

It will also be admitted that this manner or bearing is merely the outward expression of what is passing in the soul—that an earnest, sympathetic man moves in an atmosphere of sympathy and earnestness, begotten of these qualities of his nature; that a frivolous, careless manner indicates a flighty disposition; that a boorish manner points to the absence of “an inborn grace that nothing lacked of culture or appliance.”

I know there may be seeming exceptions to this law. I know it is quite possible to assume a manner for an occasion, or for a particular purpose at variance with one's disposition. The polished Lord Chesterfield and the æsthetic Oscar Wilde, of sunflower fame, are examples illustrating the possibility that one “may smile and smile and be a villain.” We all recognize that there are shams in the world—persons who at times put on company manners—but in the school-room the intuitions of the children ruthlessly tear down this veil of sham, and at once reveal in all its hideous hatefulness, the hidden nature of such a one. To such, fine airs are merely a veneering.

However, with the majority of people, the outward act reveals the true disposition. The considerate conduct, the courteous manner, the unselfish act, the grace of word and deed, all reveal the true lady or gentleman, the mainspring of whose conduct is a soul considerate, self-respecting, upright and hallowed by the memories of deeds done from the pure and gracious workings of this beneficent spirit. Such must have been the secret of Sir Philip Sidney's conduct, who could forget his own death agonies to perform one more unselfish act to a dying comrade in arms—an act, too, all the more to be wondered at when we remember the disparity in rank, between the knight and the common soldier. In such,

good manners are the genuine wood not the polished veneering.

Without further illustration, I shall take for granted that, in general, manner, deportment is the handwriting of the soul; that conduct is but the revelation of character, but the symbol of the inner man.

II.

I come now to consider more particularly some of the outward manifestations of proper deportment.

(1) Proper Deportment shows itself in self-respect. The man of good-breeding—the courteous man—not the sham—is sure not to be lacking in self-respect.

Conscious of the rectitude of his purpose, he is of necessity true to the best that is in him. The consciousness of responsibility for the comfort, success and happiness of others, results in an added feeling of self-appreciation and, to the well-balanced mind, a consequent self-respect, for self-respect, like every other quality of the mind—good or bad—“grows on what it feeds.”

I have placed self-respect at the head of my list of the outward manifestations of proper deportment, for, to me, self-respect is the foundation of all true upward and onward progress and to its absence may be directly traced much of what often surprises us in the conduct of others.

Carelessness of personal appearance, general untidiness of dress and surroundings, the use of improper language, the frequenting of places of doubtful odor, associating with persons of evil repute—in short, general grossness of conduct can always, it seems to me, be traced to a lack of self-respect.

On the contrary, attention to personal appearance, cleanliness of person and tidiness of dress, carefulness of word and tone of voice,