

→ VISITS. ←

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How careful we are to observe the courtesies of life! How uneasy till such social duties are discharged! In the making and returning of calls, how fidgety if hindered, how sensible that delay demands apology!

And this where mere acquaintances are concerned. But what then when there is question of a friend, a benefactor, one devoted to us and our interests? If formal visits are here uncalled for, it is only because our heart needs no prompting. Uninvited, inconsiderately often, we come and go, "wearing the steps of his doors".

And our best of friends—do we treat Him thus?—as affectionately, as familiarly? If not, why not? Is He not among the benefactors whose gifts deserve thanks, the friends whose feelings have to be considered, the acquaintances, at least, whose attentions must be acknowledged? Is it because He puts Himself so completely at our disposal that He is to be neglected? Or because He is King of kings that he is to be considered outside the circle where courtesy is exacted?

Ah, Lord, how unmindful we are of what is due to You, How unmindful I am of Your unfailing devotedness to me! Sent into this world as into a strange neighbourhood, I found you waiting to receive me, to make me welcome, to offer Your services, to show me all manner of graceful kindness. You have thrown open Your house to me. You invite me to your table. You press upon me Your gifts "All ye that thirst come to the waters... Come buy wine and milk without money and without any price". "Come to me and I will refresh you." "Him that cometh to Me, I will not cast out." You make use of every motive to draw me to Yourself yet have to complain after: "You will not come to Me that you may have life".

Thus it was long ago; thus it is now. We have times for other duties—for our correspondence, our shopping, our afternoon calls on other more favored friends. But