

Young People

Boys and the Minor Morals

Manners have been called the minor morals. While it is true that manners may be entirely dissociated from morals—just as there may be the polished villain, though the latter is met oftener in the pages of romance than in real life—it is also true that the connection between manners and morality is close enough to warrant the definition given.

Assuming this, without going into lengthy reasons, it is well worth while for the American mother to pay attention to her son's manners. The earlier she begins, the better, because good manners then become a habit of life, and are not readily shaken off. There will come a time in the boy's existence when it will seem to him manly to be boorish and rough, when he will esteem observance of small courtesies as evidence of "sissiness" and therefore to be shunned like the plague; but to the one whose training has gone on from babyhood, this will be only a passing phase—after "finding himself," he speedily returns to his former politeness. But the boy who has had no previous training continues to be rough, and grows farther and farther removed from the gentleman, unless something unusual jostles him out of his course.

Naturally this kind of education is much more in evidence as years go on than in the "green fruit" stage. We are none of us strangers to many men, really worthy men, who exhibit in little, unexpected ways their lack of this motherly teaching. I remember in a boarding house knocking once at the door of a room occupied by a man and his wife. The wife answered my knock, and the opened door revealed the husband sitting there with his hat on. He grabbed it off the moment he saw me, but though he was an excellent Christian man, I never liked him so well afterward, and to this day the somewhat unjust impression remains. Why? Because he accorded to me—a passing acquaintance—greater courtesy than he did to his wife. Yet, thinking it over dispassionately, it is probable that in his boyhood home, father and the boys sat around indoors with their hats on.

Mothers, there is a good deal to be said on the hat question alone. Teach your son that a hat is never, never to be kept on the head in a private house, or in the presence of ladies; that in leaving a house, even his own home, it is not to be placed on the head until the instant of opening the door of egress, or better on the first step outside; that it is to be removed at once when a lady answers the bell, or that if health requires the head to be covered while standing in the coolness, pardon should be asked—the same rule holding good in an elevator where women are present—and that the hat must be courteously lifted when meeting a woman on the street or when any woman bows to the person with whom your son may be walking. Complicated? Not at all, because all may be reduced to the one simple principle of courtesy to women, which each mother should see is ingrained in her boy's mind.

Only a few days ago I heard a man criticised for a breach of etiquette to which thousands of men could plead guilty. He was taking tea in a large dining room where there were several tables. A very sweet-mannered elderly lady from another table was leaving the room, and she paused to speak with this man, who was much younger than herself. He remained seated while she stood addressing him, and was very sharply criticised later by an onlooker, who thought the man was a boor. Being familiar with his antecedents, I knew that it was lack of early home training. He was kindly intentioned, and simply did not know that this was contrary to etiquette. Mothers, it will be easy to teach your little fellows to rise when a lady enters the room, or addresses them, and to remain standing until she is seated or passes out. Such a lesson is good for boys, whose exuberant sense of independence is somewhat lacking in reverence.

A married man once told me this incident, at which he was greatly amused, though the "joke" was on himself. He was a most devoted husband, and his domestic life was quite ideal. He and his

wife had been calling somewhere, and her overshoes had been left in the hall. As they were about to leave, the man of the house insisted on bringing in the overshoes by the fire, and kneeling down, he put them on his guest's feet. The husband said to me, "I love my wife as well as any man does his, but I declare, it never would have occurred to me to put her rubbers on for her, though it was a most graceful thing to do." The act seemed like a revelation to him. I happened to know that the husband was an only son—with sisters—and I imagined that early life of his, where he was waited on by an adoring household. He was not wanting in essential chivalry, but the delicate shadings of the minor morals had been somewhat neglected.

Mothers can never tell how such observances, or their lack, may aid or re-

tard a young man's success in life. In this hurrying age no one notices? Don't believe that. Always some "chiel's amang ye takin' notes," and though he may not "print 'em," they are laid up unconsciously for future reference. And going back to the original affirmation, manners do have a reflex influence on a boy's moral character.—The Interior.

A Nice Game to Play

Have you ever played the Farmer and the Crow?

The number of players is divided into two sides. From one side the first player may be farmer, from the other side the first player may be a crow.

The farmer plants a row of seeds about two feet apart in a straight line. Bean bags make the best seeds, and about 6 may be a good number to play with.

The crow is to hop on one foot over

these seeds to the end of the line, change to the other foot and hop back, picking up the seeds on his way. If he should fail to change feet, touch the ground when picking up a seed, drop a seed on his way—then he must become a scarecrow and stand apart from the rest.

These two players now go to foot of line, and the two at head of line play farmer and crow, the farmer this time coming from the opposite side, so that when game is finished each line has furnished an equal number of farmers and an equal number of crows.

While it is the farmer's duty to watch the crow carefully, all in the two lines must also watch, and if the farmer lets slip by unnoticed any one of the things the crow must do, then the farmer, too, must become a scarecrow.

The side that has the least number of scarecrows beats.

This may also be played inside if there is room.



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