

of character in the individual citizens of the community.

As a good citizen I should always be in my place. When need, or an emergency confronts the country, I should be where I can serve my country best. I should use my influence to defend every political issue that is righteous, and denounce every political issue that is unrighteous. If a great moral issue is under discussion, I should use my influence in battling with the reformers and the best citizens for honor and truth, and for the nation's highest character. As a Christian citizen I should neither use my influence nor be identified with any movement, political or otherwise, that will result in the exaltation of any man or of any cause that will interfere with the higher development of the national life. I should encourage Christian men and women to organize

themselves into a league offensive and defensive against every form of evil that invades the home and the community, and diminishes the vitality of the national life.

As an Epworth Leaguer I should remember that my power for good is always proportioned to the culture, the volume and the purity of my own character and life. The secret of power is not so much in the intellect, as in a will steadily, fixedly, steadfastly held to and pursuing the good.

Then as young people we ought to dwell upon the thought, that we to-day are nation-builders; that we are laying the foundation of an empire. What shall its character be? For answer let us hold high the colors on the Maltese Cross, bearing the motto "Look up and Life up" for Christ the Church and Canada.

Be Polite

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THE place to begin practising this lesson is at home. It is said that there is a certain bird which has two voices. When it is out among other birds its voice is sweet. It sings only cheerful songs without even a harsh note. But when the sun is high and it goes on its own nest, its voice immediately loses its sweetness and becomes rasping and croaking.

Are there not some people who are like this strange bird? They have two voices. When they are out visiting they are angels of amiability. They are so polite, so gentle, so kind. They are always doing favors, always saying appreciative things. But when they get home this sweet, gracious voice at once changes and becomes dull, harsh, impatient, and even angry.

Now why do they do this? Is it because they love their home more than the dear ones in the home? Not at all. They just feel they cannot stand the strain of being polite any longer than is necessary, and are glad enough to enter their own abode, where they may throw off all restraint and enjoy what they call the comforts of home.

Take for example a family living far away from us. Their manners, like their hats, are put on and off at the front door. No smiling "good-morning" greets the members of this family before breakfast. They do not sit down to the table in an orderly manner, but each one comes when he or she gets ready. Then the fun begins: "I say, Jack, pass the bread, can't you?" "You could reach it yourself if you'd try," snaps Jack, without making the least move to oblige his brother. Then a shriek rings through the room. Jack's arm and a pin have come in contact—and Jack moves. So does Will, and so does the father. They move in the direction of the woodshed, where, judging from the music, they enjoy more of the "comforts of home."

How much some people excuse in friends that they fail to excuse in their loved ones. If big brother spins a drop of tea on a very ordinary, every-day table-cloth, he is the clumsiest "clump" that ever lived, but let a visitor upset the teapot and fairly deluge the best company table-cloth and they say, "Well, wasn't it careless of me not to leave that teapot so near the edge of the table. Now teapot do not worry one bit. The stain will come out; accidents will happen, you know." Then little brother looks at little sister and whispers, "My, isn't it dandy to be a visitor; glad I didn't knock the old teapot over. Wouldn't I have got it? It's the very best seat in the house."

A young man carelessly stepped on his wife's dress as she was going down stairs.

"Grace," he said, impatiently, "I wish you would either hold your dress up or have it made shorter." The wife said nothing for a moment, then she looked up into her husband's face and said, "Meiville, if it had been some other dress and those dressy people had stopped what would you have said?" The young man was honest and he replied, "I should have apologized for my awkwardness, Grace, and I do now to you. I am truly ashamed of myself. Please forgive me."

The truest politeness comes of sincerity. It is not the kind that is observed in fashionable life—the kind that makes a woman say to a caller, "It seems an age since you were here. I cannot tell you how very pleased I am to see you. Now do stay, I should be so glad to have you." It is the kind that the door closes she exclaims petulantly, "My, I do detest that woman. She just grates on me. I hope she will never come here again."

That kind of politeness may be donned and doffed at pleasure as occasion requires, while genuine politeness is a part of the person. It is the manifestation of soft and enduring qualities within. Chesterfield manners pertain to the outside and do not go skin-deep. He allowed hypocrisy, when it was necessary, to gain the applause of mankind and the chief motive he presented for "elegant manners" was to attract attention. He advocated the "whited sepulchre," no matter what uncleanness was found within. His politeness was a sham. But genuine politeness proceeds from real character. It must be the outcome of the heart or it will make no lasting impression.

Two young men were standing in the post office when a young lady came in and greeted them pleasantly. They raised their hats and politely wished her "Good evening," but as soon as the door closed they began to make sneering remarks about her dress. Now, why did they act so politely when the lady was there and so boorish when she had gone? Simply because they wished to be considered polished. Had they had no doubt—a great deal of it—but it was all on their boots. Would it not have been better for them had they kept their three dollar hats on their empty pates and stood as stiff as if their backbones were all in a piece? Far better be boors than hypocrites.

True politeness is kind. It exhibits itself in the disposition to contribute to the happiness of others and to refrain from all that may annoy them. We have no more right to say an unkind thing than we have to act one.

A member of the House of Commons twitted an English statesman about his

humble origin. "I remember when you used to black my father's boots," he sneeringly exclaimed. The audience sat spell-bound, wondering how the statesman would take such a cut. With a clear, ringing voice that lit the room, he said, "Yes, sir, I did, and didn't I do it well."

Robert Burns, the great Scotch poet, was once taken to task by a little English snob for recognizing a poorly-dressed farmer in the open street. "Why, my dear John," said the snob, "it wasn't his coat, nor his hat, nor his top-boots I spoke to; it was the man inside of them, and for true worth he would weigh down a dozen like you and me." Some of the plainest garments still cover the most beautiful souls, and yet there are people who pay more attention to the wrapping-paper than they do to the jewel within. Really polite souls do not make any difference between well and poorly-dressed people when it comes to manners. They treat all with courtesy.

True politeness is grateful and readily acknowledges kind actions. In darkest Africa this quality is recognized and ingratitude or neglect to thank a person for a benefit conferred is punishable. Can we not learn a lesson from these Africans? Some of us have received a favor from a friend. Have we expressed our gratitude? Some of us have received an encouraging word from a neighbor. Did we ever thank her? Every day we receive blessings from God. Are our hearts overflowing with love and gratitude? Every day we sit down to well-spread tables and am I not right in saying that in some homes the first words are, "Pass the bread, please." How many of us bow our heads reverently and thank the Giver for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us? How many of us thank Him for our health, our friends, our work, and for "the wild joy of living?" We are polite enough to read our friends' letters. Do we ever sit down and take our Bible to enjoy God's messages to us? We are polite enough to introduce a friend to other friends. How many of us have introduced our friends to the greatest of all friends—Jesus?

True politeness is gentle. It exhibits itself in a refined, cultured manner. A polite person does not indulge in slang or vulgar conversation. He does not laugh at the misfortunes of others, or ridicule the weak and the afflicted. He shows respect to his elders and is considerate of the feelings of everybody.

But the only way to be truly polite is to be truly unselfish. There are people who are so unselfishly thoughtful of others in all their intercourse with them that they are almost just delightfully everybody who knows them. They question and listen with enthusiastic interest. They say kind words because they feel kind. They avoid unpleasant topics and express their best thoughts, their truest beliefs, their highest purposes and their loftiest aspirations. They put themselves into your soul and lift you up to their level. They give you their very best. You recognize their great gifts and by doing so share them.

How can we be sure of being truly polite? Paul the apostle, Christ's gentle-temper, gives us this rule: Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. If we follow this rule, we shall not only seem polite, but we shall be so.

*In the pure soul, although it sing or pray,
The Christ is born anew from day to day;
The life that knoweth Him shall bide*

And keep eternal Christmas in the heart.
—Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.