

Travelers by Land and Water

Helen Lefferts Roberts

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Dedicated

TO
THE THREE GRACES,
AGLAIA, THALIA, AND EUPHROSYNE,
WHO PRESIDED OVER THE BANQUET, THE DANCE, AND
ALL SOCIAL AND ELEGANT ARTS

These three on men all gracious gifts bestow
Which deck the body or adorn the mind,
To make them lovely or well favored show :
As comely carriage, entertainment kind,
Sweet semblance, friendly offices that bind,
And all the compliments of courtesy ;
They teach us how to each degree and kind
We should ourselves demean, to high, to low
To friends, to foes, which skill men call civility.

Edmund Spenser.

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THE wanderer to foreign lands, when taking leave of friends and relations on the steamer's deck, should accompany these amiable ones to the head of the gangway leading to the dock, as last good-bys are uttered. It is only polite to express warm thanks for the compliment that the exertion of "seeing-off" implies.

There is a degree of tact to be shown by the "seeing-off" friends that is sometimes recklessly ignored. They should not, for instance, hang about the ship's deck till the last moment, causing deep anxiety to the already nervous traveler ; and they should not exaggerate and prolong to a wearisome extent the business of speeding a seafarer on his way.

In a case where friends and relatives gather on deck to see a voyager off, the friends should make farewells and take their departure before the relatives do so. Wanting in delicacy, indeed, is the mere acquaintance who stands by while devoted members of a family exchange tender and sometimes tearful farewells.

There is no rule that may be cited to decide whether it is better to take in one's hand, or to send from a shop, flowers, fruit, books, or bonbons intended as a solace for a voyager to foreign lands. It is an infinite saving of personal trouble, of course, to send the gift on from the shop and some hours in advance of the ship's departure. Persons not inclined for the duty or pleasure of seeing a friend off may order a box of roses, grapes, or sweets, or a packet of books forwarded from a shop. This gift should be accompanied by the giver's card firmly attached, and bearing some kindly sentiment written in pen or pencil.

"Good-luck and best wishes for a happy holiday," or With best wishes for a charming voyage from, or With the compliments and good wishes of," are suitable phrases in these circumstances.

A traveler should try to send back, by the ship's pilot, notes of thanks for gifts received, when their donors have not put in an appearance on deck. It is a degree more courteous to send thanks back immediately than to wait and post a note of appreciation at the conclusion of the crossing. Some persons make it a rule to post short notes, on arriving at their port, to all those friends who took the trouble to

offer their final farewells on the ship's deck. These notes are written on the ship's stationery, give a brief resume of the events of the voyage, and are always duly enjoyed by their recipients.

When a water journey lasts for twenty-four, thirty-six, or forty-eight hours, the traveler may follow personal preference by sitting at table or on deck without addressing anyone.

But on a transoceanic steamer, or where a journey to the West Indies, or to Southern, Central, or South American ports is undertaken, it is nothing less than churlish to appear on deck and in the dining-saloon and deliberately ignore the existence of one's fellow-beings. At the first or second meal amiability requires that conventional recognition be taken of the nearest neighbors. This recognition may go no further than a gravely polite Good-morning, or a bow accompanied by a salutation. Exceedingly reserved persons may not desire to enter into friendly relations with fellow-travelers, but they need have at no time any difficulty in avoiding the advances of too gregarious folk without betraying a rude disregard of the existence of others.

It is essential on board ship to address a kind greeting morning and night to the stewards and stewardesses who give one any service whatsoever, and to bow, without any introduction, to those of the ship's officers who appear in the dining-saloon, also to the purser and chief steward.

At table, a passenger permissibly addresses conversation to a fellow-voyager who sits at his right or left. A woman may thus venture to talk to a masculine stranger on her right ; or a man is privileged to make conversational overtures to a pleasant-looking feminine traveler on his left. Thereafter, on deck, further talk may ensue, and acquaintance ripen into friendship. Steamer-chair neighbors on a crowded deck who occupy the same positions several days in succession may exchange the civilities of the hour and find in one another's society congenial companionship. The difficulties attendant on making friends at sea are not great, but care must be taken not to presume on a recently made acquaintance to borrow or use the belongings of a stranger. A traveler who is experienced as well as considerate is prompt to be polite to every one at sea, but slow to intimacy. Such a one does not gossip or comment on the behavior of one stranger in the ear of another. A discreet woman may walk and talk with an agreeable man who happens to have a place near her at table, but she does not sit late with him on the deserted deck, and forget her dignity and the publicity of the scene when taking part in the deck-games ; or does she resort to the smoking-room unless she is traveling on a German steamer. At no time should she allow a steamer acquaintance of the opposite sex to pay for any special luxury she may desire, beyond a possible small cup of coffee in the ship's restaurant.

A young woman traveling with her mother or other chaperon promptly presents any deck-made acquaintance to this lady.

In the ship's library, or writing-room, it is not only discourteous, but against the rules, to talk even in whispers for any length of time if others are present and engaged in writing or counts reading. It is often thoughtless and unkind to smoke in a stateroom, especially when all port-holes are closed and near neighbors may be rendered most unhappy by the fumes of cigarettes. It is grossly rude to sit late on deck, singing, laughing, and talking, under the open windows of occupied rooms. Children on deck and elsewhere on a ship must not be allowed to interfere with the talk, games, naps, or belongings of others. It is regarded as in some sort an obligation for passengers to attend, if possible, the ship's concert. If, however, for any good reason, a traveler absents himself, he should make it a point to contribute, at the conclusion of the programme, to the collection usually made in behalf of a charitable institution.

When religious services are held on Sunday in the saloon, passengers who attend should observe all the reverence of demeanor they would display in church ashore. Many ladies carry decorous demeanor to the extent of donning hats and veils and gloves for deck or saloon services ; but this is a detail to be decided by preference. If the position of a passenger's deck-chair is scarcely to his liking, he may not so twist his seat about as to block the free passage of promenaders ; nor is he privileged to remove a fellow-traveler's temporarily vacated seat in order to place his own more advantageously. Games and talk on deck may at no time be pursued to the obvious discomfort of many persons ; only where an isolated position is secured have passengers a right to read aloud to each other. The passenger who feels justified in making a complaint of the service received, or of a want of consideration

on the part of another traveler, must report the grievance to the proper authorities, and not fall into a way of grumbling, gossiping, and retaliating in kind. A difference with a servant or disapprobation of his behavior should be reported to the purser or chief steward, and the complaint made privately. If a fellow-passenger is unreasonably noisy, blocks a passage with baggage, smokes in his cabin unduly, or is guilty of unjustifiable imposition, then the individual who suffers from annoyance may call a steward and demand that a request be made for more considerate treatment ; or, a reasonably irate passenger can interview the purser and require him to deal with the erring one for the restitution of missing property or the restoration of order.

At the end of an ocean voyage of at least five days duration, the fixed tariff of fees exacts a sum of ten shillings, or two dollars and a half per passenger to every one of those steamer servants who have ministered daily to the traveler's comfort. Thus, a single woman would give this sum to her stewardess, her table steward, her stateroom steward, and, if the stewardess has not prepared her bath, she bestows a similar gratuity on her bath steward. If every day she has occupied her deckchair, into which the deck steward has tucked her with care and to which he has brought her bouillon, tea, many meals, her book, her fancy-work, etc., he also will expect ten shillings, or its equivalent in marks, or francs, or lire. Steamers there are on which the deck boys must be remembered with a dollar each, and where a collection is taken up, by the boy who polishes the shoes, and the musicians, who discourse more or less melodious airs during the meals and at morning concerts. A woman with children and nurses, or a woman who has been ill on the voyage and received special attentions at the hands of her stewardess, may reasonably be expected by this servant to remember her to the extent of a sovereign or a five-dollar bill, or by a considerably larger sum.

On the huge liners patronized by rich folk exclusively, the tendency of the tip-tariff is to fix the minimum gratuity at five dollars, with an advance to seven, ten, and twelve, where the stewardess, table steward, and stateroom steward are concerned. But plentiful are the luxurious ships in which all kindly respectful attention is received from servants who accept the two-dollar-and-a-half fee with a thankful smile. On these less swift and gorgeous liners, where no attentions have been received from the deck steward, he may be given a nominal fee of a dollar per traveler, and fifty cents will cover the obligations to a deck boy. In good time before a steamer docks, a sensible passenger pays any small accounts outstanding for extras ordered in saloon, smoking-room, on deck, or in the barber-shop. Men who have enjoyed this last-mentioned official's ministrations pay daily ; but at the end of the voyage they are expected to offer him an additional *douceur*. A masculine passenger must fee "the boots," his stateroom, bath, and table steward, as well as the deck and smoking-room steward. A married couple usually fee, with one sum, the servants in whose attentions they have shared. But the wife must not forget her stewardess, nor the husband his obligations in the smoking-room, if he has made use of it.

If the ship's doctor has been called in, to give advice or render aid, an inquiry should be made at the purser's office concerning the ship's rules in relation to this official. When the doctor does not render a bill, then the passenger should send him a fee of a size to be fixed with reference to the number of his visits and extent of his services, and also with reference to the length of the passenger's purse. A ship's doctor's bill is paid at the purser's office ; a fee should be sent him enclosed with a note of thanks in a sealed envelope.

On entering a railwaycar a gentleman follows the woman he escorts. On leaving a car he makes his exit first, and offers his hand to his feminine companion to facilitate her descent. A young woman follows this course when her fellow-traveler is a member of her own sex and her senior. The same rule holds good with regard to the deference due from young gentlemen to older men. Common consideration for the rights of fellow-beings requires a traveler by rail to refrain from pushing ahead with rude violence, from taking up more seat-room than is required by one person in a crowded car, from piling belongings on a seat, and from blocking an aisle with possessions that should be stored in racks or at the owner's feet.

Ill-bred, indeed, is that passenger who restlessly wanders up and down the aisle of a car on futile errands, who turns to stare repeatedly at persons in his rear, who talks loudly of his own or another's affairs, and who comments, with incautious witticisms, on the appearance and behavior of strangers. A deferential traveler gives a woman, or a senior companion, the window-seat. In foreign lands it is considered an unselfish courtesy to allow one's friend and companion a choice of seats when one of

two faces the locomotive. In the countries of southern Europe a gentleman finding himself in a railway carriage with strangers bows politely as he, or they, rise to descend at a station.

On the continent of Europe it is only by the consent of all the passengers in a railway carriage that a window may be opened. At the objection of but one individual the window must be closed and kept so : therefore, it is the rule, before lowering a window in a carriage shared with strangers, to turn and politely request permission to let in the air. If the permission is not forthcoming, that fresh-air-loving passenger does not increase the good will of the others by a refusal to abide by their decision.

In our American trains a window is usually controlled by the passenger who sits beside it, but it is distinctly unkind to open a window in the train so that dust, cinders, or cold draughts enter to the evident annoyance of a fellow-passenger.

The wealthy and generous owner of a large touring automobile who invites a party of friends to fill the seats of his fine vehicle and spend with him a week doing the chateaux on the tour Loire, or the cathedrals of southern England, or the picturesque roads of Massachusetts, must be prepared to bear all the expenses incurred. If he is by no means a rich person, then, with friends who are intimates, some sensible division of the costs of this luxurious mode of travel may be decided upon well in advance of the first day of the journey. The hospitable proprietor of a fine car must not, however, in any circumstances, overfill his vehicle, and he must select fellow-travelers of proven good temper and good spirits. If, as host, he shares no expenses with anyone, he must, when putting his hand into his pocket, be prepared to do so without even one wry smile, and set off on his expedition well financed for any costly emergencies. Before starting on his tour it is his bounden duty to learn all the rules and regulations of road-rights, speed-limits, etc., on the route he purposes to take. It is also expected of him that he will provide maps, guide-books, etc., in handy form, and know the names and locations of the best hotels along the roads he means to follow. He is not obligated for the traveling expenses of any of his friends to the agreed point of rendezvous whereat the tour is to begin. But, from the moment his party enters his car for the first day's run to the end of the last mile of the tour, he is mainly responsible for their comfort and pleasure.

His guests will reasonably expect to find his automobile in perfect condition, and stocked with water and chill-proof robes. His car must boast a hamper capable of holding enough food and hot and cold drinks for luncheons on the roadside, teas under the trees, and for emergencies. He must be ready to name the points at which every night's lodging and baggage may be found ; and mentally and morally he should be well braced to meet the heaviest strains that human contrariety may levy upon his courtesy, patience, temper, and generosity. The host of a motor tour must be kind, forgiving, forbearing, and prompt ; and he must know how to dismiss his friends in good spirits to their couches at night, and gather them up at an early hour in a smiling mood the next morning. If such a host is a bachelor, and he desires to include girl friends in his party, a chaperon must be provided for them. This social guardian may be the father or elderly uncle of one of the young women ; or if no married woman is asked to matronize the tour, his own spinster sister, aunt, or woman cousin, a person of decidedly mature years and manner, may lend perfect dignity of presence to the situation.

A touring host meets, from his own pocket, the expenses incurred by his guests at wayside inns and hotels for food and lodging ; he does not, however, pay for the forwarding of baggage from point to point. He is also responsible for the tipping, and if he drives his own car he invites his women guests, in some order of rotation, to sit beside him from time to time while he is on duty at the wheel. If his chaperon is a kind matron friend, he gives her invariably the choice seat in the tonneau, and at the conclusion of the tour thanks her for her amiable fulfillment of a sometimes difficult office.

When on a motor tour the expenses are divided, the guests sharing costs with the owner of the automobile, every traveler settles his own hotel or inn bill. At the end of the tour the sum total of garage fees and costs of gasoline, etc., are added up and paid for in equal parts by those who have enjoyed the trip. Usually, one of the gentlemen of the party, or the car's owner, discharges these essential expenses day by day and keeps a careful account. A hired automobile and chauffeur, engaged by a party of friends, are also paid for in shares : one masculine member of the party is placed in the office of treasurer, keeps the daily accounts, and renders a daily reckoning or may expect a settlement at the end of the tour.

A motor guest on tour may not justifiably indulge in any individual whim, habits, or prejudices to the obvious annoyance of fellow-travelers.

Persons afflicted with weak eyes, weak backs, and uncertain tempers, who are easily bored, easily fatigued, and who cannot carry a merry heart all the way, should not go a-touring. Once embarked upon such an enterprise, a sense of consideration for others must govern one's words and ways, and special thought should be taken in behalf of the host or hostess of the car. When the owner of the vehicle is meeting all expenses, the guest must discover, previous to departure, the course to be followed, the stops to be made, and the points at which needed baggage may be met. Thereupon, in advance, essential clothing may be sent on ahead to be held at hotels pending the owner's arrival. In the forwarding of these possessions the guest must bear every expense and worry, and only carry in the car as many small belongings as may be stowed in a handbag or basket-case of moderate size. This receptacle should contain only those absolute essentials that make for decency and comfort when baggage is delayed, or when, by accident, the party may be forced to put up at a wayside hostelry.

Additionally to these things, a tourist should carry a wrap for hot, and one for chilly weather, and both coats may well be long and waterproof. A woman should provide herself with ample veils and proper means of protecting her eyes. At hotels, the traveler who is the guest of the owner of the car should meet inadequate accommodations of room or table with perfect good-humor, and not with an air of either disapproval or of grim resignation. Such extra comforts as baths, shoe-cleaning, special foods, or bedroom service should not be allowed to appear on the bill presented to the host, and prompt observance of all appointments is a prime essential of conduct.

A host may prove tyrannical, or too economical, a reckless driver, or one who impatiently refuses to stop at points of interest, and a guest may thereby suffer humiliation, discomfort, or bitter disappointment, but no sign of these painful sensations should, along the route, be visible in the tourist's words or facial expression. A trying situation should be met with a fine fortitude, which is a proof of good breeding. Determination at all costs to preserve an air of sweet reasonableness and gay amiability, in the face of thoughtless, self-indulgent rudeness, always results in a final and glorious victory of manner over sheer temper.

This same rule, to be polite at any price and to meet difficult conditions and temperaments with persistent disregard of disagreeables, must be observed in one tourist's intercourse with another. The traveler by automobile must not allow himself to see slights or impositions, or take offense; and he must, at all times and at all costs, appear to be enjoying his experience.

To sulk or sit in moody silence, to be late for breakfast and to complain of weariness at the end of a long day, is to strike a discordant note; and not to be able to meet an accident and long roadside wait with a buoyant air of enjoying an amusing experience is to prove that one has none of the essential qualities of a fine traveler, or a fine manner.

When the costs of a tour are divided, the duty of every participant in the luxury of a car is to meet the daily or weekly discharge of expense accounts with the most punctilious promptness. The programme of route, etc., is usually, in these circumstances, fixed by a general agreement. A suggested change, proposed by one member of the party, should be offered as subject to acceptance or rejection by the whole party agreeing in concert. Even in the matter of average speed to be maintained, and the lowering or raising of the top, or a choice of two routes to be followed, the wishes of the majority ought to be ascertained and accepted in smiling submission by the minority.

The woman who purposes to go alone to an hotel of the first class in any of the great cities of Europe or America wisely writes in advance to announce her coming, and to ask that accommodations be reserved on a given date. The large, first-class, and well-managed hotels of London, New York, Paris, and Berlin look rather askance on the lone woman who arrives without warning or escort to ask for lodging. There are instances in which ladies of the most dignified demeanor and unblemished reputation have been refused accommodation or treated with an air of suspicious scrutiny at an hotel office where their name, personality, or family was not known. The letter in advance often obviates a trying experience from which the single man, who looks reputable and well able to meet his bill, is

never known to suffer. There are, however, in every city, abundant quiet and highly reputable hostelrys where the woman alone, who is accompanied with baggage and whose dress and manner bespeak dignity and self-respect, finds no difficulty in securing shelter.

But in whatever hotel and under whatever circumstances a woman finds herself accommodated, her manner invariably betrays her social quality. In a great city hotel a lady alone does not linger in the office or in the public hallways. Her business takes her only into the sanctum of the clerk, and her exits and entrances are effected quickly and with as little ostentation as possible. If there is a choice of entrances, she makes use of the quieter one, and appears but briefly in the public reading-, writing-, and sitting-rooms. When alone in a fashionable hotel, a well-bred woman appears in the restaurant in her hat and gloves. She dines early, orders no wines, and prefers an inconspicuous place in the restaurant. A young lady in a large hotel with her mother, father, elder sister, or matron chaperon takes her meals in the company of her companion, and appears only in their society to listen to the hotel orchestra, or for a half-hour after dinner in the public drawing-rooms.

At a seaside, country-resort, or foreign hotel where a prolonged stop is to be made, such precise reserve in demeanor is not expected of the feminine guests. Settled down for a series of weeks in a resort for health or pleasure, a woman traveling quite alone or in a party, and of any age, comes and goes rather at her own sweet will. She goes to her special seat in the dining-room at the regular meal-times, hatless, gloveless, and alone or with members of her party. She does not, at any time and in any circumstances, unless a person of the most venerable age, receive masculine callers in her bedroom or alone in her private sitting-room. She may not assume a familiar air with the hotel clerk ; or sit late in obscure corners of the grounds with masculine admirers ; or present herself at any time to the public gaze in any but the most tidy and appropriate costume. She is not privileged to speak to masculine strangers in the hotel, unless they chance to sit beside or opposite her at the long table d'hote. A very young lady alone at a fashionable hotel at Aix-les-Bains, St. Moritz, Homburg, or in Florida, should not, in the evening, and in conspicuous evening dress, sit on a terrace unchaperoned to listen to the band and sip coffee or liqueurs. But a spinster of dignified bearing and evidently well past her girlhood is permitted to enjoy every liberty that a married woman might claim.

At foreign hotels and pensions guests bow and murmur polite greetings morning and night without introduction, and without presuming upon this decent civility. A gentleman is expected, in those continental hostelrys of Europe that lie outside the great cities, to greet the woman stranger with a lifting of his hat and a " Bon jour, Madame" or a " Bonsoir, Mademoiselle." Newcomers to a hotel receive these greetings first from those already installed. In foreign hotels the waiters are addressed at need as " Gargon," the waitresses as " Mademoiselle," the chambermaids are spoken to by their Christian names ; the clerk is hailed as " Monsieur," and the porter as " Porteur." In English hotels the waitress, when her given name is not known, will expect to be addressed as " Miss," the man at the door as " Porter," but in other respects the usage is the same as in American hotels.

In foreign pensions the feminine head is addressed as " Madame," her husband would be designated " Monsieur." In a continental European boarding-house the guests wish one another good-morning or good-day, and enter into conversation without introduction.

The traveler who leaves a foreign pension or American boarding-house should take friendly leave of the head, or heads, thereof. Complaints or grievances at a hotel or a pension should be made and aired in the office, with a request for correction or consolation ; and unhappy is the way of that man or woman who carries the local gossip and scandal from ear to ear.

In a large and fashionable hotel, generous and widely diffused gratuities are expected by the employees. The experienced traveler generally distributes in hotels and pensions in gratuities a sum equal to ten per cent. of the amount of the bill. This is a satisfactory solution of a difficulty, save when some special or unusual attentions have been received at the hands of one or more of the domestics : then, their expectations should be adequately fulfilled by some thing more than a share in the fixed sum. It is customary, when a lengthy sojourn is made in an hotel or pension, to tip the chambermaid, the various waiters, and the porter who does one's boots, once in every week. Once in every fortnight the head waiter's expectations should be satisfied, and where an elevator-boy and door-man are on duty, they, too, have claims on the purse of the guest. In the English and American boarding-house the

weekly tip is not expected by the servants, but an habitue of the house should, as generously as the individual income will allow, remember them at Christmas with a gift of money, and on leaving satisfy their natural expectations with a gift of cash. In the pensions and smaller hotels of continental Europe the weekly rate for tips is a franc per servant. Therefore, it is wise to allow for a weekly outlay of from four to five francs in this direction. In a fashionable European hotel the rule of tipping a franc a week all round may safely be observed during a long stop. But, at the hour of departure, something extra must be added to the weekly franc, and the head waiter will scarcely smile as blandly as need be if he is not propitiated with gold. The concierge will also look for a gold piece, the door-men will expect a *douceur* each, and the several porters who handle luggage, as well as the coachman of the hotel omnibus, have claims that it is well to recognize and meet before they urge them.

Simple and suitable and extremely tidy should the costume be of those who voyage by land or water. For a long railway journey, a woman should not wear a large hat garnished with fragile dress or showy trimming. Ostrich plumes, white lace, and pink roses, do not stand the sea air or coal smoke well. Nor do delicate pale silks, airy muslins, or superb velvet appear to advantage on trains or boats. A woman's traveling-suit by land or sea should be compact, comfortable in appearance, and preferably dark in color : that fabric is best for a steamer or railway suit that stands the test of dust and moisture well. Neat shoes, well-fitting gloves that are not shabby, a fresh stock or *ruche*, or ribbon, or frill at the throat, and hair that is in immaculate order mark the capable woman traveler whose appearance is always agreeable. For the dining-room of a fashionable hotel in England or on the continent of Europe, dinner dress may be suitably donned ; or a high-necked, elbow-sleeved pale-tinted reception gown may be utilized at the *table d'hote* or in the more exclusive restaurants. In the United States, full dress at a hotel dinner does not imply such a dinner dress as is seen at a private house, but an elaborate afternoon gown is recognized as the proper costume, worn with or without a flower toque, a handsome feathered hat, or a fancy hair ornament in a fashionable *coiffure*.

At small hotels, at pensions, and boarding-houses, the women guests should make a dinner toilet in the evening, wearing a pretty fancy blouse with a dark or light skirt, or a complete afternoon dress.

On steamships it is now the rule to " dress for dinner." This dress for a woman may imply a fancy blouse worn with the plain short skirt of her traveling dress, or a theatre costume, or a dinner dress cut but half *decollete*, that is, a little low in the neck and only elbow-length of sleeve.

For men, the proper traveling dress is a quiet morning suit, dark gloves, and such a hat as would be worn on the street at home. In the evening, at hotels and on board ship, dinner dress with a round-tailed coat, low shoes, or pumps, white linen, and a black tie, is the proper change. At pensions and boarding-houses the masculine traveler as a rule merely assumes fresh linen and a change of necktie with his morning dress, and this course is often followed on board the less fashionable ships and at modest hotels.

Save for the essential ornaments of dress, watch and chain, brooch, tie-pin, sleeve links, etc., neither the well-bred man nor woman makes a display of jewelry when traveling. Earrings, pearl collars, diamond rings and studs, superb pendants, and a varied change in chains and bracelets serve only as a dangerous and pretentious display of possessions on board of trains and in pension and hotel dining-rooms.

The Gentle Art of Conversation

Too many men and women, alas, believe that to excel in conversation they must be able to fulfill the bold promise of that great person who wrote :

" Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear."

In other words, the average human being lays too much stress on the wit or wisdom, the gaiety or instructive quality of his speech. The touch of true eloquence, the capacity for quick repartee, the rapid flow of words and easy play of comment on a great variety of topics are often and erroneously considered, by too great a number of otherwise sensible folk, as the only essential endowments for

social success. Such gifts as these are too rare and too subtle to be acquired by virtue of study or by means of taking thought.

Yet the gentle art of conversation, as most agreeably practiced, has not altogether to do with those particular qualities. Indeed, a man may possess wisdom and knowledge, his words may flow easily and his wit may sparkle readily, and for all that he may not prove so delightful a companion as a simple and uninspired soul who puts into practice that good maxim of talk which holds that it is not so much the matter but the manner of your speech that enchants the hearer. So, sadly often, indeed, is the eloquent individual avoided and mistrusted, even voted a bore, while the man of few and simple words is eagerly sought after. The reason for this seeming anomaly is not far to seek, when we find that the person of simpler speech remembers always to be fair.

This may very properly be called the golden rule of conversation. To whomsoever looks into these pages with a view to acquiring helpful information, the writer may unhesitatingly declare that to please and to encourage, to attract and to inspire others, the reader must remember his duty as a listener. The saddest mistake and the most common one of which the majority of cleverly loquacious persons are guilty is their desire to do all the talking. To one who is conscientiously in search of a talisman to popularity let us make haste to urge the importance of realizing that even a most docile and attentive listener may all the while be filled with a wish to talk a little, too. So, when set down in a drawing-room by a new acquaintance or an old one, do not fall into the distressing mistake of trying to dominate the conversation. You may feel, indeed know, yourself to be the more experienced, educated, and gifted person, but you must not begin to instruct Mrs. A., or to over power her with your flow of easy, graceful language. Remember, if you please, what an effect of conceit there is so often displayed by this, and what a wonderful thing it is to know how to draw out the ideas and loosen the tongue of a quiet companion.

Don't forget that Mrs. A. may have experiences and beliefs of her own which, with encouragement, she may feel most flattered to express ; therefore, you really are not playing fair if you drive your own hobby-horses so fast and so far that you leave no time to discover if Mrs. A. does not possess a few of her own. For the sake of your own reputation and for the sake of winning others, you must therefore understand that loquacity is a most unfortunate habit and a tiresome and most tyrannical one. With just a little self-examination, by just giving a trifle of attention to your own voice, you can judge which way your tendency inclines, and by dint of self-control you can hold the habit in check, you can keep yourself in order, and, if you have an inclination to talk too much, just bear in mind a wholesome fear of criticism. Remember that even as great a man as Lord Macaulay was disliked intensely and avoided sedulously by many because of his overweening selfishness as a talker.

As this is true, how, then, can you fail to lose in charm and influence by falling into a similar error ? The cleverer you are and the more widely your ability is acknowledged, the greater in proportion will be the pleasure of your companion in finding how you stoop to conquer her by granting a ready ear to what she has to say. Never forget that people like to pour their experiences into sympathetic ears. You may know Venice as well as your pocket, ten times as well as Mr. A., but don't stultify his effort to entertain you by looking bored when he begins enthusiastically to dwell on his two weeks holiday spent in that wonderful city, and do not demolish all his pride by saying, " Oh, yes, indeed, I've been there dozens of times," as though Venice were nothing to you but an old story and not worth discussion. Permit yourself to be guided by the mood of your companion and by his interests, and not always by your own.

It is a frequent fault of easy talkers that they dwell too much upon themselves and their own affairs. This is a kind of cheerful conceit that so commonly makes talk one-sided, for the talker is only interested as long as he is telling of himself, his own sayings, doings, and adventures. To pour out the story of your woes and your joys to a listener is to disregard all the rules that make conversation out of intercourse. It is no conversation at all if you have given Mrs. A. your life's history during a call, while she has sat in polite silence and listened. If you have been ill, and Mrs. A. makes kind inquiries, admit you are better, or worse, or on your way to a cure, with an air of gratification at her expressed solicitude, and then change the subject to a topic that concerns herself or to a subject of common interest. Don't, on her query, launch into the story of your illness, from that into accounts of your house, your husband, your children, and your servants, and then, after having begun your every

sentence with an “ I said,” “ I felt,” “ I think,” “ I saw,” or “ I went,” rise to leave, adding perfunctorily with your adieus, “ I hope you are quite well.” Perhaps, on thinking such a meeting over, you will remember that it was a distinctly one-sided interview and not a conversation at all. You spent the half-hour, perhaps, amusing Mrs. A. ; more than likely you bored her and drove home to her mind the fact she may have noticed before, that your conceit outruns your good taste or the unselfish interest you should try to show in the lives and affairs of others.

Lean by preference and by self-control, then, as far as you may possibly go, to the side of intelligent development of the conversational capacities of your companions. To talk well is a good gift, but to listen well is to possess a great power. Really, you will find these persons rarely, for a good listener is not one who merely sits still and in silence, passively permitting others to hold forth. One wonders sometimes at the selfishness or the short-sightedness of that man or woman who, without gifts of ready and attractive speech, fails to cultivate the equally great accomplishment of giving ear with grace and charm.

Silence well used can, in the social life, be transmuted from a talent of silver into a talent of gold, and the singular fact is that many a shy girl or awkward young man sits in sullen dullness merely because it is found by them difficult, or even impossible, to talk with all the gay variety of clever Miss A. or witty Mr. B. With egregious stupidity they prefer to bury the talent they have to burnishing it by use and increasing it by exchange.

Give ear with understanding and an air of delight, and you will have a high and welcome seat among the talkers. To be a good listener you must talk with your eyes. You may not sit passively still, letting your glance go here and there. A wetter blanket cannot be introduced, to chill the fervor of the kindest person, than such a manner as that. As you desire to be appreciated and understood and warmly liked, concentrate your attention on the speaker, for your intelligence looks forth most clearly from your eyes, and if they wander you have lost your hold on your companion. With straying gaze you have tacitly admitted that you are bored and inattentive, so that Mr. A. or Mrs. B., who is trying to amuse you, may justly feel the uselessness of the effort.

On the other hand, if your glance only flashes away temporarily to rest nowhere for any length of time save on the face of your listener; if you smile at humorous sallies, laugh outright at amusing incidents, and let your expression change from astonishment to satisfaction as the tale progresses, you have not made your effort in vain. The heart of your informant will be warmed with the joy of finding a deeply interested and sympathetic listener. She will turn again and again to meet the encouragement of your smile, the complimentary air of devotion to her interest and experiences that your expressive silence has expressed, and she will not forget how your brief “ How do you do ?” or your “ Good-morning ; I am so glad to see you,” was uttered with a voice and a look which betokened immediate detachment from all other interests to bright concentration upon the interesting fact of her appearance.

As a follower of the high rule of courtesy, you may never, as a listener, be guilty of the hypocrisy of pretending to hearken while answering at random, since your interest has wandered elsewhere ; and to turn aside and contribute a remark to another conversation while pretending to give ear only to that of Mrs. A., is to be guilty of an insult. If you must break the chain of another’s words, do so only with an apology and only when it is essential. Say to your friend who is deep in an explanation of her purposes or her prospects :

“ Excuse me one moment, but I cannot enjoy fully all you are telling me until I have seen what is wanted of me across the room,” —

“ Will you allow me first to answer my mother’s questions ?” or

“ I am so sorry to be called away. May I hope to hear the rest of your adventures later ?”

Never let a discourse undertaken for your entertainment be broken off abruptly without your apologies or regrets. Never take leave of a talker with an air of relief. Never punctuate the stream of another’s eloquence with the frequent reiterations of “ Yes, yes, yes ;” “ So, so,” or rather gasping,

“ You don’t say so !” “ Just listen to that !” “ My ! My !” etc. Ejaculations now and then, a word expressive of surprise, or a lift of the eyebrows, may serve to encourage and please, and do not annoy.

If, when listening, your attention is forcibly distracted, and even your presence is required elsewhere momentarily, try to come back to your companion and to the point at which the recital ceased, with an air of pleased resumption of interest, and with some such phrase as,

“ And what happened after you saw him ?” or

“ Shall we not hear the rest of Mr. A’s adventures ?” or

“ Do you mind telling me how that interesting affair ended ?”

It wounds a fellow-being’s vanity when you turn away from him upon interruption and never offer to hear the end of his experience or the development of his opinion. In the same measure, but in different effect, it pleases a confident talker and encourages and stimulates a shy one if, as a listener, you say on the appearance of an intruder whose appearance might break a thread of a discourse :

“ We are just hearing a most interesting account of the storm from Mrs. A., to which you must listen, Mr. .,”

“ Have you heard the new opera, Mrs. D. ? Miss C. knows the composer and all of his romantic story. Do tell us the rest, Miss C.”

It is so easy by these short and easy speeches to convey the impression that you are ready to be entertained, and it is so wise to consider that in talk every one has the right to be heard with as complete as polite heed.

The most frequent of all errors is committed by that person who does not give kind heed to the remarks or sentences of others and who, when a listener, interrupts. It is well to remember, if you seek the liking of your kind, that the rule of good usage among well-bred folk is on this point most emphatic. It plainly reads : Never interrupt. There exist exceptions to this rule, and some have been noted above, but in the majority of instances and to those seeking instruction on those points, we may safely say it is wisest and best to let your companion always bring his point of view, his replies, and queries, to a finish.

Judge others in this matter by your own sensations when you are ruthlessly cut off, in the midst of speech, by some one too careless, too domineering, or too rude to grant the consideration you desire to exact. Do not yield to the temptation to help a friend out in his tale by telling half of it ; don’t cut a slow talker short by an egotistical “ Well, that reminds me of something I saw in Boston !” and do not break a conversation to ask an irrelevant question unless your need for information is imperative and pressing. Then it is your duty to say :

“ Forgive me, please, for interrupting.”

“ I am so sorry to interrupt, but I am obliged to ask.”

In other circumstances interruptions are quite unforgivable, and the habit arises merely from a careless, selfish disregard for the rights of others, or from an overweening egotism. Better far leave your finest mot, your most startling bit of news, your most impressive theory, or your most brilliant opinion unsaid, than defy the rules of courtesy and kindness by deliberately outraging the rights of another. Ruthless interrupters are grossly selfish talkers who have a bullying way of lifting their voices to drown out the tones of others, and an indulgence in the habit of interrupting leads to the even more reprehensible one of contradicting.

It is safe to say that no well-bred person is ever guilty of what is known as a flat contradiction. To do so is to violate one of the finest laws of etiquette. And yet you may freely and gracefully differ with anyone in an opinion. But to say in plain terms : “ I know better,” or “ You are all wrong there,

Mr. A.," or "That is nonsense," or "It is no such thing," is a way by which you may suddenly and irretrievably destroy all your right and title to a reputation for good breeding.

It is useless to try to justify an unpleasant habit of flat contradiction by the false excuse that you practice frankness of speech. You will find few who will grant the strength of your plea, since frankness is not often confounded with rudeness by the intelligent. The contradictors are those, you will find, who have an abnormal desire for correcting others, and who think that honesty and politeness cannot walk hand in hand. But if Mrs. A. makes an erroneous statement in your presence, remember, or try hard to, that it is not absolutely necessary for you to set Mrs. A. right. It is only decently polite to leave Mrs. A. free to express her opinions or make statements contrary to all your beliefs, without offering to put her straight. Two points you have to consider here : the first is that you are not infallible and that Mrs. A. may be right after all, and the second is that modesty forbids you to assume the mission of making the whole world think your way. Then, too, if without solicitation on any one's part you rise up to assert rudely that the food was good at the H. hotel, you have established an unimportant fact at the price of proving Mrs. A. a stupid and an untruthful person.

Yet to differ, and to defend in conversation when necessary, there is a way open to you a polite, effective, honest, and convincing way. If Mrs. A. offers cruel or unjust evidence against your friend, it is not noble defense to contradict her words flatly and fling them in her face. You may take up the cudgels for the maligned one as promptly and effectively as possible by saying :

"I am so sorry to hear of your experience of Mrs. D. I have known her for years," etc. or

"I am afraid, Mrs. A., that you are sadly misinformed about Mr. B. He is an old friend," etc.

Here in drawing-room talk you are morally obligated to rise to defense, but if Mrs. A. states that the Mauretania carried her across the ocean in three days, that Miss T. wore a green dress to the Blankes ball, that Arnold Bennett wrote Little Women, or that Fiona MacLeod was an Irishwoman, let the errors pass with a smile or a look of bland indifference. Perhaps Mr. B. pronounces French names all wrong, and speaks of Barcelona as the capital of Spain. In such a case do not yield to the temptation a moment later to mention that Madrid is the Spanish capital, and make it a point to mention the French word Mr. B. mangled, with a clear and precisely correct pronunciation. To do so is to prove that you are as ignorant of true politeness as Mr. B. is of the French language or Spanish geography, and thereby your inferiority is the greater.

Now, in entering upon any conversation, strive to keep too much emphasis out of your tones, your words, and your expression. It is only civil not to be too positive and too emphatic, and it is a small but a charming quality to be able to wear an air of composure when talking or when listening. Americans, as a rule, are over-vivacious. Most of us talk too loud, laugh too much, and gesticulate with our features as a Frenchman does with his hands. We use too much slang from a mistaken idea that slipshod speech is humorous, and we have nervous habits. Blessed and soothing and well-bred, indeed, is that individual who talks quietly and in sweet simple English, and whose every second phrase is not followed by an I guess, or Don't you know, or I mean to say. Such a one may not be noisy, witty, or wise, but he has a grace of calm that brings the balance of his value very near to more showy accomplishments. The beauty of the modulated voice is one to be acquired. For, would you know whether you have it or not, merely listen to yourself a while and its tone will be detected. Determine to bring your speaking voice down a note or two if it soars too far aloft, and you can easily do it, just as you can conquer a nervous laugh that means nothing save irritation to those who share your company. Slang, the high voice, the titter or giggle are nothing but habits, and habits that any human being may control by dint of a little effort.

In talk, if you are to enjoy it at its best, and if in talk you hope to go far on the road that leads to social eminence, you must learn early the protection there is from pitfalls to be found in consistently refraining from argument. Engage in discussion only so far as is safe, and that is never very far, especially if you feel intensely on any subject under discussion. As in the Japanese art of jujitsu the secret of self-defense lies in a seeming yielding which leads to victory, so in discussion the person who is the first to give way has won the field of battle.

There is no gain, no glory, no good result of any sort achieved by fighting out a subject on lines of feeling. A smiling retreat, a deft change of subject, or an amiable silence, leaves the obstinate pursuer of the topic alone, doubtful, and feeling very foolish on the stand he has taken. Leaving him to beat the air with his words, you march off with all the honors. To be drawn into an argument is as great an error of taste as to laugh at the mistake of a companion, and to tell stories derogatory to anyone in a company where you are not very very sure of your hearers. It is more than a matter of slight importance to know not only how to make, but how to take, a kind, or even a complimentary, remark. No brief is held here for the fulsome flatterer, but to one in Pretty's Peeches doubt of a social course the writer unhesitatingly recommends the conquest of a habit, if it exists, for too great candor. By this is meant the candor that lies in saying :

“ What makes you so pale, Mrs. A.? Are you not well ?”

“ I saw your sister on the street to-day, Mr. B., and thought her looking so ill,” or

“ Why did you plant that geranium bed in front of your house, Miss D.? It makes it look like a summer hotel”

“ If you ask me, Mr. E., I am willing to confess I do not think that make of automobile worth a cent.”

Such is the frankness that hurts and harms, just as the ungracious reception of a compliment wounds the speaker of kindly words.

“ Did you like it ? I thought I was as hoarse as a frog,” was the rough reply of a young lady when a pretty speech was made after her song. She may really have thought her voice in poor condition, but her answer in such circumstances should have been :

“ I am so glad you liked it, but I am afraid I was not at my best,” or

“ It is nice to hear that you were pleased ; I wish I had done better.”

Now, it is only safe to say that the people who never make and never accept pretty speeches are both rude and cruel. It is a gracious accomplishment to forbear comments on a friend's frail looks, foolish purchases, or errors in judgment ; it is also an evidence of amiable sweetness to remark in complimentary fashion on the fresh, pleasant looks of a friend, the becomingness of her dress, or the success of her endeavors. There is no false flattery meant by such speeches as :

“ I am charmed to see you looking so well,” or

“ We heard of you at the concert, Mr. A., and of your success. How pleased you must be !” or

“ Mrs. A., I must tell you how sweet your daughter looked at the dance last night,” or

“ Please remember me to your sister, Miss Blanke ; we all thought her so charming,”

“ Mr. Brown, Mrs. A. says you have the most perfect roses of the season.”

There is a pretty habit to be encouraged in saying kind things that are true and in remembering to say them. The most austere individual yields to the influence of that person who, without gush, never fails to notice with a few agreeable words any commendable object or action. We, one and all, love appreciation, and an appreciation that is not only felt but expressed, even over the tiniest detail. A good housekeeper never fails to soften to a frank pleasure expressed over a perfectly prepared dish ; a well-dressed woman enjoys hearing that blue is her most becoming color, and a strong man is none the less gratified for hearing that his judgment inspires confidence, or that his manner of handling his automobile excites admiration.

Now, while flattery is odious and carries slight weight with it, the well-bred individual is never in the least justified in treating either false praise or kind compliments with a rough air of contempt or derision. It is an art in conversation to know how to receive pretty speeches with grace. One need not return them in kind only the shameless flatterer expects such repayment ; but one may always, with amiable simplicity, rise fully to the occasion. A compliment, indeed, may never be ignored, its terms denied, or its maker forced to feel a disagreeable sense of having committed an impertinence.

You may truly dislike compliments, or you may dislike the source whence they proceed, but you must in all circumstances remember to say with an air of amiability:

“ How very kind of you,” or “ I am happy to know that my playing gave pleasure,”

“ My sister will be so pleased to hear all the nice things you have to say of her,” or

“ How very appreciative Mrs. R. is ! I shall think the better of my roses for having pleased her.”

In social intercourse it is easiest always to talk about what you know best. But if your companion does not understand your hobby, or is too self-say centered to learn what it is, let him talk about his interests to you. If you are a shy individual, or puzzled to begin talk with a silent person, do not rush to the conclusion that the silence of your companion is the result of dullness or indifference. A great railway president or a major-general may, in a drawing-room, suffer as actual agonies of shyness as a schoolboy or a debutante. Always take it for granted that beside whomsoever you are placed there exists some topic in which your companion is interested. If he does not introduce it himself, then exert yourself to discover its location. Invariably begin a difficult conversation with a question rather than an assertion, and don't forget to begin with simple themes. Even the weather will do if no other subject presents itself.

“ If you play golf I suppose this weather seems very discouraging,” or “ I wonder if you are interested in flowers, and can tell me what that big blue blossom in the centrepiece is ?” or

“ Do you, by any chance, know who won at the tennis tournament ?” or

“ I see you are wearing a jade ring. Is it Chinese, and has it any history ? I am deeply interested in jade.”

Questions thus put cannot but evoke an answer, and thus the waters of silence may be broken into cheerful ripples and wavelets, and the most selfish, the most shy, or the most indifferent, persuaded to yield to a gentle influence. By the very simple device of giving an attentive ear, by the stimulation of such phrases, as “ How very interesting” or “ Do tell me more of that !” a narrator can be coaxed into forgetfulness of diffidence or indolence, and drawn into a friendly intercourse which is worthy the expenditure of the finest and most unselfish effort.

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