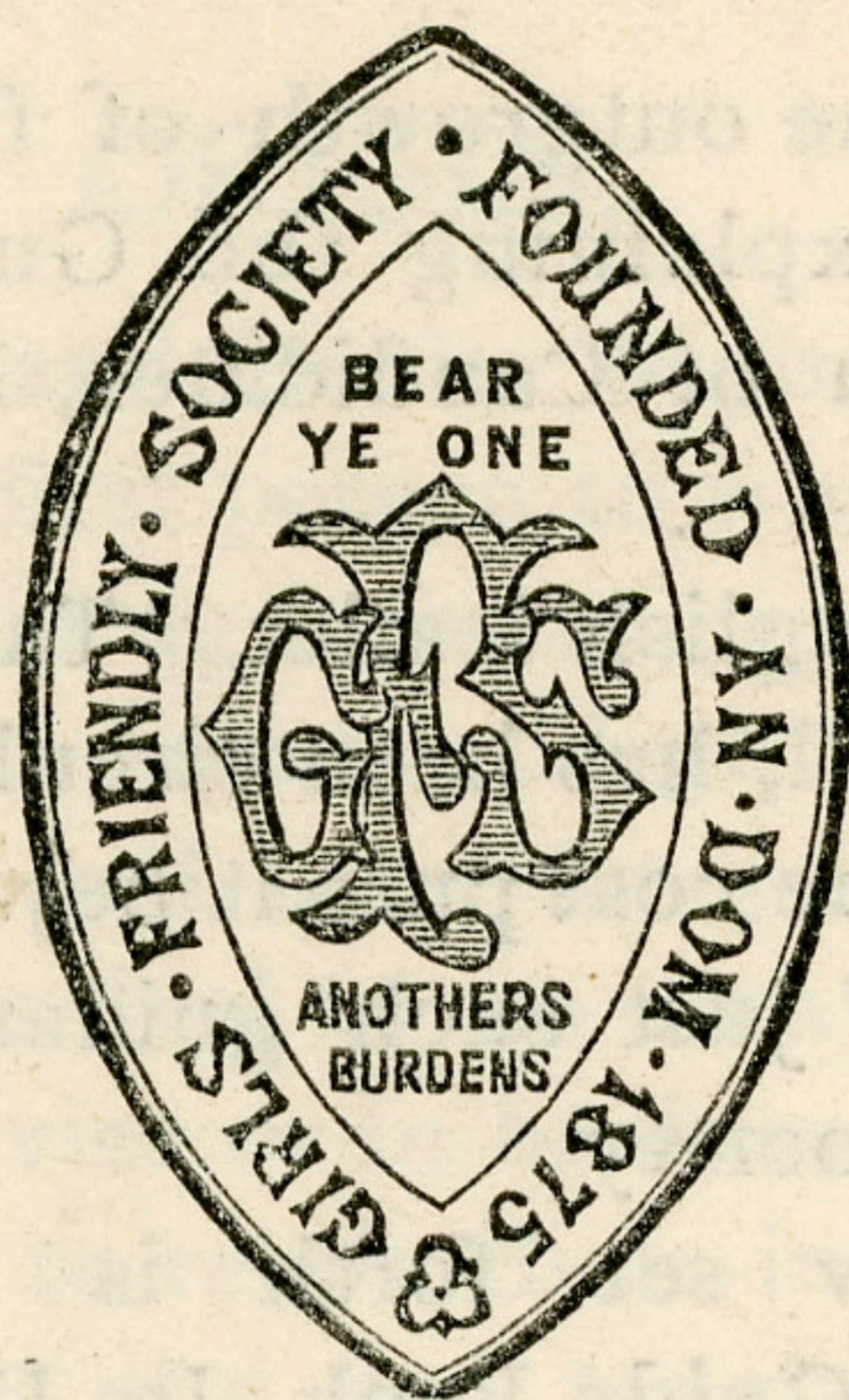


A GUIDE TO THE GUIDE BOOK
AND GENERAL ORGANIZATION
OF THE GIRLS' FRIENDLY
SOCIETY IN AMERICA



FOR THE INSTRUCTION
OF CANDIDATES, PROBA-
TIONERS AND MEMBERS

ISSUED BY THE PUBLICATION COMMITTEE G. F. S. A.

For sale at the Central Office, Church Missions House
281 Fourth Avenue, New York

[No. 18]

[Price 4 cts.]

PREFACE.

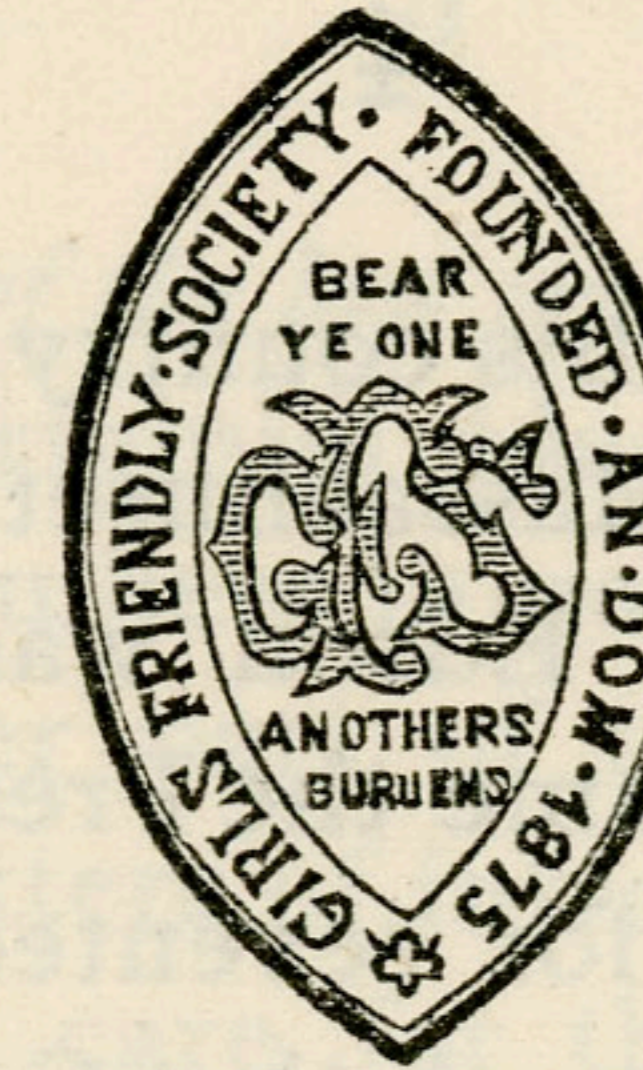
This manual is the outgrowth of frequent requests for an inexpensive leaflet explaining the Guide Book of the G. F. S. A., for the instruction of Candidates, Probationers, and Members.

The admirable English leaflet "Talks on the Guide Book," by Mrs. Sylvia M. Hill, has been circulated in the G. F. S. A. for some years, but the cost puts it beyond the reach of many who feel the need of just such guidance in training girls for Membership in our Society.

This leaflet now set forth is largely grounded on a paper entitled, "The Guide Book, Its Use and Meaning to G. F. S. Members," by the late Mrs. Arthur Wells, Diocesan Secretary of Pennsylvania, written by request for the ASSOCIATES' RECORD April, 1899), and for ultimate use as a leaflet.

E. H. B. R.

Revised October 25, 1900.



GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

ORIGIN.

We must go to England for the beginning of the G. F. S. Mrs. Townsend was the first person to whom the idea presented itself of keeping up a guiding interest in girls when they were obliged to leave their own homes and go to other places to live. This good churchwoman had been for years teaching a class of little girls, many of whom had to go away from home to make their living, either in service or in business, and it worried her very much to know how to retain their interest in her, and in the precious Bible truths she had taught them. She always wrote to them and asked them to write to her. Sometimes they did, but there were many who passed entirely out of her knowledge. Mrs. Townsend at last thought out the plan of writing to clergy and churchwomen in places to which girls were going, asking them to look after these girls in such ways as would secure their well-being and well-doing. This was the origin of the great Girls' Friendly Society.

BEGINNING OF THE G. F. S. A.

In 1875 the G. F. S. was started in London, by Mrs. M. E. Townsend, and very soon letters about girls leaving England for America began to come to clergy and churchwomen in this country, saying that girls were coming over who were Members of the G. F. S. at home, and for whom the Associates asked a welcome and protection on their arrival in this country.

From letters of this kind, and an interesting article about the G. F. S. in a London magazine, sprang the first practical

interest in the G. F. S. in this country, and the result was St. Anne's Branch, Lowell, Massachusetts, organized November, 1877, of which Miss E. M. Edson was the Branch Secretary. Miss Edson afterwards became the President of the G. F. S. A., an office which she held for seventeen years, and was then given the title of Foundress of the Girl's Friendly Society in America.

The second Branch formed was that of St. Luke's Church, Baltimore, Maryland, one year later, November 1, 1878.

Thus in two years from the organization of the G. F. S. in England, the seed had been planted in the United States of America, out of which has grown a big plant whose roots are spreading over our whole country. Ours is a work which needs to take deep hold under the soil. When it does the leaves and stems are stronger and richer, and much fuller of healthy sap. The Girl's Friendly Society in America, springs from the Girls' Friendly Society in England by the terms of the following treaty:

TREATY.

"This Society receives the Central Monogram from the Parent Society on condition of accepting the Three Central Rules, with the pledge that the name and Monogram shall be discontinued, if at any time adherence shall be withdrawn from these Rules. This Society also pledges itself to receive the G. F. S. Members from England commended to it, and to commend its Members to the G. F. S. in England."

What is a Treaty?

A Treaty is a formal agreement between two or more people, societies or nations. Every Society to which has been granted the use of the title, Girls' Friendly Society, and the Monogram, has had to sign the treaty.

What is a Monogram?

A Monogram is the private mark of an individual or society. The word Monogram means, a single design formed by two or more letters twisted together. The letters G. F. S., therefore, twisted together, form the Monogram of our Society.

What has grown out of the last sentence of the Treaty.

Commendation, the original idea in starting the G. F. S. From the beginning Members in good standing leaving home, whether to go to another part of their own land, or to other countries, were given letters of introduction to safe friends; to an Associate who would care for them, or to some clergyman who would watch over them. By this system the work has grown so that any one belonging to the G. F. S. may find through Commendation, a friendly welcome wherever the Society exists.

The work is now going on in Ireland, Scotland, India, Africa, New Zealand, Australia, and other Islands of the British Empire, in many places on the Continent of Europe where the Church of England is established, in the Providence of Canada, and the United States of America, counting its membership of women and girls as very close to 300,000 in all.

PROBATIONERS AND CANDIDATES.

Are girls received at once into Membership in the G. F. S.?

No. They must serve a certain length of time as Probationers or Candidates.

What does the word "Probationer" signify?

It signifies one who is on trial. A Probationer in the G. F. S. is a girl ten years of age or over, who earnestly desires to be a Member, and proves it by her willingness to prepare herself for membership by diligent use of whatever means are at hand for studying about the G. F. S. and its works.

Is there a fixed time for Probation?

No. The period varies in different Branches. Every Branch has its own rules about the length of Probation before admission to membership.

Who are Candidates?

Candidates are little girls between the ages of five and ten years, who wish to become Members of the G. F. S.

What is necessary before becoming a Candidate?

To have the consent of parent or guardian. The word Can-

date comes from a Latin word *Candidus*, meaning *white*. And so the Candidate's card is white, and the texts for Candidates are such as :

"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

"Blessed are the pure in heart."

"They shall walk with Me in white."

[Can anything be whiter than snow is when it first comes down, pure and soft, from the sky? How soon it gets spoiled and trodden under foot; and the snowdrops, too, that we love so well, very white and lovely they are, and how the least stain shows upon their white petals. So every sin, everything dark and bad that one is ashamed of and would like to hide, stains our souls, and we must ask God to wash away our sins, and to make us pure in heart, and keep us white now and always.—*From English Leaflet.*]

What does a Probationer of the Girls' Friendly Society receive when she is admitted to Membership?

Every one who is admitted as a Member of the Girls' Friendly Society receives a Card of Membership, together with a little book called the Member's Guide.

Why is this Card of Membership given?

As an evidence or certificate of Membership.

THE GUIDE BOOK.

What is a Guide?

A guide is some one or some thing which points out and directs the way, and helps, either in action or understanding.

What does the Guide Book show?

The Guide Book shows what it is to be a Member of the G. F. S., and points out the duties and obligations of Membership.

What do we find on the outside cover of the Guide Book?

The Objects and Central Rules. These are short and are written in few words, that they may be easily learned and remembered. But sometimes when words are learned by heart we grow so used to the sound or sight of them that they come

to have but little meaning for us. Words are only the signs of thoughts and ideas, and we must study them closely to find these thoughts and meanings.

OBJECTS.

The "Objects" tell us why the Society was established, and what is the end to be gained by its establishment.

What are the Objects?

1. To bind together in one society Churchwomen as Associates, and girls and young women as Members, for mutual help (religious and secular), for sympathy and prayer.

2. To encourage purity of life, dutifulness to parents, faithfulness to employers, and thrift.

3. To provide the privileges of the Society for its Members, wherever they may be, by giving them an introduction from one Branch to another.

What is the intention of the First Object?

The First Object is, to bind us together, Associates and Members, in one Society,—not each one for herself, but each making a *part* of the whole, and each one needing all the others to make the whole, and keep it together.

Each Member and Associate is a part of the particular Branch to which she belongs; each Branch is a part of the whole Society; and all together make up the whole great organization.

When we wish to bind things or people together, there must be something to bind them with.

What binds us all together in one Society?

This is found in our Motto,—“Bear ye one another's burdens.” This command is the cord of love which ties us all together.

Why are we formed into a Society?

The Object says, “For mutual help, sympathy, and prayer.”—That is, for bearing one another's burdens.

What does “mutual” mean?

“Mutual” means “for me and for thee”—each for the

other. The Associate helps the Members under her care, and she needs their help in return. Neither can do without the other.

What kind of help are we to give one another?

The help we are to give is to be secular as well as religious.

“Secular” means that which belongs to our lives in this world; our work—the weekday affairs of our home lives; whatever belongs to the state of life in which God has placed us.

What is “sympathy”?

“Sympathy” is feeling for and with others in everything that comes into the daily life; in the little worries and frets as well as in the great sorrows and trials.

G. F. S. PRAYER.

Of what value is Prayer, and why is the G. F. S. Prayer in the Card and in the Guide Book?

Prayer, with and for each other, is the greatest help we can give, and for this reason the G. F. S. Prayer is printed on the Cards and in the Guide Book, to be used every day by all—Associates and Members.

Repeat the G. F. S. Prayer.

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to bless us, and all who belong to the Girls' Friendly Society. May its Members be sheltered and protected evermore by Thy Fatherly love; and to its Associates vouchsafe the help and guidance of Thy Holy Spirit. Help us all to bear one another's burdens, to live not for ourselves, but for others as members of one family in Christ; wash us from our sins in His precious blood, make us holy by the indwelling of Thy Holy Spirit, and bring us all at last to the joy of Thy Heavenly Kingdom, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

What kind of prayer is this, and what does it mean to us?

It is intercessory prayer, and it means that when we use it we speak to God as our Father, and ask that His love may always shelter and protect us, and that the Holy Spirit may

dwell in us to be our help and guide and make us holy, and that our sins may be cleansed and forgiven by the precious blood of Christ our Saviour.

When we utter these words for whom do we pray?

We pray for ourselves and our own particular Branch, and for every Member and Associate who belongs to the Society all over the world, and if we do not use it, we show ourselves to be indifferent to the blessings we ask, both for ourselves and for all others.

How often should we use this Prayer?

We should pray this Prayer every day, as one of our highest privileges and most binding obligations. The prayer is not only on every Card, and in all Guide Books, it is also printed separately on slips, so that every one can have it conveniently at hand and no one need be ignorant of it.

What is the summing up of the First Object?

The summing up is contained in our motto, “Bear ye one another's burdens.”

What do the First and Second Objects show?

They show the end to be gained by adhering to the purposes and principles of the G. F. S.

What does the Second Object encourage?

Purity of life, dutifulness, faithfulness, and thrift.

What does “Purity of life” mean?

“Purity of life” means not only keeping ourselves from falling into the terrible sin by which our character for virtue would be lost, and our Membership forfeited, but more than this. It means that we should guard ourselves against everything which might lead to the least appearance of evil, such as light or impure talk, telling or listening to coarse stories or jokes, reading books with bad meanings, letting impure thoughts come into our minds; loud behavior on the streets or in public places, which might attract notice; coarse joking, playing with, or allowing any liberties from men. All this is meant by purity of life.

What will be the effect if we strive to be pure in thought, word, and deed?

If we strive earnestly to be pure in thought, word, and deed, it will be shown in our manners, dress, companions, amusements and reading. We will be modest, and quiet in behavior and appearance, never forgetting that we are each one of us "a handmaid of the Lord."

What does "dutifulness to parents" signify?

It signifies more than the simple obedience of children to parents. Those who are older, and call themselves independent, owe to their parents respect for their opinions and wishes, thoughtfulness for their comfort, and all the attention, politeness and deference which it is right for young persons to give to older ones. "Honor thy father and thy mother."

Faithfulness to employers is founded on the principle of faithfulness in general. The part is contained in the whole, and reflects the whole.

What is "Faithfulness"?

"Faithfulness" is forgetfulness of self in the performance of whatever we undertake for others, whether in the home or households of others; in factory, mill or office work; in shop, school college, or business life. Faithfulness is not only the strict fulfilment of duty with promptness, exactness, and regularity; it is more: it is the giving of our best to the duty in hand, regarding the interest of others as though they were our own. It enters into all conditions of life as an essential rule of conduct. "He that is faithful in little is faithful also in much." "Be ye faithful unto death." This is a holy faithfulness, which realizes that whatever the task, we serve a just Master who knows what we have to do, and what we need for doing it. This Master is using us, and blessing what we do. He is accepting our service according to our ability for doing it.

What does faithfulness to the G. F. S. require?

It requires a knowledge of the whole Society, in all the countries where it exists, throughout the civilized world; a knowledge of the workings of our own GIRL'S FRIENDLY

SOCIETY IN AMERICA, and of our individual relationship to it through the parish Branch and the Diocesan Organization.

How can we be faithful to the Branch?

By punctual attendance at meetings, regular payment of dues, daily use of the G. F. S. Prayer and by always sustaining every interest of the Branch.

What does faithfulness to the Girls' Friendly Society imply?

It implies our duty to show forth in our own conduct its aims, objects, and principles so conscientiously and earnestly in the home, the Branch, the parish, and in the community in which we live that by its influence upon our own deportment we may draw others to join the Society.

It implies also our duty to keep ourselves so well informed about the G. F. S. that when it is attacked we may be able to defend it intelligently. "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

What is "Thrift"?

"Thrift" is the thoughtful care of our gettings and our spendings, of our money, our health, and especially our *time*, bearing ever in mind that lost time is the one thing that cannot be regained. We are thrifty when we are careful and economical with everything belonging to us, knowing how to make the best and most of what we have, and how to use it to the greatest advantage for ourselves and for others, not spending foolishly and without thought of the future, but laying by stores of time, knowledge, and money for a "rainy day."

What are the "privileges of the Society," in the Third Object?

The meetings, where we can find profit, recreation, companionship, and the joy of doing something for others. The friendliness and watchful care of the Associates, who give their time, help and sympathy. And if we go from our homes to a strange place, the certainty of finding a friend, if not in another Branch, in some one to whom we can be commended as Members or Associates of our dear Society. So again, "Bear ye one another's burdens," is the tie that binds us, and our familiar watchword.

This last privilege is called *Commendation*, which has just been explained.

CENTRAL RULES.

What do we find on the outside of the Guide-Book?

The three Central Rules.

Read them.

I. Associates to be communicants of the Church (no such restriction being made as to Members), and the organization of the Society to follow as much as possible that of the church, being Diocesan and Parochial.

II. Associates and Members to contribute annually to the funds—the former at the rate of *not less* than six cents a month, and the latter of *not less* than three cents a month.

III. No girl who has not borne a virtuous character to be admitted as a Member; such character being lost, the Member to forfeit her card.

For what does the first Central Rule provide?

It provides *first*, that all leaders, or Associates as they are called, of the G. F. S. should be communicants of the Church. In other words it makes very plain that ours is a religious society first and foremost, and a Church Society. *Second*. Members need not be Church girls. No matter what the creed, all girls are welcome as Members. *Third*. The rule provides that the Society shall as much as possible follow the lines of the Church.

What is meant by the lines of the Church?

In the Church we have Dioceses and Parishes. A Diocese is the extent of the country over which a Bishop has power or right to exercise authority. A Parish is one section of a town or country district under the ministrations of a Rector or Parish Priest.

How does the G. F. S. follow these lines.

In providing in her Constitution that there may be a Diocesan Organization in each Diocese by written consent of the Bishop, and a Branch Organization in each Parish by written consent of the Rector.

G. F. S. Diocesan Organizations are composed of all the Branches in each particular Diocese where a Diocesan Organization exists.

For what does the Second Central Rule provide?

It provides for both Associates and Members the privilege of contributing to the funds needful to carry on the work of individual Branches and of the whole Society. The dues are so small that it is all the more necessary they should be paid promptly. To make it easy to remember to pay them a form of receipt is found in the inside of the Guide Book, by which payments are made once in three months, and receipted for by the Associate. These quarterly payments should be considered a binding obligation, except in cases of positive inability to pay. The money should be carefully laid by each month, so as to be ready for the quarterly payments, not put off from time to time. When a girl joins the G. F. S. she knows that her dues are two cents a month and that they must be paid; it is a debt of hers to the Society and one she should pay; it is her duty and an obligation she is bound to meet. We should be as careful in *small* debts as in *larger* ones, and should save each month that small sum, for if the dues are paid each month or each quarter there will be no difficulty,

INCREASE OF DUES.

These dues are now increased one cent each per month by the adoption of the following ruling of the Central Council:

“That the Central Fund shall be increased by the payment of one cent a month from every Member of the G. F. S. A., and from every Associate (Working and Honorary). Such dues to be forwarded by the Branch Secretary (with the regular annual fees) to the Diocesan Treasurer, to be by her transmitted to the General Treasurer of the Society.”

This makes Members' dues not less than three cents a month, and Associates' dues not less than six cents a month.

What is done with the dues of Members?

One cent goes to the Diocesan Fund, one cent to the Central Fund, and one cent remains in the Branch Fund. *Fund* always means the money in a treasury.

[Before leaving this subject it is needful to understand exactly the financial condition of the Society, that is, the amount of money necessary for the running expenses. To manage the necessary business requires the whole time of one person, besides the free will work of many others. The money needed to run this Society of over 20,000 women and girls is about \$2,000 a year, which includes the rent of the Central Office, the salary of the Associate in charge there, all the printing and various expenses for carrying on the work throughout the whole organization. Every girl who joins the G. F. S. knows that it costs something to belong. Her Card, Guide, and Badge are all given her. She accepts them without a thought of the cost, the time and the trouble it has been to get them; but she should know that she has had a part in paying for them—that the one cent for each month of her G. F. S. year, which goes to the Central Fund, returns *indirectly* to her in the form of work done for her by the Society. Thus she has her part and responsibility in the whole organization, and on the girl largely depends the welfare of the Society. We are no longer a *few* women and girls struggling and fighting in the battle of life against the world, the flesh and the devil, but a large *army*, scattered over our whole country.]

What does the Third Central Rule demand?

Absolute purity of life, without which it is impossible to be admitted to the G. F. S., or if lost after admission it is equally impossible to remain in the Society.

Purity is the main object of the Society, and the founders of the G. F. S. builded better than they knew when they made the membership embrace girls of every creed, for purity is as wide as God's universe, and cannot be confined to any parish, church, sect, or nation. Our thoughts and lives must be so filled with good and useful things that there will be no room for evil thoughts or deeds. Our bodies are God's gift, as well as the souls they contain.

“Know ye not that your body is the temple,” that is the shrine, the holy place, “of the Holy Ghost, which is in you”?

RULES IN GUIDE BOOK.

Next follow the rules for G. F. S. Members, which should be carefully read and studied by every Member, that they may know exactly what is required of them as Members. The first four rules have already been spoken about under the Third Central Rule, and that for the payment of dues. Careful attention to the Fifth and Seventh Rules will be of great assistance to the Associates. If Members do not notify their Associate of a change of address, or lose their Cards and Guide Books, it gives the Associate a great deal of trouble and does much harm to the Members themselves, as they might miss notices of Meetings or Services, or visits from the Associate, and much else that is pleasant to them. If a Member has not her Card and Guide Book in her possession, her Membership will almost count for nothing.

MARRIED BRANCH HELPERS.

Rule Sixth has been somewhat changed. Members who have married are now allowed to return to the Branch, if they wish to do so, upon the invitation of the Branch Secretary. A special Card and Badge is provided for them.

TRANSFER.

When Members remove from one place to another, they should be very careful to ask their Branch Secretary for a Letter of Transfer, if they wish to enter another Branch. Until they do so, they still belong to the Branch to which they were first admitted, and should pay their dues to their Associate, or the Secretary of that Branch.

SCRIPTURE RULES.

What do we find on the last page of our Guide Book?

The Scripture Rules of Life for all Christian people; and for each rule is given the text which teaches it. These rules should be read every day, and the texts looked out and learned by heart, and in our daily prayers we should ask for grace and strength to keep them and live by them. We should also carefully read and think over the short address on the first pages of the Guide Book, which sums up these rules, showing us how

we are all Members of one family, bound together by our three-fold cord of friendship, sympathy, and prayer, each dependent on the others, and all expected to set forth in our lives the principles of our Society, and its Motto, "Bear ye one another's burdens."

The Guide Book and the Card must always be together. One is of no use without the other. They are put into an envelope, that they may not be lost or torn, and should be kept in a safe place,—not hidden away, but often taken out, read and studied, that they may be always in our thoughts, and the guide of our daily lives.

CENTRAL ORGANIZATION.

Of what does the Girls' Friendly Society in America consist?

The organization of the G. F. S. A. consists

- a. A Central Council..
- b. Diocesan Councils.
- c. Branches.
- d. Associates.
- e. Members.

CENTRAL COUNCIL.

Who constitute the Central Council?

The Central Council consists of a President; four or more Vice-Presidents; a Secretary and Treasurer; all Diocesan Presidents and Secretaries, or their Deputies; one Representative from each Diocese having no Diocesan Organization; together with fifteen Elected Members.

What does the Central Council do?

It conducts the business of the whole Society. It meets annually, unless called together for a special meeting.

DIOCESAN ORGANIZATION.

Who form the Diocesan Council?

The Diocesan Council consists of a President; Vice-Presidents (if desired); a Secretary and Treasurer; and all Branch Secretaries in the Diocese; together with not more than fifteen Elected Members.

What does this Council do?

It conducts the business of the Society in the Diocese; provides for the expense of sending the Diocesan President and Secretary to the meetings of the Central Council, as well as other business laid upon it by the Central Council.

What does the Diocesan President do?

The Diocesan President looks after the formation of new Branches in her Diocese, visits and encourages Branches already formed, admits Diocesan Associates, presides at meetings of the Diocesan Council; is a member, by virtue of her office of President, of the Central Council, and attends its meetings.

What does the Diocesan Secretary and Treasurer do?

She gives notices of Diocesan Meetings, receives subscriptions and payments due to Diocesan Funds from each Branch, distributes the supplies, such as Members' Cards and Guide Books, Associates' Cards, Badges, Associates' Lists, etc., as provided by the Central Council, and also is a Member of Central Council.

Where are the supplies bought?

At the Central Office, in the Church Missions House, 281 Fourth avenue, New York.

BRANCH ORGANIZATION.

What constitutes a Parish Branch?

A Branch Secretary who is at the head, Associates and Members, banded together by the written consent of the Rector of the Parish in which the Branch exists, to advance the principles of the Girls' Friendly Society, as set forth in the Objects and Central Rules.

What is the relation of the Branch to the Parish?

It is one of the parochial societies working under the approval of the Rector, and pledged therefore to advance the well being of the parish wherever possible. The First Central Rule as well as the First Object both make this plain.

Who are Associates?

They are workers with, and especial friends of the girls.

They must be Communicants of the Church before they can be admitted as Associates of the G. F. S.

How many kinds of Associates are there in the G. F. S.?

Three, viz.: Unattached Associates—working where there is no Diocesan Organization, G. F. S. A. Diocesan Associates (Working or Honorary), entered as belonging to a specified Diocese but not to any Branch. Branch Associates (Working or Honorary), entered as belonging to a specified Branch.

The admission of all Associates is governed by the conditions laid down for Membership in Central Rule III.

What is the difference between the Working and Honorary Associate?

The Working Associate works actively in the Branch and forms a friendly tie or bond with each girl under her care.

The Honorary Associate does not promise to do active work, but is expected to be interested in the G. F. S., to subscribe to the publications of the Society, and generally to know enough about the meaning and power of the G. F. S. to stand up for it whenever it is necessary. To join in the entertainments of the Branch, and to be ready not only to pay her dues promptly, but also to give help at other times. Working and Honorary Associates, Members, Probationers, and Candidates are alike expected to be diligent in the use of the G. F. S. Prayer, especially the petition, "Help us to live not for ourselves but for others, as Members of one family in Christ."

We have now reviewed the whole G. F. S. A. plant. Its root is the parent Society in England, its trunk is the Central Council, its stems are the Diocesan Organizations, its branches are the Parish Branches; its leaves, the Associates and Members. The sap to keep alive and enrich this great plant is only to be gotten by diligence in Prayer. "In season and out of season," let us beseech Almighty God to prosper our Society everywhere, and bless it to His own use in extending the work of His Kingdom.

ELIZABETH H. B. ROBERTS,

Riverton, N. J., October, 1899.

President G. F. S. A.

Revised October, 1900.

