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PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Perhaps there is nothing that keeps boys and young men, even girls and women, from advancing in life more than a lack of good manners. A person may have a good heart, and may mean ever so well, but if he has an offensive manner and a repulsive personality everybody avoids him. People are so constituted that they love sunshine, pleasant sights and sounds, and naturally turn from and avoid anything which jars upon the sensibilities and offends a refined taste.

It may be said that good clothes do not change the individual, but we all know that a well-dressed person, especially among strangers, meets with a better reception than a person who is badly dressed. It is an undeniable fact that a man walks with more self-respect and better grace with a good coat upon his back than he who has a bad one. Every one realizes the increased self-respect which comes from having on clean, well-pressed and proper fitting clothes. It gives one a sense of power which shows in the performance of every duty; a consciousness that you are as presentable as others and renders you correspondingly more manly. The same holds true for our young women. It is not necessary that a woman's clothing be made of expensive materials, but it is necessary that her garments fit properly and that they become her. In other words, it is absolutely essential if one expects to be received among respectable people that he and she give heed to their appearance. You must believe in yourself. You may succeed when others do not believe in you, but it is positive that you will never succeed if you do not believe in yourself, and one of the very first requisites to maintain your self-respect is a desire to present a good appearance.

How can young people hope to attain even a fair degree of advancement in life, in character-building, or succeed, without control of personal habits? A strong boy or girl will never allow the lower elements of nature to usurp the place of the higher, make servants of their passions, and govern them physically and mentally.

One who has not himself in his own power is very likely to commit some serious breach and lower himself in the estimation of all good people. Education strives

to produce the faculty of self-control. When does a person feel more at ease with himself than when he has withstood a sudden and strong temptation to do wrong—a strong provocation to lose self-control—without speaking a harsh word, and ever retaining an undisturbed good humor? There are very few people—none whom we can call to mind—but who have in the chain of character one or more links that are weak and faulty. They may be weak in truthfulness, in politeness, trustworthiness, temper, chastity, temperance, courage, industry; in honesty, such as taking from others their little belongings, as well as in other things. To be a well-balanced lady or gentleman it is necessary to hold all faculties under control, subjecting them to discipline until they obey your will. It is said that a person has no more right to say an uncivil thing than to act one—no more right to say a rude thing to another than to injure him physically.

In every walk of life a young person should study politeness, cultivate neatness and personal appearance, and so conduct himself that his good manners shall be a reflection of a gentle and honorable soul. We see the influence of good manners everywhere. The person with pleasing manners will make rings around those who show coarseness and appear ill-bred in every department of life. Good manners—courtesy—often prove the foundation of a fortune. Acquire courteous habits, make it your business, for it will count heavily in your favor. How many men and women have failed because they have been discourteous? How many, on the other hand, have climbed to great heights in power and reputation because they paid attention to the civilities of life? True courtesy, after all, must spring from the heart. There is something in human nature which loves kindness and despises selfishness. Does not everybody love a noble and kindly heart?

The person who is always studying his own advantage, always looking for the main chance, never elicits our full love or respect, or our highest admiration. The world has no use for people who live only for themselves. It gives its love and adulation to the chivalrous and kind.

Chief of the attributes of a lady, or of a gentleman,

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