

HOUSEHOLD.

Etiquette For Young People.

(By Cousin Belle.)

TABLE MANNERS.

(Second Paper.)

At even the simplest meal some courtesies must be observed, and everything which could annoy or disgust others should be carefully avoided. It is, of course, especially necessary to eat rather slowly and without the least noise, and to keep the lips closed while chewing. Yet, many young people get into careless ways of eating. It is so easy when interested in conversation, or anxious to finish the meal, to eat in a way that looks very ugly. But nice eating needs a little care, and it is well for that reason to spend a longer time over meals than many people do. The dinner time should be a time of leisure, every one should come very neatly dressed, and ready for pleasant conversation. Taking dinner slowly and in a cheerful, sociable way, is best for health as well as for manners and happiness.

In eating meat and vegetables the knife should be held in the right hand and the fork in the left all the time except when both are laid down for a minute, as when you are talking about something interesting. The knife should on no account be put near the mouth, and it is best as a rule not to use the fork to lift food spoon-fashion. For pie or stiff puddings, however, the fork is used without the knife, and is held in the right hand. The table napkin should be unfolded and placed on the lap. It should be passed across the lips both before and after drinking. When not holding a fork or knife one hand may be rested on the table but not the arm or elbow. The chair must never be tilted or shoved about.

Conversation at table should be general if there are only a few people. Do not speak in undertones or say to one person what you do not wish the rest to hear. If a letter or telegram is brought to you when at a meal, do not open it without some word of excuse to the company, for it is not expected that anyone will bring private business to the table. If you are at home it will be sufficient to say, 'If you'll allow me, I'll just read this.' But if you are visiting it is better to be more formal and say, 'Will you excuse me, Mrs. —, if I open my letter?' addressing the lady of the house. In some places, however, the mail is brought in at breakfast time, and all open their letters together, in such a case no excuse should be offered. In cases of this kind it is polite just to follow the custom of the people you are with.

When a plate of buns or cake is passed round the table it is quite proper for each person to help himself before passing the plate. Some people have the way of offering the cake to the next neighbor before taking any, but this is not necessary. If all did it it would make a good deal of unnecessary ceremony. It is well, however, for young people to pass the dish to a parent or guest before helping themselves.

Next week we will talk about the small formalities suitable to a family dinner party, such as most of us enjoy at Thanksgiving or Christmas.

'Table Manners.'—Problem.—A young man on sitting down to dinner in a strange house notices that there is a plate of butter on the table, but no knife with it. If he wishes for butter with his dinner what will he do about helping himself to it? Address all answers to problems to 'Cousin Belle.'

'When to Stand.'—Problem.—A young man in a street car sees two ladies come in. Mrs. B. and her daughter, Miss Annie, who is delicate, and looks very pale this morning. To which of the ladies does he offer his seat and why? Address all answers to problems to 'Cousin Belle.'

A Common Mistake.

'I hardly know which to pity the most,' said I, as I looked from the pinched face of the child to that of the mother, which spoke so eloquently of sleepless nights and anxious care.

'Oh, do not waste any sympathy on me,' said the self-forgetful mother, 'Robbie deserves it all, he has been such a brave little sufferer!'

And then the mother gave me a glimpse of the long, dreary months which had followed in the wake of the dislocation of

her son's knee, in the early winter; and the complications arising from it; which for a time were so serious, as to endanger his life.

She also told hopefully of the child's improvement, to the astonishment of every one, until now her anxiety was well-nigh forgotten in the hope of the child's speedy recovery. And then, turning to her child, on whose leg the cruel weight still hung, she said cheerily:

'Won't it be nice, dearie, to run and play like other boys?'

'Yes, mamma,' said the child with a wan smile, 'but I get 'scouraged! I'm such a long time gettin' well.'

'Poor child!' said the mother with a rueful laugh, 'I do not wonder your courage does not hold out.'

And then turning to me, she said:

'Robbie and I have had enough to make us lose our courage; but the worst is now over, I feel sure.'

I wondered the mother could speak thus hopefully, when at every turn I heard: 'If the child lives, he will be a cripple for life.' But here, the nurse entered the room, and the mother suggested that we should leave her alone with her charge. I surmised, however, that her reason for so doing was to say what she did not like her child to hear. For as soon as we were alone, she said:

'I really think you are the first caller seeing Robbie who has not said something discouraging in his hearing.'

'And so,' I said, laughingly, 'you wanted to get me out of the room before I made the same mistake, did you not?'

'No,' said my young friend frankly, 'I knew I could trust you, for I have heard you say that one of the hardest things about being sick was the doleful remarks of callers, and I felt sure that after your experience with such tactless people, you would not add to our bitter cup what so many others have done.'

Here, the young mother, who, in the presence of her child had only smiles, burst into tears, saying:

'Pardon my weakness, but I have borne so much! I did not like to tell you before Robbie, but I knew you could sympathize with me to some extent; and it will do me good to unburden to one who understands.'

'Poor child!' said I, 'no wonder your nerves are unstrung, considering what you have borne in seeing your child suffer these long winter months.'

She seemed but a child to me, for she married so young, that though the mother of a six-year-old boy, she needed mothering herself. I supposed that the burden which she was about to unburden, though, was the knowledge of the fact, that what 'they' said was true—that her boy would never walk again. But to my surprise, when she could control herself sufficiently to talk, she said:

'But the hardest thing I have had to contend with during this trying time has been to be true to my convictions and retain our physician.'

I was surprised to hear her speak so, for I had supposed that her confidence was unbounded in the physician who had stood by the family during those trying scenes, as few professionals would do. And as I expressed myself to that effect, the girlish mother, with rising color, said:

'I had the most implicit confidence in him when we called him, and I have now; but during those awful weeks of suspense, when Robbie's life seemed to hang by a thread, I was forced to listen to so many criticisms of the doctor, that I will admit I was on the verge more than once of heeding the advice I listened to daily, "Get another physician, if you want to save your child's life."'

'Do you mean to say,' queried I, 'that callers added to your grief and anxiety in that indiscreet and cruel fashion?'

'Yes, daily, almost hourly,' said the pale-faced little woman, with tears streaming down her face; 'and though I think people meant it kindly to me, it seemed cruel in the extreme! for if Robbie had died, I should always have regretted not heeding their admonitions. But as it looks now, I cannot be thankful enough that I did not allow the many criticisms to influence me to the extent of changing physicians.'

The foregoing conversation was this morning recalled, as—one year later—I met that mother with beaming face, and saw her boy—a picture of health—bouncing by her side. And thinking of it, I was reminded, too, of how the croakers predicted that the child,

now going with a hop, skip and jump, would surely be a cripple for life, if the parents did not make a change of physicians. And then, I fell to thinking, as I have so often before, how strange it is that people can be so tactless as to add to the care and sorrow of a stricken household by criticising the family physician. This is a very common mistake, and one which has been seemingly overlooked.—Helena H. Thomas, in 'N. Y. Observer.'

How to Keep Your Room.

A look into the chamber of a boy or girl will give one an idea of what kind of a man or woman he or she will probably become. A boy who keeps his clothing hung up neatly, or a girl whose room is always neat, will be apt to make a successful man or woman. Order and neatness are essential to our comfort as well as that of others about us. A boy who throws down his cap or book anywhere will never keep his accounts in shape, will do things in a slovenly, careless way, and not be long wanted in any position. A girl who does not make her bed until after dinner—and she should always do it herself rather than have a servant do it—and throws her dress or bonnet down on a chair, will make a poor wife in nine cases out of ten. If the world could see how a girl keeps her dressing room, many unhappy marriages would be saved.—Christian at Work.

Selected Recipes.

Chinese Fish.—Put one pound of halibut in a deep frying pan with a stalk of celery, a sprig of parsley and a slice of onion. Simmer till white and firm. Remove from the water, drain, remove the bones and skin and break the fish into rather large flakes. Arrange the fish in shells or individual fish dishes, or on a shallow platter. Season highly with salt and pepper, and pour over it enough sweet cream to nearly cover. Boil four large potatoes, mash and season, whip well and cut into them four well beaten egg whites. Press this potato through a pastry bag and star tube, over the fish. Brush the whole with the egg yolk and put in a hot oven until browned.

Print.—To wash the summer calicos without fading put three tablespoonfuls of salt in four quarts of water; put the calico in this while the solution is hot, and leave it until it becomes cold, then wash and rinse.

Polish.—Put half a pint of turpentine in a stone jar; add a couple of ends of wax candles; place on the side of the range for fifteen or twenty minutes. Apply to either stained floors or oilcloth (while warm), and polish with a soft cloth. The result is a most brilliant and lasting polish.

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