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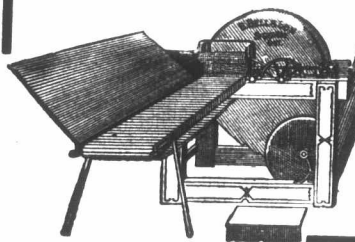
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When Writing Advertisers Please Mention Advocate

The Ingle Nook.

A few issues ago there appeared in this department a request for an Etiquette Column. It struck me at the time that this matter of manners seemed to be epidemic. Upon that very day I had noticed an article in the Globe, and another was handed me from the Weekly Irish Times (Dublin), both complaining of the modern lack of civility. The writer of the first had been inspired by the fact that he had overheard a remark to the effect that "Of all the civilized nations on the globe, Canadians have the worst manners." This, coming from a Canadian "returned from an extended trip abroad," was enough to make one gasp, and it was, maybe, with a bit of wicked relief that one turned to the Irish paper to find the statement, "One of the saddest things in life to-day is the decadence of good manners." It seemed, then, that the "Paddies," who have turned out so many right royal ladies and gentlemen, were confessing to a lapse, too. Of course, that didn't excuse the Canadians one little bit—but then, one hated to think that the Canadians were the only ones. Isn't that human nature for you, now?

The thing is, however, not to sit down and howl "O tempora! O mores!" but to see what can be done about it. If our manners are atrocious, it is time we were mending them.

Emerson says, you know, that, "Defect in manners is usually the defect in fine perceptions," and it is a fact that the naturally gentle, the unfailingly kindly, are usually the last to transgress in those little niceties which do so much to make the wheels of life run smoothly—the last to offend by brusque action or unkind, tactless word or criticism, the very pith and marrow of "bad" manners. You may forgive the big, good-natured man who pours out his tea—although you would much rather he didn't do it—but you are not likely to get over ranking towards the one, no matter how polished his manners otherwise, who has treated you meanly, or spoken to you unfeelingly. These manners, of kindness, tact, simplicity, sincerity, are they which come from the heart. The veriest society belle, should she be lacking in the right sort of heart, cannot cultivate them from without. Indeed, it is a question if she can cultivate them at all, until sorrow and experience have come to her with mellowing touch; but without them she lacks something that all the daintiness and propriety in the world cannot make up to her.

There are other "manners," however, which everyone may acquire, and which are certainly worth the trouble. The hardest, coldest, steeliest, may assume them to perfection; the sweet, gentle, sincere may also lay hold upon them as an added charm—in these days, perhaps, as a necessity. We refer to the code called "etiquette."

It is true, of course, that the man or woman of fine perceptions is also the least likely to commit vulgarisms. We do not refer to lapses of formal etiquette which may prescribe one form to-day, another six months from now, but to vulgarisms which stamp a man as "no gentleman," a woman as "no lady." To refer to a concrete example: Not long ago I had dinner at a restaurant. Opposite me sat a girl, a nice enough looking girl, too, had she not spoiled everything by committing every possible crime almost in the calendar of etiquette. One wondered where she had been "brought up," or if she had no sense at all of even common decency in "table-manners"; and, unpleasant though it was, one actually found one's self watching to see what she would do next. She let herself slouch in her chair, instead of sitting erectly; put her elbows on the table occasionally, chewed with her mouth open, and made a noise

while doing so, "grabbed" her knife half way down the blade—she couldn't describe it in any other way—ate with it, then let both knife and fork drag out onto the tablecloth. She picked up the bone of a chop, and so gnawed the meat off it; buttered a slice of bread, doubled it, and "fell to"; and, although she didn't seem in the least ill-fed, looked greedily at everything that appeared on the little table. There was grease on her fingers and on her face, and, had there been a toothpick near, one would have expected to see her take it up and use it lustily, by way of dessert. You think I am stretching this? Not one word of it. So, perhaps, you will not wonder that my own dinner was somewhat spoiled, nor that I have found it necessary to emphasize the assertion that lack of "fine perceptions" must surely be at the bottom of such solecisms.

However, no one will deny that "training" is a very necessary adjunct to the acquirement of "pretty" manners. A child may develop boorishness if he is not taught otherwise, and the question is, then, How can he best be taught?

The Globe correspondent claims that the public school is responsible for the ill-manners of the growing youth, and that the matter should be seen to there. The Irish writer rather throws the onus on the home. "It is in the home," he says, "that the absence of manners is most pronounced. How seldom will you find even the commonest politeness amongst the members of a family? Sisters rude, snappy; brothers, ditto; and in both girls and boys an utter want of parental respect. Kindly acts, pleasant words, thoughtful attention to one another—these are unknown. We are badly in want of a return to the realization of how inseparably good manners and character are bound up."

Perhaps the truth of the matter is that both the school and the home might wisely bear upon their walls Burke's dictum: "Manners are the shadows of virtues."

As for starting an etiquette column in our paper, we are not sure yet that we can find room for it, but we will bear the request in mind.

DAME DURDEN.

"Farmer's Advocate," London, Ont.

A Grey County Pioneer.

Good evening, Dame Durden and Chatterers. I hope I am not the last to call and give an account of myself; but, you know, I am a farmer, and at this season of the year a woman can scarcely keep pace with the work. It seems to multiply so, with young fowl to look after and gardening to do. Time passes so quickly; but who would not be a farmer, and have something to look after and be interested in? And then, when we open our door in the morning, take in some fresh air—so pure and good—and behold the beauty of every field, and the woods just bursting forth in green, so many different tints. But there, I must be off, as my call was to be short. I will be anxiously looking forward to hear from more of the old friends of the Ingle Nook.

Your affectionate friend,
AUNT LIBBIE.

Grey Co., Ont.

Another Way of Entertaining.

Dear Dame Durden,—We very much enjoy reading the letters in the Ingle Nook, especially the one from "Helionab," in "The Farmer's Advocate" for May 3rd. My sister and I have tried to think up some new entertainment for our guests. One evening we had a small party. We had slips of paper all around the dining-room and parlor, on which were questions to be answered by the name of a flower. Again, we passed around slips of paper on which was written the name of an animal. The guests were given squares of paper from which to tear out—without the aid of a pen or anything—the shape