

The Bee's Home Magazine Page

Courtesy

A Virtue All Should Cultivate

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

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A young man employed in one of the many places which contribute to the well-being of the public, in the great new railroad station at Forty-second and Park avenue, New York, was asked by a patron of his department whether the trains to New Haven went from the upper or lower level.



He answered brusquely that he did not know; that she could find out by going to the inquiry bureau on the floor above. His department was separate from that, he said.

The patron turned and found an official within a few feet of the young man who indicated the way.

"If I answered all the questions asked me in a day," the young man said, "I would have no time to attend to my own business."

But the man had taken more time and breath and energy in being disagreeable than he would have required in obtaining information about all the trains in the Grand Central station.

There are two levels in that station, the upper and the lower.

The New Haven & Hartford trains and those passing on to Boston are an important line, and almost any youth of ordinary intellect, or less than ordinary, would naturally learn in a few days' time from which level they started, especially if his business was in sight of these trains.

Not to possess such information in his position betokened a lack of observation and interest in occurrences continually taking place about him that bespeaks failure for the young man in anything he undertakes; and if he knew and refused the information because he did not like to be questioned on subjects not pertaining to his business, then his disposition is one to attract failure, not success.

It took many words for him to tell the lady that he did not know and that it was not his business to know what she wished to know. It would have required just two words to answer her question, had he known, "upper level" or "lower level," and, with a smile added, the lady would have gone her way, thinking what a pleasant youth he was, instead of thinking what she did think about him.

In ten years' time this youth will be a man in his full prime—somewhere in his thirties—and he will be wondering why he has not got on in the world; and he will say he has had no "influence," no "pull," and that others have been advanced over him through "favoritism," and he will make a hundred excuses for his failure to arrive, when the real fault will lie entirely with himself.

The work this youth was doing required no great concentration. He was not absorbed in some difficult mathematical problem, and he had many moments when he was doing nothing at all save waiting for people to not using his eyes and ears to learn a small yet important fact about the big station; and he had no excuse for not imparting the information asked save a lack of development of kindness and courtesy.

No matter what may be one's position in life, from the most menial to the most lofty place, kindness and courtesy are most valuable assets for human beings to possess. They are great factors in success.

Observation is another factor; and the habit of using odd, unoccupied moments in learning something that will be of value to one's self or others later—that, too, is a habit which leads to the road of success.

It is a better habit than that of watching the clock for fear of working five minutes overtime.

And still another habit is of vast value on that road—the habit of smiling and speaking in an agreeable tone of voice in the small daily occurrences of life.

Each one of us is subject to annoyance by having people ask questions which it is not our province to answer; but when we fail to give the information desired we can give something better—often by the bestowal of a pleasant look and manner.



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The Base Ball Fan-nie

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By Nell Brinkley



This is me and I'm with Tad—and didn't he have to answer a lot of foolish questions, oh! But he never peeped once.

What strikes you most about her is that she makes herself so "at home." Hat off—so the air can keep the top of her pretty head cool; her parasol leaned against the railing; her own slouched down in the middle of her back, which health-preachers say is bad for us, but which is

Here is a fat, pretty woman I saw at the game. Her haughty hat looked like a postage stamp.

These two were at the game, too, but why I don't know—they hardly ever noticed it.

mighty comfortable; in one hand a fan fluttering hard like a butterfly—the only thing about her that works; in the other hand a tall, frosty glass, or a tall, cool bottle—the prickly liquid inside it going via a double straw to her lips that only stop drinking long enough to gurgle, "Good boy, Matty!"

Mental Virtue

By DR. C. H. PARKHURST

Next to knowing how to behave, the best thing a schoolboy can learn is how to think straight. The mind is a machine and of no value to a person unless he knows how to work it.

If three men fire at a mark and only one hits it it shows that two of them do not know how to shoot. The fault is probably not with their rifles, but with their not knowing how to handle them.

In the same way the fault is not with our minds, but with not having learned to use them. The mind, every man's mind, is the very finest sort of a machine; it is as delicate a piece of apparatus as God ever made. It is the apparatus by which we are able to know things.

If we work it right, we shall know things as they are. If we work it wrong, we shall know things as they are not, that is, we shall not know them at all, only think that we know them. Knowing what is not so makes out the larger part of some people's knowledge.

We get our minds out of order by trying to make them think in a way that is not natural to them, exactly as any machine of wood or iron can be damaged if put to a speed other than that at which it was constructed to run.

We do this when, instead of letting our thinking take its easy and natural course, we frame our convictions out of our preferences and prejudices and then force our thinking into a track that will lead up to those convictions.

We in this way wreck the honest disposition of our intellect by whipping it

into a lie, and when we have once made it a liar there is no relying upon what it will tell us afterward.

A very considerable part of what we call our opinions is nothing more than our desires put in the form of dogmatic propositions. That is to say that we believe principally what we want to believe and then amuse ourselves and dignify our desires by labeling them our intelligent convictions.

And it is because people have different kinds of desires and not because they have imperfect minds or different kinds of minds that there exists in the world such a wide diversity of opinions. If the matters in regard to which we have convictions were of no personal concern to ourselves, and if it made no difference to us personally whether a certain thing is true or the opposite of it is true, and our minds therefore left to work in their own natural way, and no constraint of wish or preference put upon them, then the conviction which we should arrive at would be a soundly intelligent one, and we should all of us reach the same conviction.

Four times six are twenty-four. It makes no difference to anybody whether it is twenty-five or twenty-four. In this case, then, the intellect, being left free to run its own course, undisturbed by preference, moves straight to the truth; and there is no man, east or west, north or south, that does not come to the same result, provided only his mind has come to itself sufficiently to get into working order.

All of this was expressed in a single paragraph by our Lord when He said: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." A man who has not himself sufficiently under control to be able to think without having his thoughts shaped or colored by his personal preferences might as well not work his mind or have any mind work to work with, so far as the value of his opinion is concerned, whether in matters of science, politics or religion.

The Practice of Self-Control

By MRS. FRANK LEARNED.

Author of "The Etiquette of New York Today."

In any sphere of life self-control is an important element toward success and happiness. Control of mind is a factor toward overcoming the tendency to be over-sensitive, suspicious or tormented by imaginary slights. Moping and brooding over fancied grievances will never achieve peace. Sensitive people who take offense easily, are very difficult to get on with. We are never sure "where to find them," as the saying is. "They are constantly making exactions of their friends, calling them to account for certain delinquencies."

Social life often requires the making of concessions, the common sense not to construe the thoughtlessness of a friend into an intentional slight, or absent-mindedness into indifference. Naturally, we feel that something is due between intimate friends, but even in the case of intimates a margin of kindly concession must be made. The fear that one is not receiving sufficient attention from others is an unpleasant form of egotism.

The many demands of social life oblige people not to hold one another too seriously to account for delay in calling, for instance. Among acquaintances delay in calling, or returning calls, need not be taken as an indication of a wish to be exclusive or an intention to be neglectful. Allowances have to be made for the failings of others on this score. When an acquaintance calls after a lengthy delay it is an important courtesy to welcome her cordially, not to slide to any misunderstanding, to hasten to accept, in the kindest spirit, any explanation which may be offered, not to dwell on the subject but pass on to other matters and to do this without permitting the shadow of a suggestion that she has been dilatory. It is wise for the person making a delayed call not to be too profuse in excuses.

Many reasons for delayed calls may be considered by the sensible person who is

willing to make concessions toward friends. Absence from home, illness, engagements, various home duties, interests in charitable or other work, very absorbing to one's time may be among the causes for delay. The wish to have some leisure to pursue personal tastes may be another reason.

While the casting out of fretful grievances is of importance in daily life, control of temper is a rule of life to be practiced by every well bred person. It is well not to get too excited and to remember to close a door gently. "I never knew any one who went about banging doors and playing whirwind to possess any influence whatever," said a wise woman.

The practice of self control and composure will have an immense effect on one's own manners and will be sure to make a pleasing impression everywhere. To sit quietly, to keep the hands still, to walk calmly, these little things lead a charm to the person who has acquired them.

It is salutary to take stock of ourselves and recognize our own shortcomings and try to remedy them. It is good to get out of ourselves, to stop being self centered, to give up talking of ourselves and our grievances and to live in the sunshine of cheerfulness and the breeze of larger interests.

Advice to the Lovelorn

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX

Let the Matter End. Dear Miss Fairfax: I had the pleasure of meeting a young man at a public dance. He asked to see me home and I consented. He made an appointment with me that we both kept. When he left me he failed to set a definite time for a next meeting, saying he would try to visit a place where I frequented. Now, do you think that I should have anything to do with him in the form of writing, etc. or drop him, as I am positive that he never will visit this place? ANXIOUS. You are very sure he will not keep any appointments he makes, so why concern yourself about him? Let the acquaintance drop before it is more serious.

Ten Commandments of the Summer Visitor

By DOROTHY DIX.

Invite not thyself to the house of another, oh, my daughter, for if so be thy friend hungereth and thirsteth for thy society she will arise and send to thee a writing bidding thee to come straightway to her abode. Yea, she will send for thee swiftly by means of the telegraph and the night letter, and if so be she holdeth her hand, take that for a sign which never falleth that she wanteth thee not.

Accept not an invitation from a man to tarry and stay at his house until it hath been O. K.'d by his wife, for verily I say unto thee that no man hath authority within his own home, no, not so much as to give a home to a stray dog, it is the wife and the wife's people, and the wife's friends who have dominion over the spare bed room.

When thou visitest cast not the roo-goo eyes at thy hostess' son, nor upon her male relatives, nor upon her husband, for it is written that she that snarlet the fancy of the men of the household shall be invited there no more.

Forget not to take in thy trunk thy curling iron, and thy sewing tools, and thy postage stamps, and thy script for letters, and all the things of which thou hast daily need, for a borrower is an abomination and worse than the pestilence that destroyeth by night.

Incline thy heart unto the amusements that hath been prepared for thee, and make thy countenance mirthful, though thy soul fainteth within thee when thy hostess saith, "Rejoice and be glad, for today we go forth to picnic in the woods, and to partake of squashed lemon pie flavored with ants." Likewise dissemble thy sorrow when she trotheth thee to the church social, or nallett

Conform thy ways to the ways of the house that thou visitest. Arise while it is yet night, if it be the custom of thy hosts, so that thou shalt breakfast with them, and give no trouble to the servants, for, behold, a hand-maiden in the suburbs is as precious as gold, yea, as fine gold, and as difficult to keep.

If thou followest a diet and esteth of strange food prepared after an ungodly manner, visit not at all, but his thee to an inn where thou canst pay for the trouble thou givest. Thus shalt thou save thyself from being hated by thy friends.

Forget not to tip the hand-maiden who waiteth upon thee, for the button-up-in-the-back is worthy of her hire.

And if thou forgettest all of the other commandments of the summer visitor, remember this, oh, my daughter: Make thy visit short. Tarry not long in thy friend's house lest she be weary of thee. Go while yet she entreteeth thee to stay with her, for it is better that thy hostess should weep because thou goest than to shed tears because thou stayest. Selah!



DON'T STAY TOO LONG.

thee to the card table until thy stomach turneth in despair and thy gorge riseth in rebellion.

When thou visitest cast veracity to the winds, for verily truth hath no place in a popular house.

guest. Say of thy hostess' house, "Truly, this is a palace, fit for a king. Tell me, I pray thee, what marvelous architect planned it?" Best upon thy breast and call heaven to witness that there was never such a view, though it be but as the view of a fly that is caught under a teacup.

Praise the beauty and the wit and the way the offspring of thy hostess recteth, and when thou departest thy hostess shall say of thee, "Surely, here is a woman of discernment, and will bid thee return again."

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INVITE NOT THYSELF.

A Pledge of Spinsterhood

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX

"I am a young man of 19," writes X. Y. Z. "and in love with a girl of 17 who has signed an old-maid pledge, about which she seems to be serious. I have been paying her attention for the last six months, and would like to know whether to continue."

Following is the pledge of spinsterhood which this wise old dame of it has signed: "We, the undersigned, vow in all good faith that we shall, for the convenience of ourselves and the good of the world, live as old maids."

"We, the said undersigned, do agree that we will work honestly and faithfully until, if our lives are spared, we have accumulated a sum requisite for purchasing and maintaining a small house in the suburbs, where the said undersigned shall reside.

"We shall have freedom to visit, entertain, etc., such of our friends as we desire. There is to be no restriction, except that we shall deport ourselves in all manners, and under all circumstances, as ladies.

"It is also agreed by the undersigned that when we reach the age of 40, with consent of the majority, we shall each adopt a child from the asylum.

"If any of this charmed and secret circle should commit the grievous error of marrying, the penalty will be expulsion from the aforesaid circle, and she must hand her fiancée this pledge before the committee to be torn up by the said fiancée."

"The young have no sense of humor. It requires adversity, humiliation, disappointment and grief to make one philosophic, and philosophy is the parent of wit. If the young had a sense of humor, X. Y. Z. would carry this pledge about with him that he may have something to smile about when things go wrong, and the girl who has signed it would laugh herself to death.

What does it amount to? Less than the paper it is written on? Imagine, if you can, a lot of kittens agreeing what they will do and be when they are old tabby cats! Conceive, if you can, of the kind of a girl who will deny herself the frivolities of youth, the pretty ribbons and feathers and clothes, the theater, the dance, the love that is looking her way, that she may some day have a home in which she will enjoy the glorious privilege of shriveling up as an old maid! No girl makes that pledge for herself, my dear young man. She looks at the other girls, and sees that they are plain, and not so attractive as herself. "They know they will be old maids," every girl says, "and are making their plans so that it will look as if they wanted to be. Of course, I'll sign the pledge. It may please them and it won't hurt me!" And every girl signs, each with the secret assurance that she will not be an old maid.

They agree to deny themselves that they may purchase a home. This is the story of every good woman's life. A self-denial in the hope that some day she may own a home, but it is a self-denial that is a joy because it has its origin in love. A woman loves a man and sentences herself to a lifetime of self-denial when she marries. She loves her children, and thereafter knows not what the word "self" means.

She pinches and skimps and scrapes and makes over with "love's old sweet song" ringing in her ears, and knows neither discouragement nor regret. But can any one imagine that the same noble effort and sacrifice are possible when the goal is a home where a lot of spinsters may abide in such peace as so many tabby cats?

Believe me, my dear young man, your sweetheart would place this to enter it. Let me assure you that she would know neither peace of mind nor rest if she thought for a moment that a home with no one in it but women was to be her refuge.

If she thinks so now, it is because she is 17. When she is 27 she will be in a panic because her steps seem to be turning that way.

Encourage your sweetheart. Let her know that when she is safely within the walls of the retreat, you will drive by with your wife some day, and perhaps name one of your babies for her. It will prove a sure cure.

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