

ought to be taught in every school, but is grossly neglected to the great national detriment—we mean what is called manners or “minor morals.” In this field it is safe to say our common schools do nothing, or next to nothing, and there is none within their reach in which they might do so much.

We are not now talking of the kind of demeanour in ordinary intercourse known as “politeness,” though this is terribly deficient in nearly all our boys and girls. Little or nothing is done in the schools to combat the mischievous delusion that suavity of manner is a confession of social or other inferiority, and that in order to preserve his self-respect and maintain his republican equality, an American has to be surly or indifferent, after the manner of hotel clerks or expressmen, and too often salesmen and “sales-ladies” in stores. The result is, that we have probably the worst-mannered children in the civilized world. And the result of this neglect of the schools is to give a great many young people a dull, unready air—that is, they avoid quick responsiveness, lest it should seem like servile eagerness to please, and the habit of dilatory answering ends in giving an appearance of dullness and stupidity. One of the great uses of schools is to fortify the children of the State against whatever is evil and deteriorating in the political or economical condition of their lives. One of the great uses of American schools should be to fortify American boys and girls against the bad influence, either in mind or manners, of the passion for equality pushed to extremes, and the still more corrupting passion for notoriety fostered by the newspapers.

One of the defects in our civilization to which attention is now being called by the preparation for the Exposition is the filthy and squalid condition of our streets and highways and

the surroundings of our houses. Everybody who has seen a foreign capital anticipates with more or less shame the arrival in New York of people who are accustomed to the comfort and cleanliness of London or Paris or Vienna. No doubt much of this filth and squalor is due to defective municipal administration. But, unfortunately, it is not New York alone which suffers from it. Similar nuisances are to be encountered in every town and village in the State, and no merely legislative or official remedy will be effectual without a reform in popular habits, which must begin in the schools.

It is not easy to teach neatness to grown men and women, but it is possible to infuse into children a horror of the anti-social practice which helps a great deal to disfigure and vulgarize our cities, and especially this city, of throwing down refuse of whatever nature—peanut shells, bits of paper, ends of cigarettes and cigars, old shoes, hats, ashes, saliva, or other excretions—in places frequented by or seen by one's fellow-citizens, such as streets, roads, lanes, sidewalks, public stairways, etc. Our indifference to this practice, which appears to be the result of a long familiarity, is incomprehensible to foreigners. It disappeared from European countries completely fully one hundred years ago. It is now found nowhere in the Eastern hemisphere except in Turkish or other Mussulman towns and cities, and is looked upon as the sure sign of a low civilization. It is considered in every European city a grievous offence against a man's neighbours to make any public display of offal, or to sit down quietly in the presence of filth or rubbish of any description. A horror of it might be taught to every child in the public schools by any average teacher. To instil it should be one of a teacher's first duties, for it must be remembered that the chief observable superiority of the civilized