

THE COST OF RUDENESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED,"
"THE FIVE TALENTS OF WOMAN," ETC., ETC.



TRULY incivility is a losing game, and it is only the very rich who can afford it. A man said the other day, "It cost me just a thousand pounds to take that man's chair." He had taken a chair that was reserved for another man, and by doing so had given so much offence that the man would not do business with him; and in this way one special contract was lost, which would have brought in a thousand pounds. A few words which a young man spoke rudely when angry with a rich uncle were found on the old gentleman's death to have cost him exactly fifteen hundred pounds a word. The will had been altered to that amount.

Every act of churlishness invariably causes loss, either directly or indirectly, by the injury it inflicts upon the character of the ill-mannered person. Here is a case of direct loss which we give in the words of one who observed it. "I got into a first-class carriage at Ascot, in which was an elderly and irritable gentleman, who occupied one seat and placed his bag upon another. Just before we started, a youth came running up and tried to jump in. 'This compartment is full,' said the old gentleman; 'that seat is taken by a friend of mine, who has put his bag there.' The youth plumped down with the remark, 'All right; I'll stay till he comes,' and took the bag on his knees. In vain the old person looked daggers. The 'friend' did not appear, and the train presently moved off. As we glided down the platform, the interloper flung the bag through the window,

with the quiet remark, 'Your friend has missed his train, evidently; we mustn't let him lose his luggage into the bargain.' I shall never, to my dying day, forget the expression on the old gentleman's wrinkled countenance."

Lord Ellenborough punished himself for rudeness to his wife in a way somewhat similar. The lady wished to accompany him on circuit, and the judge consented on condition that she did not tuck any bandboxes into the carriage, as she had too often done before. They both set out, but had not gone far, before the judge, stretching out his legs under the seat, kicked against one of the flimsy receptacles which he had prohibited. Down went the window with a bang, and out went the bandbox into the ditch. The startled coachman pulled up, but was ordered to drive on, and let the thing lie where it was. They reached the assize town in due course, and his lordship proceeded to robe for court. "And now, where's my wig?—where's my wig?" he demanded, when everything else had been donned. "Your wig, my lord," replied the servant tremulously, "was in that bandbox your lordship threw out of the window as we came along."

It does not "pay" to be indifferent to the feelings of any one, but least of all to those of a life-partner. When people are tied together for life it is their mutual interest not to grow weary of one another, and the best safeguards they can adopt are kindness and civility. How the whole day is rendered dismal and disagreeable when there has been "a storm" in the breakfast "tea-cup" between husband and wife! As far as happiness goes, each must confess in the evening, "I have lost a day." And rudeness, when it becomes habitual in a home, generally results in the ruin of some or all of the children. Many a child goes astray, not because there is a want of prayer or virtue at home, but simply because home lacks sunshine. A child needs smiles as much as flowers need sunbeams.

Swearing is a kind of bad manners that brings no profit, and often costs the swearer the loss of the regard and respect of valuable people. A young fellow was engaged to be married to a young lady