

A True Gentlewoman.

'Caleb Bateson is a very ignorant man: he says Penny-lope.'

'Says what, Elisabeth?'

'Penny-lope I was showing him a book the other day about Penelope—the woman with the web, you know—and he called her Penny-lope. I didn't like to correct him, but I said Penel-o-pe afterwards as often and as loud as I could.'

'That was very ill-bred of you. Come here, Elisabeth.'

The child came and stood by the old lady's chair, and began playing with a bunch of seals that were suspended by a gold chain from Miss Farrington's waist. It was one of Elizabeth's little tricks that her fingers were never idle when she was talking.

'What have I taught you are the two chief ends to which every woman should aim, my child?'

'To be first a Christian, and then a gentlewoman,' quoted Elisabeth, glibly.

'And how does a true gentlewoman show her good breeding?'

'By never doing or saying anything that could make any one else feel uncomfortable,' Elisabeth quoted again.

'Then do you think that to display your own knowledge by showing up another person's ignorance would make that person feel comfortable, Elisabeth?'

'No, Cousin Maria.'

'Knowledge is not good breeding, remember; it is a far less important matter. A true gentlewoman may be ignorant; but a true gentlewoman will never be inconsiderate.'

Elisabeth hung her head. 'I see.'

'If you keep your thoughts fixed upon the people to whom you are talking, and never upon yourself you will always have good manners, my child. Endeavor to interest and not to impress them.'

'You mean that I must talk about their things and not about mine?'

'More than that. Make the most of any common ground between yourself and them; make the least of any difference between yourself and them; and, above all, keep strenuously out of sight any real or fancied superiority you may possess over them. I always think that Saint Paul's saying, 'To the weak became I as weak,' was the perfection of good manners.'

'I don't think I quite understand.'

Miss Farrington spoke in parables.

'Then listen to this story. There was once a common soldier who raised himself from the ranks and earned a commission. He was naturally very nervous the first night he dined at the officers' mess, as he had never dined with gentlemen before, and he was afraid of making some mistake. It happened that the wine was served while the soup was yet on the table, and with the wine the ice. The poor man did not know what the ice was for, so took a lump and put it in his soup.'

Elisabeth laughed.

'The younger officers began to giggle, as you are doing,' Miss Farrington continued; 'but the Colonel, to whom the ice was handed next, took a lump and put it in his soup also; and then the young officers did not want to laugh anymore. The Colonel was a perfect gentleman.'

'It seems to me,' said Elisabeth thoughtfully, 'that you've got to be good before you can be polite.'

'Politeness appears to be what goodness really is,' replied Miss Farrington, 'and is an attitude rather than an action. Fine breeding is not the mere learning of any code of manners, any more than gracefulness

is the mere learning of any kind of physical exercise. The gentleman apparently as the Christian really, looks not on his own things, but on the things of others; and the selfish person is always both unchristian and ill-bred.'

Elisabeth gazed wistfully up in Miss Farrington's face. 'I should like to be a real gentlewoman, Cousin Maria; do you think I ever shall be?'

When my Mother Tucked me In.

BY BETTY GARLAND.

Ah, the quaint and curious carving
On the posts of that old bed!
There were long-beaked, queer old griffins
Wearing crowns upon their head:
And they fiercely looked down on me
With a hard, sardonic grin;
I was not afraid of griffins
When my mother tucked me in.

What care I for dismal shadows
Shifting up and down the floor,
Or the bleak and gruesome wind gusts
Beating 'gainst the close-shut door,
Or the rattling of the windows,
All the outside noise and din?
I was safe and warm and happy
When my mother tucked me in.

Sweet and soft her gentle fingers,
As they touched my sunburnt face;
Sweet to me the wafted odour
That enwrapped her dainty lace:
Then a pat or two on my cheek,
And a good-night kiss between,
All my troubles were forgotten
When my mother tucked me in.

Now the stricken years have borne me
Far away from love and home;
Ah! no mother leans above me
In the nights that go and come,
But it gives me peace and comfort,
When my heart is sore within,
Just to lie right still, and dreaming,
Think my mother tucked me in.

Oh, the gentle, gentle breathing
To her dear heart's softer beat,
And the quiet, quiet moving
Of her soft-shod willing feet!
And, Time, one boon I ask thee,
Whatsoever may be my sin,
When I'm dying let me see her
As she used to tuck me in.

A wonderful thing is seed—
The one thing deathless ever!
The one thing changeless, utterly true—
Forever old, forever new,
And fickle and faithless never.
Plant love, and love will bloom;
Plant hate, and hate will grow;
You can sow to-day—to-morrow shall bring
The blossom that proves what sort of a seed
Is the seed, the seed that you sow.

The Cork-tree.

Some children fancy that corks grow out of bottles, instead of being made of the bark of a tree which grows in Italy, Spain, and other southern countries.

The cork-tree is an evergreen about the size of our apple-tree. The bark is stripped in order to obtain the cork, which is soaked and then dried. The moment the bark is peeled off, the tree begins to grow another cork skin, and each new one is better than the last, so the older the better the cork.

The trees are stripped about every eight years, and so strong does it make them, that they often live to the age of two hundred years. Besides its chief use as stoppers for bottles, cork is made into buoys, in making life-preservers to save people from drowning, soles of boots and slippers, fancy rock work, largely for life-boats, and sometimes for artificial limbs. After the bark is stripped off, it is trimmed and dried, and flattened out. Then it is packed, and shipped to all parts of the world.

Victoria and the Sabbath.

Queen Victoria began her illustrious reign with a strict observance of the Sabbath, and has never failed to insist upon the nation has been marked. On one occasion one of her ministers of State arrived at Windsor Castle late on Saturday night.

'I have brought for your Majesty's inspection,' he said, 'some documents of great importance; but I shall be obliged to trouble you to examine them in detail. I will not encroach upon the time of your Majesty to-night, but will request your attendance to-morrow morning.'

'To-morrow is Sunday, my lord.'

'True, your Majesty, but the business of the State will not admit of delay.'

The next morning the Queen and the court went to church and listened to a sermon on 'The Christian Sabbath—Its Duties and Obligation,' the Queen having sent the clergyman the text from which he preached. Not a word was said about the State papers during the day, but in the evening Victoria said: 'To-morrow, my lord, at the hour you please—as early as seven, if you like—we will look into those papers.'

'I could not think of intruding upon your Majesty at so early an hour,' replied the minister; 'nine o'clock will be quite soon enough.'

Tired Birds.

Many of our birds fly several thousand miles every autumn, passing not only over Florida, where they might find perpetual summer, but over the Gulf and far beyond into the great summer land of the Amazon; after a short stay, returning again to the North, some penetrating to the extreme shores of the Arctic seas.

How the small birds fly so great distances is almost incomprehensible, but I have seen many of our small feathered friends on the little Key of Tortugas, two hundred miles or more from Cape Florida, the jumping off place of the United States. Great flocks of them would alight upon the walls of the fort, especially during storms, evidently thoroughly tired; but the next day they were up and away off over the great stretch of the Gulf and the Caribbean Sea.

Numbers of the English birds and many from Northern Europe make yearly voyages down into the African continent, and careful observers state that they have seen the great storks, so common in Germany, moving along high in the air, bearing on their broad backs numbers of small birds that had taken free passage, or were, perhaps, stealing a ride.

In these wonderful migrations many birds are blown out to sea and lost, while others become so fatigued and worn out that they will alight upon boats. A New England fisherman, who in the autumn follows his calling fourteen or fifteen miles out from shore, informed me that nearly every day he had four or five birds as companions. They had wandered off from shore, or were flying across the great bay on the lower coast of Maine, and had dropped down to rest. One day the same fisherman fell asleep while holding his line, and upon suddenly opening his eyes, there sat a little bird on his hand, demurely cocking its head this way and that, as if wondering whether he was an old wreck or piece of drift-wood.

'Ever since Jonah found a ship going to Tarshish, and paid the fare thereof, men have been turning aside from the work that God called them to do.'

Every duty we omit obscures some truth we should have known.—Ruskin.