

POLITENESS

If those who are doubtful as to the correct course to pursue in any given situation will remember that even the wrong thing is overlooked if one is but absolutely polite in the doing of it, their relief might be great. A genuineness of demeanor and a courteous response or question can never be out of place. A man may wear a business suit of clothes to a wedding less noticeably than a truculent air of insolence. If he be perfectly well bred as far as behavior goes, it matters not so much what his outward garb, although by an unwritten law of social observance certain clothes are the correct thing for certain occasions. Politeness is never wrong. Its practice goes nearly all the way toward the goal of the right thing in the right place. We hear of polite insolence, but insolence is never polite, and it is never, under any circumstances, polite to be insolent.

FUNNY LITTLE ONES

Some time ago a monthly magazine (the *Delineator*) offered prizes for the brightest original sayings of children. No fewer than 32,000 answers poured in. From some pages of these quips published recently the following selections are taken:—

Allen was one day playing with his mother's opera-glasses. Looking through the small end he said, 'Everything seems so far away: why, mamma, you look like a distant relative.'

Louise, after being scolded, could never be reconciled till mother had assured her that she loved her, which resulted on one occasion in the following dialogue:—

'You don't love me.'

'Yes, I do love you.'

'Well, you don't talk like it.'

'Well, how do you want me to talk?'

'I want you to talk to me like you do when you have company.'

ODDS AND ENDS

'There is only one thing,' said the collar button; 'that is as hard to find as I am.'

'What is that?' inquired the comb.

'The North Pole.'

Little Elsie (at theatre): 'Mamma, is that man on the stage crying in earnest?'

Mamma: 'No, dear.'

Little Elsie: 'Well, I don't see how he can cry for fun.'

FAMILY FUN

Photography Without a Camera.—The up-to-date photographer knows how to make pictures without a camera. He will take, for instance, some flowers, squeeze the juice out of them, and with it saturate a sheet of ordinary paper. When the paper is dry some sort of picture can be printed on it by exposing it to the sun beneath a negative. Flower juice is a passable sensitizer. But paper itself is sensitive to light, and a sheet of it, placed in a printing frame with a negative in the usual fashion, will make a recognisable picture after a considerable exposure to the sun. The leaves of trees, at a pinch, may be utilised for a similar photographic purpose. The usual method of copying a photograph is to take a picture of it with the camera, developing the plate in the ordinary way. But, if necessary, the camera may be entirely dispensed with. Put a photograph in a printing frame with a piece of sensitized paper, using it just as if it were a negative, and, after proper exposure to the sun for only a few minutes, a print will be obtained. This print, of course, will be a negative, and (after toning) it may be employed in exactly the same way for printing copies of the original picture. It is not impossible, in the absence of apparatus, to improvise a camera out of a hat, by inserting a spectacle lens in the middle of the crown and closing up the opening for the head with a piece of black cloth—a piece of sensitized paper being attached to the inner surface. Indeed, the lens might be dispensed with, a pinhole in the top of the hat admitting the light.

All Sorts

Coroners' juries found that 46 persons died from starvation in London during 1907.

The three great blessings looked for by the average Chinaman are—male children, official promotion, and a long life.

Some time ago the stationmaster at a small country village received a cheese addressed to a Mr. Blank, and labelled 'to be called for.'

A fortnight passed, but no one came to take it away, so the following note was despatched to the senders: 'If the cheese which was sent here, addressed to Mr. Blank, is not claimed in two days, it will be killed.'

German capitalists have established a glass factory at Poshan, China, a town on the Tsingtau-Chinan-fu Railway; a sugar refinery at Tsingtau, of which the daily output will be two hundred tons, requiring eighty thousand tons of raw material annually; and a soap factory.

Lady (to husband): 'My dear, did you think to order a ton of coal to-day?'

Husband: 'Yes.'

Lady: 'And my hat?'

Husband: 'Yes (peering through the window). There is a truck backing up to the door now, but it's too dark to see whether it's the hat or the coal.'

The one public observatory in the world is situated in the little Swiss town of Zurich. It is open to the public every evening, and during the last six months ended June was visited by no fewer than 25,000 persons. It is in every respect an up-to-date observatory, possessing a fine instrument, which was built by the world-famous optician, Carl Zeiss, of Jena. This telescope, which is mounted in an entirely new and ingenious way, is 17ft 6in long, and weighs 14 tons. Its object glass is 12in in diameter. An interesting device attached to the instrument is the projecting screen, upon which objects in the heavens are thrown.

One of Dean Swift's friends sent him a fish by a lad. The boy burst into the room, exclaiming very unpolitely: 'My master sends you a fish.' 'That is not the way a gentleman should enter,' reproved the Dean. 'You sit here in my chair while I show you how to mend your manners.' When the boy was seated the Dean went out. Then the Dean knocked at the door, bowed low and said: 'Sir, my master sends his kind compliments, and hopes you are well, and begs you to accept a small present.' 'Indeed,' replied the boy, 'return him my best thanks, and there is a shilling for yourself.' The Dean, caught in own trap, laughed heartily, and gave the boy a half-crown for his ready wit.

There is a great contrast between the manner in which the Government of England and that of the United States treat the old soldiers. Although there are fewer persons in the United States drawing pensions to-day than at any time during the past fifteen years, still the number, which is equal to the whole European population of New Zealand, is still very large. The last pension bill introduced into Congress appropriated an annual distribution of £24,000,000—a sum about equal to the cost of the whole of the railways of New Zealand. The United States pensioner is evidently a long-lived individual, for forty years after the Civil War there are 951,867 of them on the pension roll. The high-water mark in pensions was reached in 1904, when for a brief period there were more than 1,000,000 persons on the roll. The Civil War cost £1,200,000,000. Up to the present time half as much again has been paid out for pensions, and it is predicted that, before all the heroes of that war have died out the first cost of the war will have been equalled. At present the pensions cost the Government of the United States just one-fourth of all its expenses. Compared with the £24,000,000 spent annually by the United States, France spends £5,200,000; Germany £4,200,000, Austria £2,000,000, and Great Britain £1,800,000. In other words, the United States spends more than two and a half times that of these four great European powers together.