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Are You the Grinder of the Ground.

By John A. Howland.

Are you quite sure that in the ob-
servance of community amenities you
are keeping close enough to the line
that marks gentility and breeding in
social life?

"Ground in yonder social mill,
We rub each other's angles down."

If the poet should have had under
consideration the great community mills
of the modern great city it is a certain-
ty that his philosophy would have called
for a rougher dress in rhyme. The
crowded city street is a human glacier;
the crowded city cars and trains are
too packed to admit of literal grinding
shop, and store, and theater, and dining
place may be hives of incivilities.

In them are you, reader, grinder or
the ground? There is no dodging the
condition. You are ground, or you are
grinding. And whether grinder or the
ground, you cannot escape the charge
of being a full party to this outraging
of a nation's courtesy, as well as a
party to one of the most wasteful forms
of community extravagance in economy
and temper.

In the illimitable field of mechanics
the avoidance of friction is the desir-
atum above all else. Were it not for
friction the dream of perpetual motion
would be waked tomorrow and real-
ized. But movement and friction are
the eternal cause and consequence. But
in any movement friction may be mini-
mized, and this possibility always has
concerned the mechanical engineer in
the exactness of his science. Thus a

a muddy or dusty boot on another seat
which he knows some one will need to
occupy within a few minutes.

And when the person comes who
must have that seat or hang to a strap,
how grudgingly the foot is moved, per-
haps to the accompaniment of a marked
scowl of disapproval. How grudgingly
does the man move a crossed leg over
from the side seat next him, and how
expressive of irritation may be the face
of the woman who in like manner is
shown that some one standing needs the
seat which she has pre-empted with her
parcels! And how little show of con-
sideration comes from the person who
deliberately walks out of a crowded
office building by a left hand door into
a stream of other people who are at-
tempting to come in on their own right
side of the entrance!

People of both sexes violate the
rights of others in community life
almost wholly for the reason that the
victims, for one reason or another, sub-
mit supinely. One class of the supine
victim has not the courage to combat
in any form any such aggressions.
Another type rests upon the goody-
goody belief that the law of universal
kindness should prevail. Still another
class of people have a horror of making
"a scene"; already the real scene may
have been enacted against their sacred
rights, but that is not "a scene" in its
acceptance.

In this way, when all too seldom one
of the aggressive confiscators of public
decency runs afoul of the man who will



Steep Rock Point, Lake Manitoba.

modern automobile with the least pos-
sible friction in its mechanism moves
through a modern double wall of human
beings on the sidewalks where human
friction may be at its maximum.

There is no possible question of the
fact that the ordinary man, leaving his
home on the way to his business down-
town, leaves also the greater part of
his courtesy and consideration there un-
til he returns. Even his office courtesy
which may have material advantage
for himself behind it, will be shaded
until his office acquaintance finds an al-
together different man of him in that
home. And more than this, too many
thousands of people leave all amenities
behind them and replace them with an
aggressive selfishness that in literal
form is retarding all that is figurative
in human progress.

It is no unusual experience for the per-
son in a restaurant to be eating his meal
when a newcomer in decent dress and
bearing seats himself opposite at table
and spits offensively on the floor. There
is no possible chance that this man
ever spat on the floor of his own
dining room or in the house of his
friends. His family would not tolerate
it at home and his friends would ostracize
him if he did such a thing in an-
other's house. But so common is this
beastly offense that in the public dining
room many persons are so constituted
at to take it as a tolerated matter of
course.

There are few men who in their
homes would sit near a chair, couch or
davenport on which another person is
sitting and deliberately put a foot or
feet upon that piece of furniture. In
a double seat in car or train on his way
down-town however, that man almost
is an exception who does not rest even

not be put upon, this second real scene
following the outrage leaves the on-
lookers aghast at the "scene" which
every onlooker needs to notice.

Men put their feet on other people's
car seats or on their clothing because
the people submit to it. Men spit on
the floors of dining rooms in public
only because the public hates "a scene."
Men and women alike sit in two seats
of a public conveyance for the reason
that most other people haven't the nerve
to compel their moving over. Men and
women alike walk in the strip of shade
on the wrong side of a summer pave-
ment because they know the people they
meet will turn out if only they continue
to walk briskly on.

As the grinder or the ground, what
are you doing about it? What are you
going to do about it? If traffic in con-
gested streets and public places were
for the production of power for a
municipality the friction in the power
plants would leave no unexpended
energy. The institution would be
bankrupt in six weeks. In reality all
these places ARE power plants in
which the conserving of energy, the
diminution of friction, and the preser-
vation of good nature are essentials to
community welfare. Is it not worth
your while to refrain from aggressive
friction in this great power-house? Or
as a passive frictional element, don't
you owe it to yourself and to society
to reduce the condition? And by force
of might if necessary?

Professor (lecturing on hygiene):
"Tobacco, gentlemen, makes men ugly,
short-winded, idiotic, paralytic; and I
can tell you this from experience, for
I have smoked for many years."

There is only one

BOVRIL

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particularly good food for them
as it is specially rich in
those elements of beef
which form
bone, brain and
muscle.



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