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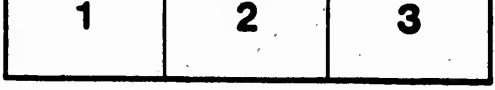

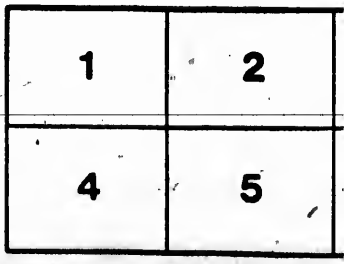

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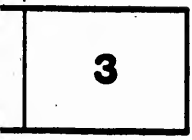

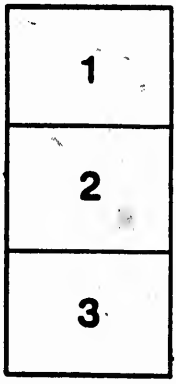

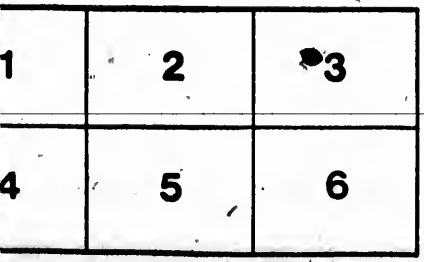

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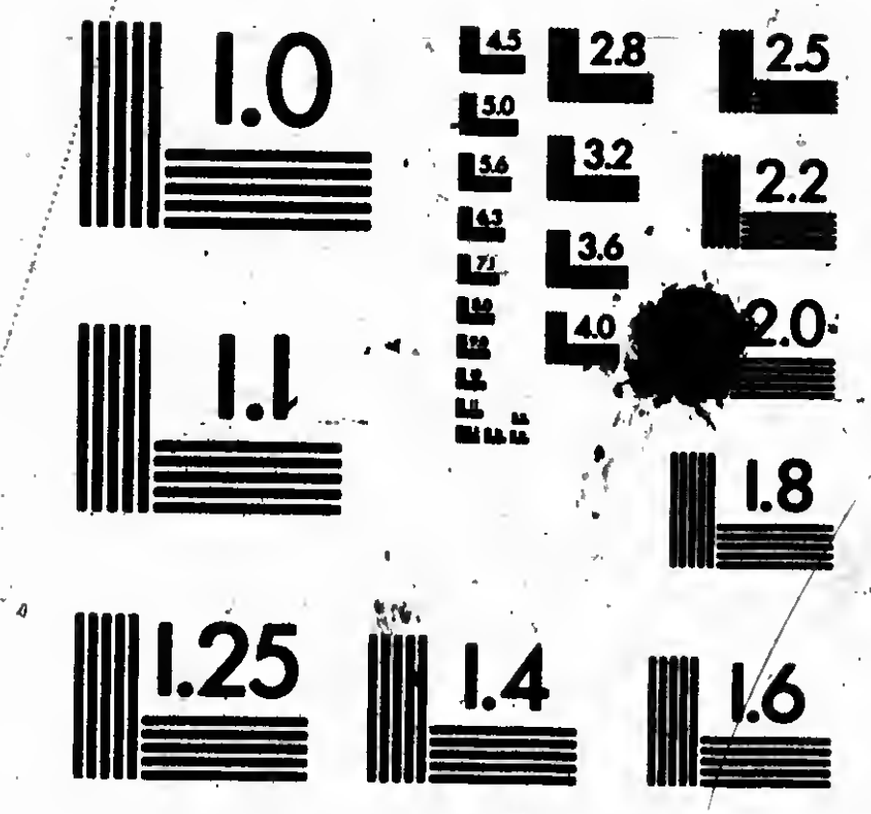

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Letter-Writing Simplified

BEING A GUIDE TO FRIENDLY, AFFECTIONATE, POLITE AND BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE.

Containing

A LARGE COLLECTION OF THE MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION RELATIVE TO THE ART OF LETTER-WRITING, WITH CLEAR AND COMPLETE INSTRUCTIONS HOW TO BEGIN AND END CORRESPONDENCE, RULES FOR PUNCTUATION AND SPELLING, &C.; TOGETHER WITH NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF LETTERS AND NOTES ON EVERY SUBJECT OF EPISTOLARY INTERCOURSE, WITH SEVERAL IMPORTANT HINTS ON LOVE LETTERS.

AND COMPLETE

BOOK OF ETIQUETTE

London, Ont.:

WM. BRYCE, PUBLISHER, DUNDAS ST.

PRINTED BY

THE FREE PRESS PRINTING CO.,

LITHOGRAPHERS, PRINTERS, ENGRAVERS AND DESIGNERS.

LONDON, ONTARIO.

CHESTERFIELD'S

LETTER-WRITING SIMPLIFIED

GOOD letter-writing is one of the mainsprings of business, and one of the strongest connecting links of common life. To write a business letter, and to write a familiar one, requires as different qualifications as to enter a drawing-room and to knock at one's own street-door. Let us try to point out what these qualifications are.

Tact is equally necessary in both, but tact of a different character. In writing to a man of business, *brevity* becomes literally "the soul of wit," and true tact will teach us three things; first never to waste time in more compliments than are demanded by the common courtesy due from one man to another; secondly, never to say anything that has nothing to do with the subject; and thirdly, always to say all that the subject really requires, and to say that clearly. A letter of ten lines will often fulfil all these conditions, when a lengthy epistle will bring back an impatient wish to "know the meaning of your communication of the [illegible]." In writing letters, we ought to consider that we may be wasting another person's time more precious than our own, in the mere operation of reading, to say nothing of understanding and replying to them. But let us always remember, that it is possible to be brief and to the purpose, without being bearish or uncourteous.

Tact in familiar writing, and in some half-business-half-familiar correspondence (which enters constantly into our every-day life), consists in a clear and ready interpretation of our thoughts and wishes, as well as in a prompt and graceful understanding of those of another. Here we are less fettered by the pressing calls of time already over-employed; we are enabled to *speak on paper* (which is the great and true perfection of letter-writing), and we mingle the gentler feelings of home association with the sterner calls of duty. But tact is no less wanting under these circumstances. Who would write to a child at school, to a friend just married, or to a dignitary of the church, all in the same terms? One may be familiar with all three.

And even on the most familiar occasion, and in addressing

the most familiar friends, this tact will aid us in not a few material points. It will prevent us mistaking boisterous familiarity (and, too, often, slang and vulgarity) for heartiness—carelessness in grammar for freedom of style (a mistake, unhappily, not confined to letter-writers only), and will give a refinement and gracefulness which enhance even the most tender passages of love and friendship.

Now it is candidly to be confessed that the art of acquiring this tact (which is little else than the whole art of letter-writing) is one of time, trouble, and difficulty. The earlier it be commenced the better; but there are many whose acquaintance with the world at large begins late in life—perhaps never begins at all, and from such persons much cannot be expected. A regular correspondence with those who themselves write well is unquestionably the surest means of attaining this end, and, next to it, the frequent perusal of such letters as form a part—and a charming part—of the writings of our best authors. To those who possess the opportunity of cultivating both or either of those resources, the examples contained in the following pages can teach little, excepting, perhaps, the art of saying plain things in plain words, and being able to say no more than is necessary upon a trifling subject—a matter which a great many very clever people find more difficult than they are willing to confess.

As to letters on courtship, matrimony, and such like matters, the Editor candidly confesses that he should feel little sympathy with any gentleman who received a *printed circular* in answer to an address taken from a printed letter. Had he consulted his own inclinations, he would probably have excluded any attempts to deal with such matters (where befitting writing can only spring from the deepest recesses of the human heart); but, in deference to custom, he has prepared some specimens, and selected a few others, which he trusts will, at all events, not lead his readers to any of the displays of folly or misplaced romance, which too frequently form painfully-ludicrous episodes in the earlier acquaintance of the two sexes. A manly and honorable feeling towards the objects of our affections will, it is to be hoped, always suffice to prompt its honest expression, without running into bombast, extravagant adulation, or unreasonable and absurd protestations.

Howsoever humble, or elevated, there is no situation of life in which the "art of letter-writing" must not occasionally be found of vast importance. To the poor, it is a comfort, a solace, a blessing; with the middle and higher classes of society, it is an indispensable acquirement—an ex-

haustless source of enjoyment and pleasure. It ought to be regarded as an essential part of education. But, like other arts, it must be taught, or studied; for, whatever may be the scholastic advantages of the individual, it can rarely, if ever, be possessed by intuition.

Do you feel puzzled when you sit down to write a letter? Are you in a fix how to begin? Would you rather walk a mile to tell your friend what you have to say, than spend half a day in writing to him or her? Do you postpone the writing of a letter because it is "such a bother" until the occasion for writing has gone by, or the patience of your friend is exhausted, or you yourself "ashamed of having put it off so long?" Attend a while, and you shall endure these pains no more—you shall no longer suffer headache or cramp in the wrist, nor the loss of a day in accomplishing what may have been done in a quarter of an hour, nor the worry and vexation of not knowing how to begin, or, having begun, how to go on, or how to leave off; nor the danger of breaking faith with the best of friends because, although you would if you could, yet you cannot, cannot write a letter.

Can you write a letter without hesitation, demur, or difficulty? Can you seize the pen, and, at once, commit your thoughts to paper as freely as you could speak them, stating your business proposals, your friendly assurances, your gratulations, your condolence, your love; or, in the formal language of reserved politeness, convey your acceptance or refusal of an invitation or a present, or your simple notification or acknowledgment of a fact? If you can do this you want none of our advices, and we assure you at starting that we do not believe we have a single hint to offer you—therefore, if you read on it is at your own peril, not ours.

But we do offer help to those who really want it—and their name is legion. Persons who are not accustomed to the use of the pen find it a tough task to write a letter, and the difficulty is the greater in proportion to the insufficiency of their education. Many, even among sensible and well-informed people, are but poor hands at letter-writing, or even in the diction of a simple note, and they wonder how in the world it is that others of no better education than themselves are so ready in the use of the pen, so little embarrassed in the composition of sensible and even long letters, so happy in their expressions, so clear in their statements, their sentences so brief, so well arranged, and the whole tone of their correspondence characterized by good sense, good feeling, and true politeness. It seems as if there were a mystery about

it which only a gifted few can understand; whereas there is no mystery whatever; comparatively speaking, nothing to be learnt; for whosoever can manage to scrawl with a pen, and spell the words in common use, might, with the exercise of a little patient perseverance, write down their thoughts as easily as they can speak them.

But, says the reader, "This is not exactly true; for I have persevered for years, my hand-writing is really respectable, I can spell correctly, and I know something of grammar, and yet it costs me much labor to write a letter, and, after all, I seldom write one that pleases me, and [in confidence] I assure you, I frequently write half a dozen, and say the same thing half a dozen different ways, and then destroy them all because there is not one that I consider fit for the occasion." What of that? The most accomplished scholar that ever lived, the most finished inditer of a model letter, found a little difficulty at first, and no literary man ever acquired the free and ready use of the pen without some stumblings at starting, and you have only to persevere in the *right direction*, to attain excellence in this necessary, useful, and ornamental accomplishment.

A well-written letter has opened the way to prosperity for many a one, has led to many a happy marriage and constant friendship, and has secured many a good service in time of need; for it is in some measure a photograph of the writer, and may inspire love or hatred, regard or aversion, in the reader, just as the glimpse of a portrait often determines us in our estimate of the worth of the person represented. Therefore, one of the roads to fortune runs through the ink-bottle, and if we want to attain a certain end in love, friendship, or business, we must trace out the route correctly with the pen in our own hand.

Let us take the general case of letter-writing as practised by uneducated persons. Whatever be the subject of the letter on the occasion of writing, it is pretty sure to begin thus:

"This comes hoping to find you all well, as it leaves us at present: thank God for it."

In the next letter the writer varies the commencement for the sake of change, and begins:

"I take up my pen to write you these few lines."

By-and-by the writer begins to suspect that such a mode of beginning a letter is not very elegant, and eighteen cents are expended on that very remarkable work, "The Lady's and Gentleman's Complete Letter-Writer, 90th edition." The tim

comes for another letter; the "Complete Letter-Writer" is dragged out from the darkness of the drawer in which it had hoped to conceal itself for ever, and an hour is spent in the search for a model letter that will just express the writer's feelings and ideas. But, alas! among the three hundred and forty-seven specimens of every style of correspondence, there is not one in which James is politely requested not to forget the boots, or Eliza is reminded that Walter still hopes to meet her, with sentiments unchanged, when next she visits New York; there is nothing in the "domestic letters" to meet the case of baby's teeth, or Susan's blistering, or Jeremiah's illness and recovery, or the death of Mr. Jones. The "business letters" say not a word about the administration of Jones's will, they do not even mention the apprenticeship of young Waggles. Also to the "love-letters," the writer thereof has made no provisions for Jemima's acceptance of Joseph on condition that he will at once shave off his moustache, and take to all round collars, and give up punning at the dinner table. The "complimentary letters" are certainly very pretty, but they don't help one to present compliments to Mrs. Popejohn, and thank her for her kind present of a green cat and a pair of turtle doves. No; nor when the general form of any letter or note does happen to suit, can the copyist determine how or where to work in a little special request, or remark, or question, or, in fact, to make a respectable statement of any kind save and except what is actually printed; and for this good reason—that a printed letter saves the writer the trouble of thinking; and self-dependence, confidence, easy expression of ideas, are, of course, in any such case impossible.

The fact is, a complete letter-writer is a complete sham, an absurdity. People want to write letters "out of their own heads," and it is impossible to give them "ready made" letters, which, like ready-made shirts, shall fit every subject that may require clothing. We know a case of a gentleman—at least, a person—who offered his hand to a lady with the help of a letter-writer. The letter began, "Reverend Miss;" how it finished the reader need not be told, but, of course the lover was rejected, and his "billy dux" went into the lady's museum of *curious* autographs. Perhaps he should have copied it "Revered Miss," but he should not have copied at all. Had he written what he really felt, in the best language he could command, he might have gained a hearing, and, perhaps, a bride; but he went to a dead sepulchre of words instead of speaking from his living heart, and deserved the snubbing for his pains. The first step, then,

towards attaining the art of letter-writing is, to tear up the "Complete Letter-Writer" into pipe-lights, or curl papers; at all events, it must be got out of sight, and you must begin *de novo*, that is, out of your own head.

You want to write a letter, then, and you are puzzled how to begin. Will you write sentences on bits of paper, and accumulate them till you have a heap, then sort and arrange them, copy them out at length, then correct and copy the whole? Nothing of the sort; yet this is the way *some* people write letters. We know a case of a lady who broke off an engagement with a gentleman, and who had occasion to return him a book which she had borrowed. She wrote an indignant letter, composed bit by bit till she had about half a peck of little sentences. When she came to copy them out the greater part were of a most objectionable kind; some, she remembered afterwards, were very bold, nay, insulting in tone. But she managed to make up what she thought a very proper letter, and, by some strange muddle, gave him both book and letter with her own hand. But, alas! she had no sooner parted from him than she remembered she had tucked the half-peck of disjointed sentences inside the book, so that he had not only had the letter, but the corrupt pieces of which it had been made. She hoped never to meet him again—let us hope she never did, though he might have found her a sadder but a wiser woman.

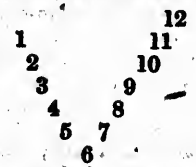
When you sit down to write a letter, think of your subject—of the circumstances you wish to state. On a spare piece of paper put down your loose ideas, your various points promiscuously as they occur. For instance, I will suppose that you have a dozen different heads, more or less, on which you desire to expatiate. Put them all down (leaving a little margin on the left-hand side of your paper), no matter in what order, one after another, as they occur; a single word will in most cases suffice to lead your memory. Having proceeded so far, consider in what manner, in what order, the different heads of your letter may be arranged, so as to produce a harmonious and effective whole, and number them in the margin accordingly, 1, 2, 3, &c. There are three modes by which your task may be successfully accomplished; the mode to be determined by circumstances and by your own taste and judgment.

First.—Suppose that you have numbered your subjects according to their intrinsic importance, 1, 2, 3, &c., and that you wish to treat of them in that order, commencing with No. 1. By this means you will first state your most import-

ant point, and then gradually descend, numerically, and close with No. 12, the least significant in the series. To this mode, unless for short letters, there is an objection; your letter incurs the risk of becoming tame, feeble and unimpressive at the close.

Second.—Number your subjects inversely; that is, let your first head, No. 1, be of the slightest consideration in the series; No. 2 will possess an interest somewhat higher; No. 3 will become still more interesting; your letter will thus grow upon the attention of the reader as he proceeds; and, by reserving the most important point till the last, it will terminate with a strong and impressive climax.

Third.—For long letters, or for letters embracing a great variety of subjects, this will generally be found the most preferable; but still, as I have said, the mode must be determined by circumstances, and by the taste and judgment of the writer. Adopt, first the *descending*, and then the *ascending* scale; from *superior* to *inferior*, and then from *inferior* to *superior*; something like this:



That is, commence with No. 1, as an important point, though of less importance than No. 12; thus descend in the importance of the respective points till you reach the bottom of the scale, No. 6; after which you may ascend from the comparatively insignificant point, No. 6, till you gradually reach the most important point of all, No. 12. Or you may number your subjects in a double series, according to the modes, *First* and *Second*, thus:

Superior 1 ——— 1 Inferior
2 ——— 2
3 ——— 3
4 ——— 4
5 ——— 5
Inferior 6 ——— 6 Superior

By these means the *commencement* of your letter will be *good*, and its *termination* will be *better*; and calculated to leave a clear and strong impression on the mind of the reader.

You want to begin your letter, and it is to be a letter to a

friend. Now just consider for a moment what you would say to that friend if he or she were present. The moment you have abstracted yourself, the first words of greeting will pass through your mind, then the inquiries, and your friend's responses. Quietly take a pen and write down these imagined words. But the moment you take a pen the words are gone, and your mind is as barren as ever; that is because you are trying to say something grand, to "write like a book," or like somebody else whose letters you like. Never mind how sentences are made in books, or how somebody else begins such pretty letters. Write *as you would speak*, write on till you have written all you would speak, as far as the compass of a letter will enable you, and you will be surprised to find that you have explained yourself in a straightforward way, and with a feeling of grace that does you credit.

We beg you to depend wholly upon yourself, to write down your simple thoughts as they occur to you, and to state your requests, your replies, your sympathies and suggestions, just as if your friend were beside you, and you were talking as friends do talk. For instance, a young man is about to write to his absent brother, and he begins, "Dear Thomas." Then he is stuck fast, and he thinks of sending his letter "hoping to find brother Thomas well." Then the great event which he is to relate thoroughly puzzles him, and, at last, he writes "mother and father send their loves, and mother has been confined, and the baby is a girl, and its to be named Eliza."

But if he would imagine himself talking to brother Thomas, he would write in this wise:

"Dear Tom—

"As we have not received any unpleasant news from you, we feel assured that you are hearty and prospering. But if you are at all pinched in pocket, or out of health, don't hesitate to let us know, for we are anxiously concerned about your progress, and father would remit you a few dollars rather than that you should suffer inconvenience from scarcity of cash.

"You know what a quiet life we live, and can well imagine how excited the village has been lately, when I tell you that there is an addition to the family here—a thumping sister for you, Tom, born at twelve, on Tuesday night last, and 'mother and child doing well.' The nurse, old Hatchet—you remember her—says she is the finest baby she ever saw. She certainly is a fine child; but, upon my soul, she makes a horrid noise all night. I'm glad that my bedroom is at the

top of the house, and I can patiently bear with the moaning of the pigeons when I reflect on the sort of serenades I should have if I slept in the room you had."

Of course, we might go on and compose a very long letter to brother Tom; but as it is impossible to *invent* a letter of any kind, suitable to more than one case in ten thousand, so it is absurd to invent incidents or imagine feelings, in the expectation that some lucky chance will make them suitable to anyone about to write a letter. Our object is to impress upon the beginner the necessity of writing what he or she may really think and feel, and to abandon all intention of producing an effect by fine writing or hard words. That which you say directly from yourself will most forcibly appeal to the reader of your letter; and whatever the object of the letter—a mere interchange of friendship, a declaration of love, or a business proposition—it will be more readily attained by a letter written off-hand, than by one which may cost you a whole night of study, even if you nibble the pen into pulp, and spoil a quire of paper.

But if your letter, when so written, has an awkward look, go over it carefully, and strike out every word that seems superfluous. In this suicidal sort of a task you will have to slaughter adjectives wholesale. Adjectives, my dear reader, are those words which express the qualities of things, and inexperienced writers are generally addicted to an excessive use of them. An extraordinary incident, a remarkable fact, a very strange and wonderful occurrence, a magnificent and splendid appearance, and so on, are to be regarded as excrescences which you must prune off, however fine they look for the moment. Run your pen through every word that can be spared, no matter how small the word may be; erase whole sentences if they are not strictly essential to convey your meaning; and when you have reduced the compass of your letter, you will remember something which you ought to have said, but which escaped you while writing; add any such omitted matters, and copy the whole out as clearly as you can, and you will be pleased with the new form of your letter, though you may have endured many pangs in erasing some portions of the original.

Let us have an example to help us. You write in the first instance, thus:

"I did not receive yours of the 18th till this morning, so that it has been six days detained by the post, which is very inconvenient, as the letter might have been of much more importance; and in that case you might have thought me negli-

gent in not replying earlier, which I could not do, of course, because I had not received the letter. I am glad to hear that your health continues so good, and I hope it will do so, and I dare say it will, for the air is good and situation high were you are now living, and, by this time, I should think, very pleasant. It gave me very great pain and much sorrow to hear of the sad news of your niece's continued illness, especially as I have so much regard for her, and remember, as I shall always do, the very pleasant and agreeable mornings we used to spend together in walking over those remarkable ruins, where there are so many extraordinary beauties of scenery, and so much to interest the mind, in the contemplation of magnificent scenery and wonderful prospects at the Abbey. I am sure you will believe me very thankful for your kind offer which you state in your letter; but as I am so much engaged at home, and have to see to Harry's business when he is away on market days, I cannot accept it, though I can assure you that I should be most happy to do so if circumstances permitted, and I could see clearly that I should be able to stay; because such an egagement is not of much use unless one can keep it for some time at least, and if I took it I should like to stay a year or two."

Perhaps when you have got so far you may halt to take breath, and find your space exhausted; and then some important matter, which you had nearly forgotten, will have to be scribbled round the edges of the letter, as a sort of frame work, being, perhaps, of more importance than the picture. Just write out this additional matter in a paragraph, and then go over the whole and see what you can cut out. You will find that you have wasted a great space in apologizing for not having replied earlier, in consequence of the delay of the post. You have been very diffuse about your correspondent's health, and still more so on the few matters that follow, but yet you cannot see where to spare a portion; but if you imagine that you are called upon to relate in a few words the contents of your letter, you would soon find that it might be condensed into a neat shape thus:

"Yours of the 18th did not arrive here till this morning, and the delay will excuse any apparent negligence on my part, in not replying earlier. I hear with much pleasure of your continued good health, which I sincerely hope will continue; the purity of the air and elevation of the position are, I think, very much in your favor. It gives me much sorrow to hear of the continued illness of your niece, the more so that I remember with pleasure the agreeable mornings we

used to spend together among the interesting ruins and charming scenery of the Abbey.

"The proposal you make me I highly appreciate, and would at once accept, were I not very much engaged at home. Let me, therefore, decline with sincere thanks, the engagement you so kindly offer."

When you have thus reduced the bulk and improved the style of your letter, you will find room for the additional matters that you were at first compelled to thrust into an ugly postscript.

In all cases you must guard against diffuseness, you must be plain and brief, and you will soon find that half a dozen words will usually convey your meaning more clearly and more elegantly than half a dozen sentences. But brevity must never be cultivated to such an extent as to merge into abruptness, for abruptness and rudeness are near neighbors, and a moderate freedom of expression is always preferable to immoderate condensation. There is a story told of a gallant who wrote to a noted general the following brief epistle:

"To General——,

"Sally has accepted me; can I have her?

"Yours,——."

To which the General replied:

"Go ahead.

"Yours,——."

Another important matter to be borne in mind is, to go as straight to your subject as possible. Do not circumvent, or play a game of round-about, but plainly say what you mean, as if you were expressing yourself in the simplest conversation. Here is a bit of circumventing fearful to behold:

"Sir,

"I am very sorry that I should have to trouble you so often; but in consequence of the very great dullness of trade, and the difficulty in getting moneys in at this dead season of the year, and the few orders that I get, and most of them from customers who expect credit, and that for a long period, when ready-money trade is that which I most want; together with the late failure of the Messrs. Brassey, which occurred on the 10th of last month, and in consequence of which the Branch Bank stopped payment on the following day, and a small balance which I had there is lost, or at least I shall only get a small dividend, and that not at present; and some orders which I had from the Messrs. Brassey were countermanded; and if they had not been countermanded I could not have gone on with them; besides which, I had a small

account against them which they had promised to settle immediately, and in consequence of their failure I shall have to take my chance with the other creditors, and shall get, I fear, but a very small dividend, so that all my transactions with that firm have been a loss to me. If you could advance me another hundred dollars on my bond, for three months, I should esteem it a great favor, and would make such good use of the money, in completing orders which I have in hand, and which I cannot go on with for want of cash, but which if completed, will be very profitable, and enable me to discharge my obligations to you, and to inscribe myself, your very obedient and humble servant,

"JONAS SLOWCOACH."

Now, this request of our friend might be compressed into a few modest words, and a respectful appeal made, which, would be more likely to secure him the loan he wants than the long winded statement he herein inflicts upon his patron. No sensible man would care to lend any one so much money after reading such a letter; it is worth all the money to wade through it. But if Jonas would "re-word the matter," and give the whole a decent shape, he might stand a good chance of having his request granted. Let him go straight to the point, and his patron will see at once that he is dealing with a man of decision, who preserves a proper self-respect and independence when asking a favor.

"Sir,——

"I regret that I should have again to tax your kindness, but I am under the necessity of requesting you to advance me another hundred dollars to enable me to complete some orders of a profitable kind, for which ready money is indispensable. I should not have had to trouble you had not the recent failure of Messrs. Brassey entailed upon me some heavy losses, which the orders I have in hand will enable me to some extent to repair. Messrs. Brassey's failure was announced on the 10th of last month, and on the following day the Branch Bank stopped payment, and a balance of cash which I had there was rendered unavailable, and will possibly be lost. Besides this misfortune, the Messrs. Brassey owed me an account at the moment of their failure, and I shall now have to take my chance of a dividend with the other creditors. Trade is very dull," &c., &c.

One great cause of tediousness in letters is the practice adopted by writers of interlarding their sentences with parentheses, so that the thread of sense pursues a tortuous course, and we are engulfed in the serpentine most completely.

"John says (and I dare say he is right) that (had he known it before) he would (had not the weather prevented him, and an illness from which he was then suffering, and from which he was only just recovering, though Dr. Emetic told him he could not be about for six weeks) have gone over to the marshes (only that the frost was so severe, and his pony was laid up at the farrier's with a tooth-ache, and besides he could not face the east wind), and he would have bought the sheep at once."

Just remember that your pen is an arrow or javelin, and that it is to be hurled directly against some chosen mark, and you will soon acquire the art of plain speaking, without parenthesis or twaddle, much to your own rejoicing and your reader's relief.

Some ludicrous effects are sometimes produced in letters by the neglect of the writer to pay attention to the antecedent. That is to say, you must write the present line in accordance with what has gone before, and not mix your sentences together so that it shall be difficult to understand to what any particular remark is intended to apply. Thus we read an advertisement in a New York paper, announcing that a blue gentleman's cloak was lost at the railroad depot, and any person giving information of it, or if stolen, the convicted person, shall receive five dollars reward. But to make it intelligible, regard must be paid to the antecedents, namely, *blue* is the antecedent of gentleman, but applies to the cloak, not to the gentleman, and we must therefore say, "gentleman's blue cloak." And again, as to the reward, it is not to be paid to the thief, but to the informer, and we must say, "a reward of five dollars shall be paid to any person who shall give such information as shall lead to its recovery, or if stolen, to the conviction of the thief."

Yet blunders of this kind are very common in the letters of uneducated persons. Mr. Shaver will write to a wholesale house requesting another parcel of the patent hooks and eyes, and a few razor cases, sixty to the ounce. "Sixty to the ounce" occured to him after he had written "razor cases," and applies to the "parcel of hooks and eyes," not, certainly, to the "razor cases."

By avoiding long sentences, and summing up every statement or remark in one or two short ones, you will soon attain to elegance of composition, and from the first you will be sure to make yourself understood, and that is the first necessity of any communication whatever. Depend upon it, as soon as you begin wire-drawing, you are getting cloudy

and ungrammatical; and if your letter wants remodelling or copying, the long sentences will puzzle you into a low fever, and if an error occurs anywhere, even if you detect it, it will be very difficult to remedy it in any sentence that runs on to an immoderate length. But you must not make your sentences so short that they express only parts of ideas or facts; as, for instance:

"It rained. So I rode. But it soon cleared up. And remained bright. So I got out at Broadway. And walked the remainder of the way."

Though such a statement may be cut up into many short sentences, it really consists of but two, because there are but *two incidents to relate.*

"It rained, so I rode. But as it cleared up, and remained fine, I got out at Broadway, and walked the remainder of the way."

In composition of every kind, a grammatical construction of sentences is essential, not merely for the sake of accuracy, but for elegance and clearness. The writer of an ungrammatical letter must risk being pitied, or laughed at, or sneered at, according as the reader may be influenced in the perusal of the letter. Yet, though grammatical accuracy is so desirable, it does not follow that a person cannot write a respectable letter without first going through a course of grammar. As we can only here advise you to make yourself as competent as possible in that useful department of knowledge, it remains with yourself to pursue it or not, according to your inclinations; but the plain confession must be made, that, without a sound knowledge of grammar, the writer of a letter can never rise above mediocrity.

In the absence of such knowledge, we beg to impress upon you the necessity of paying attention to the numbers and genders of nouns and pronouns, and to the persons of verbs. Be careful to avoid confounding the singular with the plural, as,

"These was mine, and they was his, but we changed, and that's how I come to have them."

If you are in doubt in writing such a sentence, just reflect how you make the same statement with the tongue, then adopt the same for the pen, and your sentence will read,

"These were mine, and these were his, but we made an exchange, and hence I came into possession of these."

A little quiet reflection will often serve you well, even if

you are unacquainted with the rules of grammar". You might write, or in conversation say, "I was going along the street, and who should I see but the fellow himself, and I whispered to Jenkins, 'That's him.'" Now, a little use of the grammar you have will convince you at once of the impropriety and inaccuracy of this mode of phrase. "That's him," for it is evident at first sight that *that* is an impersonal pronoun, but *him* is a personal pronoun, and hence they cannot be used in conjunction. To say "That is the man," would be correct, because we do not then use a personal noun or pronoun at all. In the same way it would be incorrect to say, "I shall tell you this," because *you*, already named, cannot apply to the pronoun *I*, and we say, "I will tell you this."

What are called demonstrative and relative pronouns most frequently occasion difficulty to the uninitiated. *This* refers to an object *near* the speaker, *that* to an object *distant* from the speaker. *These* is the plural of *this*, and *those* is the plural of *that*. They remain the same in every variation of *person*, *gender* or *case*. Hence we say, "*This* man and *these* boys *whom* you see here."

In reference to time, *this* is applied to the present, and *that* to the past and future; as, "*This* is an age of wonders, *that* age was distinguished for its feats of arms—*that* time is not yet come."

Who, *which* and *that* are employed in relation to some person or thing in the sentence, and the person or thing so referred to is called the *antecedent*; as, "The man *who* spoke to you produced the letters to *which* I refer, and amongst them the one *that* I wrote." A difficulty is sometimes experienced as to the respective uses of *that* and *which*.

Who and *that* may be employed with reference to the three persons *I*, *thou* and *he*, in both singular and plural; but *which* should be used only in reference to a noun in the third person, singular or plural.

But perhaps the words *was* and *were*, which are parts of the verb *to be*, are the least understood of any in our language. An uneducated person will write or say, "If I *was* going, and you *was* coming;" and sometimes those who have noticed that educated persons use these words, somewhat peculiarly fly to another extreme, and say, "I *were* about to say." When such an utterance is made before a grammarian, who has a slight love of the ludicrous, it has a tendency to make him explode, so very comical is that *were* when so placed.

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[2] See "Live and Learn; or Errors Rectified in Speaking and Writing Corrected." Published by Dick & Fitzgerald. Price, 50 cents.

Was belonging always to the singular number, and *were* to be the plural; as, I was, thou wast, he was, we were, you were, they were.

The verb always takes the form of *were* in any conditional case, so that whenever it is preceded by *if* you will bear in mind that *was* is a sign of vulgarity and ignorance. If I were, if thou wert, if he were, if we were, if you were, if they were.

SPELLING.

Rules for spelling words cannot be given here, and the dictionary must be your guide whenever you are in doubt. To spell a word incorrectly is not always a proof of the writer's incapacity; for, in the manuscripts of eminent scholars, instances of the kind frequently occur—the result of hurry and inadvertence. But there are some kinds of bad spelling that enable us to distinguish between the carelessness of the scholar and the blundering of an ignorant writer; for instance, the confounding of the comparative *as* for the past tense of the verb to *have*. Yet there is nothing more easy of comprehension than the difference between "He has the book, and it is bound in the same way as yours." The first implies action—the action of possession; the second, comparison. How distinct and unmistakable; and yet how often we see a neatly-written letter, in which the writer asks, "Has he told you so?" or, as it happened"

Words which have the double l, or m, or n, are very common, and are frequently misspelt. Fortunately a very good rule can be given for the guidance of the letter writer. When you are in doubt just pronounce the word aloud, and notice where the accent falls, and place the double consonant instead of the single one if the accent falls on the syllable preceding it. For instance, if the word *battalion* were pronounced *bat'alion* it would be correctly with one t; but as the accent falls on the second syllable—*batta'lion*—the double t is correctly used.

We might fill a page with examples, but prefer to state the rule only, and leave the reader to note the instances in the dictionary, or call them to mind by the aid of the memory. The rule is very little known, but is none the less valuable on that account.

Words to which the compounds *to* and *of* occur, afford a further instance of the necessity for a rule, and fortunately we can give one; but its value will depend on the person's accuracy of pronunciation.

In order to impress this rule on the reader's mind, we must beg him or her to remember that whenever *ol* or *le* occurs in

German the second vowel has its full vowel sound; for instance, Liebig is pronounced *Leebig*, and Bleicher, *Bliker*; in both these the second of the two vowels has its full sound, and the first remains mute. Now, apply this to English words ending in ei, and you have the key at once to the mode of spelling them. The word feind is pronounced feend, and hence you put the i first because it is mute. But neither and either are pronounced ni-ther and i-ther; and the proper way to spell them, therefore, is to put the e first, the e being mute. We believe that both these rules will prove useful to many who are a little bit learned in literary matters, and so far as we know, they have not been given before. Our reading has not been finished; but we have never seen such rules laid down for spelling in the case of double consonants, and the digraphs of and ie.

CAPITALS should be cautiously used in letter-writing. We should certainly not confine the writer of a letter to the rigid rule observed in printed literature, because an important word may sometimes be graced with a capital which, in a printed form, would begin with a small letter. But an indiscriminate, or even frequent use of capitals, is a proof of the plebeian origin and ignorance of the writer. The name of a person or a place should always be commenced with a capital, and every fresh paragraph should commence with a capital; beyond this there is little need for their use—strictly speaking, none.

Italic letters are employed to distinguish the words of a *foreign* language that may be introduced into a sentence, or to denote that those of our own, thus distinguished, are particularly emphatic and expressive. The Italic character was invented and introduced by Aldus Manutius, a celebrated Venetian printer, 1501. The Italic words in the Sacred Scriptures are such as have no corresponding words in the original Hebrew or Greek, but were added by the translators to complete the sense, &c. In writing, it is customary to underline such words as would be Italicised in printing.

PARAGRAPHS.—A letter which runs on like a stream, without stops, and with no division into paragraphs, is as ridiculous a thing as one in which every other word commences with a capital letter. But you may find a difficulty in breaking your matter into separate paragraphs, and, in your anxiety to do it properly, may break into two or more portions that which should not be broken at all. But if you bear in mind that paragraphs bear the same relation to written composition that bands do to a sermon, and acts and scenes to a play, you will perceive at once that every paragraph should contain within it the complete relation of an incident, or an important part or division of a relation of an

incident, or a distinct statement of some kind, having no relation to the statement which follows, and which latter will properly form another paragraph. Pay a little attention to the manner in which paragraphs of books are arranged—this, for instance—and you will see that there is no rule as to the length of a paragraph; it may consist of one or two lines only, or of a hundred, but it must have a distinctness, and to some extent a completeness of its own. Lady writers are very much at fault in this particular; they hurry on from one thing to another, from James's cold to Betsy's fever, then to the fashion of bonnets, or the prevalence of hats; thence to the weddings that have happened, and to weddings that are about to happen; and then to inquiries of all kinds, and replies to inquiries that have been addressed to them; and the whole of such separate and distinct matters are strung together, sometimes without stops, but very often indeed with no division into paragraphs. Yet nothing can be more simple, for the matter readily separates itself into portions, if it be carefully scanned, and it will soon be discovered that this necessary and proper division may be accomplished without the help of a professor, or a consultation of blue stockings.

PUNCTUATION.

"PUNCTUATION is the art of dividing a written composition, by certain marks, to denote the different pauses which the sense and construction require.

"The marks used in punctuating are the *comma* (,), the *semicolon* (;), the *colon* (:), the *period* or *full point* (.), the *note of admiration* (!) and the *note of interrogation* (?).

"A *comma*, which is the shortest pause, is used to separate those parts of a sentence which, though very closely connected in sense, require a pause between them. Two or more substantives, adjectives, &c., immediately succeeding each other, require a comma after each: as *She is young, handsome, and agreeable*; but, if connected by a conjunction, the comma is not required; as, *He is a wise and learned man*. When an address is made to a person, the noun requires a comma before and after it: as, *Attend, child, to what I say*. Many adverbs require a comma before and after them: as *perhaps, however, indeed, besides*, &c.

"A *semicolon* is used for separating those members of a sentence which require a longer pause than a comma, and need some other member to render the sense complete: as, *A slovenly air is but a slight defect; yet, striking as it is, it is sufficient to render a man disagreeable*. Or it is used to distinguish those members of a sentence which, though less closely connected than those separated by commas, are not so independent as those distinguished by a colon: as *The youth of truth is a plain and safe path; that of falsehood is a perplexing chase*.

"A *colon* is used when a member of a sentence is complete in itself but is followed by some additional remark or illustration: as, *There is no material truth more fixed and certain at the same time; wisdom is the repose of minds*. When several members of a sentence have been distinguished by semicolons, they require to be separated from the last clause by a

colon; as, *Education is necessary to enlighten the mind: it is of great importance in the business of life; but it is indispensable for rising in the world; therefore improve in it with the utmost assiduity.* When an example or quotation is introduced, it is generally preceded by a colon; as, *The Scripture says: He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.* The colon is also adopted for the purpose of marking or dividing such portions of the sacred Scriptures as are Parochially Read in Churches, separating each of those portions into two parts; as, *With his own right hand, and with his holy arm, hath he gotten himself the victory.*

The *period*, or *full point*, denotes that a sentence is complete; as *Honor the King.* It is also placed after all abbreviations; as, P.S., *Post-script.* A.D., *Anno Domini.*

"A *note of admiration* is used when some violent emotion of the mind is expressed; as, *O, virtue! how amiable thou art!*

"A *note of interrogation* is placed at the end of every question; as, *Whither shall we go? Shall we go home?*

"There are several other marks used in writing and printing which require illustration. The *dash* (—) is used when the sentence is broken off abruptly; as, *To die—to sleep.* The *parenthesis* ( ) is used to enclose some part of a sentence which may be omitted without injuring the sense; as, *We all (including Mr. A.) went to Boston.* The *apostrophe* (') is used either as a sign of the possessive case, or to shorten a word; as, *Mary's frock, tho' for though, ne'er for never.* The *caret* (^) is used to show that some word or words are omitted; as, *I saw a man.* The *hyphen* is used to connect compound words; as, *self-love.* The *diæresis* (¨) is placed over one or two vowels, to show that they are to be separately pronounced; as, *aërial.* The *Index* (☞) points out a remarkable passage. The *asterisk* (*), the *single* or *double dagger* († ‡), *parallel lines* (‖), the *section* (§), the *paragraph* (¶); also some small letters as a, b; and figures, 1, 2, 3, are used as references to notes in the margin or at the bottom of the page."

Lawyers disdain punctuation in their documents, and scholars will never cease to pity them so long as they continue the practice of constructing documents without stops. Are law clerks endowed with any greater power of lungs than other people, or are they so clever in extemporaneous punctuation, that they can always mark the pauses correctly in the perusal of documents? No, it is the practice, or rather, the habit, of the profession; the worse, then, for the profession. Let no aspirant to elegance in epistolary correspondence disdain the services of those valuable little dots, the comma, the semicolon, the colon and the period. The comma and the period will do nearly all you want; the dash may sometimes be useful; but the other two require more experience to use them well. Wherever a proper pause occurs, wherever the sentence seems naturally to halt, stick in a comma; and when that head, or division, or sentence, is really completed, put down your full stop, and begin again with a capital letter. Observe how this is managed in books, and you will gain more instruction in punctuation, in ten

minutes than we could teach you were we to devote several pages to the subject. Correct punctuation not only gives elegance to a composition, but it makes its meaning clear, enforces attention to those words or passages which most require it, and to a great extent prevents a misunderstanding, or willful misconstruction of the writer's meaning."

TO THOSE WHO WRITE FOR THE PRESS.

It would be a great favor to editors and printers, should those who write for the press observe the following rules. They are reasonable, and correspondents will regard them as such: 1. Write with black ink, on white paper, wide ruled. 2. Make the pages small, one-fourth that of a foolscap sheet. 3. Leave the second page of each leaf blank. 4. Give to the written page an ample margin *all round*. 5. Number the papers in order of their succession. 6. Write in a plain, bold hand, with less respect to beauty. 7. Use no abbreviations which are not to appear in print. 8. Punctuate the manuscript as it should be printed. 9. For italics underscore one line; for small capitals, two; capitals, three. 10. Never interline without the caret to show its place. 11. Take special pains with every letter in proper names. 12. Review every word, to be sure that none is illegible. 13. Put directions to the printer at the head of the first page. 14. Never write a private letter to the editor on the printer's copy, but always on a separate sheet.

THE COMPLIMENTARY NOTE

Has a distinct character, and can never be confounded with the familiar epistle. The note style is to be adopted by persons who are strangers to each other, or not sufficiently known to allow of a familiar style of correspondence. But the subject has also much to do in determining whether the letter or note form shall be adopted. Invitations of all kinds may be conveyed in the form of the note; so may congratulations, short requests and compliments. But where positive business of any kind is to be dealt with, the formal business letter is preferable, except when a gentleman writes to a lady who is a stranger to him, or a lady in writing to a gentleman stranger; and even then the letter commencing "Sir," or "Madam," may frequently be the best.

It is a necessary character of a note that it should be short, plain and polite, but distant; as, for instance:

"See an excellent work entitled, "Mind your Stops; or, Punctuation Made Plain." Published by Garrett, Dick & Fitzgerald. Price, 12½ cents.

"Mr. Brown presents his compliments to Miss Quaver, and desires to know if Miss Q. still continues to give lessons on the guitar.

"Harmony House, June 10th, 1884."

"Mrs. Sociable presents her compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Gay, and will be happy to have their company for a friendly dance, on the evening of Tuesday next, December 18, at nine precisely.

"The Shaggery, December 12th, 1884."

Etiquette must be strictly observed in all such correspondence; the reply must be prompt, decisive, and as polite as the inquiry or invitation.

"Miss Quaver presents her compliments to Mr. Brown, and has the pleasure to inform him that the guitar classes are now continued at 27 Music Street; terms, twenty dollars for the course of twelve lessons.

"Flutonic Parade, June 11th, 1884."

"Mrs. Gay presents her compliments to Mrs. Sociable, and has much pleasure in accepting for herself and Mr. Gay, Mrs. Sociable's kind invitation for the evening of Tuesday next, the 18th instant.

"Makepeace Place, December 13th, 1884."

Now, why does Miss Quaver give more information than is sought of her? Simply because she is a shrewd woman, anxious to extend her professional engagements, and so she states her terms at once, and saves Mr. Brown the trouble of writing again, and herself the trouble of a second answer.

This form of correspondence does not admit of remarks by the way, or even of prolix explanations, or of rambling statements and questions. Neither is it advisable as a form of communication between very intimate friends; for, after a close friendship has been sealed by social communion, and many acts of mutual regard, it would be in danger of sudden destruction by the appearance on the scene of so cold a document. We must then adopt a warmer medium, and say thus:

"Hart Street, November 9th, 1884.

"My Dear Miss Pink,

"We shall have a few friends here to dinner at five on Friday next; will you kindly join us? If little Arabella comes to town in time, bring her with you, and gladden the heart of yours devotedly,

GEORGIANA PLUM."

One point we should scarcely have thought necessary to mention, had we not, while writing this, had a document

handed to us for inspection. We should call it a note, "with a vengeance," for it runs thus:

"Mr. Hawkins presents his compliments to Mr. Henry Whittle, and I want to know if I can proceed with the drawings as you get the models ready. If Mr. Hawkins can make progress with the scrolls first, perhaps you will oblige by introducing, as occasion serves, a few of the new floral borders, and oblige, yours obediently, J. S. Hawkins."

Now, whatever may be Mr. Hawkins's capabilities in using the pencil, he certainly cuts a ludicrous figure when he seizes the pen. But for this document, we should have thought it unnecessary to inform the reader that, whatever tone is assumed at starting, whether in formal note, a friendly gossipy epistle, or a plain business letter, that same tone should be sustained throughout, and more especially so its grammatical form.

If we write, "Dear Sir, I have had occasion," &c., we write in the *first* person singular; but when we say, "The editor begs to inform Mr. ——," &c., we write in the *third* person singular. In the first case we say, *I am*, in the latter, *he is;* and it is impossible to shift from one form to another without at once violating the very fundamentals of English syntax.

When you write a note you stand, as it were, behind the scenes, you speak from a distance, and refer to yourself as if you were a distinct personage, having no claim to *I* or *me*. From that position you must not budge an inch, nor must you attach a signature at the end of your note, but state, after the fashion of the forms given above, and as briefly and politely as possible, the object of your communication.

Hence the uses of the note are restricted. It forbids you to give a full account of any transaction, or to enter minutely into any details of trade or business, and more especially friendly inquiries, and chit-chat of any kind; it is complimentary, and may be friendly; but it must be formal, elegant, brief, and so plain in its statement as to require no explanation, or any further correspondence beyond an equally plain, polite and elegant reply; and the reply must be in the note form. To reply by means of a note in the first person would evince a sad want of propriety, and a proof of very ill breeding. As a rule, invitations of all kinds should come from the mistress of the house.

THE FRIENDLY LETTER.

But though a correspondence may commence in this ways, and may even be so continued for complimentary purposes,

yet, as acquaintance ripens into friendship, the time will come day come when such formal modes of correspondence may be exchanged for others of a more familiar kind. Amongst men formalities are soon got rid of, and especially among men of literary culture, who yield to the genialities of their own warm temperaments much sooner than those who cultivate politeness only; for men of letters, and cultivators of the liberal and fine arts, have a happy way of regarding each other as friends, even before personal acquaintance begins. In literary circles it is common enough for a person to write to another a friendly and confidential epistle, before the parties have ever seen each other; but even then the value of the note in the third person would not be overlooked, and such a letter would never be made to the duty for it, and complimentary matters would still have their proper formal mode of expression.

But, supposing an acquaintance to be commenced through the cold medium of an invitation, a congratulation, or a barren compliment, when may the parties abandon such a form, and adopt one more congenial to their mutual regards for each other, and the expression of the more enlarged communion of feeling which may have sprung up between them? Plainly, when they feel that they really understand each other, and are on terms of real acquaintance, if not of confidential friendship. Herein they must judge for themselves, but without haste, and cautiously.

Individual judgment, based on circumstances, is the only guide in such a case, but is a guide which can never fail, if there be a small amount of common sense to support it. When your heart yearns towards your friend, when you feel that you have been too long separated by the demarkating line of cold conventionality, sit you down and write to him—not from the head, but from the heart; but keep a rein gently tightened on your enthusiasm, for fear he should think you are over-doing it. But you must still be a little complimentary till you know each other well; give him credit for his good judgment, good taste, good feeling, or whatever of his qualities strike you as forming a prominent part of his character; and you may do this without being servile, without bespattering him with sickly flattery, without licking the soles of his feet. Should you stoop to the latter, you may expect to get kicked in return; and yet a little gentlemanly adulation, neatly done, and implied rather than said, is a great charm in friendly correspondence, and will be pretty sure to bind your correspondent to you by very enduring ties.

But you have opened your heart, and have said "My dear Mr. Wilkins," instead of "Mr. Bumps presents his compliments to Mr. Wilkins."

Will he reply in a kindred tone? *He must.* He dare not send you back a cold note of six lines, written in the centre of an odoriferous sheet of the purest cream-laid. If you get back a very polite note, distant as usual, the third person repeating to your assuring first, give it up, you are not wanted; remain as an acquaintance, if you please, but be sure that in that quarter you have no friend.

Reverse the case, and all that applies to Wilkins applies to yourself; and if you want to elbow aside an obsequious flatterer, who thrusts his unwelcome eulogies, or his hollow cordiality—perhaps with a future view to borrow—upon you in an excessively pleasant way, settle him with an awfully polite, short, and distant note, and he must be a fool, indeed, if he does not understand at once that "it won't do."

A friendly correspondence once established must not relapse into mere formalities, unless a decided quarrel and separation have taken place. Small differences or disagreements are never to make any change in your modes of address and expression, for there is nothing meaner than the severing of the obvious ties of friendship for trifles, though such things do take place every day. It should be remembered that neither friendship, nor cordial acquaintanceship, interferes in any way with a person's opinions or conduct, so long as the universally recognized principles of honor and morality are not violated. You may some day have to oppose your friend at a caucus meeting or in a warm discussion on religion or politics; yet his aversion to your views, and your impetuous opposition to his, are not to prevent you writing, "My dear Harry," or "My dear Tomkins," or My dear Sir," as you did before the difference broke out. Depend upon it, there is nothing more contemptible than to taint the amenities of social life with exhibitions of temper or vexation, or to suffer the pen to express unfriendly sentiments or greetings of a suddenly cool character, because some trifling difference has arisen between yourself and your friend.

Here it should be hinted that whatever mode you adopt in addressing a person, is to be preserved in future correspondence, if not in exactly the same words, at least the same in purport; you must not go back except for a special reason, but you may go forward with a proper grace as intimacy ripens, and increase the warmth of your congratulations.

We remember an incident which may be mentioned in illustration of this. A gentleman had been for many years on terms of intimate friendship with his tailor, and their correspondence between them, whether of a friendly or a business nature, had always a cordial tone pervading it, until on one occasion the friendship was slightly interrupted. In fact, the gentleman was a little in arrears as to the settlement of his friend's account, and the latter sent a short and brusque letter, as follows:

"Sir,

"I am disappointed in not having received the amount of my bill as promised by you in your last; may I beg the favor of a speedy settlement? Yours obediently,

"SIMON SLOWSTITCH."

To this answer was returned as follows:

"My dear Slowstitch,

"Last time you wrote I owed you nothing, and you addressed me as your 'Dear Nonplus;' but since I have unfortunately failed to meet your demand, according to my own promise, you reduce me to a mere 'Sir,' upon your list of patrons. Do you intend to terminate a friendship of ten years in this way, or do you purpose resuming the 'Dear Nonplus,' with a view to be mine 'faithfully,' when the account is settled (as it will be to-morrow), remaining in the meanwhile mine, 'obediently,' only? Will you allow me to suggest that expressions of friendship are open to question, both as to their value and their sincerity, when they are made to depend on business relations for their respective amounts of warmth or coldness which shall be infused into them. To be consistent, I shall have to adopt a cringing tone when I owe you money, and a tone of pompous patronage the moment I have paid it; that is, if any correspondence should continue between yourself and yours very truly,

STEPHEN NONPLUS."

Among the forms of address for friendly, complimentary and semi-business letters, we have the formal "Dear Sir" for use on all occasions. The solicitor so addresses his client, the client his solicitor, the patient his physician, the editor his contributor, and, indeed, any man of gentlemanly pretentions, addressing another to whom he has already been introduced, or with whom he has already corresponded. In correspondence of a professional nature, where both parties are strangers, it would always be well to commence with the simple "Sir," or "Madam," and in the second or third letter adopt the more agreeable "Dear Sir," or "Dear Madam." A little enhancement of the gentlemanly or lady-like feeling is to be

found in "My dear Sir," or "My dear Madam," which may by degrees, as the parties know and respect each other more sincerely, take the very friendly and now fashionable form of "My dear Mr. Swallowwing," "My dear Mrs. Pettitoe," or "My dear Miss Nightingale." The latter form is that most in use at the present day in polite society, between persons who have met at least once, and who are on terms of acquaintance, in which business has no part whatever.

When folks begin to say "My dear Higginbottom," "My dear old boy," and "My dear fellow," all strict rules of etiquette are at an end, and good sense gives a proper form to the free expression of mutual friendship.

But friendship, like all other moral and material adornments of life, is subject to blight occasionally, and the strongest union may be dissolved by a fiercer heat arising from the combustion of the very dregs and lees of amity. Your friend annoys you, disappoints you, breaks his word, or lets off a bit of scandal that reaches your ears. Then you will "write him such a letter," you'll tell him plainly what you think of him, and put him to shame by the evidence of black and white.

Now, if you are wise you will do nothing of the sort; you will never write a single word that may cause shame or pain in the reader's mind, or that the writer may have cause hereafter to regret. A letter is a document that may be preserved for ever; and should you be mistaken, or only partially informed, or the victim of your own too hasty or incompetent judgment, your own hand and seal may remain as a witness of your rashness, perhaps of your meanness, to the end of your days, ay, and long after that, to the end of the world even.

Therefore, if you want to tell your friend your mind, do not *write*, but *speak* it; a spoken bitterness may be forgotten and forgiven, but a written one cannot be so readily forgiven, and it can never be forgotten; no, not even if burnt; for when we are stung in the perusal of something, the effect goes deep, and becomes lasting, and can scarcely ever be thoroughly erased, even by all-corroding time. A fierce letter, a sharply written reproof, or a disparaging communication to a friend, has been the cause of embittering many a couple of lives; and it may be safely said that that should never be written which we may, within possibility, wish hereafter to recall. We are all fallible, and may, therefore, be very much in error when we feel very sure that we are in the right; and that consideration should be sufficient to make

any sensible man or woman pause before giving vent to anger, with the pen in the hand.

But exceptions to such a rule may occur; an admonition, a regret, nay, even an accusation, may sometimes be necessary, and a letter be the only possible mode of conveying it. Let good sense and good feeling determine how the case shall be, and let it at the same time be borne in mind, that what is once written cannot be unwritten, and that greater caution is necessary in using the pen than in using the tongue.

THE BUSINESS LETTER

Must be pithy, short, and go straight to the point. Pleasantry is not advisable, except between persons who are very intimate, and even then it is best to keep friendship and business as much apart as possible.

"The first thing necessary," says Lord Chesterfield, "in writing letters of business, is extreme clearness and perspicuity; every paragraph should be so clear and unambiguous that the dullest fellow in the world may not be able to mistake it, nor be obliged to read it twice in order to understand it. This necessary clearness implies a correctness, without excluding an elegance of style. In business an elegant simplicity, the result of care, not of labor, is required; nor does it exclude the usual terms of politeness and good breeding, but, on the contrary, it strictly requires them." A writer, after iterating Lord Chesterfield's remarks, continues: "The one principal and pervading object of all communications on matters of business is to convey the thought which the writer is wishing to impart; *that* is understood to be so important, that it alone is to be attended to, and all interfering purposes rejected. And, if this intention be closely and freely followed, a beauty will spring up in the very plainness that will thereby be reached; for there is a rare and essential elegance abiding in the barrenness of mere and perfect perspicuity."

In writing, be particular, and clear, in arranging the subjects of your letter. Some directions relating to this and applicable to epistolary correspondence in every variety, will be found in the immediately succeeding section. Commence with the most important subject of your letter. To every distinct subject, or point, allot a distinct paragraph. Long and involved sentences, or sentences composed of several members, must be avoided. For the sake of perspicuity, a careful attention to punctuation is necessary. At the close of your letter, a short recapitulation of its leading contents will be found use-

ful; to your correspondent, in the first instance; to yourself, in the second, as matter of reference in your copy.

Be prompt and punctual in your replies. A recapitulation, at the close of a reply, is yet more desirable than in a first direct communication. "In this, however," observes Anderson, in his Practical Mercantile Correspondence, "merchants have also another object, which is to render their letter-books, as far as possible, *a history of their transactions*, for the advantage of ready reference after a lapse of years, and for production in court with the better effect, in case of litigation. Accordingly, every letter should speak, as it were, for itself, and give all the necessary particulars of the transaction to which it refers."

All letters should be dated; that is, they should present, either the head or conclusion, the year, the day of the month, and the name of the place whence written. The *date* of a letter is often of great importance in reference—especially in affairs of business. For the same purpose, it is a good plan also to place the date on the upper left-hand corner of the letter when folded, preceding the superscription.

Letters on *business* should be dated at the *head*—that is, on the first page; together with the name and address of the parties written to, thus:

"Montreal, April 30th, 1885.

"Messrs. James M Harris & Co., Hamilton.

"Gentlemen—

"We beg to inform you," &c.

The object of adopting this mode of address is to provide against accident, or an attempt at fraud, by tearing off the superscription of the letter, or destroying the envelope in which it might have been placed. In such a case, it would be difficult to prove to whom the letter might have been written; consequently, in a court of justice, its production would be defective as evidence.

All letters received in a manufacturing, mercantile or trading establishment should, when read, be carefully folded and endorsed, with the name of the correspondent, the date of writing, and the date of receipt, with a blank left for the date of the answer. For example:

"Montreal, March 10th, 1885.

"Williamson, Thompson & Co.

"Received, March the 12th.

"Answered,

Many persons, not much accustomed to use the pen, have

notice, if any occasion happens to call for a letter on any business matter, that they must at once compose a tedious string of circumstantial explanations; and, finding it difficult to make up what they consider a "capital letter," they defer writing until the occasion is perhaps gone, or at least until the business in hand has suffered considerable injury by the delay. But if they would divest their minds of all ideas of literary composition, and just write down what they would say, and in the fewest possible words, such persons would find business correspondence agreeable rather than irksome. Thus a manufacturer of wooden bowls writes to his wholesale house, to ask for an advance of cash, and commences thus:

"Sir,—

"I am sorry to inform you that in consequence of not being able to complete an order, which was sent me from parties at Albany, and which ought, and which I indeed promised, to have completed and forwarded by the freight train, on Wednesday last, but which I have not sent on account of being so short. I could not go into the market for wood, and therefore could not complete the order, and am obliged reluctantly to request of you to be so kind as to oblige me with an advance by cash of one hundred dollars, on account of the orders I have in hand for you, and which I shall be able, if you can do me the favor of obliging me with one hundred dollars, of forwarding without fail on Tuesday next, and shall remain your humble and obedient,

TURNER WOODENHEAD."

When his employer receives this he will look hard at it through his spectacles, read a few lines, then put it down and take it up again, growing testy as he proceeds, and at last toss it across the desk to his clerk, saying, "Here, Crampton, I can't read Woodenhead's letter; just make it out and answer it; it's as bad as having to read the supplement to a newspaper to have a letter of his to come in."

Would not our friend tremble to see his request for one hundred dollars on account handed over to a junior clerk, perhaps to be forgotten for a day or two, or explained to the principal in such a careless way as to ensure for it either no reply at all or one in the negative? Let him, therefore, write a short, plain letter, thus:

"Ottawa, July 27, 1858.

"SIR,—I find myself much pressed for cash, and have some orders from a house at Albany, which should have been completed by Wednesday last, besides the goods which are in progress for you. As I have not ready money sufficient for the purchase of wood, will you kindly advance me one hundred

dollars on account! That would enable me to complete and deliver the goods I have in hand for you, by Tuesday next, as well as those referred to for the house at Albany. As the case is an urgent one, I have no doubt you will confer such a favor on yours obediently. TURNER WOODBRIDGE.

"To Mr. Longpurse, Pearl Street."

When friendly matters are mixed up with business, such as an invitation to tea, and an order for soap, or a proposal for a drive, and a request for payment of an account; the several matters should be stated in distinct paragraphs, not jumbled together, as if the ideas were first shaken up in a hat, and then turned out in a heap, according to the caprice of chance. State your business proposals plainly and your friendly greetings kindly, and let friendship always take precedence, else it will appear that your invitation or compliment is a mere make-weight or an afterthought intended to preserve a profitable connection; though, as a rule, the less business and friendship are mixed together, the better for all parties.

The following are some capital samples of Business Letters:

To a Merchant proposing to open an Account.

Hamilton, Feb. 7th, 18—.

Sir,—My friend, Mr. —— of B—— street, has spoken of you in terms of high recommendation; so much so, indeed, that having found reason to withdraw my orders from my late ——, I am disposed to open an account with your firm. You will therefore much oblige me by forwarding a list of prices, together with other necessary particulars as to your manner of doing business.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

To Mr. —— (— —).

Do. to a Publisher's Firm.

Windsor, May 3rd, 18—.

Gentlemen,—As our business is rapidly on the increase, we are desirous of opening an account with your house, and shall feel obliged by your transmitting us a trade list of your publications, as well as some of your general catalogues. Our usual terms of settlement are as follows (*here state terms*). Should they be agreeable to your house, the favor of an early attention to our request will oblige,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servants,

To Messrs. —— & Co (—— & ——).

To a Firm, seeking a Clerkship.

Halifax, April 4th, 18—.

GENTLEMEN,—Perceiving by your advertisement in the —— of ——, that you are in want of a clerk, I beg to enclose testimonials, and venture to hope that from my previous experience in the line of business you pursue, I should be of some use in your establishment. My habits of life are such as to insure regularity in the discharge of my duties, and I can only assure you that, should you honor me with your confidence, I shall spare no pains to acquit myself to your satisfaction.

I remain, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

To Messrs. —— —— (——).

A Testimonial on behalf of a similar applicant.

St. John's, April 3, 18—.

GENTLEMEN,—Finding that Mr. —— is an applicant for a situation as clerk, I beg to say a few words on his behalf. During the —— years he was in my employ, I found him diligent and conscientious in the discharge of his duties, remarkably clever in correspondence, and correct in the management of my books. Indeed, nothing but my retiring from business would have induced me to part with him, and I firmly believe that both his personal character, and his thorough knowledge of business, will render him a valuable acquisition to your firm.

I remain, gentlemen,

Yours most obediently,

To Messrs. —— —— (——).

To a Correspondent, requesting the payment of a sum of Money.

New Brighton, April 12, 18—.

SIR,—Although the balance of the account between us has been of long standing in my favor, yet I would not have applied to you at present had not a very unexpected demand been made upon me for a considerable sum, which, without your assistance, it will not be in my power to answer. When I have an opportunity of seeing you, I shall then inform you of the nature of this demand, and the necessity of my discharging it. I hope you will excuse me this freedom, which nothing but a regard to my credit and family could oblige me to take. If it does not suit you to remit the whole, part will be thankfully received by

Yours very respectfully,

To —— (——).

Delaying the Payment of a Debt.

Montreal, June 15th, 18—.

Gentlemen,—I much regret that circumstances prevent my being as punctual as is my wont, and hope you will kindly renew the acceptance you hold of mine for another three months. The failure of a person largely indebted to me, and some other losses in business, have caused me severe inconvenience, and I really must depend upon your leniency as one means to enable me to recover myself.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient and faithful servant,

To Mr. —— (——).

Another on the same subject.

Memphis, Jan. 14th, 18.—

Sir,—I must really beg of you to defer the settlement of your account till after the middle of next month, when I shall be in a condition to meet your demand. Regretting that circumstances prevent my being more prompt in attending to your wishes,

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

To Mr. —— (——).

Another on the same subject.

Louisville, August 7th, 18—.

Sir,—Your account, amounting to ——, has indeed remained some time unsettled, but disappointments of a pecuniary nature, to which I need not more particularly allude, will prevent my liquidating it for some time to come, perhaps three months, but the payment will not exceed that period. From the pressing language of your application, I am disposed to think that a promissory note for that time may be of service to you, it being negotiable; if so, I have no objection to give it, and will be prepared to honor it when duly presented.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

To Mr. —— (——).

A Gentleman Desiring the Renewal of a Note of Hand.

Milwaukee, August 3rd, 18—.

Sir,—My note of hand (or acceptance) will be due on the 20th instant, but I regret to say that, owing to circumstances beyond my control, I fear that I shall not be able to meet it.

May I therefore request that you will grant me the indulgence of a short renewal (of six weeks), when I doubt not of my means to take it up. Your compliance with this wish will confer an obligation upon,

Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

To Mr. ——. (——).

Proposing to Open an Account.

San Francisco, Nov. 30th, 18—.

GENTLEMEN,—Having succeeded to the business formerly carried on by Messrs. ——, we are desirous of entering into a negotiation with your house for the supply of ——. We may mention that business is happily very brisk at present, and that, having materially increased our connection in Sacramento, Oregon, &c., we flatter ourselves that we could be very instrumental in increasing the sale of——. We are encouraged to make this application from knowing that you were formerly in the practice of transacting business with Messrs. —— in this way.

We have, in the meantime, forwarded through Messrs. —— a pretty extensive order for your——, by which you will perceive the nature of the articles most in demand. We would suggest, in the event of your acceding to our application, that a supply of your —— be sent to us, say every six weeks or two months, to the extent of about $500. We mention this sum at present, but hope, when the trial has been made, and we find ourselves in a position regularly to supply our country agents, to have it extended to twice or three times that amount. Mr. ——, who returns to your city in the course of a month or two, will give you every satisfaction as to our name and position, but in the meantime we beg to refer you to Messrs. ——, or to Messrs. —— & ——.

We trust this order we have now sent will be executed with all speed, and on presentation of the invoice to Messrs. ——, they will give you a cheque for the amount, as well as advice by what vessel to ship the goods.

We are, gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

(—— & ——).

To Messrs. —— & Co., New York.

FAMILY EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE.

All intercourse between parents and children, whether colloquial or epistolary, should be free and confidential. The heart, more especially of the child to the parent, should be laid open

without reserve. There ought to be no half confidence. No friend can feel so deeply interested for another's welfare as fathers and mothers for that of their own offspring. Few are so well qualified to advise—to make allowance for the errors of youth—to judge with candor—to censure with mildness—to point out the right path, or to reclaim from the wrong one. There is no subject upon which either son or daughter can have even a chance of consulting another with so much advantage as a parent. Fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, should be the warm, ingenuous, peculiar friends of one another; blending the strongest ties of nature with the fondest affections of the heart—improving and strengthening, expanding, and heightening each. On present feelings and circumstances, on future prospects, whom can the son consult with so much propriety as his father—the daughter as her mother? In cases which admit of the combined consultation—and there are few that do not—the advantage is more than doubled to the child.

Next to the confidence between parents and children, ought to be that between brothers and sisters—the tenderest, holiest, most sympathetic affection.

If I may so express myself, I love to see fathers and sons as brothers—mothers and daughters as sisters; and this affection may exist in full force without in the slightest degree infringing the relative duties between parent and child. To create, however, where it may not exist naturally, the habit of, intimateness and confidence in a child, to foster and to cherish it where beautiful promise is given from the birth—the parent should act with corresponding frankness and affection. Virtue elicits virtue as surely as its opposite engenders vice. To this neglect or unconsciousness of this great truth must be ascribed much of that coldness, reserve, and estrangement which too often subsist in even well-disposed families.

It is an old saying—and, like many other old sayings, it requires to be accepted with due qualification—that "familiarity breeds contempt." In my view, this does not hold good amongst well-regulated minds. On the contrary, I consider that perfect respect is compatible with much familiarity. Form, ceremony and etiquette, unless held in wise subordination, are very chilling in the social and affectionate intercourse of life, especially amongst relations and intimate friends. Formerly, it was the practice for pupils to be taught, when addressing their parents in the epistolary form, to commence with the words, "Honoured Sir," or "Madam," "Honoured Parent," &c. At present, the tendency is to the opposite extreme. Let us, without affectation or servility, but with a due regard to propriety, unaffected respect, and true affection, begin our letters, as we would our conversation, with the words, "My dear Father," or "Mother,"

or, "My dear and honored Father," "My dearly beloved Mother," &c., according to circumstance and feeling.

However, as in the present section I am writing for the instruction and benefit of youth upon their entrance into life, rather than for children still under the discipline of school, enough has been said upon this head.

Forms are, indeed, of comparatively little importance.

"If you reside at a distance from your family—parents, brothers, sisters, dear and estimable friends—write to them frequently, and at stated periods; weekly, fortnightly, monthly, as circumstances may allow; but—be punctual. Under the new postage system, no excuse can be admitted on the plea of expense. By the establishment of periodical times for writing, you know when to write, and when to expect a letter; all fruitless expectation, anxiety, and expense will thus be avoided. Correspondence between friends and relations is, in every respect, more valuable, interesting, useful and pleasant to all parties, for being regular and punctual. In such cases you need not be parsimonious of words or sentences. Avoiding mere verbiage, express your feelings in the same easy, cheerful manner that you would use were you at home and entertaining the family circle with the incidental converse of the day. By this plan you will enjoy the additional advantage of cultivating some of the sweetest and noblest virtues of the human heart. But do not get into the worse than useless habit of corresponding with those from whose communications you derive neither pleasure nor profit."

Examples, here, are hardly necessary; yet I have a few before me, which, for their intrinsic merits and characteristic propriety, are well entitled to perusal. The first is a penitential letter from a youth who had unwisely abandoned his house, relinquishing higher prospects, and adopting the stage as a profession, to his uncle. The writer was Elliston, afterwards celebrated as a comedian; the gentleman addressed, Dr. Elliston, Master of Sidney College, Cambridge:

Sir,—However dismayed I find myself in this undertaking, and however ashamed I feel at my conduct towards you, yet I know the attempt to gain your forgiveness is a duty. I have taken courage, therefore, to proceed. Fearful as I have reason to be of your anger, how shall I address you, or what can I allege? I can see no middle state between that of the beloved nephew (as I have a thousand proofs to know I once was) and the discarded Robert Elliston. If but a faint ray of hope would break in to lead me to suppose I should ever regain

your confidence and esteem, I should then, indeed, be happy. Of my transgressions, let me confess, I am truly deeply sensible.

Unfortunately for me, the profession I have chosen by no means meets with the concurrence of even my general friends, and the world at large has hitherto held it in the light of contempt. What was the infatuation which first prompted me to swerve from the path of wisdom and rectitude which you had pointed out, I know not. Had I followed that I might have made a more reputable stand in life; at any rate, moving in a circle more honored than that into which I have thrown myself. But it is not for me to aggravate my misfortunes; my task should rather be to reconcile them. If I succeed in removing any portion of your anger, I might then repay myself; if not, it is at least a trifling evidence of my affection, though repaying not a thousandth part of what I am indebted to you. Mitigate, I pray you, your resentment. My most sanguine hopes do not hint at sudden or, perhaps at any period, entire forgiveness. Suffer me to write to you now and then—to feel that I am addressing you—to relieve my aching heart, by assuring you how I love and honor you. May I entreat, too, you will not let my mother participate with me in your anger. I declare to you she is blameless in respect of this step I have taken.

Imperfectly as I may have written, I still venture to send you this sincere confession; but no attempt at extenuation of my conduct. Your justice I must ever fear; in your mercy I may have hope.

Your affectionate and contrite nephew,

R. W. Elliston.

York, April 6th, 1792.

My second example, of a character widely different, now for the first time meets the public eye. It is a letter written from a young man to his brother, after the loss of their sister; and, in allusion to a little difference which had unfortunately existed, it is distinguished by a naturalness, a pathos, a correctness and purity of affectionate sorrow and regret, which cannot but be deeply felt.

"My dear Brother,—I should earlier have acknowledged the receipt of your letter, but, at the time when due, I heard that you also were standing in the shadow of that cloud which had darkened our inland home; and, in such cases, silence is often far more acceptable than any word offering can be. For a reason akin to this, I will not here say much of that sorrow which we must *mutually* feel. I can grieve, and that deeply, the sad necessity which crushed, in the very bloom of existence, the

being of one admirably natured, both for the adornment and enjoyment of life. Yet, as death was the only escape from all the grief, and pain, and disease which haunted her later years, I must rejoice that it at last overtook her. She is now where no echo from this world can reach her; and rests well, I hope, after her most weary pilgrimage. The kindly mention you make of her is an earnest that she was *not forgotten*; and with you, I regret those circumstances which made you, for a season, comparative strangers. What they *were*, I never rightly understood, nor would it answer any purpose now to inquire. All I can say is, that I ever found the dear lost one a creature of most perfect disinterestedness, and can call to mind no action of her life which bore the impress of caprice or selfishness; I therefore conclude that, whatever the facts were, a very strong impression must have existed in her mind that slight *had been* intended; how generated, of course impossible for me to say. But you must be well aware that the morbid fancies of invalids too frequently imagine offence where none might have been intended. A few words would probably have explained all. Be it, however, as it may, you are not one, I know, to think much of this *now*; and, if there *were* blame, it will be more charitable and human to lay it to the account of the living than of the dead.

"It was her intention to acknowledge the receipt of your marriage cards. Therefore, *think* of her as if that intention had been really executed; as though the olive-branch had been actually extended. Inability and death *alone* prevented her peace-offering from reaching you."

* * * * * * *

We give the following real letter as a very pleasing model and specimen of style:

"——— College, *Tuesday Evening.*

"My dear Mother,

"Though I am now sitting with my back towards you, yet I love you none the less; and, what is quite as strange, I can see you just as plainly as if I stood peeping in upon you. I can see you all just as you sit round the family table. Tell me if I do not see you? There is mother, on the right of the table, with her knitting, and a book open before her, and anon she glances her eye from the work on paper to that on her needles; now counts the stitches, and then puts her eye on her book, and starts off for another round. There is Mary, looking wise, and sewing with all her might, now and then stopping to give Sarah and Louisa a lift in getting their lessons, and trying to initiate them in the mysteries of geography. She is on the left side of the table. There, in the background, is

silent Joseph, with his slate, now making a mark, and then biting his lip, or scratching his head, to see if algebraic expression may have hidden in either of those places. George is in the kitchen, tinkering his skates, or contriving a trap for that old offender, the rat, whose cunning has so long brought mortification upon all his boasting. I can now hear his hammer and his whistle—that peculiar smoking sort of whistle which always indicates a puzzled state of brain. Little William and Henry are snug in bed, and, if you will just open their bedroom door, you will barely hear them breathe. And now mother has stopped, and is absent and thoughtful, and my heart tells me she is thinking of her only absent child. Who can he be? Will you doubt any more that I have studied magic, and can see with my back turned to you, and many a hill and valley between us?

"You have been even kinder than I expected, or you promised. I did not expect to hear from you till to-morrow, at the earliest. But, as I was walking to-day, one of my class-mates cried, 'A bundle for you at the stage-office!' and away I went, as fast as the dignity of a sophomore would allow me. The bundle I seized and muffled it under my cloak, though it made my arm ache, and, with as much speed as my 'conditions' would permit me, I reached my room. Out came my knife, and forgetting all your good advice about 'strings and fragments,' the said bundle quickly owned me victor, and opened its very heart to me; and it proved a warm heart, too, for there were the stockings (they are now on my feet, *i. e.*, one pair), and there were the flannels, and the bosoms, and the gloves, and the pincushion from Louise, and the needle-book from Sarah, and the paper from Mary, and the letters and love from all of you. I spread open my treasures and both my heart and feet danced for joy, while my hands actually rubbed each other out of sympathy. Thanks to you all for the bundle, letters and love. One corner of my eye is now moistened while I say, 'Thank ye all, guide folks.' I must not forget to mention the apples—'the six apples, one from each'—and the beautiful little loaf of cake. I should not dare to call it 'little,' if it had not brought the name from you. The apples I have smelled of and the cake I have just nibbled a little, and pronounced it to be in 'the finest taste.'

"Now, a word about your letters. I cannot say much, for I have only read mother's three times, and Mary's twice. Those parts which relate to my own acts and doings greatly edify me. Right glad am I to find that the spectacles fitted mother's eyes so well. You wonder how I hit it. Why, have I not been

told from my very babyhood, 'You have your mother's eyes!' And what is plainer than that, if I have her eyes, I can pick out glasses that will suit them? I am glad, too, that the new book is a favorite. I shall have to depend on you to read for me, for here I read nothing but my lexicon, and, peradventure, dip into mathematics. John's knife shall be forthcoming, and the orders of William and Henry shall be honored, if the apothecary has the pigments.

"I suppose the pond is all frozen over, and the skating good. I know it is foolish, yet, if mother and Mary had skated as many 'moony' nights as I have, they would sigh, not at the *thought*, but at the *fact*, that skating days are over. Never was a face more bright and beautiful than the face of that pond in a clear, cold night, under a full moon. Do the boys go down by my willow still? and do they still have the flag on the little island in the centre, where I used to rear the flag staff once a year? I was going to tell you all about college. But when I think I will begin, pop! my thoughts are all at home. What a place home is! I would not now exchange ours for wealth enough to make you all kings and queens.

"I am warm, well, and comfortable; we all study, and dull fellows like me have to confess that we study hard. We have no genius to help us. My chum is a good fellow; he now sits in yonder corner, his feet poised upon the stove in such a way that the dullness seems to have all run out of his heels into his head, for he is fast asleep.

"I have got it framed, and there it hangs—the picture of my father! I never look up without seeing it, and I never see it without thinking that my mother is a widow, and that I am her eldest son. What more I think I will not be fool enough to say; you will imagine better than I can say it.

"Your gentle hint, dear mother, about leaving my Bible at home, was kind; but it would relieve you to know that I left it designedly, and, in its place, took my dear father's from the upper shelf, in our little library room, and, what is more, I read it every day.

"I need not say, write! write! for I know that some of you will at the end of three weeks. But love to you all, and much, too. I shall tell you of my methods of economy in my next.

"Your affectionate son, &c."

Can any of my readers doubt that a letter like the above would do much to alleviate the anxiety of the mother, and add greatly to the comfort of the family? Every son can show attention, and at the same time keep his own heart warm with the remembrances of home and kindred. It will add to your

sons in letter-writing, and it will cultivate some of the noblest and sweetest virtues of which the heart is susceptible.

Our next specimen is a letter written by the elegant and accomplished Lord Chesterfield to his son.

"DEAR BOY,

"Your letters, except when upon a given subject, are exceedingly laconic, and neither answer my desires, nor the purpose of letters: which should be familiar conversations between absent friends. As I desire to live with you upon the footing of an intimate friend, and not of a parent, I could wish that your letters gave me more particular accounts of yourself, and of your lesser transactions. When you write to me, suppose yourself conversing freely with me, by the fireside. In that case, you would naturally mention the incidents of the day, as where you had been, whom you had seen, what you thought of them, etc. Do this in your letters: acquaint me sometimes with your studies, sometimes with your diversions; tell me of any new person and characters that you meet with in company, and add your own observations upon them; in short, let me see more of you in your letters. How do you go on with Lord Pulteney; and how does he go on at Leipsig? Has he learning, has he parts, has he application? Is he good or ill-natured? In short, what is he; at least, what do you think of him? You may tell me without reserve, for I promise secrecy. You are now of an age that I am desirous of beginning a confidential correspondence with you; and, as I shall on my part write you very freely my opinions upon men and things, which I should often be very unwilling that anybody but you or Mr. Harte should see; so on your part, if you write me without reserve, you may depend upon my inviolable secrecy. If you have ever looked into the letters of Madame de Sevigne to her daughter, Madame de Grignan, you must have observed the ease, freedom, and friendship of that correspondence; and yet I hope and believe that they do not love one another better than we do. Tell me what books you are now reading, either by way of study or amusement: how you pass your evenings when at home, and where you pass them when abroad.

* * * * * * *

John Randolph, of Roanoke, to his Nephew.

"BIZARRE, Sept. 11, 1806.

"MY DEAR THEODORE,

"I thank you for your letter, which received post before last. Present my respects to Dr. Haller

and tell him I will be obliged to him to procure you shirts, handkerchiefs, and such other things as you may stand in need of.

"We do not say '*scarcely nothing*,' but *anything*. Give my love to Buona, and tell him that I shall forward his letter to his brother immediately; but tell him also that a '*tolerable*' long letter is *intolerable* English. He should have used the adverb (*tolerably*) instead of the adjective. I wish that, instead of a fictitious correspondent, you would address your letters—I mean those which Dr. Haller requires you to write weekly—to some one of your friends and acquaintances. It would take off from them the air of stiffness which now characterises them. If Buona had been describing Richmond to his mother or myself, he would never have introduced it with, 'I beg leave to wait upon you,' an awkward exordium, which even Mr. Expectation, of Norfolk, would not approve. You see, my sons, that I make very free with your performances; but do not let this discourage you. *Write* your letters just as you *think them*, and they will be easy; and any inaccuracy which creeps in may be afterwards corrected.

"The partridges are so forward that we have begun to shoot nearly a month earlier than usual. Carlo is an excellent dog for bringing birds after they are shot, but not so good for finding game. I wish you were with me, my sons, to enjoy the sport. Your skill, my dear Theodore, would make amends for my clumsiness, and dear Buona would hold Minikin, who now runs away from uncle whenever she has opportunity. But thank God, my children, you are more profitably engaged. This alone reconciles me to the loss of your society. I hope to see you both about the last of this month.

"Mother has had an ague, and Sally very sore fingers.

"Your friend and kinsman,

JOHN RANDOLPH.

"P.S.—Do not make a flourish under my name in the superscription of your letters. It is not customary to do so.

"I got a letter to-night from Mr. Byrau: he and my little godson are well, but Mrs. B. has a fever.

"My dear Buona, this your birthday, you are now entering on your 12th year. May you see many happy returns of this anniversary. The success of my wish will materially depend, my child, on the use which you make of the present time.

Here is a charming letter from Hon. William Wirt to his Daughter.

"Baltimore, April 18, 1882.

"My Dear Child,

"You wrote me a dutiful letter, equally honorable to your head and heart, for which I thank you; and when I grow to be a light-hearted, light-headed, happy, thoughtless young girl, I will give you a *quid pro quo*. As it is, you must take such a letter as a man of sense can write, although it has been remarked that the more sensible the man, the more dull his letter. Don't ask me by whom remarked, or I shall refer you, with Jenkinson, in the Vicar of Wakefield, to Sanconiathon, Manetho and Berosus.

"This puts me in mind of the card of impressions from the pencil seals, which I intended to enclose last mail, for you, to your mother, but forgot. Lo! here they are; these are the best I can find in Baltimore. I have marked them according to my taste, but exercise your own *exclusively*, and choose for yourself, if either of them please you.

"Shall I bring you a Spanish guitar of Giles's choosing? Can you be certain that you will stick to it? And some music for the Spanish guitar? What say you?

"There are three necklaces that tempt me—a beautiful mock emerald, a still more beautiful mock ruby with pearl, and a still *more* beautiful real topaz—what say you?

"Will you have either of the scarfs described to your mother, and which—the blue or black? They are very fashionable and beautiful. Any of these wreaths and flowers? Consult your dear mother; always consult her, always respect her. This is the only way to make yourself respectable and lovely. God bless you, and make you happy.

"Your affectionate father,

"Wm. Wirt."

Hon. William Wirt to his Wife.

"Baltimore, December 27th, 1882.

"The image of your pensive face is on my heart, and constantly before my eyes. May the Father of Mercies support you, and pour into your bosom the rich consolations of His Grace, and reward you for your family. What can we do, if you suffer yourself to sink under the sorrow that

afflicts you! Let us bear up, and endeavor to fulfil our duty to our surviving children. Let us not overcast the morning of their lives with unavailing gloom, by exhibiting to them continually the picture of danger. Trouble comes soon enough whatever we do to avert it; and the sombre side of life will early enough show itself to them without any haste on our part to draw aside the curtain. Let them be unusually gay and happy as long as they can; and let us rather promote than dissipate the pleasing illusions of hope and fancy. Let us endeavor to show religion to them in a cheering light; the hopes and promises it sets before us; the patience and resignation which it inspired under affliction; the peace and serenity which it spreads around us; the joyful assurance with which it gilds even the night of death.

* * * * * * *

"May God bless you, and breathe into your bosom peace and cheerful resignation.

"W. W."

Dr. Franklin to his Wife.

"Easton, Nov. 13, 1756.

"My dear Child,

"I wrote to you a few days since by a special messenger, and enclosed letters for all our wives and sweethearts, expecting to hear from you by his return, and to have the northern newspapers and English letters for the packet; but he has just now returned without a scrap for your us, so I had a good mind not to write to you by this opportunity; but I never can be ill-natured enough, even when there is the most occasion. The messenger says he left the letters at your house, and saw you afterwards at Mr. Duche's and told you where he would general that he lodged at Honeyh, next door to you, and yet you did not write; so let Goody Smith give one more judgment, and say what should be done to you. I think I won't tell you that we are all well, now that we expect to return about the middle of the week, nor will I send you a word of news—that's a pos.

"My duty to mother, love to children, and to Miss Betsy and Gracy, etc., etc.

"I am your loving husband,

"B. Franklin.

"P. S.—I have scratched out the loving words being written in haste by mistake, when I *forgot I was angry.*"

LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE.

In our epistolary correspondence, there are perhaps no letters so difficult to indite with due effect as those of condolence on the death of relations or near and dear friends. Yet no difficulty, no experience of painful sensations, must be allowed to deter the writer from the performance of one of the most sacred duties entailed on our sublunary state. Letters of condolence from the sympathising pen of friendship, fall upon the heart of man like the gentle dews of evening on the parched earth. In the composition of such, there must be no high-flown words or expressions, no straining after effect. If heart speaks not to heart in the simplest, most soothing language of nature, words will, to the sufferer, prove cold and unimpressive—worse than useless. Be it ever borne in mind that, to the afflicted, to the mourner in spirit, "there is only one true source of consolation—that we shall meet those we love in another and better world, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. This is the hope our blessed religion holds out to us, and its realisation will amply repay our sorrows here, whilst the anticipated joy blunts the edge of present grief."

The subjoined epistle is from a lady—a young lady, but high in literary fame—to a father, after the loss of an only and much beloved daughter. It has not before been submitted to the public eye. To mention the writer's name would shed lustre upon a work of infinitely more importance than this.

"My Dear Mr. ——,

"I should have immediately replied to your melancholy note of the 11th inst., had I not been [illegible] since the period of its receipt. I pray you to believe how very sincerely I sympathise with you in the loss which you have just sustained; although I am perfectly aware that all verbal consolations is vain, under the circumstances. Nevertheless, even at my age, I have become so much worn and hardened by the attrition of the world, that I cannot refrain from looking upon that early rest, which is at times granted to the young, as a blessing which the survivors are totally unable to appreciate. There is a purity and a holiness in the quietness of those who leave us in their tenderness and their beauty, which instinctively lead us to a contemplation of their happiness. How many temptations have they escaped! How many faults and errors have they not avoided! How many sorrows have they not been spared! We have not, then, reason for them; we can only weep for ourselves; and those very consolations should only be sweet, of all their bitterness.

"May these and still more efficient consolations be yours,

my dear sir;" and may you find comfort in the conviction that those whom you have loved on earth will be prepared to welcome you in heaven.

"Ever, my dear Mr. ——,

"Very faithfully yours."

Not less beautiful, not less pious, not less exalted in religious feeling, are the following extracts from a letter, addressed to the same party, and on the same melancholy occasion as the above. They also are by a lady, one of the noblest and most estimable of her sex, and of the first rank and reputation in the literary world.

Bannow, ——, 1843.

"Dear Mr. ——,

"Your mournful letter (brief, though so full of a father's heart) has found me here. I can well 'weep with those that weep!' therefore my tears flowed over your few lines, imparting to me your last trial. Alas! the little envelope which a few months ago conveyed to me the united bridal cards, 'tied by their silken cord,' did not bring any address to them or to you! Hence, until this sad announcement has thus reached me, I had no means of showing you before, the sympathy of 'rejoicing with those who do rejoice.'

"But we have been too old friends for you to doubt that the weal or woe of yourself, or whatever was dear to you, would always be objects of the sincerest interest with me.

* * * * * * *

"When you have mental strength enough to do it, it will afford me a sacred satisfaction to hear from you again; to read, from your own pen, that the God of Comfort has been, and is with you in your great trial; for *my experience* of His graciousness to me, under mine, convinces me that *all* who trust in His consolations will receive them.

"My bodily health is weak, very weak; but my mind and my soul's strength is Him, he upholds!

"Praying the same for you, in the blessed Name of our Lord and Saviour, I remain,

"Dear Mr. ——,

"Ever your sincere old friend,

"——."

Announcing to a Lady the Death of her Sister.

"Goderich, May 18th, 18—.

"My dear Madam,—You have long been aware of the painful and serious illness under which your dear sister has

[illegible] by those around her, that the [illegible] Would that our fears had been without foundation; but I am [illegible] to tell you that our worst anticipations [illegible]

[illegible] a lawyer in another world. Your dear mother is in such a state of prostration, that she finds the task of writing to you too painful for her feelings; and has requested me to say that [illegible] would help to console you under [illegible] and the whole of the family. They [illegible] to see you, by the earliest opportunity, and [illegible] to send you their best love.

Accept, dear madam, my sincerest condolence under this [illegible] and bereavement and affliction, and

"Believe me to remain,

"Ever yours sincerely,

"To Mrs. ——." "——."

A Letter of Condolence on the Death of a Husband.

"Washington, June 19th, 18—.

"My dear ——,—If any consolation can be afforded under so heavy an affliction as you have just experienced, it must come from a higher power than mine. Your firm, strong [illegible] of religion, and of our duty of submission to a power that is beyond our control, and a will that is ever [illegible] towards our good, must enable you to bear [illegible] better still. I will know how painful the [illegible] but often mistaken, officiousness of friends may be on such occasions, or I should have hastened to your side, and sought to assuage the pangs of your over-worn spirit.

"It were a melancholy pleasure to dwell upon the virtues and accomplishments of your late husband; [illegible] but the subject is too painful [illegible] in his [illegible] I am sure [illegible] to offer [illegible] I hope that you will suppress your tears, comfort your own and your

children's sake, and look forward to that brighter and happier world in which we shall go to those who cannot return to us.

"God comfort you,

"Dear ——

"Your affectionate and sorrowing friend,

"To Mrs. ——." "——."

The Same, on a Child's Death.

BROOKLYN, July 5th, 18—.

"MY DEAR ——,—If anything could have caused me especial pain, it was the news of your sad bereavement. How I remember your dear child! Affectionate, lively, and intelligent, ever displaying a thoughtfulness beyond his years, and holding forth hopes of happiness in after times which will scarcely bear reflection.

"It has, indeed, been a heavy blow, and I scarcely know how to talk of consolation under so bitter an affliction. But think my dear ——, of One who 'careth for all,' who loves little children beyond others, and think of the bright and never-ending future life of that dear child, whose spirit has passed away but for a brief period, whose soul only waits in heaven to hail the mother from whom he has been parted.

"I can say no more; human consolations are weak and poorly. May a higher power do that which I cannot!

"Ever sincerely yours,

"To Mrs. ——." "——."

The Same, on a Reverse of Fortune.

"BALTIMORE, Jan. 3rd, 18—.

"DEAR ——,—I am truly pained to hear of the melancholy change in your circumstances. I had hoped that your husband's position and connections would have prevented the possibility of his embarking in any scheme where there seemed room for uncertainty. But, unhappily, the speculative spirit of the age is too seductive to be easily withstood, and we are every day hearing of families being reduced to absolute poverty, more from misfortune than wilful error.

"But you must not only cheer up, but labor to cheer your husband likewise. Let him find that he possesses a wife who will not display her annoyance at the deprivation of many (perhaps unnecessary) luxuries of life, and whose determination to economise will make poverty seem less poor, and whose

affection will insure him that comfort which the wealthiest position, without undivided affection, would wholly fail to realize.

"Nor must you look at matters as hopeless. Although changed in your means, you have not lost in *character*. Your true friend looks upon you with the same eye as formerly, and for the shallow and insincere you ought not, cannot, care. Besides, a favorable change must result from your husband's persevering and consistent efforts; and, by the exercise of economy, and the patient submission to a few privations, you may ere long fully retrieve the position you have already adduced, and which legitimately belongs to you.

"That success and happiness may soon spring out of the present unfavorable condition of things is the hearty and earnest wish of,

"Yours, ever affectionately,

"To Mrs. ——." "——."

LOVE, COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE, ETC.

If friendship be capable of waking sensations so warm, so strong, so elevated, in the human heart, what may not be expected from love—the liveliest, the noblest, the most soul-inspiring, soul-absorbing of passions!

"Who hath not owned, with rapture-smitten frame,
The charm of grace, the magic of a name?"

I speak not of that love by which common minds are too frequently influenced, and which is little more than mere animal instinct; but of that unselfish, hallowed, undying affection which regards its object as being of a higher order, and for whose interests it is at all times ready and willing to sacrifice its own. Under the influence of such a passion, no creature, man or woman, can ever be guilty of a mean or a base action. Love, *true* love, is the inspirer, the creator of all our noblest virtues.

A gentleman is struck with the appearance of a lady, and is desirous of her acquaintance, but there are no means within his reach of obtaining an introduction, and he has no friends with her acquaintance, either herself or her family. In this dilemma there is no alternative but a letter.

There is, however, a delicacy, a timidity, a nervousness in [illegible] passion, more decorous modes of communication rather than the speech, which, in such cases, too often fails [illegible]. In short, these are reasons enough for writing—but when the enamored youth sets about penning a letter to the

object of his passions, how difficult does he find it! How many efforts does he make before he succeeds in writing one to suit him!

It may be doubted whether ever so many reams of paper have ever been used in writing letters upon all other subjects, as have been consumed upon epistles of love; and there is probably no man living who has not at some time written, or desired to write, some missive which might explain his passion to the amiable being of whom he was enamored; and it has been the same, so far as can be judged, in all the generations of the world.

Affairs of the heart—the delicate and interesting preliminaries of marriage, are oftener settled by the pen than in any other manner. To write the words legibly, to spell them correctly, to point them properly, to begin every sentence and every proper name with a capital letter, every one is supposed to learn at school; still we give such instructions in another part of this book.

For a love letter, good paper is indispensable. When it can be procured, that of costly quality, gold-edged, perfumed, or ornamented in the French style, may be properly used. The letter should be carefully enveloped, and nicely sealed with a fancy wafer—not a common one, of course, where any other can be had; or what is better, plain or fancy sealing wax. As all persons are more or less governed by first impressions and externals, the whole affair should be as neat and elegant as possible.

Speaking of love letters generally, Moore, in his "Life of Lord Byron," observes that "such effusions are but little suited to the public eye." Probably not; and therefore they ought not to be subjected to the gaze of the public. "It is the tendency of all strong feeling," he adds, "from dwelling constantly on the same idea, to be monotonous; and those often-repeated vows and verbal endearments, which make the charm of true love letters to the parties concerned in them, must for ever render even the best of them cloying to others." Without stopping to discuss the philosophy of the passage, I will hazard the assertion that it applies accurately only to such love letters as the writer is most likely best acquainted with; "things that are of the earth, earthly." Have lovers nothing to talk or write about but Cupids, and Venuses, and flowers, and hearts and darts! I would not ask for a better criterion by which to test the moral and intellectual power of a man than his love letters, presuming, always, that the party addressed be an object capable and worthy of inspiring a genuine passion. No subject can be too exalted for the pen of an intellectual lover.

How sweet and beautiful is affection portrayed in the following passages of a letter from a gentleman to a lady with whom he was on the point of being united in marriage:

"Tromsoe, May 23, 184—.

"If you were but here, my Alette! I miss you every moment, while I am preparing my dwelling to receive you, I am continually wishing to ask you, 'How will you have this, Alette?' Ah, my ever beloved, that you were here at this moment! You would be enraptured with this 'land of ice and bears' at the thought of which I know you inwardly shudder.

"'But the winter!' I hear you say, 'the summer may pass well enough, but the long, dark winter!' Well, the winter, too, my Alette, passes happily away with people who love each other, when it is warm at home. Do you remember, last summer, how we read together at Christiansand, in the morning paper, this extract from the *Tromsoe Gazette*?

"We have had snow-storms for several days together, and at this moment the snow-plough is at work, opening a path to the outhouses. The death-like stillness of night and winter extends over meadow and valley; only a few cows wander about like ghosts, over the snowy tracts, to pluck a scanty meal from the twigs of the trees that are not yet buried in the snow.' The little winter sketch pleased me, but you shuddered involuntarily at that expression, 'the death-like stillness of the night and winter,' and bowed your sweet, dear face, with closed eyes, upon my breast. Oh! my Alette, will it be so when, in future, the terror of the cold and darkness passes there, and upon my breast, listening to the beating of my heart, the words of my love, will then forget those dark images of storm and gloom? . . . Close thine eyes, slumber, my beloved one, while I watch over thee. Then will one day look upon night and winter, and own that their power is not so fearful. Love, that joyous of the soul, can melt the ice and snow of the most frozen regions. Wherever its warm springs well up, there dawns a southern climate.

The above comes before us in the form of fiction, yet every line [illegible] vivid impress of truth and nature. It is from [illegible] one of the charming novels of Fredrika Bremer, a Swedish author of contemporary celebrity.

The [illegible] from another of that lady's works, "The [illegible] presents an equally beautiful picture of [illegible] It is from the letter of a newly married lady, the wife of a clergyman, to her friend.

"Beata, do you know what I pray, morning and evening, ay, hourly, from the bottom of my heart? O God! make me worthy the love of my husband, and let the power of making him happy. And I have received much power, for he is (as he says and so he seems) very happy. If you knew how well he looks, how gay! This is because I take so much care of him: when he does not dare take so little care of himself as before; and that he may not open his eyes at night, he has weaned himself of this; and as he thinks and writes (he acknowledges himself) more freely and powerfully than before. Then I am very careful not to interrupt or disturb him when he is in his studies, writing or reading. Oh! when I would just get a glimpse of him (he is so beautiful, Beata), I steal in gently and play him a little trick. I place a flower upon his book, kiss his brow, or do some such thing, and go quietly back again, and when I turn round to shut the door, I always get a glance from his eyes that follows me as though it were stolen."

One scrap more—the last letter of a lady, on her death-bed, to her affianced husband:

"My dearest, ever-beloved Charles!

"Long has my spirit struggled, but in vain, against a threatening dissolution. The hope that I might yet be yours, that our fairy visions of bliss might be realized, has sometimes given a new and momentary impulse to the lamp of existence in my veins; but I feel that my heart is broken—nature will no longer perform her office—I am sinking daily and hourly into the grave. Charles, my beloved! when these lines shall meet your sight, this yet warm mass will be 'a kindred clod'—the hand that now writes will be cold forever! Oh, Charles, my adored husband! look upwards to the throne of Him eternal in the heavens. There, where the weary are at rest, and the wicked cease from troubling, we shall meet again and be for ever happy.

"You will preserve the inclosed tresses, as memorials of her who loved you above all earthly things. Bless you! Oh, for ever bless you. This will be the last aspiration of your dying

"Mary."

To a young Lady to whom one is Engaged.

"Chester, Oct. 15th, 18—.

"My dearest Fanny,—If there be one thing that can console me for my unavoidable absence from your side, it is the

pleasure of being able to pen you a few lines to express, however feebly, my [illegible] for you. It is, indeed, a painful and [illegible] from our rambles about the [illegible] our evening walks, and our pleasing conversations, to a dull [illegible] of [illegible] ending [illegible] Happy, happy moments, my dearest [illegible] is a [illegible] heart to [illegible] dove, and to [illegible] mind [illegible] I [illegible] this evidence of my dear girl's affection, she has mentally every sentiment that ever fell from her pen is treasured in my memory.

"God bless you, dearest Fanny, and believe me, with most respectful and affectionate remembrances of your parents, and all friends,

"Your ever affectionate and devoted

"——."

"To Miss ——."

On receiving a favorable answer.

"Elmgrove, October 16th, 18—.

"Dearest Miss (or one Christian name).—Words cannot express my delight on finding your note on my table last night. The pain of the day were over, but how delightful was it to find a letter—and such a letter!—from one whom I may now hope to hail as the companion of my whole future life! The weight taken off my mind by the candid and generous confession of one whose love reached too great a happiness to hope for is beyond description. To-morrow I shall hasten to the presence of her from whom I hope I may never henceforth be parted, but I could not rest to rest without making one feeble attempt to express my delight at finding that hopes so flattering have not been in vain.

"Believe me, dearest

"Your devoted and happy lover,

"——."

"To Miss ——."

A Lover's Quarrel.

"Mount Holly, July 3, 18—.

"My dear ——.—It is with pain I write to you in aught that can seem like a strain of reproach, but I confess that

your conduct last night both surprised and vexed me. Your marked approbation of the attentions paid to you by —— was as obvious as your neglect of myself. Believe me, I am in no way given to fits jealousy—still less am I selfish or unmanly enough to wish to deprive any girl, on whom I have so fixedly fixed my affections, of any pleasure to be obtained in good society. But my peace of mind would be lost for ever, did I believe that I have lost the esteem of your affection.

"Pray write, and assure me that you still preserve your undivided affection for

"Your devoted but grieved ——."

"To Miss ——."

Explaining away an apparent slight.

"August 5th, 18—

"My dearest ——,—How grieved am I that you should think me capable of wavering in my affection towards you, and inflicting a slight upon one in whom my whole hopes of happiness are centered! Believe me, my attentions to Miss —— were never intended for anything more than common courtesy. My long acquaintance with her father, and my knowledge of her amiable character—as well as the circumstance of her being a comparative stranger to the ——s,—made me feel it my sole resource to pay more attention to her than I might otherwise have done.

"Pray rest confident in the belief that my affection for you is as unchanging as my regret is great that I should ever have given you cause to doubt it, and believe,

"Dearest ——

"Yours ever sincerely and devotedly,

"——."

To an early companion and playmate.

"New York, July 6th, 18—.

"My Dearest Henry,—For I can only think of you—woman as you now are—as the 'little Henry' of the many happy days of childhood we have spent together, can you make up your mind to a very awful confession? In plain words, I love you as heartily now as ever, and, if I may judge from our last night's meeting after so long a separation, you have not quite lost the remembrance of your old playfellow. But, joking apart, these holidays must be both of us—for you, in making you all that can be desired by man as the object of his love and trust—for me, in enabling me to provide a home

for her who has ever been dearest to me, and whose image has never faded from my memory amidst the varied occupations of a preliminary professional career.

"And now, my dear Henry, think you will whether you can transfer that affection, as a woman, which, in your childhood, was my sweetest delight. We shall meet on —— at ——, and there, perhaps, my heart may be gladdened by a belief that there is something in first loves.

"Eagerly awaiting our meeting,

"Believe me,

"Your affectionate old playmate and new lover,

"To Miss ——." "——."

A Lady absent on a Visit, to her Husband.

ALBANY, July 22nd, 18—.

"MY DEAR ——,—In imagining what your thoughts and feelings are likely to be during my absence, I have only to call to recollection what my own have been interwoven with each minute of my existence; and how have I counted the hours, till that had arrived which brought me intelligence of your welfare! So justly do I appreciate your attachment that I feel convinced this feeling must be mutual, and I pleasure to myself the smile of delight with which you will receive my present letter. I know you will experience real satisfaction in hearing that I still enjoy my health, and, in fact, never was better; and that the family and kindly [illegible] so far [illegible] seem rather to increase. They make it [illegible] to surround me with [illegible] are constantly devising some fresh plans which [illegible] may convince to my amusement. Be assured, [illegible] dear ——, that, with the exception of missing [illegible] company, and that of our dear children, I am [illegible] the fondest of all my well-wishers, could [illegible]

"Having [illegible] myself, let me how observe that I am most [illegible] to receive a letter from you; for I long to hear how you [illegible] children still continue in regard to health, and what [illegible] occurrences have taken place since you wrote last. At present, I have no reason for supposing that my absence from home will be prolonged beyond the —th, on which day, hope again to be with you. Give my kindest love to the [illegible] and

"Believe me, my dear ——,

"Your ever affectionate wife,

"To ——, Esq."

To a Lady, complaining of her coolness.

"Monroe Place, June 15th, 18—.

"Dear ——,—How often have I [illegible] in review before me, [illegible] act I could have given you offence. Yet, however, has been the attempt, for the offence which I have given, my heart beats painfully indistinct, and could never have meaning from any intention to have given you even a moment's uneasiness. But that by some means I have [illegible] incurr your displeasure has been but too evidently indicated by the change of your behavior towards me—a change from the kindness of an intimate friend, to the cool indifference of a distant acquaintance. Of late, when in your presence, I have been many times upon the point of asking you upon what occasion, and by what means, I have displeased you; But as constantly have I needed the courage to do so, and my voice has failed me whenever I have endeavored to make the attempt. In the hope of being eased from a painful state of anxiety, I write this letter, and trust that you will give me some explanation on the subject referred to, either by an answer in your hand writing, or through your own lips at our next meeting. But whatever that reply may be, of this be assured, that, my [illegible] for you can never know a change, and that you will ever [illegible] cherished object in the breast of him who now subscribes himself,

"Yours most affectionately and sincerely,

"To Miss ——." "——."

From a young man, avowing a passion he had entertained for a length of time, and fearful of disclosing it.

"New York, Feb. 12, 18—.

"Dear Miss ——.—It is with no small degree of apprehension as to the manner in which you may receive the following avowal, that I take up my pen to address you; but I have so long struggled with my feelings, that they have now got the better of my [illegible] and throwing aside all hesitation, I have [illegible] on my own boldness in [illegible] you. For months past, I have been [illegible] with a passion that has entirely [illegible] my heart; that [illegible] Lost [illegible] afraid of it. In vain have I endeavored to drive this idea from my mind, by [illegible] In vain have I

* On perusal of this composition, however, we should not recommend this letter for imitation; but people will write such letters.

sought out every amusement that might have a tendency to relieve my mind from the bias which it has taken, but love has taken such fast hold of my whole soul, that I am unable to entertain but one idea, one thought, one feeling, and that is yourself. I neglect myself, my studies, and can neither hear nor see any thing but you, and the chief part therein. Believe me I am sincere when I assure you that I feel it totally impossible to live apart from you, when near you, I am in paradise, when absent, I feel in torture. This, I solemnly assure you, is a true description of the feelings with which my breast is continually agitated, and it remains only for you to give a reality to those hopes, or at once to crush them, by a single word; say but that word, and I am the happiest or the most miserable of mankind.

"Yours till death,

"To Miss ——." "_____."

To a Lady.

"Tunbridge, July 3, 18—.

"Dear Madam,—I have been so harassed with love, doubt, distraction, and a thousand other wild and nameless feelings, since I had the happiness of being in your company, that I have been unable to form one sane reflection, or to separate events from the feelings that accompanied them—in fact, I have been totally unable to bring my thoughts into anything like regularity, for they are so entirely mixed up with the idea of yourself, that the business of the world, and the pursuits of amusements and pleasure, have been entirely forgotten in the one passion that holds undivided empire over my soul. I have deferred from day to day penning this confession to you, in order that I might have been enabled to have done so with some degree of ease and calmness; but the hope has proved fruitless. I can resist no longer, for to keep silent on a subject which is interwoven with my very existence would be death to me. No, I am unable to do so, and I have, therefore, determined to lay open to you the suffering of my heart, and to implore from you a restoration of that peace and happiness which once were mine. You, my dear Miss ——, are alone the cause of my unhappiness, and to you alone can I look for a relief from the wretchedness that has overwhelmed me. The fervent passion that devours my soul for your adorable self, can only be allayed by the declaration that I am loved as fervently in return. But dare I ask so much purity, so much sweetness, mildness, and modesty, to make such a declaration. I know not what I say—but O! my dear

Miss ——, be merciful, and if you cannot *love* me—say, at least, that you do *not hate* me. Never could I survive the idea of being hateful to that angelic being whose love I prize more than existence itself. Let me then cling to the idea that time may accomplish that which, I fain hope, a first impression has done, presuming, unless a fatal pre-engagement exists (a thing I dare not trust myself to think of), that you will comply with my request, seeing that my designs are perfectly pure and honorable. I remain waiting with the utmost impatience for your favorable reply,

"Dear Miss ——,

"Your devoted servant till death,

"——."

From a young Lady, in answer to the proposal of a Gentleman who had met her the previous evening.

"Westchester, July 6th, 18—.

"Sir,—Although it is the highest compliment that can be paid our sex to receive offers calculated to ensure a lasting acquaintance, I must still complain of the precipitate character of your address to me who, till last night, was a total stranger to you. Without wishing to say anything harsh, I must confess that I do not feel any motive to entertain so hasty a proposal, and have felt bound to lay your letter before my parents, as I could not think of concealing from them any correspondence of such a description.

"Trusting that you will see this in its proper light,

"I remain,

"Sir,

"Yours respectfully,

"To ——, Esq." "——."

Another more Favorable.

"Philadelphia, Sept. 18th, 18—.

"Sir,—Although your letter of this morning comes upon me in a strangely unexpected manner, I feel that your intimate friendship with my kind hostess, Mrs. ——, perhaps excuses a precipitation which could scarcely be justified on ordinary grounds. At the same time, I cannot think of giving a sanction to further attention on your part, without consulting Mrs. —— on the subject, and I have, therefore, placed your letter in her hands. I cannot deny that I feel some pleasure in having elicited sentiments from you, which

appear to be founded in honorable good feeling, but must for a time beg of you to excuse me giving you any further sanction to your addresses.

"I remain,

"Sir,

"Your sincere well-wisher and friend,

"To ——, Esq." "——."

On receiving a second Letter, after frequent Meetings.

"Bellevue, Dec. 15th, 18—.

"Dear Sir,—It is impossible for me to deny that your assiduous but delicate attentions to me of late have confirmed a favorable impression I had formed, but which the suddenness of your address rendered it impossible I could avow. Your whole conduct has been that of a gentleman, and Mrs. ——'s representations are so strongly in your favor that I feel it would be false modesty in me to disclaim a feeling of strong regard for yourself. Let us not, however, be too hasty in our conclusions—let us not mistake momentary impulse for permanent impression; let us seek rather to know more of each other, to study each other's tempers, and to establish that sincere esteem which should, which must, be the foundation of every deeper feeling.

"I have written to my father on the subject, and, as I anticipated, he has left me under no restraint, save of cautioning me not to be hasty in giving that promise, or accepting it from another, which may involve the happiness of a whole life. Meanwhile, Mrs. —— begs that you will accept a general invitation to her tea-table, to which arrangement, I can assure you, no objection will be made by

"Dear Sir,

"Yours very truly,

"To ——, Esq." "——."

To an acquaintance of long standing.

"Chelsea, October 15th, 18—.

"My dear Miss ——,—I have so long enjoyed the happiness of being received as a welcome guest at your respected parental home, that I write with the more confidence on a subject of much serious importance to my welfare.

"From our frequent meeting with you, and observing the [illegible] acts of hospitality and kindness which adorn your family life, I have gradually associated my hopes of future hap-

pinese with the chance of possessing you as their share. Believe me, dear Miss ——, this is no outbreak of boyish passion, but the hearty and healthy result of a long and affectionate study of your disposition. It is love, founded on esteem; and I feel persuaded that your knowledge of my own character will lead you to trace my motives to their right source.

"May I, then, implore you to consult your own heart, and, should I not have been mistaken in the happy belief that my feelings are in some measure reciprocated, to grant me permission to mention the matter to your parents.

"Believe me, dear Miss ——,

"Your ever sincere but at present anxious friend,

"To Miss ——." "——."

To a young Lady from a young Tradesman.

"London, Oct., February 16, 18—.

"Dear Miss ——,—Since I met with you at ——, my mind has been constantly filled with the remembrance of the pleasant moments passed in your society. My business has been improving of late, and in point of prosperity I have much cause to be thankful. But I feel that there are higher duties in life than can be fulfilled by a man in his single state, and I am anxious to find a companion for my future life. Such a companion, dear Miss ——, I venture to believe I have found in you, and my earnest hope is that you may be willing to appreciate the affectionate regard of one who, however humble in his present position, has every desire to elevate that position for your sake.

"Without attempting to use fine language, or make a parade of sentiment, I hope you will accept these few lines as conveying the plain and honest sentiments of one who, in anxious expectation of your reply,

"Remains,

"Dear Miss ——,

"Your most devoted servant,

"To Miss ——." "——."

Neither my plan nor my space admits of "instructions for the choice of a wife," or of a husband, or for forming or avoiding "prudential" marriages. What I have given, however, will suffice to show that lovers, whether single or married, are not under the necessity of writing nonsense—of indicting nothing but the sickly sentimentalism which Mr. Moore so philosophically regards as constituting the essence of amatory epistles.

CONCLUDING HINTS.

Some few general remarks on very simple matters—which are, nevertheless, of much importance in the transactions of every-day life—may be advantageously appended to the specimens already laid before the reader.

There is great judgment required in using "Sir" or "Dear Sir," especially in addressing a person of superior worldly position to yourself. Always reflect whether you are on such terms with the person to whom you write as to warrant your using "Dear" or "My dear" before the more retiring phrase of address.

At the same time the use of "Dear Sir," even towards a stranger, is considered a graceful manner of addressing an inferior; but in responding to this it would be preferable to avoid too much familiarity *at first*. A golden rule in such matters is that nothing is lost by too much modesty, while nothing gives so much offence as officious familiarity.

"Reverend and Dear Sir" is a frequent address from one clergyman to another, with whom he is supposed to have little acquaintance beyond that of being in the same profession. "Dear Sir" is afterwards adopted, when one or two letters have passed between the parties.

"Dear Sir" is frequently used in transactions between gentlemen and their tradesmen; but such use must be guided by the good sense of both parties. It must also be considered that the position and character of tradesmen render them fully on a par with professional or independent persons. We are all equal in this free country.

"Honored Sir," though somewhat antiquated, is still frequently used, either in addressing a person in very advanced years, a parent, a person to whom we have been under great obligations, or in an appeal from a poor person to a rich and powerful one.

Nearly the same rules apply to letters addressed to persons of the other sex.

Never send a note to a person who is your superior, unless it be upon a very slight and indifferent matter. In asking a favor of an intimate friend, address him in the first person.

Do not [illegible] for freedom of style. Whatever pleasure your friends may derive from reading your letters, you have no right to suppose that they have time for the study of *Hieroglyphics*.

Always put a stamp on your envelope at the top of the right-hand corner.

Always use an envelope, except for letters of mere business. Fashion now demands it, and it has the advantages of keeping the letter clean and insuring secrecy.

What you have to say in your letter, say as plainly as possible, as if you were speaking; this is the best rule. Do not revert three or four times to one circumstance, but finish up as you go on.

Let your signature be written as plainly as possible (many mistakes will be avoided, especially in writing to strangers) and without any flourishes, as they tend not in any way to add to the harmony of your letter. We have seen signatures that have been almost impossible to decipher, being a mere mass of strokes, without any form to indicate letters. This is done chiefly by the ignorant, and would lead one to suppose that they were ashamed of signing what they had written.

Do not cross your letters; surely paper is cheap enough now to admit of your using an extra half-sheet, in case of necessity. (This practice is chiefly prevalent among young ladies.)

Avoid the too frequent use of French and Italian phrases. A letter thus larded is the fit production of a boarding-school miss.

If you are not a good writer, it is advisable to use best ink, the best paper, and the best pens, &c, though they may not alter the character of your handwriting, yet they will assist to make your writing look better.

The paper on which you write should be clean, and neatly folded.

There should not be stains on the envelope; if otherwise, it is only an indication of your own slovenliness.

Common wafers should never be used, at least in general correspondence. For letters of business they are still permitted. Should you send a note on business by hand, be careful that the wafer is dry before it touches the party addressed. Nothing is more offensive than a wet wafer. We have seen a commercial man tear away the corner of a note in great disgust, when delivered to him thus sealed.

Courtesy requires that letters of condolence to a friend on the death of a relative, should be written on black-edged

paper, and sealed with black wax, even should you have been unacquainted with the deceased.

Give the proper address and date of writing at the head of every letter. Never assume that your correspondent knows your address so well that it is unnecessary to repeat it.

Go straight to your main subject at once, whatever it may be; for therein is the charm of all good writing. Just observe how a clever "leader" in a newspaper arrests your attention, by the first line, or certainly by the first paragraph.

Avoid postscripts, for they are ugly, *old-womanish*, and, as a rule, unnecessary. Ladies are said to write long letters having no meaning, and to crush into a postscript the only matter of importance they have to communicate. This we cannot believe. The fair are more shrewd than they get credit for from their clumsy partners. A postscript containing the pith of the letter always reminds us of a cracker attached to a dog's tail; the glory is at the wrong end, and the spectacle is more likely to amuse the observer than arrest the attention of his sober sympathies.

Long letters are more easily written than short ones, for condensation requires some exercise of skill. Therefore, do not take pride in the length of your letters, as our members of the council of collective wisdom do in their long speeches, for though both may serve as anodynes, or at least as soporifics, yet we do not desire compulsory repose when we read the one, or listen to the other. If you find it difficult to compress your thoughts, rewrite your letter, and with a little perseverance you will soon discover a great many *heres*, and *theres*, and *whichs*, and *whats*, and *ifs*, and *buts*, besides no end of superfluous adjectives, that encumber the sense and render many things more "wonderful," "extraordinary," and "unparalleled," than they really are or ever will be.

In writing to a person, especially if a stranger, on your own business exclusively, and wishing to receive an answer, do not fail to enclose a stamp for that purpose.

And, finally, remember that whatever you write is written evidence either of your good sense or your folly, your industry or carelessness, your self-control or impatience. What you have once put into the letter-box may cost you lasting regret, or be equally important to your whole future welfare. And, for such grave reasons, *think before you write, and think while you are writing.*

CHESTERFIELD'S

COMPLETE

RULES OF ETIQUETTE

—AND—

HOW TO SHINE IN SOCIETY.

INDEX TO CONTENTS.

PREFACE.

MANY books have been written on Etiquette and the Usages of Society which prove to be useful and valuable, especially to those young people whose positions did not enable them to inform themselves from personal observation of the standard proprieties of social life. In view of this fact, I do not expect to present anything novel in prescribing rules for correct behavior; but shall endeavor to give, in a brief and plain manner, all the practical information that is necessary for a novice in general society to know, omitting all crude advice, and remarks on people who do not conform to the code of politeness. In a word, it is my aim to simplify the rules of Etiquette so they can be easily understood and acted upon.

The works hitherto published on this subject, though mostly large and expensive, do not go sufficiently into minor details to enable the uninitiated reader to comprehend the various phases of polite society without a good deal of close study and attention. I have endeavored to remedy this defect, and to set forth, with the strictest economy of words, all that is necessary to know of the usages of social intercourse among well-bred people.

The utility of good manners is conceded even by those whose station or pursuits in life do not enable them practically to cultivate a polite and genuine courtesy. To such people a study of the subject is necessary. Some of them, it is true, may have an instinctive courtesy, and will only require to know a few of the leading rules to make themselves equal to any occasion. But the largest class will have to examine carefully the whole routine to make even a tolerable appearance in society.

Good manners and good morals are founded on the same eternal principles of [illegible], and are only different expressions of the same great [illegible]. If [illegible] would excel in politeness, you must first [illegible] your morals are unexceptional. Manners [illegible] the mind and the heart. They do not [illegible] asserted; but the man makes the [illegible], that the manners react upon [illegible] developing and improving the qualities out of which they spring.

Young people, who just begin to be recognized as companions in the social circle, [illegible] observe, may study this book with much advantage. By becoming familiar with the regulations here laid down, they will avoid many errors and consequent mortifications.

It is to these classes I dedicate my little treatise. I do not design to preach to them a homily on immorality and ill-manners, but to tell them briefly what constitutes good manners.

Books of Etiquette are sometimes useful, even to the most fastidious persons, for reference on many occasions; and the more plain and simple the rules are laid down in them the better they are for that purpose. Considering all these facts, I hope and think that my book will meet a favorable reception with the public.

ETIQUETTE

—AND—

HOW TO SHINE IN SOCIETY.

The true principles of Etiquette are to regulate your conduct towards others so as never to give offence, or cause a disagreeable feeling—never to show your temper or make a remark that you think will create an unpleasant sensation to the listener, and on all occasions to religiously refrain from gratuitous intrusions, of whatever nature. You should always show a genuine kindness of heart, cultivate a correct taste, and possess such self-control as never to be rude or discourteous to any one, however far he may transgress conventional usages. Lacking these qualities, the most perfect knowledge of the rules of etiquette, and the strictest observance of them, will not suffice to make you a perfect gentleman or lady.

Politeness seems to be a certain mark on the manner of our words and actions, to make others pleased with us and themselves: and the grand secret of never-failing propriety of deportment is to have an *intention* of always doing right. To some people these peculiarities come natural; but most of mankind must acquire them, together with the art of behavior, by study and practice.

True politeness is perfect freedom and ease—treating others just as you like to be treated. Nature is always graceful; affectation, with all her art, can never produce anything half so pleasing. The very perfection of appearance is to imitate Nature; how much better to have the reality than its imitation! Anxiety about the opinions of others fetters the free.

dom of Nature and tends to awkwardness. All your actions should therefore be so unexceptionable as to give you a frankness of character that will inspire confidence in yourself in the presence of the most exalted or venerated of your friends.

INTRODUCTIONS.

It is the common custom among a certain class in the United States, particularly in New England, to introduce friends or acquaintances to everybody they may meet, whether at home, abroad, or even while walking or riding out. This is not necessary or desirable, for promiscuous introductions are not always agreeable, and very seldom serve any purpose whatever. It is generally conceded that an introduction is a sort of social endorsement of the person introduced; and how wrong would it be, under such circumstances, to introduce a casual acquaintance of whom you know nothing, and who should afterwards prove to be anything but a desirable one. These remarks apply more particularly to family introductions. Young men about town are not so particular about whom they introduce to each other, though a habit of universal introductions is a bad one, and as a general rule a young man should be as careful of whom he introduces to his friends as he is of whose note he would endorse.

No gentleman should be presented to a lady under any circumstances, unless her permission has been previously obtained, and no one should ever be introduced into the house of a friend except by permission first had. Such introductions we know are frequent and usual, but they are improper, as any one can imagine who will reflect for a moment. For how can you know that introductions of this kind will be agreeable? If a person asks you to introduce him to certain people, you may decline on the ground that you are not sufficiently intimate to take that liberty.

There are many other reasons why people ought never to be introduced to the acquaintance of each other, without the consent of each party previously obtained. A man may suit

the taste, and be agreeable enough to *one*, without being equally so to the *rest* of his friends—nay, as it often happens, he may be decidedly unpleasing. A stupid person may be delighted with the society of a man of learning or talent, to whom in return such an acquaintance may prove an annoyance and a clog, as one incapable of offering an interchange of thought, or an idea worth listening to.

Should you find an agreeable person in private society, who seems desirous of making your acquaintance, there cannot be any objections to your meeting his advances half way, although the ceremony of an introduction may not have taken place; his presence in your friend's house being a sufficient guaranty for his respectability, as, of course, if he were an improper person he would not be there.

If you meet a male acquaintance in the street, accompanied by a lady, either raise or take off your hat to him, instead of nodding—as this last familiar mode of recognition looks disrespectful towards her.

Never make promiscuous acquaintances in coffee-houses, or other public places. As no person who respects himself does so, you may reasonably suspect any advances made to you in such a place.

An adherence to etiquette is a mark of respect; if a man be worth knowing, he is surely worth the trouble to approach properly. It will likewise relieve you from the awkwardness of being acquainted with people [illegible] you might at times be ashamed, or be obliged under [illegible] circumstances to "cut."

The act of "cutting" can only be justified by some strong instance of bad conduct in the person to be cut. A cold bow, which discourages familiarity without offering insult, is the best mode to adopt towards those with whom an acquaintance is not deemed desirable. An [illegible] observance of ceremony by letter, the most delicate way of withdrawing from an acquaintance, and the person so treated must be obtuse, indeed, who does not take the hint. And when

you observe that any of your own acquaintances appear distant and more than usually cold towards you, you may suspect that they desire to withdraw their intimacy, if not their friendship.

In making introductions, the person of highest consideration should be the one first named—or if a lady, she should be first addressed, as, "Miss Phillips, permit me to introduce Mr. Day." A lady may, however, be introduced to a gentleman much her superior in age or station. Gentlemen and ladies who are presumed to be equals in age and position are mutually introduced; as, "Mr. Lincoln, allow me to make you acquainted with Mr. Jones; Mr. Jones, Mr. Lincoln."

It is the common custom in this country to shake hands on being introduced. This, however, should be optional with the persons to whom you are presented, or with you, if you stood in the position of the superior. If a lady, or a superior in age or social position, offers the hand, you of course accept it cordially. You will have too much self-respect to be the first to extend the hand in such a case. In merely formal introductions a bow is enough. Feeling should govern in this matter.

In introducing members of your own family you should always mention the name. Say, "My father, Mr. [illegible]," "My daughter, Miss Kipp," or "Miss Mary Kipp." Your wife is simply "Mrs. Kipp," still if there happens to be another Mrs. Kipp in the family, she may be "Mrs. Kipp, my sister-in-law," &c. To speak of your wife as "my lady," or enter yourselves on a hotel register as "Mr. Kipp and lady," is not the correct way, though many worthy people do it.

An introduction is not always necessary to enable you to form a temporary acquaintance. There is no reason in the world why two persons who may occupy the same seat in a railway car or stage coach should remain silent during the whole journey because they have not been introduced, when conversation might be agreeable to both. The same remark

will apply to many other occasions. You are not obliged, however, to know these extempore acquaintances afterwards.

If you are a gentleman, do not, we beg you, permit the lack of an introduction to prevent you from promptly offering your services to any unattended lady who may need them. Take off your hat and promptly beg the honor of protecting, escorting, or assisting her, and when the service has been accomplished, bow and retire.

LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION.

These are of two kinds. First, as to business. Second, those of friendship. For example: If you have a friend going to a distant place to transact certain business, it may be necessary for him to form some acquaintances there for business purposes only. You have, perhaps, a correspondent there; yet you are not sufficiently intimate to ask him to entertain your friend; but as a matter of common courtesy he cannot refuse to accept him as a business acquaintance, for which purpose you write a letter similar to the following:

NEW YORK, 20th September, 1885.

MR. A. J. HOOPER:

Dear Sir,—The bearer of this is my friend, George Jones, who goes to New Orleans to effect a settlement with the assignees of the late firm of Cornley & Co. As he will be a stranger in your city, I have taken the liberty to introduce him to your notice, and any attention or advice you may give him will be duly appreciated by

Your faithful serv't,
GEORGE LAW.

Mr. Jones presents this letter to Mr. Hooper, and if the latter chooses to consider it strictly a business letter, there is no breach of etiquette. He can invite Mr. Jones to his house, or not, as he pleases.

Ordinary letters of introduction, however, are considered as certificates of good social position, and proofs that the writer knows the bearer to be a proper person to be admitted into the family circle of the person to whom the letter is addressed.

But yet it is not often the case that such a letter will do more than give the recipient an invitation to dinner, unless he should prove to be an uncommon agreeable acquaintance. Letters of introduction are therefore sometimes facetiously termed "tickets for soup," and many people will not make use of them at all, for that reason. The following is a form of such a letter, though in special cases it may be written in more urgent terms:

Washington, Sept. 10th, 1860.

Dear Sir,—

The bearer of this, Mr. Edward Everett, an esteemed friend of mine, is about to visit London for the first time, and will consequently be a stranger in your metropolis. Any attentions which you may extend to him will be gratefully appreciated by

Your friend and humble servant,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

Hon. JOHN RUSSELL.

It is not customary to deliver a friendly letter of introduction personally. You should send it to the person to whom it is directed, on your arrival, accompanied by your card of address. If he desires to respond to the request of your friend, he will either call on you personally or give you a written invitation to visit him. A neglect to call would be considered by some people a mark of ill-breeding, though it really is not, as the person addressed may consult his own convenience of feeling in the matter. Nor is he compelled to invite you to his house unless he is so disposed. A simple return of his own card is all that is required, and then you can call on him at your leisure.

A letter of introduction should never be sealed by the person giving it; but the recipient should seal it when he sends it to the party to whom it is addressed.

In Europe it is always customary for any one with a letter of introduction to make the first call; but here we are more considerate, for we think that a stranger should never be made to feel that he is begging for our attentions—that he

possesses a certain delicacy that would induce him not to intrude until he is positive that his company would be agreeable. Hence if you desire to welcome any one recommended to you by letter from your friend, call upon him with all possible dispatch after you receive his letter of introduction.

SALUTATIONS.

If you meet a friend in the street, or in any public place, do not call him by name loudly, as, "Ah, Brown, how d'ye do?" It is not even necessary to speak his name at all so that strangers may hear, as modest people do not desire to attract notice from any one. Accost your friend quietly, and in a low tone of voice.

Should you meet a lady of your acquaintance in the street, or in a public place, it is not necessary that you should speak, or even notice her, unless she first recognises you. You should, however, give her ample opportunity to see that you are aware of her presence. If she bows, you should take off your hat, or rather lift it from your head. A mere touch of the hat will not answer. There are, no doubt, many diffident young ladies who do not appreciate the necessity of making the first demonstration when they meet their male acquaintances; but each should remember that their sex is always paramount. They are at liberty to bow or speak as they please, while a gentleman would make an almost unpardonable breach of good manners should he neglect to respond to the least possible nod of a lady.

Salutations should vary in style with persons, times, places and circumstances. You will meet a friend with a shake of the hand and an inquiry after his health, and that of his family, if you have been introduced there. To a slight acquaintance you will respectfully bow without speaking, or silently recognise him in any other way. But in no case should you refuse to return recognitions of this kind made by any person whatever. Even to your enemy it is bad taste

to decline a recognition should he salute you. In sparsely settled places it is customary to salute everybody you meet with a bow, and the custom is an excellent one, as it shows kindly feeling and a good heart.

VISITING.

In fashionable life visits and calls are made systematically, as we will enumerate: First as to visits of ceremony. Every lady thinks she must call on all her female acquaintances at stated times; it becomes habitual with her to do so, and she considers it a duty. These calls are usually short, and by means of them all the little gossip which is afloat may be as thoroughly and extensively circulated as though it were printed in the newspapers. The usual time for a morning call in New York is from eleven until three or four o'clock. Formerly they ceased at two. These calls should be timed so as to end a full hour before dinner, therefore in country towns, where people rise at six, and dine at twelve and one o'clock, they should be made earlier in the day—say from nine till eleven or twelve o'clock. They are denominated morning calls, because "morning" in fashionable parlance means any time before dinner.

In making a morning call, the lady does not take off her bonnet and shawl, and she usually stays from ten to twenty minutes. Sometimes (though seldom) a lady may make her calls attended by a gentleman. In such a case he assists her up the steps, rings the bell, and follows her into the reception room. He should never suggest that it is time to go, but wait until the lady gives the signal. He must take his hat and cane into the room with him, and keep them in his hand, as it is not proper to leave them in the hall on such an occasion.

Do not handle any of the articles of *bijouterie* in the houses where you may call or visit. They may be admired, but not touched.

In making a call, if the lady called upon is not at home, leave your card, if you have one; and if there are several ladies there who you wish to see, desire the servant to present your compliments to them severally. Should you not have a card, leave your name with the servant, of course.

When a call or visit is terminated, it is customary among fashionable people to ring the bell for a servant to open the front door; and this is necessary unless you attend your visitor to the door and open it yourself, which is sometimes done by people who do not stand upon ceremony. Some persons would feel that they were shamefully neglected if allowed to go alone to the front door and let themselves out.

In calling upon a person living at a hotel, it is customary to stop in the parlor and send your card to their rooms. Among intimate acquaintances such formality may not be necessary.

Ladies should make their morning calls in a simple *negligé* —not in their richest dresses. Gentlemen may dress with either a frock or sack coat.

Visits of congratulation are made on the occurrence of any happy or auspicious event which may have occurred in the family visited—such as a birth, a marriage, or any piece of good fortune. Such visits are similar to the morning call, unless made by special invitation in the evening.

When a person is going abroad to be absent for a considerable period, if he has not time or inclination to take leave of all his friends, he will enclose each of them his card. Upon the envelope he will write the letters T. T. L., or else the words "to take leave" in full. On his returning home it is customary that his friends should first call upon him. If they neglect to do so, he may drop their acquaintance if he chooses.

Visits of condolence should never be delayed beyond the next week after a death occurs in a family, and such visits

among friends are usually considered in the light of absolute duties.

Visits of friendship are conducted by no particular rules of etiquette, as it is to be presumed that intimate friends or relatives understand each other's tastes and peculiarities, and will conduct themselves in a manner mutually agreeable. Such visits may occasionally be made under misapprehension, because there are many people in the world who are extremely fond of change, and will often persuade themselves that their society is coveted, when in fact they are not particularly welcome. Persons of any degree of sagacity can easily discriminate in their reception the free and hearty welcome from the polite and easy grace which duty makes imperative. With intimate friends all strict ceremony can be dispensed with, but there are certain liberties which you may enjoy at home that are not exactly proper to take in the house of a friend or relative. Criticising the conduct of servants or children, or the acts of any member of the household, or the domestic management generally, is in very bad taste, though it may be done with the utmost good nature. No well-bred person will ever make remarks of any kind upon the habits, faults, or foibles of a family where they are paying a visit of friendship; and to drop these remarks after they have left only shows that they were not deserving the confidence and attentions they received. In such visits you should strictly apply the rule to do nothing by act, word or deed that may cause a disagreeable feeling on the part of your entertainer; which rule, as we have before explained, is the fundamental principle of gentility.

Never make a visit of friendship unless you have either a special or general invitation. Many people take it for granted that their friends desire to see them on any and all occasions, and in this way frequently becomes bores. Neither should you ever beg an invitation, or intimate by word or action that you desire to make a friendly visit, and only wait to be asked.

as in such a case you would run the risk of disgusting your friend.

Evening visits, or parties, are sometimes formal, but more frequently mere social gatherings. In the latter case, when a lady is invited alone, she may bring a gentleman with her if she pleases. She presents him first to the lady of the house, who is presumed to receive all her visitors as they arrive.

If you should happen to pay an evening visit at a house where a small party had assembled unknown to you, do not retire with an apology, but present yourself precisely as you would have done had you been invited; and then if you desire to leave shortly afterwards, you can plead as an excuse that you only had intended to make a short call, and had an engagement elsewhere. In this way you will not in the least disturb the harmony of the assemblage or cause an unpleasant feeling to any one.

RECEIVING COMPANY.

The mistress of the house usually receives the visitors, though at evening parties the master will often officiate with her. The reception should be performed in an easy, quiet, and self-possessed manner, and without unnecessary ceremony. If the persons arriving are strangers to any of the company present, the names are announced on their entering the room, and they are afterwards introduced personally to such of the company as may desire an introduction, or with whom they may wish to enter into conversation, or play, or to dance.

When any one enters, whether announced or not, the master or mistress should rise immediately, advance towards him, and request him to take a seat. If it is a young man, offer him an arm-chair, or a stuffed one; if an elderly man, insist upon his accepting the arm-chair; if a lady, beg her to be seated upon the sofa. If the master of the house receives the visitors, he will take a chair and place himself at a little distance from them; if, on the contrary, it is the mistress, and if she is intimate with the lady who visits her, she will place

herself near her. If several ladies come at once, we give the most honorable place to the one who, from age or other consideration, is most entitled to respect. In winter, the most honorable places are those at the corners of the fire-place, if you have a fire in it. If the visitor is a stranger, when the master or the mistress of the house rises, any person who may be already in the room should do the same, unless the company is a large one. When any of the company withdraw, the master or mistress of the house should conduct them as far as the door. But whosoever the person may be who departs, if we have other company, we may dispense with conducting them farther than the door of the room.

On his first arrival, the visiter should salute the lady before he takes notice of any one else. If she receives him, this duty will be performed as a matter of course, but in case she should not happen to do so, he must still make his bow to her before speaking to any other person.

TATTLING.

In all social intercourse, conversations will take place in which opinions are given and motives scrutinized which it would be extremely improper to repeat. Yet we find a great many people who delight in retailing remarks made by one party upon another, thus stirring up discord and strengthening hatred wheresoever they appear. Such characters are the bane of country society. What is more absurd, for instance, than if one lady should say to another—"Well, Jane, what do you think Lucretia Smith says of you? She says you have the thickest ankles and the thinnest arms of any girl in town—that your shape is like an alligator's, and your head resembles that of a hiena!"

Another class of tattlers are those who visit their friends and take note of all the habits and customs of the family, the conversations at table, the government of children, treatment of servants, family expenditures, employments and dress of the mistress, and even the late hours of the male

members, should there be any who stay out late. These are told in detail at the next visiting place. It is almost unnecessary to say that such people are contemptible. If you wish to preserve any claim to respectability or social position, you will refrain from criticising, even by a single unfavorable remark, anything you may have observed in the house of a friend where you were stopping as a guest.

FORMAL EVENING PARTIES.

These are of various kinds, and more or less ceremonious, according to the taste of persons giving them. Some people who desire to be extremely fashionable overdo the thing and make their friends uncomfortable. The best plan is not to stand much upon ceremony, but exert yourself to make all your visitors at ease.

Invitations to large evening parties are usually written ones, though it is by no means necessary to send such to your intimate friends. A verbal message to them is quite sufficient. An answer to an invitation should always be promptly given. A written invitation to an evening party runs as follows:

MRS. EDGERTON present her compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Day, and requests the pleasure of their company on Friday evening, the 19th inst.

311 Fifth Avenue, Tuesday.

Please oblige by an answer.

Should your party be given to celebrate any particular event, such as a daughter's birth day, the anniversary of your marriage, &c., you can add to the note the words, "It being our daughter Susan's fifteenth birth day," or "it being the twentieth anniversary of our marriage." &c.

If the person invited by note desire to accept the invitation, they will write a reply similar to the following:

MR. and MRS. DAY present their compliments to Mrs. Edgerton, and accept with pleasure her kind invitation for Friday evening.

Wednesday.

If, on the contrary, they wish to decline, it is not necessary to give any reason for it, but simply write a note as follows:

Mr. and Mrs. Day present their compliments to Mrs. Edgerton and regret that circumstances will prevent their acceptance of her kind invitation for Friday evening.

Wednesday.

Having accepted an invitation to a party, never fail to keep your promise, even if the weather should prove unfavorable. But in case of a severe storm, you will be excusable. A married man should never accept an invitation of this kind unless his wife is included in it.

CONVERSATION.

MANY men of talent forget that the object of conversation is to entertain and amuse, and that society, to be agreeable, must never be made the arena of dispute. Some persons spoil every party they join by making it their only object to prove that every one present is in the wrong but themselves. It requires so much tact and good breeding to sustain an argument, however logical and correct the arguer may be, that an avoidance of it will gain him more popularity than a triumph over his adversary could accomplish. Even slight inaccuracy in statement of facts or opinions should rarely be remarked on in conversation.

A man should never permit himself to lose his temper in society—nor show that he has taken offence at any supposed slight. It places him in a disadvantageous position—betraying an absence of self-respect, or at least of self-possession.

If any one should assume a disagreeable tone of voice or offensive manner toward you, never resent it in company—and above all, do not adopt the same style in your conversation with him; appear not to notice it, and generally it will be discontinued, as it will be seen that it has failed in its object; besides which you save your temper, which is an important consideration.

Be careful in company how you defend your friends, unless

the conversation be addressed to yourself. Remember that nobody is perfect, and people may sometimes speak the truth; and that, if contradicted, they may be desirous of justifying themselves, and will *prove* what might otherwise have been a matter of doubt.

Never talk *at* people—it is in the worst possible taste, as it is taking an unfair advantage of them. If there be anything said that you dislike, speak your mind boldly, and give the parties saying it an opportunity of explaining, or of defending themselves. If you do not choose to do this, be silent.

Do not repeat the name of the person to whom you are speaking: as, "Indeed, Mr. Jones, you don't say so, sir;" or "Really, Mrs. Brown, I quite agree with you, Mrs. Brown." It is a very bad habit.

In talking of your children, never speak of them as "Master William" or "Miss Jane," "Mr. Henry" or "Miss Louisa:" it is a silly attempt to elevate both them and yourself, and is practiced only by vulgar and self-conceited people.

When giving or attending parties, do not mistake stiffness for dignity. The very spirit of good breeding consists in being easy and natural yourself, and in the endeavor to make others the same. Etiquette is only the *armor* of society; and when your position is fairly established, it may be thrown aside, at least so far as is consistent with good feeling and decorum.

Avoid a loud tone of voice in conversation, or a "horse-laugh:" both are exceedingly vulgar; and if practiced, strangers may think that you are a retired politician, who had acquired the practice in bar-room harangues. You should speak in a slightly subdued tone of voice, which we fear can only be acquired in good society. Be cautious, also, how you take the lead in conversation, unless it be forced upon you, lest people may reiterate the remark made by Dr. Johnson on a certain distinguished personage famous for his self-assur

ance, viz.; that he was like a *great toe* in society—the most ignoble part of the body, yet ever thrust foremost.

Be very careful how you "show off" in strange company, unless you be thoroughly conversant with your subject, as you are never sure of the person next to whom you may be seated. It is a common occurrence for young gentlemen of very shallow pretentions to endeavor to astonish country society, never dreaming that other persons may be present equally posted, and perhaps far more intelligent than themselves. Indeed, as the consciousness of ignorance is apt to make people peculiarly sensitive, it would be as well to avoid all subjects with which you suspect the generality of persons present cannot be acquainted; for, as the mere introduction of such topics will be considered and resented as an assumption on your part, should you happen to be vanquished on your own ground, your defeat will be the more humiliating.

In a room full of company, you should never take a person aside to whisper; it is extremely vulgar and offensive. If you have anything to say in private, retire to another room.

Lounging on sofas or easy-chairs, tipping back your chair on two legs, throwing your leg over your knee, or sitting in any unnatural position—these habits are always considered indecorous, and when ladies are present are deemed extremely vulgar. Do not cross a room in an anxious manner, and force your way up to a lady merely to receive a bow, as by so doing you attract the eyes of the company towards her. If you are desirous of being noticed by any one in particular, put yourself in their way as if by accident, and do not let them see that you have sought them out—unless, indeed, there be something very important to communicate.

Never introduce professional topics in general conversation at a party; very few persons can be interested in your private business matters, and you must remember that the object in to

entertain others, not yourself. You should be careful, also, not to introduce topics that have only a local interest, and you should never speak slightingly of those who are friends of any one present.

Mothers should be on their guard not to repeat nursery anecdotes or *bon-mots:* as, however interesting to themselves, they are seldom so to others. Long stories should always be avoided; however well told, they interrupt general conversation and leave the impression that the narrator thought the company dull, and consequently endeavored to amuse it.

Never use the term "genteel" in conversation. To convey your idea, substitute "well-bred person," with "the manners of a gentleman," or "a gentleman." In speaking of any one, do not say Mr. A., Mrs. B., or Miss C. Pronounce the whole name; nothing sounds more abominable than to hear a woman speak of her husband as Mr. B.

GAMES AND SPORTS.

In some of the evening social gatherings a variety of sports or plays are frequently introduced. Entering into the spirit of them, we throw off the restraints of more formal intercourse, but they furnish no excuse for rudeness. You should never forget your politeness, or allow yourself to take liberties or lose your sense of delicacy or propriety, while engaged in these amusements.

The selection of games or sports belongs to the ladies, though gentlemen may modestly propose them to ask the opinion of the ladies on that subject. The promiscuous kissing which frequently forms a part of the performances in some of these games is now considered in bad taste. It has been brought into disfavor by the too fervent salutes which gentlemen—or rather, male visitors—have substituted for the more passive ones intended. A lady will offer her lips to be kissed only to

her lover or husband, and not to them in company. Any breach of this rule in plays or games is wrong. The French code of kissing is the proper one, viz.: "Give your hand to a gentleman to kiss, your cheek to a friend, but keep your lips for your lover."

Never prescribe any forfeiture, in a game, which can wound the feelings of any of the company; and you should pay those which may be adjudged to you with cheerful promptness.

DANCING.

As an evening party is often called by another name for a dancing party, we have give the rules observed in fashionable dancing parties or sociables in New York city. If not applicable everywhere, they contain hints which will be useful to every one who dances:

1. Draw on your gloves (white or yellow) in the dressing-room, and do not be for a moment with them off in the dancing-room. At supper take them off; nothing is more preposterous than to eat in gloves.

2. When you are sure of a place in the dance, you go up to a lady and ask her if she will *do you the honor* to dance with you. If she answers that she is engaged, merely request her to name the earliest dance for which she is not engaged, and when she will do you the honor of dancing with you.

3. If a gentleman offers to dance with a lady, she should not refuse unless for some *particular* and *valid* reason, in which case she can accept the next offer. But if she has no further objection than a temporary dislike or a piece of coquetry, it is a direct insult to him to refuse him and accept the next offer; besides, it shows too marked a preference for the latter.

4. When a lady is standing in a quadrille, though not en-

gaged in dancing, a gentleman not acquainted with her partner should not converse with her.

5. When an unpracticed dancer makes a mistake we may apprise him of his error; but it would be very impolite to have the air of giving him a lesson.

6. Unless a man has a very graceful figure, and can use it with great elegance, it is better for him to *walk* through the quadrilles or invent some gliding movement for the occasion.

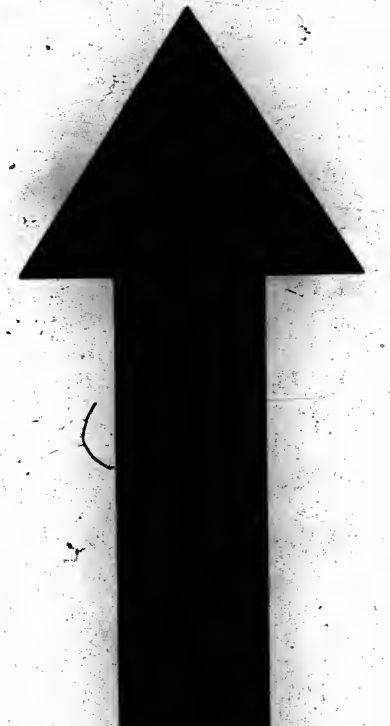
7. At the end of the dance the gentleman re-conducts the lady to her place, bows, and thanks her for the honor which she has conferred. She also bows, in silence.

8. The master of the house should see that all the ladies dance. He should take notice particularly of those who seem to serve as *drapery* to the walls of the ball-room (or *wall-flowers*, as the familiar expression is), and should see that they are invited to dance.

9. Ladies who dance much should be very careful not to boast before those who dance but little or not at all, of the great number of dances for which they are engaged in advance. They should also, without being perceived, recommend these less fortunate ladies to gentlemen of their acquaintance.

10. For any of the members (either sons or daughters) of the family at whose house the ball is given, to dance frequently or constantly, denotes decided ill-breeding. The ladies of the house should not occupy those places in a quadrille which others may wish to fill, and they should, moreover, be at leisure to attend to the rest of the company; and the gentlemen should be entertaining the married women and those who do not dance.

11. Never hazard taking part in a quadrille unless you know how to dance tolerably; for if you are a novice, or but little skilled, you would bring disorder into the midst of pleasure.



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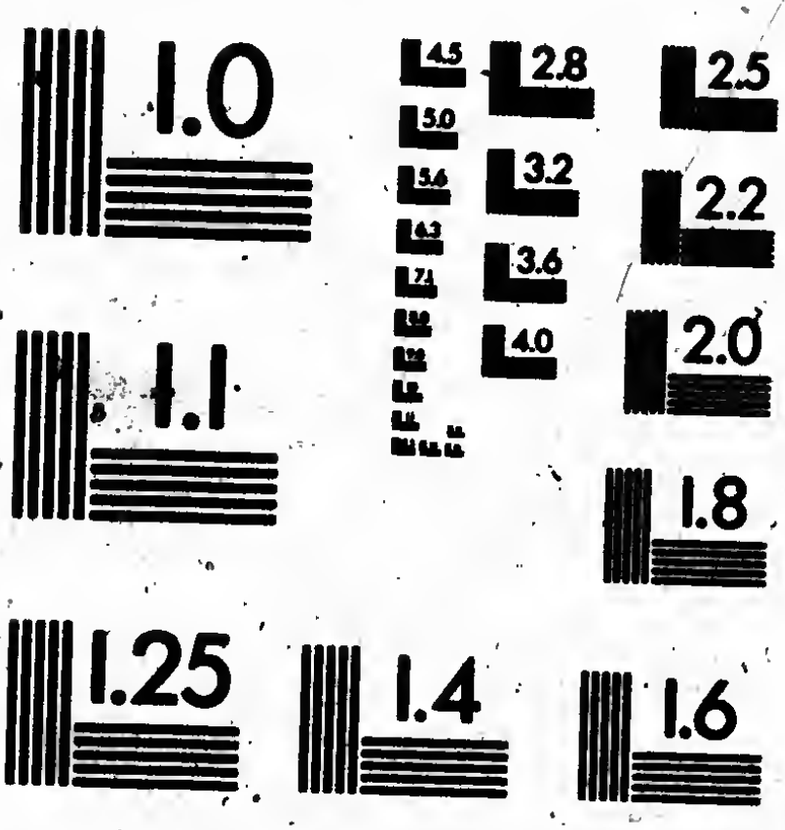

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12. If a lady waltz with you, beware not to press her waist; you must only lightly touch it with the open palm of your hand, lest you leave a disagreeable impression, not only on her *ceinture*, but on her mind.

13. If you accompany your wife to a dancing party, be careful not to dance with her, except, perhaps, the first set.

14. When that long and anxiously disiderated hour, the hour of supper, has arrived, you hand the lady you attend up or down to the supper-table. You remain with her while she is at the table, seeing that she has all that she desires, and then conduct her back to the dancing-room.

15. A gentleman attending a lady should invariably dance the first set with her, and may afterwards introduce her to a friend for the purpose of dancing.

16. Ball-room introductions cease with the dancing; and the gentleman should never again approach the lady, by salutation or any other mode, without re-introduction of a formal character.

This code must be understood as applying in full only to fashionable dancing parties in the city, though most of the rules should be adhered to in any place. The good sense of the reader will enable him to modify them to suit any particular occasion.

FRENCH LEAVE.

If you desire to withdraw before the party breaks up, take "French leave"—that is, go quietly out without disturbing any one, and without saluting even the mistress of the house, unless you can do so without attracting attention. The contrary course would interrupt the rest of the company and call for otherwise unnecessary explanations and ceremony. If you are an intimate friend of the family, perhaps it would be more proper to take leave of the lady of the house in private.

DINNER PARTIES AND DINNERS.

Until quite recently dinners were given in the most agonizing ceremonious manner; but we are happy to inform all mankind that a little common sense is now used in dispensing the principal meal to hungry mortals. What was thought to be the height of good taste and superlative refinement, a few years ago, is now declared vulgar, and the dinners of this day are not such tiresome affairs as those inflicted on our parents. A dinner party in the year 1860 is almost as difficult to describe as the gyrations of a picnic, so different are the customs of different people, and so few ceremonies are really necessary. It used to be said that many a man would pass muster in society as a gentleman until he accepted an invitation to dinner; but, unless he was perfectly *au fait*, dinner would surely betray him. All this is changed now.

An invitation to dinner is generally given several days beforehand. It may be written or verbal. If you send out notes, they should be brief and unpretending, something like the following:

Tuesday, September 16, 1884.

Mr. George Jones requests the pleasure of your company at dinner on Friday, the 19th instant, at 6 o'clock.

W. B. Astor, Esq.

If it is a family dinner party, the note should begin "Mr. and Mrs. George Jones would be happy," &c., and should be addressed to Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Astor, or to W. B. Astor, Esq., and Mrs. Astor, according as your taste may dictate.

Persons who receive an invitation to dinner should give a prompt answer, either verbally or by note. The note must be brief, as follows:

Wednesday, September 17.

Mr. Astor accepts with much pleasure Mr. Jones's invitation to dine with him on Friday.

Or, in case you decline—

MR. ASTOR returns thanks for your kind invitation for Friday, but regrets that circumstances will prevent his joining you on that occasion.

GEORGE JONES, Esq.

Invitations to a family dinner should always be answered to the lady instead of her husband.

Persons who so choose may at all times decline invitations to dinner without any breach of etiquette. But if they accept, they should be punctual at the hour appointed. The gentleman should be neatly dressed, and wear either a frock or dress coat. The lady should always appear in full dress.

When dinner is announced, the host rises and requests all to walk into the dining-room. He offers his left arm to the lady present who, from age or any consideration, is entitled to precedence. The hostess will then see that each lady is conducted by a gentleman, and they should enter the dining-room under her direction, the married people preceding the single ones. Should you have to go down stairs to the dining-room, always give the lady the wall, and when you arrive at the table seat yourself on her right side.

The lady hostess seats herself at the head of the table and the host himself at the foot. The two most distinguished gentlemen of the party are seated next to the hostess, and the two ladies of greatest consideration sit next the host. If the dinner is given in honor of any gentleman, he sits at the right of the hostess. In placing the party at table, always separate husband and wife, and members of the same family, as they are supposed to enjoy enough of each other's society at home. Mix up the gentlemen and ladies as much as possible.

Help ladies with a due appreciation of their delicacy, moderation, and fastidiousness of their appetites; and do not overload the plate of any person you serve. Never pour gravy on a plate without permission. It spoils the meat for some persons.

Do not insist upon your guests partaking of particular dishes; never ask persons more than once, and never put anything by force upon their plates. It is extremely ill-bred, though extremely common to press one to eat of anything.

Soup is always served first, and then fish; and it is considered vulgar to take either of them twice. The reason for not being helped a second time at a large dinner party is, because by doing so you keep three parts of the company staring at you while waiting for the second course, much to the annoyance of the mistress of the house. At a family dinner it is of less importance, and may be done now-a-days without a breach of good manners. Fish is always helped with a silver or plated fish-slice, and when you have it on your plate you should use your fork only in eating it. The application of a knife to fish is likely to destroy the delicacy of its flavor; besides which, fish sauces are often acidulated; acids corrode steel, and draw from it a disagreeable taste. In the North, where lemon or vinegar is very generally used for salmon and many other kinds of fish, the objection becomes more apparent.

Do not ask any lady to take wine, until you see that she has finished her fish or soup. This exceedingly absurd and troublesome custom is very properly giving way at the best tables to the more reasonable one of the gentleman helping the lady to wine next to whom he may be seated, or a servant will hand it round. But if either a lady or a gentleman be invited to take wine at table, they should not refuse; it is very *gauche* so to do. They need not drink half a glass with each person, but merely taste it or touch their lips to the glass.

The host or hostess should never eulogize any particular dish, but should leave everyone to their own choice and enjoyment, the main object being to have your guests realize an ever-present sense of being entertained. You may casually

mention that a certain dish is considered excellent, but never press it upon any one, nor should you ever try to persuade your guest to eat more than he takes freely, for very young or modest people may be thereby induced to accept what they really do not want, which would be unpleasant to them.

Silver or plated forks are now universally used at table—steel forks being only fit for carving. Never use a knife to convey food to your mouth under any circumstance. It is unnecessary, and glaringly vulgar. Feed yourself with a fork or spoon. A knife is only used for cutting. Peas, tomatoes, tarts, puddings, &c., should always be eaten with a spoon.

If at dinner you are requested to help any one to sauce or gravy, do not pour it over the meat or vegetables, but on one side of them. Never load down a person's plate with anything—it is vulgar.

At a dinner party the host usually serves his left hand neighbor first, then his right hand, and so on. One ladleful of soup to a plate is sufficient. Take whatever is given to you, and do not offer it to your neighbor. Begin at once to eat, and do not suck the soup into your mouth or blow it. If it be too hot, stir it until it is cool enough to eat. Many people make an unpleasant noise with their lips by inhaling their breath while taking soup. This habit should be carefully avoided. Making a noise in chewing, by smacking the lips, or breathing hard, are both unseemly habits. Use your knife, fork, and teeth as quietly as possible.

Do not pick your teeth at table, except in an emergency; as, however satisfactory a practice it may be to yourself, to witness it is not at all pleasant.

Ladies should never dine with their gloves on, unless their

hands are not fit to be seen, though the habit is not positively ungenteel.

Servants occasionally wait at table in clean white gloves, as there are few things more disagreeable than the thumb of a clumsy waiter in your plate.

Most writers on Dinner Table Etiquette prescribe that in sending your plate for anything you should leave your knife and fork upon it. There seems also to be a reason for the custom in the fact that to hold them in your hand would be awkward, and to lay them on the table-cloth might soil it; but the author of the "American Gentleman's Guide," whose acquaintance with the best usage is not to be questioned, says that they should be retained, and either kept together in the hand or rested upon your bread, to avoid soiling the cloth.

Finger glasses, when used, come on with the dessert, and are filled with warm water. Wet a corner of your napkin, and wipe your mouth, then rinse your fingers; but do not practice the filthy custom of gargling your mouth at table, albeit the usage prevails among a few, who think that because it is a foreign habit it cannot be disgusting.

The French fashion of having the principal dishes carved on a side-table, and served by attendants, is now very generally adopted at ceremonious dinners in this country; nevertheless, those who go into company cannot safely count upon never being called upon to carve, and the art is well worth acquiring. Ignorance of it sometimes places one in an awkward position. You will find directions an this subject in almost any cook-book; you will learn more, however, by watching an accomplished carver than in any other way.

Never pare an apple or a pear for a lady, unless she desires you to do so, and then be careful to use your fork to hold it. You may sometimes offer to divide a very large apple or pear with a person.

Coffee is sometimes served in the dining-room and sometimes in the drawing-room after dinner. If served at table, do not be in a hurry to have it brought, but wait until every one has done with his wine, for fear you should seem chary of the wine.

Should your servants break anything while you are at table, never turn round, or inquire into the particulars, however annoyed you may feel. If your servants betray stupidity or awkwardness in waiting on your guests, avoid reprimanding them publicly, as it only draws attention to their errors, and adds to their embarrassment.

It is customary when you have been out dining, to leave a card upon the lady the next day, or as soon after as may be convenient; but attentions of this sort are not always expected from professional or business men, their time being too valuable to sacrifice in making visits of mere ceremony, therefore, do not attribute such omission to any want of respect, but to its proper cause—time more usefully occupied.

When a man is about to be married, he usually gives a dinner to his bachelor friends, which is understood to be their *congé*, unless he chooses to renew their acquaintance.

THE BALL-ROOM.

As it is necessary for every young person who goes into society to learn to dance, in acquiring that art they will of course become familiar with the etiquette of the ball-room. If you are a stranger at a ball, you apply to the managers for a partner and are presented to a lady, with whom you dance. This does not entitle you to claim her acquaintance afterwards, and you should not even recognize her again unless she makes the first advances with a bow or a smile. In Europe it is customary for a gentleman to take off his hat to any lady in whose society he had ever been. But here we are more particular. We wait for a lady to first recognize

us. Few ladies who go to public balls would object to being noticed by their ball-room acquaintances, or fail to bow on meeting, when you can respond by lifting your hat. Never invite a strange lady to dance with you unless you have been presented to her for that purpose.

White or yellow tinted gloves are indispensable either at a ball or a dancing party. Lead the lady through the quadrille; do not drag her nor clasp her hand too tight. Never stand up to dance unless you are acquainted with the figures and know some of the steps. Dance quietly. Do not kick and caper about nor sway your body, but let your motion be from the hips downward. Do not pride yourself too much on the neatness of your steps, lest you be taken for a dancing master. When you are waltzing with a lady, do not press her waist, but touch it lightly with the open palm of your hand.

If a lady should civilly decline to dance with you, making an excuse, and you chance to see her dancing afterwards, do not take any notice of it, nor be offended with her. It might not be that she despised you, but that she preferred another. We cannot always fathom the hidden springs which influence a woman's actions, and there are many bursting hearts within white satin dresses; therefore do not insist upon the fulfilment of established regulations "de rigueur." Besides, it is a hard case that women should be compelled to dance with everybody offered them, at the alternative of not being allowed to enjoy themselves at all.

If a lady friend be engaged when you request her to dance, and she promises to be your partner for the next or any of the following dances, do not neglect her when the time comes, but be in readiness to fulfil your office as her cavalier, or she may think that you have studiously slighted her, besides preventing her obliging some one else. Even inattention and forgetfulness, by showing how little you care for a lady, form in themselves a tacit insult.

Never quarrel in a ball-room, or show the least resentment. All misunderstandings must be settled outside. It is in bad taste to be over-officious in noticing derelictions from strict propriety, for well-bred women will not thank you for defending them under such circumstances, as they do not like to become conspicuous; and in small matters they are generally able and willing to take care of themselves, and overwhelm the offender in some quiet way. It is only serious and glaring violations of decorum that should be publicly noticed.

In meeting your friends at a ball or promenade, it is only necessary to salute them once for the whole evening. Some people are constantly nodding and bowing, which is quite disagreeable.

THE STREET.

While walking the street no one should be so absent-minded as to neglect to recognize his friends. If you do not stop, you should always bow, touch your hat, or bid your friend good-day. If you stop you can offer your hand without removing your glove. If you stop to talk, retire on one side of the walk. If your friend has a stranger with him and you have anything to say, you should apologize to the stranger. Never leave your friend abruptly to see another person without asking him to excuse your departure. If you meet a gentleman of your acquaintance walking with a lady whom you do not know, lift your hat as you salute them. If you know the lady, you should salute her first.

If you meet a lady of your acquaintance in the street, if she is an intimate friend, you can confidently salute her by lifting your hat; if only a casual acquaintance, wait for her to recognize you first. Never offer to shake hands with a lady in the street if you have on dark gloves, as you may soil her white ones. If you meet a lady friend with whom you wish to converse, you must not stop, but turn and walk along

with her; and should she be walking with a gentleman, first assure yourself that you are not intruding before you attempt to join the two in their walk.

In walking with ladies in the street, gentlemen should treat them with the most scrupulous politeness. It is customary to give them the inside of the walk, but there may be places where the outside would be safer, and you should then change sides.

You should offer your arm to a lady with whom you are walking whenever her safety, comfort, or convenience may seem to require such attention on your part. At night your arm should always be tendered, and also when ascending the steps of a public building. In walking with any person you should keep step with military precision, and with ladies and elderly people you should always accommodate your speed to theirs.

If a lady with whom you are walking receives the salute of a person who is a stranger to you, you should return it, not for yourself, but for her.

When a lady whom you accompany wishes to enter a store, you should hold the door open and allow her to enter first, if practicable; for you must never pass before a lady anywhere, if you can avoid it, or without an apology.

If a lady addresses an inquiry to a gentleman on the street, he will lift his hat, or at least touch it respectfully, as he replies. If he cannot give the information required, he will express his regrets.

When tripping over the pavement a lady should gracefully raise her dress a little above her ankle. With her right hand she should hold together the folds of her gown and draw them towards the right side. To raise the dress on both sides, and with both hands, is vulgar. This ungraceful practice can be tolerated only for a moment when the mud is very deep.

Most American ladies in our cities wear too rich and expensive dresses in the street. Some, indeed, will sweep the

sidewalks with costly stuffs only fit for a drawing-room or a carriage. This is in bad taste, and is what ill-natured people would term snobbish.

The outdoor costume of ladies is not complete without a shawl or a mantle. Shawls are difficult to wear gracefully, and few ladies wear them well. You should not drag a shawl tight to your shoulders and stick out your elbows, but fold it loosely and gracefully, so that you may fully envelop the figure.

SHOPPING.

In inquiring for goods at a shop or store, do not say, I want so-and-so, but say to the shopman—Show me such or such an article, if you please; or use some other polite form of address. If you are obliged to examine a number of articles before you are suited, apologize to the shopkeeper for the trouble you give him. If, after all, you cannot suit yourself, renew your apologies when you go away. If you make only small purchases, say to him—I am sorry for having troubled you for so trifling a thing.

PLACES OF AMUSEMENT.

Gentlemen who attend ladies to the opera, to concerts, to lectures, &c., should take off their hats on entering the room, and while showing them their seats. Having taken your seats, remain quietly in them, and avoid, unless absolute necessity requires it, incommoding others by crowding out and in before them. If obliged to do this, politely apologize for the trouble you cause them. To talk during the performance is an act of rudeness and injustice; you thus proclaim your own ill-breeding and invade the rights of others, who have paid for the privilege of hearing the performers, and not for listening to you.

If you are in attendance upon a lady at any opera, concert, or lecture, you should retain your seat at her side; but if you have no lady with you, and have taken a desirable seat, you should, if need be, cheerfully relinquish it in favor of the lady for one less eligible.

To the opera or theatre ladies should wear opera-hoods, which are to be taken off on entering. In this country custom permits the wearing of bonnets; but, as they are neither convenient nor comfortable, ladies should dispense with their use whenever they can.

Gloves should be worn by ladies in church and in places of public amusement. Do not take them off to shake hands. Great care should be taken that they are well made and fit neatly.

TRAVELING.

As a general rule travelers are selfish. They pay little attention either to the comforts or distresses of their fellow-travelers; and the commonest observances of politeness are often sadly neglected by them. In the scramble for tickets, for seats, for state-rooms, or for places at a public table, the courtesies of life seem to be trampled under foot. Even the ladies are sometimes rudely treated and shamefully neglected in the headlong rush for desirable seats in the railway cars. To see the behavior of American people on their travels, one would suppose that we were anything but a refined nation; and I have often wondered whether a majority of our travelers could really make a decent appearance in social society.

When you are traveling, it is no excuse that because others outrage decency and propriety you should follow their example and fight them with their own weapons. A rush and scramble at the railway ticket-office is always unnecessary; the cars will not leave until every passenger is aboard; and if you have ladies with you, you can easily secure your seats and afterwards procure the tickets at leisure. But suppose you do lose a favorite seat by your moderation! Is it not better to suffer a little inconvenience than to show yourself decidedly vulgar? Go to the cars half an hour before they start, and you will avoid all trouble of this kind.

When seated, or about to seat yourself in the cars, never allow considerations of personal comfort or convenience to

cause you to disregard the rights of fellow-travelers, or forget the respectful courtesy due to woman. The pleasantest or most comfortable seats belong to the ladies, and you should never refuse to resign such seats to them with a cheerful politeness. Sometimes a gentleman will go through a car and choose his seat, and afterwards vacate it to procure his ticket, leaving his overcoat or carpetbag to show that the seat is taken. Always respect this token, and never seize upon a seat, thus secured, without leave, even though you may want it for a lady. It is not always necessary for a gentleman to rise after he has seated himself and offer his seat to a lady, particularly if the lady is accompanied by another gentleman; for there may still be eligible vacant seats in the cars. But should you see a lady come alone, and if the seats in the car all appear to be filled, do not hesitate to offer her yours if you have no ladies in your company. And should a lady motion to seat herself beside you, rise at once and offer her the choice of the two seats. These are but common courtesies, that every well-bred man will at all times cheerfully offer to the other sex.

Making acquaintances in the cars, although correct enough, is a measure of which travelers generally appear to be very shy. There is no reason for this, as acquaintances thus picked up need never be recognised again unless you please. If a stranger speaks to you, always answer him politely, and if his conversation proves disagreeable, you have no alternative but to change your seat.

In steamers do not make a rush for the supper table, or make a glutton of yourself when you get there. Never fail to offer your seat on deck to a lady, if the seats all appear to be occupied, and always meet half way any fellow-passenger who wishes to enter into conversation with you. Some travelers are so exclusive that they consider it a presumption on the part of a stranger to address them; but such people are generally foolish, and of no account. Sociable intercourse

while traveling is one of its main attractions. Who would care about sitting and moping for a dozen hours on board a steamer without exchanging a word with anybody? and this must be the fate of the exclusives when they travel alone. Even ladies, who run greater risks in forming steamboat acquaintances than the men, are allowed the greatest privileges in that respect. It might not be exactly correct for a lady to make a speaking acquaintance of a gentleman; but she may address or question him for the time being without impropriety.

Fellow-passengers, whether on a steamboat or in the cars, should at all times be sociable and obliging to one another. Those who are the reverse of this may be set down either as selfish, foolish or conceited.

In the cars you have no right to keep a window open for your accommodation, if the current of air thus produced annoys or endangers the health of another. There are a sufficient number of discomforts in traveling, at best, and it should be the aim of each passenger to lessen them as much as possible, and to cheerfully bear his own part. Life is a journey, and we are all fellow-travelers.

If in riding in an omnibus, or crossing a ferry with a friend, he wishes to pay for you, never insist upon paying for yourself or for both. If he is before you, let the matter pass without remark.

MISCELLANEOUS HINTS.

If you wish to pass for a well-bred person, keep clean. It is far better to dress coarsely and out of fashion and be strictly clean, than to cover a dirty skin with the finest and richest clothing. A coarse shirt or a calico dress is not necessarily vulgar, but dirt is essentially so. A clean skin is as essential to health, beauty and personal comfort, as it is to decency; and without health and that perfect freedom from physical disquiet which comes only from the normal action of all the

functions of the bodily organs, your behavior can never be satisfactory to yourself or agreeable to others.

When you go into a house anywhere, never fail to scrape your shoes, and wipe them on the mat, if the weather be muddy. Neglect of this duty is a pretty strong proof of slovenliness and vulgarity at home.

Clean and white teeth are an absolute necessity to any one who expects to pass muster in good society. Some people can keep their teeth white without the aid of washes or powder, while for others it is necessary to use some cleansing substance daily. To keep the mouth sweet and the teeth clean, it is generally necessary to brush them always after eating, and to scour them once a day. Powdered myrrh one part, to two or three parts of orris-root, is all that is necessary for a tooth powder. Scent it with anything you may fancy, and you then have the same tooth-powder that is sold under different names by the apothecaries.

A bad breath is frequently caused by a dirty mouth and decayed teeth. Where it proceeds from the stomach, it can only be rectified by dieting and taking seidlitz-powders or some other gentle cathartic.

You will not, of course, go into company, or sit down to the table, with soiled hands, but unless you habituate yourself to a special care of them, more or less dirt will be found lodged under the nails. Clean them carefully every time you wash your hands, and keep them smoothly and evenly cut. Never pare or scrape your nails, pick your teeth, comb your hair, or perform any of the necessary operations of the toilet in company. All these things should be carefully attended to in the privacy of your own room. To pick the nose, dig the ears, or scratch the head or any part of the person in company, is frightfully vulgar.

A gentleman should always wear a clean shirt. It is better to wear a threadbare coat than to have your shirt disreput-

able. Your hat and boots must also be well brushed if you expect to pass for a person of good breeding.

Bashfulness or diffidence is one of the greatest obstacles with which young people have to contend, and it can only be overcome by resolute effort and practice. Never give way to it. Go where you desire to go and overcome your diffidence by self-respect, self-reliance, and self-control. Persevere in this and you will conquer it in due time.

Pulling out your watch in company unasked is a mark of ill-breeding. It looks as though you were tired of the company, and that time dragged heavily. If you desire to know the time, retire to some corner, or to another room, and look at your watch unnoticed.

Never offer a lady a costly gift unless you are engaged to marry her. It is in the highest degree indelicate, and looks as though you were desirous of purchasing her good will. When you make a present to a lady, use no ceremony, but give it in an indirect and indifferent way, as though it was of very little consequence. Gifts given by ladies to gentlemen should not be purchased, but should be the offspring of their gentle skill, such as needlework, drawings, or paintings.

Keep yourself free from strange tricks or habits, such as thrusting out your tongue, continually snapping your fingers, rubbing your hands, sighing aloud, gaping with a noise like a country fellow that has been sleeping in a hay-loft, or indeed with any noise. These are imitations of the manners of the mob, and are degrading to a gentleman. It is rude and vulgar to lean your head back against fine papered walls, and thus soil them.

Never censure any one in conversation whose religious belief, or politics, or opinions of any kind, are different from your own. If he intrudes his ideas upon you offensively, be silent. Because he shows his own ill-breeding, is no reason why you should commit an impropriety.

The right of privacy is sacred, and should always be respected. It is exceedingly improper to enter a private room anywhere without knocking. No relation, however intimate, will justify an abrupt intrusion upon a private apartment. So the trunks, boxes, packets, papers, and letters of every individual, locked or unlocked, sealed or unsealed, are sacred. It is ill-manners even to open a book-case, or to read a written paper lying open, without permission expressed or implied. Books in an open case or on a centre-table, cards in a card-case, and newspapers, are presumed to be open for examination. Be careful where you go, what you read, and what you handle, particularly in private apartments.

Always conform your conduct, as near as possible, to the company with whom you are associated. If you should be thrown among people who are vulgar, it is better to humor them than to set yourself up, then and there, for a model of politeness. It is related of a certain king that on a particular occasion he turned his tea into his saucer, contrary to the etiquette of society, because two country ladies, whose hospitalities he was enjoying, did so. That king was a gentleman; and this anecdote serves to illustrate an important principle, namely, that true politeness and genuine good manners often not only permit, but absolutely demand, a violation of some of the arbitrary rules of etiquette. Bear this fact in mind.

Some people of both sexes affect odd, out-of-the-way dresses, or wear their hair in a queer manner, and defend themselves by saying that their mode of dress is more convenient or becoming, or less expensive. I have no doubt that a few of them do this in good faith, but with a majority it is simply a case of vanity and self-conceit, craving notoriety. Such pranks, either in men or women, should discard them from all good society. If they choose to affect eccentricity, let them enjoy it alone by themselves. Quakers may be an exception to this rule; though even that strictly moral people

have recently introduced a little common sense into their creed as far as it relates to dress. The young Quakers and Quakeresses of the present day conform to the usages of society in this respect except in the matter of "finery." Their dresses, and even their hats and bonnets, approach very near to the fashionable styles.

Well-bred gentlemen or ladies will sustain their characters as such at all times and in all places—at home as well as abroad. If you see a man behave in a rude or uncivil manner to his father or mother, his brother or sister, his wife or children, or fail to exercise the common courtesies of life at his own table and around his own fireside—you may at once set him down as a boor, whatever pretensions he may make to gentility. Good manners should always begin at home.

If you would have your children grow up beloved and respected by their elders as well as by their cotemporaries, teach them good manners in their childhood. The young sovereign should first learn to obey, that he may be the better fitted to command in his turn.

Show, but do not show off, your children to strangers. Recollect, in the matter of children, how many are born every hour, each one almost as remarkable as yours in the eyes of its papa and mamma.

Never recline backwards, while seated, so as to push your chair upon two legs. This appears to be almost exclusively an American habit, and is decidedly a breach of good breeding. Parlor chairs are usually made without braces across the legs; and should you enter a gentleman's parlor and tip back in a chair like this, you would run the risk of breaking it down.

In shaking hands it is more respectful to offer an ungloved hand; but if two gentlemen are both gloved, it is very foolish to keep each other waiting to take them off. You should not, however, offer a gloved hand to a lady or a superior who is

ungloved. Foreigners are sometimes very sensitive in this matter, and might deem the glove an insult. It is well for a gentleman to carry his right-hand glove in his hand if he is likely to have occasion to shake hands. At a ball or party the gloves need not be taken off.

Be exact and prompt in all your money transactions. No man who has the least pretensions to good breeding will take advantage of the liberality of his friend under any circumstances. It is no breach of politeness to refuse a loan, to even your best friend, because no one is supposed to know of your ability to make the loan at that particular time.

The first mark of a gentleman is a sensitive regard for the feelings of others; therefore smoke where it is never likely to prove offensive by making your clothes smell. After smoking always wash your mouth and brush your teeth. What man of delicacy could presume to address a lady with his breath smelling of onions? Yet tobacco is equally odious to some people.

Be cautious how you indulge in *badinage* in the presence of dull people; they will either get out of temper, in consequence of taking what you say literally, or else will stare and wonder at you for being such a "strange man." "Poor Susan!" said a gentleman to a pretty girl. "Poor, indeed!" replied the lady, with an indignant toss of the head; "not so poor as that comes to. Papa can give us something, I think!"

HINTS TO LADIES.

YOUNG LADIES should always be on their guard against excessive timidity, for it not only paralyses their powers, renders them awkward, and gives them an almost silly air, but it may even cause them to be suspected of pride among those who do not understand the real cause of their diffidence. There are many intelligent and worthy young ladies who make a very indifferent appearance in society from this cause. We can only advise them that a firmness of purpose

to break themselves of their timid feelings will accomplish it by a little practice.

Good temper and good nature are the real essentials to true politeness, and the most artful polish can never impart the *je ne sais quoi* of elegance where these two requisites are wanting.

Propriety in the carriage of the body is especially indispensable to ladies. It is by this that, in a walk or any assembly, people who cannot converse with them judge of their merit and their good education. How many dancers move off, and how many persons sigh with pity, at the sight of a beautiful woman who has a mincing way, affects grace, inclines her head affectedly, and who seems to admire herself incessantly and to invite others to admire her also! Very few people like to enter into conversation with an immovable lady, and one who is formal and precise, stretching out the body, pressing the lips, and carrying back the elbows as if they were fastened to her side.

Some ladies walk so as to turn up their dresses behind; and I have seen a well-dressed woman made to look very awkward by elevating her shoulders slightly and pushing her elbows too far behind her. Some hold their hands up to the waist, and press their arms against themselves as tightly as if they were glued there; others swing them backward and forward, as a business man who walks along the street. Too short steps detract from dignity very much, forming a mincing pace; too long steps are masculine. All these manœuvers are in bad taste. The easiest or most natural gait and disposition of the limbs is the most graceful.

The gait of a lady ought neither to be too quick nor too slow; the most easy and convenient step is that which fatigues the least and pleases most. The body and the head should be erect, without affectation and without haughtiness; the movements, especially those of the arms, easy and natural. The countenance should be pleasing and modest.

It is not polite for a lady to speak too quick or too loud. When seated she ought neither to cross her legs nor take a vulgar attitude. She should occupy her chair entirely, and appear neither too restless nor yet too immovable.

On rising from bed in the morning a lady should put on a morning gown and a small muslin cap. The hair-papers, if they cannot be removed on rising, should be concealed under a bandeau of lace or of the hair. They should be removed as soon as may be. In this dress she should receive only intimate friends, or persons who call upon urgent or indispensable business. Dispense with this dress as soon as possible, and dress for the forenoon. Some will go about in their morning dress half the day, which is a decidedly low and vulgar habit.

In selecting your dresses have a correct eye to suitable colors for your complexion. If you do not possess a good eye for color, you ought never to rely upon your own judgment in the selection of your patterns or in their arrangement upon your person. If you do, you may be nothing more than a walking violation of all the harmony of light and shade; and, however expensively dressed, you will never appear either genteel or fashionable.

It is altogether out of place for a lady to spread out her dress for display, or to throw her drapery around her in sitting down, and what is especially to be avoided is an unquiet, bold, and imperious air, for it is unnatural, and not allowable in any case.

In receiving guests, your first object should be to make them feel at home. Begging them to make themselves at home is not sufficient. You should display a genuine, unaffected friendliness. Allow their presence to interfere as little as possible with your domestic arrangements; thus letting them see that their visit does not disturb you, but they fall, as it were, naturally into a vacant place in your house-

hold. Observe your own feelings when you happen to be the guest of a person who, though he may be very much your friend, and really glad to see you, seems not to know what to do with either you or himself; and again, when in the house of another, you feel as much at ease as in your own. Mark the difference, more easily felt than described, between the manners of the two, and deduce therefrom a lesson for your own improvement.

Always avoid the foolish practice of deprecating your own rooms, furniture, or viands, and expressing regrets that you have nothing better to offer. Neither should you go to the other extreme of extolling any particular thing or article of food. The best way is to say nothing about these matters. Neither is it proper to urge guests to eat, or to load their plates against their inclinations.

When visitors propose to leave you, do not be over urgent to have them to remain, even if you feel that their visit has been too short. You can express your regrets, of course; but good manners do not require you to endeavor to retain them against their wishes or sense of duty.

Don't make your rooms or stair-case gloomy. Furnish them for light, and let them have it. Daylight is cheap. If your rooms are dark, all the effects of furniture, pictures, walls, and carpets is lost. If you have beautiful things, make them useful. The fashion of having a nice parlor, and then shutting it up all but three or four days in the year, when you have company; spending your own life in a small room, shabbily furnished, or an unhealthy basement, to save your things, is the meanest possible economy.

Don't put your cards around the looking-glass, unless in your private boudoir. If you wish to display them, keep them in a suitable basket or vase on the mantle or centre-table.

If you are a guest in any family, you should accommodate

yourself to their customs and habits. Ascertain their hours for meals, for retiring, &c., and regulate your own movements accordingly. Your own good sense and delicacy will teach you the desirability of keeping your room tidy, and your articles of dress and toilet as much in order as possible. If there is a deficiency of servants, a lady will certainly not hesitate to make her own bed, and to do for herself as much as possible, and for the family all that is in her power.

Treat your servants always with kindness, but at the same time with firm respect for yourself; on no account be familiar with them, neither hear their tattle, nor tattle with them. Do not scold them or they will lose their respect for you. When they need reproof give it them in a calm, dignified, and firm manner; but on no account, if you can possibly avoid it, find fault with them in the presence of strangers, even though they should let fall the tray with your best set of china upon it.

The reputation for good-breeding of the mistress of the house is often measured by the conduct of her servants. You should take care, therefore, to make them civil and polite, teach them to assist your visitors in putting off and on their overcoats, cloaks, &c., and let them always be ready to open the door when your guests arrive or depart.

Accustom your servants never to appear before you too slatternly or too richly dressed; never allow them to enter into conversation with each other in your presence, nor to answer you by signs or coarse terms. If you have only one servant, talk of her by her Christian name; if you have more, talk of them by the names of their offices, such as nurse, cook, housemaid, butler, footman, &c., but always address them by their Christian names.

Never entertain your visitors with any narrative of your servants' improprieties.

A lady in company should never exhibit any anxiety to

sing or play; but if she intends to do so, she should not affect to refuse when asked, but obligingly accede at once. If you cannot sing, or do not choose to, say so with seriousness and gravity, and put an end to the expectation promptly. After singing once or twice, cease and give place to others. There is an old saying, that a singer can with the greatest difficulty be set agoing, and when agoing, cannot be stopped.

A lady will not say, "My husband," except among intimates; in every other case she should address or speak of him by his name, as Mr. ——.

If a lady who receives a half-ceremonious visit, is sewing, she ought to leave it off immediately, and not resume it, except at the request of the visitor. If they are on quite intimate terms, she may request permission to continue. If a person visits in an entirely ceremonious way, it would be very impolite to work even an instant. Moreover, with friends a lady should hardly be occupied with her work, but seem to forget it on their account.

To carry children or dogs with you on a visit of ceremony is altogether vulgar. Even in half-ceremonious visits, it is necessary to leave one's dog in the ante-room; the nurse who holds the infant must also be left without the drawing-room.

When ladies are introduced to one another, or to gentlemen, it is not customary for them to shake hands, but merely to bow slowly and gracefully. Courtesying is now obsolete. When old friends meet they shake hands or salute each other with a kiss on the cheek.

Ladies of literary tastes should never attempt to show off much, for fear some jealous rival of the other sex should sneer and call them *blues*.

A lady should never prolong a friendly call into the evening, or make one at the close of the day, without first having arranged for an escort home. She should either have one of

the domestics accompany her, or else a male member of her family, or have an understanding that they come for her. Should she have loitered until evening without being thus provided, she must accept an escort from the family visited, at the same time expressing her regrets.

If, in traveling, any one introduces himself to you, and does it in a proper and respectful manner, conduct yourself towards him with politeness, ease, and dignity; if he is a gentleman, he will appreciate your behavior—and if not a gentleman, will be deterred from annoying you; but acquaintanceships thus formed must cease where they began, and your entering into conversation with a lady or gentleman in a boat or a coach does not give any of you a right to after-recognition.

NEW YEARS CALLS.

The American custom of gentlemen making calls on all their friends on New Years day is very ancient, having originated among the Dutch settlers of New York. In 1840 it was at its height, almost every family with any social pretensions setting a New Years table, and making a display according to their means. It is still continued, though with much less parade and entertainment. Under the old arrangement, Young America was apt to take too much wine and an excess of hot whiskey punches, hence big treats on New Years fell into disfavor. At the present time most families in New York [illegible] to some extent in large towns, receive New Years [illegible]. The ladies are at home to all their gentlemen acquaintances from eleven or twelve o'clock in the day up to ten at night. It is not customary, however, to set a table or make a display as formerly, but to receive the gentlemen, who pass the compliments of the season, and after a few moments' chat, retire. In some houses, if they protract their visit beyond a few moments, they are asked to take a glass of wine with the ladies. That is all.

In making New Years calls, gentlemen frequently go in

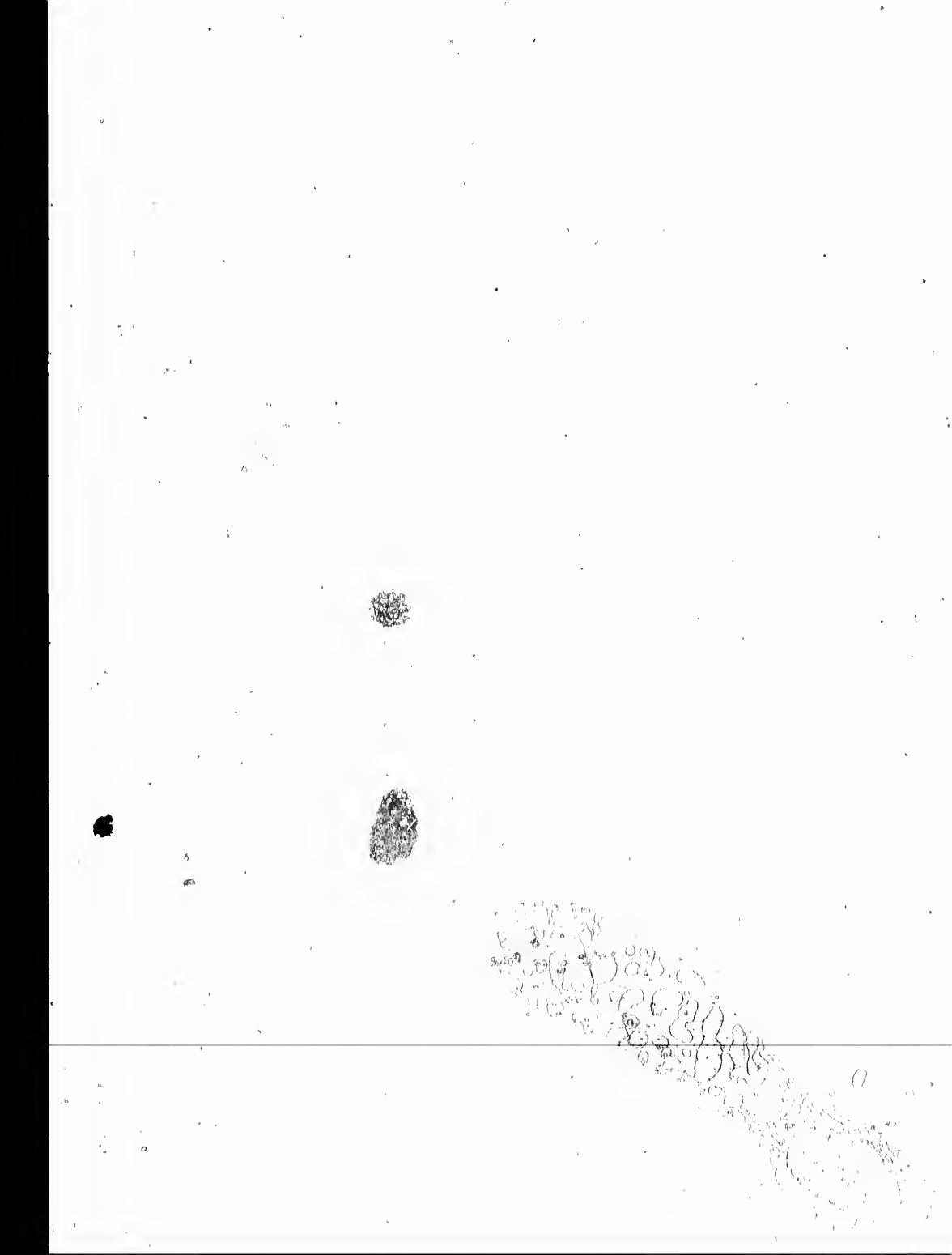
couples, and by threes and fours. They call on the female friends of the whole party, and if one or more of them should not be acquainted with the lady where the call is made, they are introduced. It is not usual, however, to make promiscuous introductions in the best society. Most people are not very particular, because these casual introductions do not really amount to anything.

New Years day is the gala day for match-makers among the ladies. All the country cousins, and young ladies in the matrimonial market, are marshalled and drilled to make the best possible appearance—in short, to put on their most bewitching and fascinating smiles—and we are happy to add that casual acquaintances thus made often end in new friendship, and not unfrequently in closer ties.

If a gentleman is introduced to ladies while making a New Years call, it does not warrant him to claim the privilege of a friend of the family. He should never call a second time except he be specially invited, or unless he has permission to do so through an acknowledged friend of the family. If he is desirous of a further acquaintance with the young ladies, he will request the friend who introduced him to ask such permission.

In receiving their company on New Years day, ladies have the largest liberty and freedom. They can chat with any one who comes properly introduced, with the same frankness and lack of reserve that they would with their most intimate friends. All ceremony is dispensed with for a moment; but as the visits are necessarily short, if there should happen to be any cases of "love at first sight," the smitten youth must manage to get an invitation for future further acquaintance.

New Years is jubilee for bashful girls. On that occasion they show themselves in a frank, hearty and free-and-easy manner, in singular contrast to the stiff etiquette of their common every-day life. They are not then afraid of making a mistake, and they act natural. I have always admired the



characters of bashful girls, and whenever opportunity offers I make their acquaintance. Their reserve seldom or ever comes from stupidity. They are usually amiable, intelligent and clever, if not so quick witted as their more favored sisters. If I was pressed to choose me a wife at random, I would select a bashful young lady.

The two or three days succeeding New Years are the ladies' days for calling, to pass the compliments of the season. This custom has not become quite as popular as the New Years calls of the gentlemen. The ladies discuss with each other the number of their gentlemen visitors on New Years, the new faces they have seen, and the matrimonial prospects for the year. It is customary on these occasions to offer wine and other refreshments, and to drink to each other's health and prosperity.

LOVE AND COURTSHIP.

YOUNG people of both sexes are too apt to wax romantic, and think of love and courtship before they are out of their teens. Some girls may marry thus early and do well enough, but we earnestly protest against boyish courtships. They should be frowned down in every social circle. Young men under twenty years old who think of marrying are generally those who have not seen much of good society. A boy candidate for matrimony is usually a bashful fellow, who yearns for a social companion of some kind, and picks up the first silly girl he meets. If circumstances had so favored him that he could have gone more into female society, the probability is he would never have committed a folly that may prove the bane of his future social existence. It is almost unnecessary to say the boys who marry, and girls who marry them, are by that act out of the pale of good society. No one would recognize a pair of children in the matrimonial state. They must tarry at home, and live upon love, until the husband's beard is grown. There are a few silly women, of not much account anywhere, who might patronize married boys for the sake of being praised and lionized by somebody. That is all.

A young man should make up his mind not to marry until he is twenty-five. If he enters society with that determination, and possessing any degree of firmness of purpose, there is little danger to him of the shafts of Cupid. At that age he will have acquired such a knowledge of himself, both physically and mentally, as will enable him to set up a proper standard of female excellence, and to determine what qualities, physical and mental, should characterize the woman who is to be his companion for life.

Do not make up your mind to wait till you have acquired a fortune before you marry. You should not, however, assume the responsibilities of a family without a reasonable prospect of being able to maintain one. If you are established in business, or have an adequate income for the immediate requirements of the new relation, you may safely trust to your own energy and self-reliance for the rest.

Girls of good sense will not be ambitious to marry until after their twentieth year. They should then seek partners among gentlemen who are from five to ten years older than themselves. If a girl is of a romantic turn, and in danger of falling in love, we would respectfully suggest that she should form no intimate acquaintances with the other sex except among those who are of suitable age for her. She will thus avoid the Scylla of a green husband, even if she gets wrecked upon the Charybdis of a shiftless or unprincipled one.

I have generally noticed that where a marriageable young man looked too anxiously round among his female acquaintances for a wife, he almost invariably got cheated. There is a certain class of girls who are brought up for the matrimonial market in the same way that an organ grinder trains his monkies. A girl of this kind is directed by her mother, who keeps hold of the string to which she is fastened, directs all her movements, and shows her off until her market is made. These are the ones usually taken by greenhorns, and over-anxious Benedicks.

It is seldom that a young man who goes much into female society arrives at the age of twenty-five without having formed agreeable acquaintances among the other sex. He will therefore have little difficulty in selecting a girl suitable for his wife, and the question is, how shall he proceed to win her according to the rules of etiquette of good society?

Girls have keen perceptions, and if the object of his choice reciprocates his partiality for her company, he will have no difficulty whatever, for she will meet him half way in all those little attentions which naturally suggest themselves to a lover. If, on the contrary, the lady is shy and undetermined, let him not seem too anxious to secure her favor, but treat her with a polite deference, and endeavor by assiduous attention to her wishes, tastes and humors, to gain her heart. Some young ladies will surrender under such treatment even after they had solemnly made up their minds never to encourage the man who was thus seeking their favor.

Do not visit your sweetheart too often, lest by making yourself common with her, she will not feel that respect so necessary to foster genuine affection. Some young fellows, after they are tacitly accepted as lovers, will so overwhelm their sweethearts with their company as to become positive bores. If a girl is sensible she will dislike so much billing and cooing.

In paying your attentions to a young lady with a view of marriage, you should not be so selfish as to omit your duties towards other ladies in whose society you may be thrown. Be careful about this. You had better run the risk of displeasing your sweetheart than to lose caste by a neglect of the rules of good-breeding.

Never make costly presents to a young lady, thinking thereby to obtain her favor. You can offer her neat trifles in casual way, and procure any books that she may express a desire to read. After the matter is arranged, by an engage-

ment, you may show your generosity in proportion to your means. Even then it is in bad taste to be too lavish, or she may set you down for an improvident person. Young men who are excessively liberal and attentive as lovers, do not always make the best husbands. Girls know this, and one of good sense will discourage her lover from making needless expenditure in ministering to her gratification, or in proof of his devotion.

Lovers usually feel a certain need of confidants in their affairs of the heart. In general, they should be of the opposite sex. A young man may with profit open his heart to his mother, an elder sister, or a female friend considerably older than himself. The young lady may with equal advantage make a brother, an uncle, or some good middle-aged married man the repository of her love secrets, her hopes, and her fears.

Asking the consent of parents or guardians is a duty on the part of the lady. She should consult her natural protectors before giving much encouragement to any one who aspires to her hand. It is often unnecessary for her to broach the subject to them at all, because the attentions paid to her speak for themselves. A father, mother, or guardian, would naturally oppose any close intimacy offered by an unworthy person. Where the lady lives apart from her parents or guardian, she would commit a great impropriety in neglecting to apprise them of any serious attentions paid to her. In such a case her lover might apply for permission to pay her his addresses.

Young men are presumed to have arrived at an age of discretion before they marry, hence they usually act independently of everybody. There may be cases, however, where it would be but just and proper that a young man should ask his parents' consent. If he proposes to marry before attaining an independent position, or seeks an alliance with a lady either beneath or much above him in the social

circle, it is but fair that he should first consult his parents. Never enter into an engagement of this kind with a prospect of future isolation from your own family and friends.

Never trifle with the feelings of a lady, by paying her marked attentions that you do not intend for something. A female coquette is bad enough. A male coquette ought to be banished from society. Let there be a clearly perceived, if not an easily defined, distinction between the attentions of common courtesy or of friendship, and those of love. All misunderstanding on this point can and must be avoided.

Quarrels between lovers should be reconciled by a first proposition on the part of the lady. She will thus show a magnanimity that cannot but command the admiration of her lover, if he has the least spark of manhood about him. If she has been at fault, let her confess it. If he was unjust or ungenerous, overlook his fault, and offer him a hearty forgiveness.

When a gentleman has treated his sweetheart badly in a moment of petulance, it is but just that he should make an apology and ask forgiveness; but do not urge a reconciliation —let that come voluntarily from the lady.

Many young men are anxious to procure a code of proposals, so that they can conduct their courtships, even down to "popping the question," strictly according to etiquette. This is all nonsense. If your acquaintance and intimacy with a lady does not suggest the proper mode to ask her hand in marriage, we are afraid there is no hope for you, unless she loves you well enough to arrange the little matter herself. "Popping the question" by rule is absurd. You had much better write her a note, revealing your wishes, than to do that.

A formal agreement to marry is not always necessary. In your little intimacy the grand result may be taken for granted where mutual confidence is strong. It may be proper to

clinch the matter by asking the lady if she is almost ready to name the happy day—that being her special privilege. If she declines on the ground of no real engagement, it opens the door for you to make one then and there.

After an engagement to marry is entered into in good faith, and it is so understood by the lady's family, no motives of delicacy or false shame should prevent her enjoying the society of her lover alone, and under circumstances that would otherwise seem imprudent. But neither of them should ever show their fondness in company by any acts of endearment. It is not always necessary that engaged lovers should be left alone. They are supposed to be able to enjoy themselves in company as well as other people, and it is therefore not correct to leave the room because the young lady's beau has arrived. If you wish to leave on that account, wait awhile until a good excuse offers, but in no case leave without an apparent reason.

An engaged young lady should not encourage her lover to be too loving during courtship. "There is many a slip," &c. Hugging and kissing is perhaps all very well when not too often or too fervently indulged in. The lady should never be lavish of her caresses nor too forward to receive those of her lover. Let her govern her feelings without prudishness, and keep up a certain self-respect that will assure him that though her affections may be strong and sincere, her sense of propriety governs her actions.

A gentleman of any degree of refinement will never offer an indignity to the lady of his choice. It would be brutal in him to do so, and some very sensible people contend that such conduct is a proof of the absence of any sincere regard. This is perhaps a mistake, as the passions of some people are stronger than their sense of propriety. A lady should firmly resist any improper liberties with her person on the part of her lover, but it is not necessary that she should quarrel with him on that account. She can easily forgive her intended husband for what would be an unpardonable insult in any

other man. No well-bred person will offer to take offensive liberties with the girl he proposes to marry. He will have too profound a respect for her to do that.

Young girls should be careful to avoid all indelicate expressions in presence of their lovers, or in fact anywhere else. Some ladies not only relish *double entendres*, but actually use them. Yet, however much it may create a feeling of cleverness at the moment, cool reflection is afterwards sure to condemn it both on the part of the speaker and listener. Such discourse, wanton glances, and lightness of carriage, are considered by men as gauntlets to dare them to speak and act in a more free and unguarded manner than they otherwise would have the boldness to do.

At a dancing party, a lover should not expect to monopolize his sweetheart as a partner. Let him lead off with her and then give some one else a chance. It is a piece of magnanimity that every lady present will appreciate. These parties are rightly named sociables, and in attending them you should leave all your selfishness at home.

Although it is highly improper for an unmarried lady to travel alone with a gentleman, yet after an engagement between them has taken place, the impropriety *per se* ceases. The outside world are not supposed to know of this engagement, hence it is not exactly correct that they should travel alone, even then. She should have a female companion with her.

Engagements made with due deliberation, and between parties who have been sufficiently long acquainted to thoroughly understand each other, will seldom be broken off. If such a painful necessity occurs let it be met with firmness, but with delicacy. If you have made a mistake, it is infinitely better to correct it at the last moment than not at all. Recollect that *a marriage* is not easily dissolved. On breaking off an engagement, all letters, presents, &c., should be returned,

and both parties should consider themselves pledged to the most honorable secrecy and delicate conduct in reference to the whole matter.

LOVE LETTERS.

In writing their letters lovers should avoid a repetition of endearing terms. A girl of good common sense does not require to be assured over and over again that she is the most angelic of her sex—the darling of her lover's heart—the sweet solace of his existence, and all that sort of thing. I know that most girls are fond of adulation, and if one has a real affection for her lover, she will be apt to relish a good deal of soft nonsense put into his letters; nevertheless it is not the correct way to write a love epistle. Always compose your love letters in a style that you would not be ashamed to have them fall into the hands of a third party. You can easily do this and "pile on the agony" some, notwithstanding. You need not be formal and stiff in your style, but avoid silliness. Some lovers are naturally silly, and I do not expect to learn them anything. I address myself to those who are supposed to be full-witted. Never fill your letters with religious talk or family gossip, for fear your friend might suspect you of frivolity. Express your sentiments with candor and fervency, and in a humorous rather than a serious tone. Many lovers find it difficult to begin a letter satisfactorily. They desire some original mode of opening; but when once started they get along very well. For the benefit of such people I shall give a few skeletons of love letters to be used by ardent youths and maidens, who can fill up between the bones to suit themselves.

Skeleton 1. An ardent lover, who lives away from his mistress, wants to write his first letter after having paid her a visit. He begins as follows:

My Dearest Amelia,—I cannot refrain from writing you a few lines to-day, though we parted so recently. My thoughts are constantly with you, and your pleasant face and sweet

smile seem even now to be before my mind's eye. I do not know that it is much satisfaction to you to be so often reminded of my love and devotion, but it is a pleasure to me to speak my thoughts on the subject, and perhaps I am selfish in this respect. Be that as it may, I am sure my whole soul is with you, and the only anxiety I have is the fear that I may not be enabled to prove myself worthy of your generous confidence. I shall do my best, however, to merit your constant love, waiting and hoping for the happy day when we part no more.

[Here you can put in your own talk and gossip, and conclude the letter as follows:]

With further assurances of my entire devotion, and that you have my whole heart, I remain as ever, my dear girl, your affectionate friend and lover,

ABRAM LINCOLN.

SKELETON 2. A matter-of-fact philosopher soars into the regions of the romantic, and "piles on the agony" a little, in writing to his lady-love:

My Bonnie Kate—Some philosopher has remarked that when a man is once thoroughly in love it changes the whole scope of his thoughts, feelings, and ideas—that he, in short, is not the same individual in point of intellect that he was before he experienced the delightful sensations of a sincere personal attachment. This seems to me a rational theory if I can judge by my own experience. When I reflect upon my position as your favored friend, my happiness knows no bounds. The sun of heaven shines bright and glorious. Every one around me looks pleasant and contented, and I feel as though the Creator of the Universe had made this beautiful world especially to confer bliss upon us poor mortals. I never felt so before. There was always something wanting. Success in business matters may have been cheering and comfortable, but yet my happiness was incomplete. I lacked a loving heart to beat in unison with my own. In your affection, my dearest Kate, I have found consolation; and I hope and trust that our future career will be one of happiness unalloyed. Indeed, I feel that it will be so, for my feelings and affections are much too strong ever to wander from one who is so good and generous, and I hope always to merit your unaffected regard.

[Here put in your gossip and the information you desire to communicate, and conclude as follows:]

Hoping that our mutual sympathy may continue while life lasts, I remain, Katy darling,

Your faithful friend and affectionate lover,
HANNIBAL HAMLIN.

SKELETON 3. Here is a letter of more moderation. The young fellow puts in only a few "scientific licks" of love. It is an answer to a very loving epistle from his sweetheart:

My Sweet and Pure Eliza,—Your kind letter reached me safely by mail this morning, and I read it with great eagerness and pleasure; indeed, I may say I have read it over at least a dozen times, so grateful and happy do I feel to enjoy the affection and confidence of one who I sincerely love. I rejoice to hear that you are well, and hope that nothing may occur to mar your happiness.

[Here put in your gossip, and conclude as follows:]

But I must bid you adieu! and as I do, so let me remind you that your loving letters are to me a source of much pleasure. As I read them to imagine I am sitting by your side and hearing the sound of your voice. Let me entreat you, then, to write to me constantly. I promise to answer you promptly, even should my ideas run out so that I can merely handy compliments. Let me again assure you that you have my whole heart, and that I remain as ever

Your affectionate JAMES.

SKELETON 4. Here is the head and tail of a pleasant little epistle that will answer in case you do not want to be very sentimental, but yet desire to tickle the fancy of your sweet heart a little:

Dearest Julia,—I take great pleasure in again writing to you, first to thank you for your generous and affectionate confidence, and then to assure you of my entire and continued devotion. I am, thank God, well and cheerful, and I am constantly thinking of "the good time coming" when we shall never again be separated. It is said that when one is really in love, if things go smoothly, he or she is the happiest

of mortals. I can believe in this doctrine implicity, and I trust it is the same with you. Tell me, if it is so? Are you one of those favored by the merry little fellow with bows and arrows? Does our mutual attachment tend to contribute to your present happines? As Touchstone says—Doth my simple features content you? I think I feel your soft embrace and your warm lips upon my own in generous response!

[Here put in your gossip, and then wind up the letter as follows:]

And now, Julia, let me ask you another question, and I will then close. Don't you think that when lovers part for a while they experience a deeper and more profound feeling of devotion and attachment than when they are almost constantly meeting and enjoying each other's society? It seems so to me. I really believe that I love you more tenderly than ever now that I can express myself by letter. What is the state of your feelings? Write word and let us compare notes. I remain, truly and devotedly,

Your faithful and loving friend,
JAMES THOMPSON.

SKELETON 5. This may fit in somewhere, and so we print it. It is a good plan to take out some particular, strong sentences when the whole skeleton will not suit your case. Girls generally like to be loved pretty strong, and it will do no harm to put in anywhere a few such expressions as may be found here:

Mon cher Ami,—What on earth is the reason you do not write to me? I am absolutely pining away and dying by inches in consequence of your neglect. If I did not know that your little heart was exactly in the right place, and that some time or other I should have a plausible excuse, if not a good and valid one, for this neglect, I assure you I should begin to think of getting vexed. But let us not talk about anything disagreeable. Love is my theme! and it is to my soul's idol that these lines will speed their way. Let me now picture to my mind's eye my dear little Carrie as she reads this letter. First she puts on a look of sadness as she peruses my gentle reproaches. A sweet little blush now tinges her cheek as she is assured of my forgiveness, and as the reading continues she unconsciously raises the letter to her lips.

Dear, good girl! I will kiss this sheet all over, and thus have the satisfaction of sending you the shadow while we cannot enjoy the substance of our mutual caresses.

[Here write your private gossip, and conclude the letter as follows:]

And now, Carrie dear, don't fail to let me hear from you "right sudden." If you have not time or inclination to write two lines, give me one, and say in it, "I am well, and I love you, John," and I will be satisfied. Fancy your own feelings if I should neglect to write to you for nearly three weeks! Adieu! my darling, and believe me that my greatest present happiness is in reading your letters.

From your always loving and devoted JOHN.

Ladies generally know exactly how to address their lovers. To them love letters come natural. It is unnecessary to place before them even a "skeleton" to set them agoing, for a live, handsome young fellow will do it alone. Nevertheless, some of the above skeletons, or parts of them, could be adapted by ladies into letters to their lovers, if they were hard up for ideas. I will wind up this essay on letters by giving a genuine one from a young lady to her lover. It is a gem in its way:

Newport, August 23, 1884.

Dear John,—I have come here, as you so disinterestedly recommended, but my heart, I fear, is left behind. I am sad to-night. Papa says that in two or three days I shall be as bright as a lark, but I fear not. We go to the White Mountains on Monday, and I want you to come and go with us, so I can hear you talk about "Earth's thousand voices," "Nature's bright teachings," and all those romantic things which are forever at your tongue's end. They come natural to you, but it is a great effort for me to get them off. I promise to make the proper responses to all your enthusiastic exclamations, and to say "Yes!" every time you exclaim "Beautiful!" which will keep me incessantly busy, I'm sure, for the scenery in the mountains is said to be grand. Do come, dear John, and you will make me happy. I am troubled some with a cough, which the doctor calls the asthma. Papa says I inherit it from Grandmother Jones. I told him it was an awful piece of injustice in her to leave him all her money and

poor me only her infirmities. I shall post this by to-night's mail, and will look for your answer to-morrow. You must come on Saturday, for we start bright and early on Monday morning. I think you are sure to come, as you never refuse any request of your pet,

ELIZA.

MARRIAGE.

WHEN a man marries it is presumed that all his bachelor acquaintanceship ends. He can renew his friendships by sending cards or invitations, but where he neglects to do so, the party neglected may be sure that no further intercourse is desired. There are various reasons for this. In the first place, a bachelor need not be so particular in his choice of companions as a man of family who has a social reputation to achieve. For amusement, while unmarried, he may associate freely with those whose morals and habits would not exactly accord with the proprieties of domestic life. After marriage his reputation must be unexceptionable if he expects to be recognized among persons of refinement. There is still another reason why he may discard bachelor acquaintances. A newly-married pair may wish to limit the circle of their friends, from praiseworthy motives of economy. When a man first "sets up" in the world, the burden of an extensive and indiscriminate acquaintance may be felt in various ways. Many have had cause to regret the weakness of mind which allowed them to plunge into a vortex of gayety and expense they could ill afford, from which they have found it difficult to extricate themselves, and the effects of which have proved a serious evil to them in after-life.

Ladies, after an engagement to marry, should be cautious of receiving any attentions whatever from gentlemen. Lovers are naturally jealous of any such attentions, however innocent or frivolous.

If, after engagement, a lady should wish to go to a place of public amusement, or to a concert, or even to an evening meeting, she should not accept an invitation to go with a gentleman other than her lover, except it be a near relative

such as her brother or an elderly uncle. To go with any other gentleman, except by permission of her intended husband, would be exceedingly improper.

It is the lady's privilege to name the day for marriage, and the lover should leave the arrangement exclusively to her. He ought never to urge her to hasten the event contrary to her wishes, as the lady may have reasons that he cannot appreciate for a more remote day for the nuptials than he desires.

The bridal outfit, which is furnished by the relatives of the bride, usually consists of clothing and necessary family linen. Some opulent fathers will add to these a house and furniture. Jewels are not usually comprised in an outfit. They are presented by the bridegroom. Bridal presents consist of any useful or ornamental article for the use of the bride, whether to adorn her person, for the toilet, or for house-keeping. Sometimes dress-patterns are given, but they are not appropriate, as the colors may not please her.

Some ladies put on a travelling dress, get married in a hurry, and start at once for the cars or steamboat. This is not the correct way. A bride should be dressed in white, with white veil and a wreath of orange flowers on her head. After the ceremony is over, and she has received the congratulations of friends, she can put on her travelling dress and hasten away as fast as she pleases. If, from motives of economy, you conclude to go through the ceremony in your travelling dress, you should only invite a few intimate friends to be present.

The bridegroom should wear a black dress coat and trowsers, white vest, and black cravat. Let us entreat him not to commit the solecism against good taste of wearing a white cravat, which gives an inexpressibly silly look to the most intellectual countenance in the world.

The bride may have one or half-a-dozen bridesmaids at her choice. No particular number being fixed, it is often determined by the number of sisters or of intimate friends she may have. The bridesmaids should be dressed in white, all alike, and wear orange flower bouquets.

If there is a bridal breakfast, or collation, the bride should retain her bridal dress until that is over. She can then put on her travelling dress.

After the departure of the newly-married couple, cards are issued, and wedding cake forwarded to their numerous friends. The cards usually contain an appointment of a certain day or two or three days if necessary) when they will be at "home" to receive visits of congratulation. Cards and cake are also sent to distant friends—those residing even hundreds of miles away. The cake is often omitted, and the cards sent by mail.

When a bride attends the first party after marriage, she usually trims her hair with orange flowers.

A new married couple is not expected to give parties at their house for the first year; but after that time they must no longer play the part of exceptional beings, but blend with the herd, and give and take as others do.

THE END.