

How to Write a Pleasing Letter.

In the first place, the paper and ink should be of the best possible quality, more especially if the handwriting leaves something to be desired. Thick cream-laid or white paper is to be recommended for ordinary use. It always looks in good taste, which cannot be said of those glaring eccentricities in vivid-colored papeterie affected by so many people nowadays.

The date of the month and year ought never to be omitted, even when writing a trivial note to an intimate friend. This may seem an insignificant detail, but much inconvenience is often caused by its being left out. It is not sufficient to put the day of the week alone.

The civility of enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for the reply must always be observed when writing to a stranger on a matter of business.

All the words must be written in full. Abbreviations of any kind evince a thoughtless haste, as well as a lamentable lack of politeness on the writer's part towards the recipient of such abridged epistles.

The answer to a letter which requires a definite response should be sent directly after its receipt—by return post, if possible. There is nothing to be gained by delay in the matter, unless the question at issue is one which demands much anxious thought and deliberation.

In these days of fabulously cheap paper and penny postage, the crossing of writing is an unpardonable act. Correspondents who are guilty of it deserve to have their letters returned on their hands unread.

A letter, when written, must be evenly folded in such a manner that the signature comes inside, and placed in the envelope with the fold inserted first. By this means the first line of the communication meets the reader's eye directly it is withdrawn from its enclosure.

The proper place for the stamp is at the top right-hand corner of the envelope, at equal distance from the edges. Nothing gives a more slovenly appearance to a perhaps otherwise perfectly-appointed missive, than a stamp carelessly stuck on, either askew or in any of those peculiar positions supposed to convey some hidden meaning to the initiated.

Care must be taken to write the direction correctly and very distinctly. Postmen are not skilled hieroglyphists. It is often impossible for them to decipher the addresses on some of the letters entrusted to them, thus causing delay in the delivery.

If the least doubt be felt as to the correct spelling of a word, consult the dictionary, which ought to have a post of honor on every writing-table. Nobody's spelling is above suspicion, and one ill-spelt word will cast a slur over a letter.

Finally, the scattered members of every family should make any sacrifice in order to keep up a brisk, regular correspondence with one another.—Exchange.

It is Cardinal Manning who relates this incident as having happened to himself. One night I was returning to my residence in Westminster when I met a poor man carrying a basket and smoking a pipe. I thought over this: He who smokes gets thirsty; he who is thirsty desires to drink; he who drinks too much gets drunk; he who gets drunk endangers his soul. This man is in danger of mortal sin. Let us save him. I affectionately addressed him:

"Are you a Catholic?"

"I am, thanks be to God."

"Where are you from?"

"From Cork, your reverence."

"Are you a member of the Total Abstinence Society?"

"No, your reverence."

"Now," said I, "that is very wrong. Look at me; I am a member."

"Faith, may be your reverence has need of it."

I shook hands with him and left.



A Servant's Place.

"He deemed forget His own Eternal Being. . . .
He loved and served and toiled, the end foreseeing—
Say, were such lot too low for such as I?"

Most people want to get on in the world; they would like to win a high place, securing for themselves the respect and love of their fellows. But sometimes the road to honor is missed because a mistake is made in the very beginning.

Long ago, there was a strife among certain disciples as to which of them should be accounted the greatest. The Master explained that the road to greatness was through the valley of service: "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." That was the way He rose to His high position, for He—the Son of God—came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. We recognize this fact, by calling one who is over a congregation, its "minister," or "servant." Then the "Prime Minister" is in a very high position, although his very name declares him to be the "chief servant" of the whole country. Our late dear Queen was honored by the whole world because she devoted her life to the service of her people. One who lives only to have other people waiting on him will never win either honor or respect for himself.

A servant's position then is not only important, but also very honorable, and no one need feel ashamed of it since our Master Himself took on Him the form of a servant and came to minister to the wants of all men. He is still always ready to give us what we need, or, in other words, to "serve" us. When the King of kings comes again in His glorious majesty, He will still continue to serve those who have proved themselves faithful servants: "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

God always honors those who honor Him, and the world loves to heap its honors on the men and women who have proved their greatness by years of willing service, carrying out St. Paul's declaration—"ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

The first statue ever erected in England in memory of a woman who was not a queen, stands in the town of Walsall—the statue of "Sister Dora." She won her high position by a life of devoted service. In 1864, she went to Walsall, when most people, who could, fled from the place, for smallpox was raging there. She nursed the sick, and sometimes buried the dead with her own hands, because no man dared do it. At first the rough, drunken men treated her with scorn, and even with open violence, hurling after her stones and vile language; but she worked on patiently and cheerfully, even joking with her patients, and treating those who had treated her cruelly with a kindness which soon won all hearts. Once, when the hospital was filled with smallpox patients, she shut the doors, preserving the strictest quarantine; and, with only one man to help her, did everything that was needed. She was servant to all the rough patients—nurse, cook and washerwoman. Was it any wonder that, when she passed into higher service, one of the eighteen laborers who carried their dearest friend to her grave, said: "We want her cut in marble, with her cap an' goon and blessed face. It's not that we'll forget her;

no danger o' that, but we want her to be there, so that when strangers come and see her standing up there, they'll say: 'Who's that?' An' we'll say: 'That's our Sister Dora.'"

The statue was not erected by the rich, but by the hard-earned money gladly given by the poor people she had served so willingly. The name of "Sister Dora" will never be forgotten; for the world, in spite of its worldliness, delights to honor those who deserve to be honored—although the honors are sometimes late in coming. Truest happiness, as well as honor, lies in the path of willing service "for Jesus' sake."

"Thy love
Shall chant itself in its own beatitudes,
After its own life-working. A child's kiss
Set on thy sighing lips, shall make thee glad;
A poor man served by thee, shall make thee rich;
A sick man helped by thee, shall make thee strong;
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense
Of service which thou renderest."

"But," you may say, "I can't copy Sister Dora. I have to stay at home and fritter away my time on little humdrum duties that will never be of much importance in the world."

Do you know, it is probably a very good thing for us that we have only opportunities of serving the world in small, insignificant ways. It isn't everyone who can do great things and not get conceited, and how sad it would be if all the world praised us, and yet we failed to win the only commendation that can really satisfy anyone—the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant." We all have a chance to serve both God and man many times a day; the great question is: are we working only because we have to—yielding a slave's service—or are we "with good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men." If we wish to make our work a grand and noble service, then we must do it heartily, "not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

Lastly, let us never forget the wonderful truth that every little service we may do for others is accepted by our Master as a gift to himself. Perhaps the greatest incentive to one who has any love for Him is the golden text, which I will give you as:

A THOUGHT FOR THE COMING WEEK—

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.—St. Matt. xxv: 40."

"Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work; for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."—Haggai ii: 4.

He is with us! We are not working alone, the daily tasks are not wasted, even though they may have to be done all over again to-morrow. No smallest act of service is forgotten or overlooked. We work always under the Master's eye. Could any day be commonplace or dull, if only we always remembered the living reality of His presence?

"Yet the world is Thy field, Thy garden,
On earth art Thou still at home.
When Thou bendest hither Thy hallowing eye,
My narrow work-room seems vast and high,
It's dingy ceiling a rainbow dome—
Stand ever thus at my wide swung door,
And toil will be toil no more."

HOPE.

A Reminiscence.

Written for the "Farmer's Advocate."

Ariel gave me a pen of gold,
One chosen word to write:
Child-wise I wait, I muse, I choose,
Why, nothing suits me quite!
Here in the meadows sweet to roam,
In blisses manifold,
I have the word, the world thinks fair,
It hath obtained in every sphere—
'Tis "Home," sweet "Home."

No, stay my pen of gold!
All are not happy who are old,
Their deeds conveyed to a will.
Others do have and hold,
I want a dear word still.

"Mother!"
Seek I another?
I am a mother, I should know,
I have forgot my sucking child;
Mother in Israel, I have let them go,
A-starving for that bread;
Their red, red 'brodered robes defiled,
Hard things the neighbors said,
I cannot write it so.

"Love" is a jewelled word;
Say, will "love" do?
Love is the climax, new and old,
Of all things good and true.
Shall I write "love" in golden-rod,
With asters star it through?
Above a lyre of golden strings,
And on a field of blue?

Love oft is but a silvern sound,
What can it signify?
And if a gem, a flaw is found,
And is it love? or is this love
The amber or the fly?
And if 'tis wine's delicious zest,
Too soon the fount runs dry;
Some a specific love have found,
Then, have not I?

Sweet "Heaven," it hath a holy sound,
Be it mine Italy!
"Come, Sara, give me a sweet word,
The dearest that can be."
"Write 'JESUS,' mother, 'JESUS,'
For He loves you and me."

MRS. A. E. HOLT.

Some Things a Mother of Boys Should Not Do.

She should not forget that if she treats her boy as a gentleman she will do much towards making him one.

She should not treat her boy to perpetual frowns, scoldings and fault-findings. "Sugar attracts more flies than vinegar." Love wins her boy to a noble manhood.

She should never be so busy or hard pressed for time that she cannot listen to him. If he lives to be a man he will all too soon leave her. She should make the best of him while she has him.

She should not deny her boy any opportunity to enjoy outdoor exercise or sports, and she should not forget to train him with a proper regard for his personal appearance.

She should never allow him to form such habits as coming to table in his shirt sleeves, neglecting his nails or teeth, or carrying soiled handkerchiefs.

She should never nag him, or forget that he is a creature of reason, not an animal which requires to be driven.

She should not try to break her boy's will, but be thankful that he is manly enough to have a mind of his own, and devote herself to training it to the noblest uses.

She should not fail to instil in him a distaste for all that is vulgar.

He had been shooting "late" all day, hitting the tail feathers of the pheasants with the outer edge of the "spread," but without doing any further damage.

On his lamenting this fact, the keeper remarked, consolingly, "Well, sir, if the birds was only to take to flyin' tail foremost, you'd 'it every one of 'em in the 'ead."

He was the same man who had cheered the sportsman lamenting that he "couldn't shoot at all to-day" with the remark, "You shoots well enough, squire, but you don't 'it nothink."