

fifty years ago, it was their endeavour to look at business like as possible, and as totally different as they could from their more idle and elegant sisters. Now fashion has grown wiser; the same mode of dress is found to suit work and play. Women wish to charm as well as to instruct, and the woman who takes her place on the School Board or in the lecture-room is frequently as neatly and becomingly attired as her sister at a tennis party or in her own garden. Would that her manners were always as becoming as her dress!

Elocution is an art that has increasing followers; public speaking amongst women has brought about regard to manner and diction such as was never known before. If only the soft and pathetic voice were in all cases the organ of a conciliatory spirit and a generous nature! Not that I would wish the regard for the amenities of life to discount straightforward speaking. Some persons in their desire to be pleasant or to please are prone to gloss over, or evade, a disagreeable yet necessary statement; they conceal their own opinions on views in order not to wound the feelings of a beloved parent or much valued friend; they demur from giving the one word of advice or warning which might have proved invaluable, and in their desire to be sympathetic they lose their single-mindedness and love of truth.

The balance should be strictly kept between a tactless manner of stating unpleasant things and a sympathetic manner that is hiding a falsehood; and, above all, the speaker or worker should, however unpopular it may make her, hold fast to what she thinks right and true.

And now as to the amenities of life in regard to the home existence.

In the August number of the *Nineteenth Century* Mrs. Hugh Bell has written a very original and pungent paper on "A Plea for the Better

Teaching of Manners," in which she says: "If urbanity were persistently taught and practised in the home there would not be so much to learn, and especially to unlearn, with regard to intercourse with the world at large. People would not then have two manners—one to use in public and one in private. There would be less self-consciousness and less affectation, for these arise from trying to do a thing of which we are uncertain, to assume a manner which we have imperfectly acquired. I am not saying, of course, that in every respect the code of behavior should be the same at home as abroad; that would be absurd; only the difference, it seems to me, should lie in the direction of there being less reserve in the familiar circle than amongst strangers, but not less gentleness and courtesy."

After all, why should good manners only appear with our best clothes? Why should anything be good enough for home consumption? And, indeed, why should not the workaday clothes be clean, neat, pleasant to look upon, and, if possible, graceful and attractive; then manners would have to suit them? It is really far more necessary to conciliate those nearest and dearest than the stranger whom we may seldom see.

Home life can be made delightful or the reverse by observing or disregarding the amenities of life; for instance, an evening where every member of the family contributes some iota to the general cheerfulness of the hour, and in so doing invigorates the weary bread-winner or hard worked housewife for the morrow's work—as opposed to the fireside where each one sits apart engaged in his or her favorite pursuit, oblivious of the fact that the evening should be a time of general recreation and exchange of ideas; the hour of poetry in the prose of life. This should apply very particularly to the young, who in these days