

Some Common Conversational Faults.

One of the most useful working talents for everyday life is the ability to converse well and agreeably. Mere talk is not conversation. Many young people talk a great deal, yet say very little which is worth remembering. More than we are apt to fancy, our words, our mode of speech, and our habits of expression are within our own power, so that the declaration of Scripture: "By thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words condemned," ought to be taken closely to our hearts. A quiet, shy, and naturally retiring and sensitive person may become charmingly gifted in conversation by giving thought and consideration to the subject, while a voluble and aggressive individual may equally shine, as clever, forcible, and picturesque, though requiring to exercise care and self-restraint, so as not to trench upon the rights of others.

Shall I tell you of some common conversational faults? One is due to what I may call an inopportune accuracy of statement. A lady, for instance, in relating an incident which happened last week, says: "It happened on Wednesday, when Cousin Jenny was here at luncheon." "I beg your pardon, mother," interrupts a listening daughter. "Cousin Jenny did not lunch with us on Wednesday, but on Thursday." To the group in the room the day of Jenny's visit was an affair of no particular consequence and the mistake made by the mother should have been passed over in silence. Never set people right in small matters of this kind, unless matters of moment depend upon exactness of statement in the case.

Never interrupt a speaker unless under stress of absolute need. If I were listening to a friend and I observed that her gown was on fire, I should certainly interrupt her, for the most important thing then would be to save the burning gown. Ordinarily, however, I should reflect a long while before I should break in on anything my friend was saying.

Never interrupt an old lady or gentle man. To do so shows a lack of good breeding on your part, for a cardinal point in good breeding is deference to age. Never interrupt a child, for you thus set a very bad example. Cultivate that serenity of listening and that sincere altruism which enables you to be far too really interested in your companion to be capable of rudely interrupting her remarks.

Above everything, dear friend, do not contradict a statement made in the family or in society. Say, "I had a different impression," or "my recollection is thus and so," but do not suffer yourself to flatly contradict another. This rule is imperative.

Avoid long and detailed explanations of episodes or events in which outside people are not immediately concerned. Avoid dwelling on illness, or surgical operations, on painful accidents, especially if they have been a part of your personal experience.

When a friend hesitates and apparently searches for a missing word, it is usually the part of courtesy not to help him, but to wait until he himself discovers the word or the phrase he wants.—M. E. Sangster, in the Young Women.

Thoughts of a Sunday School Teacher

A few months ago I was bidden to lay down the work of a Sunday School teacher, and come apart into a quiet place, and think. As I think, many questions come to me, demanding answers, oftentimes most humiliating.

Do you pray for the members of your class daily, by name?

Do you tell Jesus all you learn of their joys and sorrows, of their trials and temptations?

Do you pray, above all, for their salvation? And for those who have begun the Christian life?

Is your daily life a safe copy of Christ? Do the class know you pray for them?

Do you pray with them, singly, collectively? What part has prayer in connection with the lesson hour?

Does your earnest "God bless you" fall upon the ear of your pupil as you meet or separate?

Do you know what those three words may mean to the young soul, hungry, thirsty, tried?

Can you point them to Christ as able to understand, to sympathize, to help, because you know he can do these things, and will? That he does these things for you?

The Dying Soldier to His Mother.

BY H. ISABEL GRAHAM.

I'm dying far from home, mother,
O Afric's burning strand;
No more I'll see the hill tops
Of my Canadian land.
The foeman rage around me
In their relentless ire,
While shot and shell are raising
A ghastly funeral pyre
I'm dying far from home, mother;
We fought until the last,
To save our glorious empire,
We held her honor fast.
They'll never call us cowards,
We did not flinch or fly
But stood beside our colors
And showed them how to die.

I'm dying far from home, mother;
Our boys will come again;
They'll proudly bear their banners
Across the mighty main
And wild huzzas shall greet them
From fortress, mart and fane,
But you shall seek in silence
Your lad amongst the slain.
I'm dying far from home, mother,
They'll miss me on the green,
For I was always foremost
In any contest keen;
I wonder if my comrades
Will pause when at their play
To think of their own champion
Who sleeps so far away.

I'm dying far from home, mother;
Would you were with me now,
To soothe my sinking spirit
And fan my fevered brow.
Methinks that death's cold fingers
Would stay their chill embrace
And heaven itself seem nearer
Could I but see your face.

I'm dying far from home, mother;
But God is everywhere;
He camps about his armies
And keeps them in His care,
His angel guards shall bear me
Beyond all strife and fears,
And then they'll hasten earthward
To wipe your falling tears.

Daily Globe, Toronto.

Our path is to be upward from the start; there is no grade downwards on the road that leads to God. He calls to us from above.

A More Remarkable Case.

When one had read the story of Helen Keller, he felt that the limits of the marvellous had been reached. That a poor girl without sense of sight deprived of the possibility of hearing and void the powers of speech, could be carried through the ordinary studies of our most gifted youth and graduate with honor from one of our first class universities, this seemed more wonderful than any story of fairy-land. But Helen Keller has herself been instrumental in showing the world a still more remarkable career. It is that of a little boy named Tommy Stinger, a thirteen year-old lad from Washington, Pennsylvania. The boy had been so neglected in his infancy that when brought to an institution for the care of the defective classes it was not certain that his mind was any more acute than his blunted and half obliterated senses. It took some weeks to get him physically strong to stand upon his feet although he was five years old. It took nine months of patient training to get him to comprehend by motions of the hand the word expressing his first necessity, "bread." But after the mind was once awakened his progress was so rapid that to-day he is far in advance of most boys of his years in mechanical ingenuity mental aptitudes and spiritual feeling. In mathematics, for example, he is almost a phenomenon, and in out-door life he is an expert and an athlete. All of which make one think how much Jesus Christ saw in our poor, debased and feeble human life which it needs only his gentleness and grace to bring out. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him."—The Interior.

It Draweth Nigh.

O what a joyful day that will be to those who love and adore Him. The goal of our hope is not heaven. Heaven is a good place. No trial, temptation, or conflict there; no sorrow or crying there. God shall wipe away the tears from every eye there. I shall be glad to reach it. Yet heaven is not our goal. Our goal is only Jesus himself. Possessing him we are already partakers of eternal life, and we shall soon possess, in our perfected union with him, not only this sin-cleansed earth, but also the whole of the holy and beautiful universe in which that eternal life shall forever in its transcendent excellence and splendor reveal itself. For, as Paul has said, "All things are ours, whether the cosmos, or things present, or things to come; and we are Christ's and Christ is God's." The day of his coming is not a great way off. Perhaps some of you may live to see it. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—Rev. H. M. Scudder, D. D.

Jesus was willing to preach a sermon to one woman—the woman of Samaria—perhaps went out of his way to enjoy the opportunity. He has, in this, left us an example that we should follow his steps.