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THE VALUE OF POPULARITY

Let us draw attention to the value of popularity. A gracious, genial presence, a charming personality, a refined, fascinating manner are always welcome anywhere. These qualities enable a person possessed of them to make a better impression than one having only a fine education or the highest attainments along some special line. An attractive personality, even without great ability, often advances one even when great ability will not. There is a premium upon a charming presence. We often hear people say that they don't understand how such an one manages to get on so easily—why he is so popular with everybody; it is not realized what an asset such people have in their charm of personality. A man, young gentlemen, must be measured as a whole. His ability to get on should not be gauged by his brain power alone, but rather by his persuasive force, his ability to please people, to interest them, and to make them believe in him. His manner, his appearance, his atmosphere, his personality, his capacity to make friends and hold them—all these are as much a part of his get-on assets as the gray matter in his brain. A sour face, a repulsive manner, an ugly, unusual nature, often cover up and prejudice us against great ability. There is no substitute for personal charm, for a refined and magnetic manner, and in spite of the fact that most people believe one must be born with it or forever lack it, the quality can be acquired by any-one who will take as much trouble and pains to acquire it as would be necessary to accomplish anything else worth while.

We believe every one of us would like to have a gracious manner, to be popular, to be loved by all. It is a legitimate ambition to be well thought of and admired by our fellow men. Yet the majority of us are not willing, apparently, to make any great sacrifice to acquire this great art of arts; in fact, we are all the time doing things which repel others and which tend inevitably to make us unpopular.

We have to take infinite pains to succeed in our various vocations or in any accomplishment worth while, and should we expect to gain the charm of personality, the power to please, to attract, to interest, without making great efforts?

Selfishness in all its forms is always and everywhere despised. No-one likes a person who is bound up in himself, who is constantly thinking of how he may advance his own comforts—perhaps at the expense of others.

The secret of popularity is to make everybody you meet feel that you are especially interested in them. If you really feel kindly toward others, if you wish sincerely to please, you will have no difficulty in doing so. But if you are cold, indifferent, retiring, silent, selfish; if you are all wrapped up in yourself and think only of what may advance your own interests or increase your own comfort, you can never become popular. Banish the thought.

The great trouble with most unpopular people is that they take no pains to make themselves popular, to cultivate lovable and attractive qualities. They are not willing to put themselves out to try to please others. Many of them, indeed, think it silly to observe the many little courtesies and trifling civilities practiced by cultured people.

We expect, and really demand, observance of the more important things by even selfish people, but it is the outward expression of kindly thought and feeling, the practice of little acts of courtesy, of thoughtful attentions, which sweeten and refine life and indicate a lovable nature.

We often hear young people declare that they could not be agreeable or popular if they tried. They say: "I am naturally reticent, shy, diffident, timid; I have not enough cheek to push myself forward," and so on.

The unwillingness to exert one-self to be sociable is much more common than a lack of ability to be so. Of course, it takes an effort to overcome a quiet, retiring disposition and inclination to shrink from meeting people, but we assure our young readers in particular that it pays to try. If you wish others to be interested in you, and practically every-one has this wish, you must be interested in them. Sour, cynical, fault-finding, sarcastic people, often wonder why they are so unpopular, why people avoid them. It is simply because people like to get into the sunlight, dislike the dark, the gloom. We love harmony and hate discord,

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