries on a bicycle every day for \$1.50 a week, that's right, a week. Besides, he was only twelve years old. Oh, you don't believe things were like this, huh? Go home and ask Mom or Dad. They know it's correct.

Some of your fathers worked for just a dollar a day in the depression and supported a family on it, too.

I suppose that's the very reason so many parents of today give their little offspring so much. They didn't have anything when they were kids and they want their kids to have the things they couldn't afford.

Of course, all of this can have a reverse effect on youth. It can easily cause him to have a mixed up notion about money. This can produce two effects: the kids that think that money means happiness and the more you have the happier you are; and the kids that think money grows on trees and you don't need to work for it.

Well, if money makes you happy, then why aren't all the rich people in the world happy? It didn't make Judas happy, why should it make anyone happy? That doesn't mean all rich people aren't happy, but they are not happy because of their money, but in spite of it. Even if a rich man tried to prove that it did make him happy, he would still have to admit that it is a great risk to his soul. Just remember that Christ said it was as hard for a rich man to get to heaven as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. Now you know that's going to be a tough squeeze for the camel and it's going to be a rough squeeze for ole gold-pants, the rich man. Of course, we can't live without money, we need it, but we shouldn't live for it.

No, and as I said before, money doesn't grow on trees or any place else for that matter. Don't think of your poor old Pop and Mom as a cash register, push a button and out flies the cash box. Maybe it's easy come and easy go for you, but they may have their blood in those bucks. If you don't appreciate money now and be careful with it, you may never learn. I'm not telling you to be a thick-skinned tight-wad, never be that, but don't be so generous with other people's money, especially your parents.

A couple of times already, I have beat my drums about the teenager's attitude toward work. Just let me play that tune once more and this will be the last time. The reason I want to mention it here is because of the close association between money and work, or at least there should be such an association. You should hold tight to the fact that work is the ordinary way people get money. Some get it other ways and some are in the pokie for the way they tried to get it. You might be left a fortune by someone, but those are the things that hit newspapers and they wouldn't hit if they weren't exceptional. Work is the usual way of getting your wages, and ninety-five percent of mankind must figure on traveling that way.

The result of having too much money in your teen years could explode this whole idea. When money comes as easy as it does for many teenagers, they can get the idea that it is always going to

be that way. You may have a racket now, but you won't always have a racket. If you think you will, you will be like so many people today that think life is like an easy buck. They think they will hit it rich some day. They keep looking for the oil well in their backyards, they never get over the idea that they haven't hit it because their luck is bad. Their luck is bad because they never did anything to improve it. They flit from job to job. They never settle down. They dream "great dreams" but when they wake up, they find dreams aren't bucks. Bucks mean work and work they won't do. Most people get things in life by just plugging away, not just for a day or week or month, but for life. That's the way you will get it, so figure on working for it.

Well, there you have it, money and work. One you want and seldom get; the other you never want and always get. That's life and we can't change it. It is as old as Adam and Eve. It happened the day the Lord tossed them out of paradise. One of the punishments was that they would have to work by the sweat of their brows. And they did. So will we. But you know, I suppose it's a good thing after all, because it helps us to have a proper view about money and without the proper view, we might cash all our chips in at the window marked "HELL."

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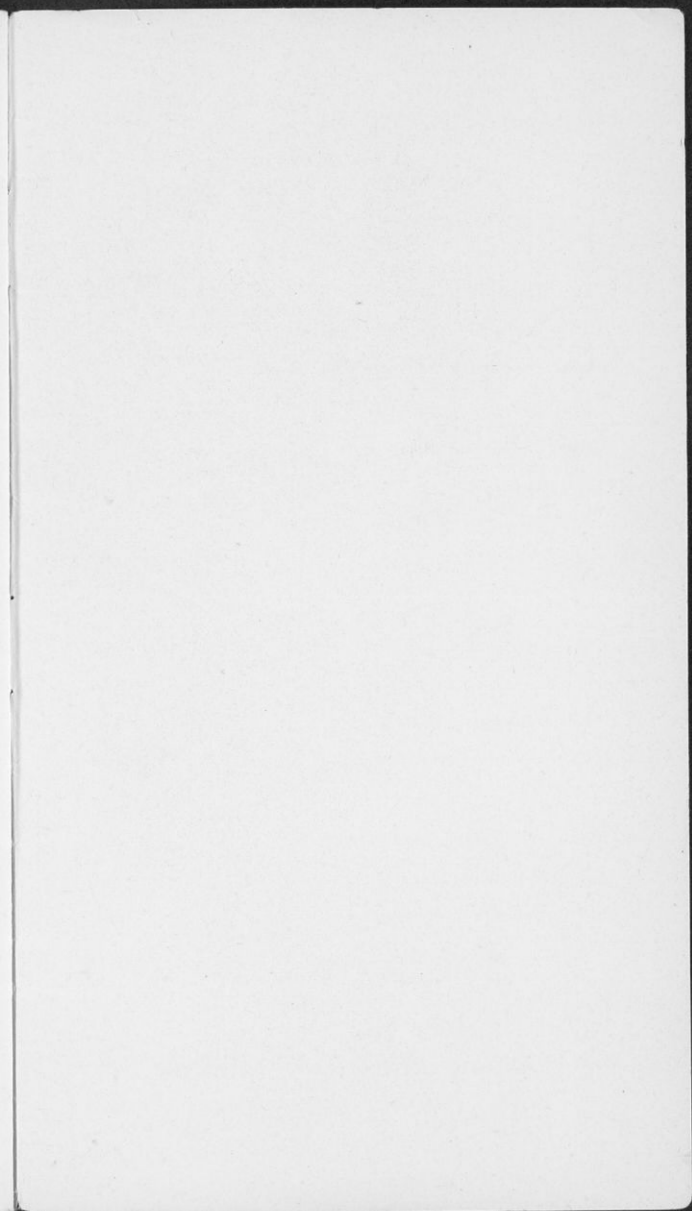
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