

**MISTAKES.**

To err is human; to point out another's mistakes is inhuman. This is a rather garbled recast of a popular saying, and it is only true in part. And with this part we propose to deal. It is not by any means an imposition upon a person to have some discrepancy in his general behavior pointed out, especially when such action springs from religious or disinterested motives. Otherwise gratuitous interference in another's affairs is nonsensical and even a nuisance.

To err is human—quite human. In general conversation while remarks are ricocheting back and forth with careless abandon, one is apt to take leave of his senses just long enough to leave an impression of such an unsanitary character, that as soon as he realizes it, he is smitten in the abdominal cavity with a holly feeling, making him feel like a man caught cutting monkey-shines before a looking-glass. Such breaks are bound to occur, especially when a person is punishing his faculties in an effort to say something cute. No amount of explanation, no cleverly wrought out system of qualifying, can repair the break, when once it is made. The best thing to do is to keep quiet, or else the matter will be made all the worse.

A story is told of a young clerk from the city who had sallied forth to the woods to put in a few days in the slaughter of the wild creatures inhabiting them. Coming to a clearing, he found a small house situated in the midst of a grassy spot. A little girl was playing on the door-step, and seating himself on an oddly-shaped box nearby, he watched her at her play. As he sat thus absorbed, he thought he heard a low, indistinct humming sound within the box beneath him. The sound became louder and finally his curiosity was aroused to such an extent that he called to the little girl: "What's in this box?" he asked.

The little girl looked up startled, but recovering herself, replied: "Why, that's a bee-hive." "A bee-hive," mused the clerk, "and where is the entrance?" "Your sitting on it," replied the girl, and it is quite natural to suppose that the clerk got up.

It was well for this clerk that someone was kind enough to point out his mistake. Otherwise he might have been caused much bodily suffering. If he had stayed he probably would have been inspired to rise in full dignity as an American citizen to resist the onslaught of his foes. But assuming that he didn't stay, it is hoped that he got safely out of range, before the honey bees got active.

Even so, in our own experiences, we find ourselves seated on a bee-hive, unmindful of the deadly peril lurking within. While reposing in seeming security, feeling confident in our own powers to beat off the effects of some habit, while at the same time we are actually courting disaster, then, indeed, it is a serviceable thing for some friend to point out our proximity to danger and to urge us to a safer place. If we persist, we must reap the full

benefit of our perversity and suffer the stings of a remorseful conscience, and find whatever relief we can. This is a sermon; this is philosophy; this is moralizing or demoralizing—I don't know which. Anyhow, beware of the bee-hive, whether figurative or material.

To point out another's mistakes for the purpose of finding fault is inhuman. What is the use of telling the devotee to the bottle of materia medica, that he is a miserable wreck, a shame to society, an also ran, if you can't encourage him to give up his vice and get converted? You make him feel blue, he'll drink himself to death trying to recover his spirits. Tell him rather that he isn't out of the running, that he can hope for salvation and that he can win out in the race despite his handicap. Do this and you will make no mistake. It may be the saving of him, anyhow it will do him good.

But above all things, never attempt to show any literary prodigy wherein he or she errs, or you will stir up a hornets' nest of tempestuous violence. They all have a deep-seated conviction that they are infallible and cannot do wrong. Therefore let them rest in their own wise conceit. To them red ink on their papers is worse than the tooth-ache. If you attempt to advise them, they will pay as little heed to you as does a bird in the tree-top to the withered remains of a dead relative on the summit of a fashionable hat. They will have as little regard for your advice as has any university professor for studies outside of his own department.

Be right yourself and let others have no cause for concern on account of your conduct.

**The Younger Generation.**

I.  
The children were going on a visit and for a week their mother had been cautioning them about their behavior. This grew somewhat irksome to the 5-year-old boy, and he some times rebelled. One day his mother did some small service for him, adding, "Now what do you say for that?" "Dunno," he replied, starting for the door.

"Well," remarked his mother, quietly, "I shan't let you go away from home until you know when to say 'Please' and 'Thank you.'"

"Thank you," the child muttered reluctantly. Then, thrusting his hands into diminutive trouser pockets he stalked out onto the porch, and sat down on the step.

"I declare," he remarked disgustedly, to the cat. "It's gitting so a fellow can't get anything in this house without saying something for it."

II.  
The little girl came running into the house, righteous disapproval written plainly upon her countenance.

"Mamma, you ought to see Arthur! He's just a side of a hole."

The mother looked puzzled. "What's that, dear? I don't understand. What's the matter with Arthur?"

"He's the side of a hole. He's just awful."

The door opened to admit a boy of seven, whose face and garments showed traces of close contact with Mother Earth. His mother glanced at him in laughing dismay.

"Gracious, Arthur!" she exclaimed. "You're a sight to behold."

His sister smiled the smile of vindicated judgment.

"That's what I said, mamma. Side of a hole. See?"

III.  
There was a sudden cry, and the mother, hurrying into the bedroom, found the covers and ten-year-old Jim sitting on the edge of the bed, looking defiant.

"What's the matter?" asked the fond parent, anxiously. "Jimmy, what have you been doing to her?"

"Well, you can take her out of here. She crawls in all cold and wakes me up, and I won't have it."

"But, Jimmy, she's so little. Besides, she's a girl and you're a man, and you ought to be good to her and let her do things."

He turned on her with all the outraged indignation of the sterner sex. "Huh!" he shouted. "If you had your way about it, you'd have man just ground to powder and woman scuffling around in the dust."

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