

teacher, or employer ought to be sufficiently poised to greet or dismiss with a smile, a nod, or a pleasant word. It not only oils the bearings of life, but in the commerce of life, these small coins of civility will prove to be more profitable than minted gold.

### What Are Good Manners?

They have been defined as the shadows of virtues. Good manners are not merely skin-deep, but have their foundations in a good heart. They do not consist of idle formalities nor a polished veneer made up of bows and grimaces. Such superficiality has been rightly styled "the candied peel of courtesy." Artificial rules are of little value. "Etiquette" is often the essence of untruthfulness.

Nor do they consist in mere impulses spasmodic and intermittent, depending on the feeling of the moment, and changing with the ever-changing sensibility. To a large extent, good manners are the exponents of our inner nature. Their root is to be found only in unselfishness, so that to be really polite one must cultivate the affections. It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say that he is one who *never* inflicts pain. He carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast.

Bobby Burns, the ploughman poet, was said to be the most thorough gentleman in Europe. He was never rude, for he loved everything, even to the timid mouse and the field daisy.

Benjamin Franklin, when a laborer, reformed the habits of an entire workshop.

When Prince Henry of Prussia was in the United States, a prominent public man thus described him: "He is such a true gentleman that he can meet a Prince without himself being embarrassed, and can meet a poor man without embarrassing the poor man." And this was a good standard wherewith to judge him. As a rule, it is not difficult for a person to be courteous to individuals who are classed

in the same social scale, but the truest test comes when that individual is brought into contact with some one who is considered beneath him in wealth and influence.

Too many people put on courtesy as they do a dress for company and make up for it at home by being rough, selfish, coarse, or even brutal. Yet they deceive few, for their thoughts and feelings are put down, added up, brought forward, and registered on the living page of the face. Plenty of women whose lips are modelled on classic pattern, with complexion that challenges comparison with lilies and roses, are nothing but ugly, unattractive jades because they are cross-grained and rude. There never can be a handsome idiot, nor can there be a comely boor.

We must not, however, quite overlook those unfortunate people who are often thought to be stiff and reserved when they are only shy. The late Prince Consort was not a favorite in England until the people understood that a big, warm, every-day soul lay very close under his handsome but cold exterior. Another of this ilk was Sir Isaac Newton, who was so shy, and had such a keen dread of notoriety, that they kept his discovery of the Law of Gravitation a secret for years.

To overcome this shyness, one should endeavor to think only of others, and never of oneself. The perfection of manner is ease, and nothing will prevent your being natural so much as the desire of appearing so, whereas a genuine wish to be thoughtful for others will enable you to conquer embarrassment.

It will also teach you the happy way of doing things. Two people may do the same thing for us, and one cause us pleasure and the other vexations. The refusal of some people is preferable to the acceptance of others. Therefore, practice benevolence and unselfishness. They will bring you happiness, grace of person, and success in life. What greater gifts could the Fates bestow?