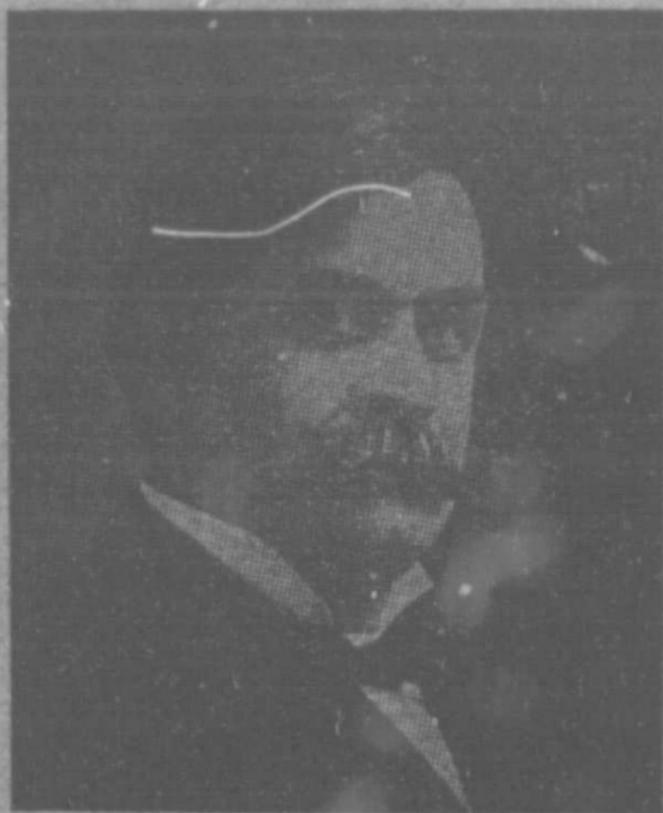


**PUT YOURSELF
IN
HIS PLACE**



BY

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Put Yourself in His Place

Heart qualities are the saving elements in a man's character. And the qualities of the heart ought to be cultivated. We ought to train ourselves to lean toward the tender side of things. Nothing will so lift a man in the estimation of his fellowmen as for humanity to discover that with increasing success and added wealth a man is disposed to be considerate, kind and tender. Some years ago the eminent John Stuart Blackie became professor of Greek in the University of Edinburgh. At the opening of a college term, the students noticed that, under the pressure of cares and labors, their hot-tempered professor had become unusually sensitive and exacting. Students desiring admission were arranged in line before his desk for examination. "Show your papers," said the professor. As they obeyed, one lad awkwardly held up his papers in his left hand. "Hold them up properly, sir, in your right hand," said the professor. The embarrassed pupil stammered out something indistinctly, but still kept his left hand raised. "The right hand, ye loon!" shouted the professor. "Sir, I hae nae right hand," said the agitated lad, holding up his right arm, which ended at the wrist. A storm of indignant hisses burst from the boys, but the great man leaped down from the platform, flung his arm over the boy's shoulder, and drew him to his breast, and, breaking into the broad Scotch of his childhood, in a voice soft with emotion, yet audible in the hush that had fallen on the class, said: "Eh, laddie, forgive me that I was over-rough; I dinna mean to hurt you, lad. I dinna ken!"

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Memory will be hard on you unless you are kind. The way to be kind to yourself is to be kind to other people. Kindness always comes back. If nobody brings it back, it comes back of itself on the wings of memory. And when you are sick, when you are weary, when you are tired, when you are lonely; or it may be when you have been forsaken by the world—memory will whisper sweet things to you in the chambers of silence. The historian remarks: "When Napoleon Bonaparte was at the height of his power he established an orphanage for girls in a little town in France. After his return from banishment at Elba he made a visit to the orphanage, which remained untouched. The girls crowded about him as he left, and gave him the most touching expression of their love and admiration. They covered his hands with kisses, and warm tears fell on the great emperor's hand while they crowded around him, claiming the privilege of a last grasp and a last word as he left. Afterward came Waterloo and banishment and the rocky isle of St. Helena. The Old Guard went down in blood and death and his empire fell with a crash. The magnificent temple which he had built of matter crumbled in a night. He was left in poverty a prisoner. But there were some things that survived Waterloo. There was one thing which survived the crash of the empire—the words of love, the tears and kisses of those orphan girls. Often, in his exile on St. Helena, he spoke of the joys of the memory of this deed of love."

Let each day be jewelled with a kind deed. The memory of such deeds will be as perfume floating through the corridors of the soul. A little kindness, a little attention, a little consideration—

and life will be all the sweeter for you. Show the best side of your nature occasionally, and then men will say of you as they wrote concerning that eccentric character Dr. Johnson.

“The Johnson who put pennies into the hands of sleeping street-arabs in order that they could buy breakfast when they woke up, who took papers of sweetmeats to his child friends, or went out himself to buy oysters for his cat rather than make it unpopular with his servants, is a different Johnson from the self-assertive, slovenly, clumsy-mannered ‘Big Bear’ of the anecdotes.”

Kindness belongs to a gentleman. Thoughtfulness is the velvet of character. No man can be a full-orbed Christian without being considerate. Treat every person as though they represented the aristocracy. Remember that every man is a son of God, and remembering—Be kind. The New York Outlook presents the following illustration: In a well-known letter to his sons, William, Earl of Bedford, said some things which ought to be posted in every commercial school and every business house in the country, for manners, quite as much as character, talents and ability, have to do with success: “Before you speak let your mind be full of courtesy; the civility of the hat, a kind look, or a word from a person of honor has brought that service which money could not. And he that can gain or preserve a friend and the opinion of civility, for the moving of the hat or a gentle look, and will not is sillily severe. Spare not to spend that which costs nothing; be liberal of them, but be not prodigal, lest they become cheap. I remember Sir Francis Bacon calls behavior the garment of the mind; it is well resembled, and rightly

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expresses the behavior I would have in proportion to a garment. It must be fit, plain, and rich, useful and fashionable. I should not have advised you to such a regard of your outside, the most trifling part of man, did I not know how much the greatest part of the world is guided by it, and what notable advantages are gained thereby, even upon some very wise men, the request of an acceptable person being seldom, or at least unwillingly, denied."

Be big. Be kind. Be generous. When a man snubs you, smile on him. When a man opposes you cover him with a compliment. When a neighbor "ruins you down" smother him with kindness. Go out of your way to assist an enemy. Speak well of the man who has no use for you. Find a good point in the man who declares that there is not one redeeming trait in your character. And keep it up—day in and day out—be the friend of your enemy. Thus you shall heap coals of fire on his head—to burn him up. Nay verily: But to melt him down. It was in the fall of 1880, that Mr. Beecher introduced Col. Robert Ingersoll to a great political gathering in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, saying that the Colonel was the most brilliant living orator in any tongue. A day or two afterwards the Colonel was asked by a reporter what he thought of Mr. Beecher. He at once sat down and wrote as fast as his pencil could trot over paper thus: "I regard him as the greatest man in any pulpit of the world. He treated me with a generosity that nothing can exceed. He rose grandly above the prejudices which are supposed to belong to his class, and acted only as a man could act without a chain upon his brain, and only kindness in his heart."

Say kind things and say them now. People need encouragement. Actors need encouragement. Preachers need encouragement. Servants need encouragement. People are dying for a kind word. And you can say it. Not simply a formal thank you—more than that. Watch, study, and be considerate. If folks serve you well, tell them so. Men and women hunger for a word of appreciation. Some years ago a clergyman died in New York, and after his death a company of his brother ministers met to speak of the one who had gone. The widow was present, and as one after another spoke of the dead with words of loving appreciation which had never been used to him in his life, the poor woman, who knew how weary and discouraged he had been, broke out at last: "Oh, gentlemen, why did you not tell him this while he lived?" There are weary hearts to comfort, there are broken hearts to heal, there are saddened hearts to comfort, there are penitent hearts to forgive, "As the days are going by," and it is woeful to wait until the days are gone and then stand weeping over the lost opportunity.

My friend, make it easy for people. Instead of being amused at the awkwardness of your unpolished friend and neighbor—help him through his social difficulty. He may have brains, wealth and influence, even though his manners are not perfect in the drawing room and parlor. "A story is told in Washington of the wife of a senator. A plain man, a constituent of the senator, called, and was invited by the lady of the house to take a cup of coffee. The cups were of very delicate French china, and very fragile. The plain man, unaccustomed to such wares, broke a cup. It was an

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annoying incident and might have been quite embarrassing to him, but the lady with splendid tact instantly crushed another cup in her slight fingers, saying as she did so, "It is wonderful how easily this ware breaks." The plain man was heard to say afterwards, "Do you suppose that there is anything that I would not do for that woman or her husband?"

Be charitable. Remember that all temperaments are not the same, nor are all the circumstances which surround people the same in every case. Make allowance for temper, training, nationality, education (or the lack of it), and circumstances. Under the right influences we have seen weak people become strong, sour people become sweet, and ill-tempered people become sane and reasonable. Remember, too, that many men are better than they appear. Richard Baxter, after the closest contact with the severest Puritans of the Commonwealth, and the most licentious cavaliers of the Restoration, writes in his old age, "I see that good men are not so good as I once thought they were, and find that few men are as bad as their enemies imagine."

Perfection is not a human characteristic. You must take human nature as you find it. Saints are not as sinless as we imagine and sinners are not as bad as they are painted. So strong is the human imagination that we can always see great virtues in people with whom our acquaintance is but slight. But wait! It was said concerning Joseph Jefferson, the famous actor: "He was greatly admired and respected by his neighbors and worshipped by those in his employ. He did not expect to find in his farm employees all the cardinal virtues for twenty or thirty dollars a month.

He possessed the rare quality of not seeing too much."

Have regard for the tender side of humanity. Remember that every body is sensitive. We all like to be noticed. Our project and schemes have cost us blood and tears and love to hear them well spoken of. Say something. Say something kind. Say it with thought and discrimination. Say it, and it will come back to you years afterward, with splendid compound interest. A Scotch pastor, accounting for his successful ministry in answer to inquiries from a group of students, said that as he was leaving home in the morning of the day when he was to be ordained, his mother, holding his hand at parting, said: "You will be told your duty to-day by those who know it far better than I do; but I would have you remember one thing well which they perhaps may not tell you—whenever you lay a hand on a child's head, you are laying it on a mother's heart."

Healthy emotion is manly. It is evidence that a man is the possessor of certain noble heart qualities. These ought to be cultivated with a tender regard for the future of the soul. The best way to develop true sensitiveness of soul is to give every noble inspiration an instantaneous expression in some form of practical endeavor. If the enthusiasm of some new thought is permitted to die out, the result means a nature less sincere and a soul less responsive. Remember the tender side. An English historian remarks:

"What was it the expiring Nelson said when his decks ran blood, and crimson victory placed upon his whitening brow laurels of triumph, whose leaves were mingled with cypress? 'Kiss me,

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Hardy,' was what he said. Strange words, were they not, for a scene of carnage? Yes, but words which touched the hearts of the English people."

Every man is a hero to somebody and the consecration of his influence depends on knowing how to treat that "somebody." The time to treat people right, socially, is when and where you meet them. You may meet them in the kitchen, in the carriage, on the stairway, below the stairs—wherever you meet them be man enough to act without condescension and with every consideration of chivalry and politeness. Thackeray took particular notice of the fact that when he met Father Mathew at a private dinner party, the Apostle of Temperance always found occasion to exchange a friendly grasp of the hand and a few genial words with the butler or the footman, to make benevolent inquiries of them concerning their wives and children, and to show a kindly acquaintance with their domestic affairs.

Popularity has more to do with manners than with any other phase of human personality. It depends on the impression which you are able to make at the point of personal contact. No man can be genuinely popular who has not, in his heart, a profound respect for humanity; and the ability to express this respect at the right time wins for a man the coveted crown of "popularity." "The love and admiration," says Canon Kingsley, "which that truly brave and loving man, Sir Sydney Smith, won from every one, rich and poor, with whom he came in contact, seems to have arisen from the one fact, that without, perhaps, having any such conscious intention, he treated rich and poor, his own servants, and the noblemen his guests, alike, and

alike courteously, considerately, cheerfully, affectionately—so leaving a blessing and reaping a blessing wherever he went”

There is a certain measure of business which is built up on friendship. People go to a man in the beginning, because they like him. They wish to encourage the man who seems to wear the garland of prophecy. In fact a man's career very often depends on the way in which he treats his first batch of friends. If he can hold these, there is a new crop on the way. Make friends. Go out of your way to serve people. Some will forget you but the best class of mortals will have for you a tender regard and consideration. When Abraham Lincoln was a young man starting in life, it used to be said of him, “Lincoln has nothing, only plenty of friends.”

There is no calling or profession in the world in which it does not pay to keep sweet. An even disposition is as good as salt in the soup, sand on the track, oil in the cog, sunshine in a back room, fresh air in a crowded audience chamber, and large coin on the collection plate of a poor church. To be explicit, here is an illustration out of the life of Henry Ward Beecher. “Beecher dared speak out his inmost convictions. Not infrequently he spoke when his life was openly threatened. At Elizabeth City, New Jersey, the Copperheads declared they would kill him rather than permit him to speak. Amid indescribable uproar, Mr. Beecher entered the hall, advanced to the platform, and said: ‘Gentlemen, I have been informed that if I attempt to speak here to-night I am going to be killed. Well, I am going to speak,

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and therefore I must die. But before you kill me, there is one request I have to make. All you who are going to stain your hands in my blood just come up here and shake hands with me before you commit the crime, for when I die I shall go to heaven, and therefore I shall never see any of you again.' ”

Say a good word concerning your business competitor. It will do you no harm. Nay, it will help you. Why not rejoice in his success! Success is a beautiful thing. Would you not like to have it yourself? Then deny it not to your neighbors—not even in your thoughts. A great soul is better than a big business. Col. A. K. MacClure, the American editor, says concerning Abraham Lincoln: “Another very marked feature of Mr. Lincoln’s character was his patient and generous forbearance with all who were unfriendly to him. I never heard Mr. Lincoln utter a single sentence of resentment against anyone, and I have never met any person who claimed to have heard him speak vindictively against even his bitterest foes. The beautiful sentence of his inaugural—‘With malice toward none, with charity for all,’ was a perfect reflex of the heart of Abraham Lincoln.”

Get through with your grudges. Time will bury them, destiny will ignore them, your friends will grow weary of them and history will make light of them. Here is a bright paragraph from Talmage:

“How often have writers, with their pens, plunged into the hearts of their rivals—pens sharper than cimeters, striking deeper than bayonets! Voltaire hated Rousseau. Charles Lamb could not endure Coleridge. Waller

warred against Cowley. The hatred of Plato and Xenophon is as immortal as their works. Corneille had an utter contempt for Racine. Have you ever been in Westminster Abbey? In the 'Poets' Corner,' in Westminster Abbey, sleeps Drayton the poet; and a little way off, Goldie, who said the former was not a poet. There sleeps Dryden; and a little way off, poor Shadwell, who pursued him with fiend's fury. There is Pope; and a little way off is John Dennis, his implacable enemy. They never before came so near together without quarrelling."

What we admire in great men are the ordinary virtues. These are within our reach and remind us of ourselves. It is at this point where we think we see a reflection of ourselves—and we enjoy the reflection. Dr. Dodds reminds us concerning Dr. Chalmers, the great Scotch preacher, that "When he was a hearer only, he sat among the crowd of deaf old women who were following the services with unflagging interest. His eye was upon every one of them, to anticipate their wishes and difficulties. He would help one old woman to find out the text; he would take hold of the psalm-book of another, hand in hand, and join her in the song of praise. Anyone looking at him could see that he was in a state of supreme enjoyment; he could not be happier out of heaven."

Kindness is the velvet of social intercourse. Kindness is the oil in the cogs of life's machinery. Kindness is the controlling spring which holds back the slamming door. Kindness is the burlap in the packing case of every day's merchandise. Kindness is the stain on the cathedral window which

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woven into beautiful characters shuts out the hideous sights of a world which is all too practical. Kindness is the carpet on life's floor which deadens the sound of shuffling feet and adds warmth to silence. Kindness is the satin lining of the silver casket. Kindness is the plush on the chair. Kindness is the green grass near the hard pebbles of the road. Kindness is the touch of an angel's hand.

