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NUMBER 14

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### The Art of Conversing.

(By Rev. T. B. Gregory.)

The "American" is in receipt of the following communication:

"I am a young woman of twenty three. I have a high school education and my mind is fairly bright, but I am often shamed almost to death by my inability to appear well in conversation. I do not know that I am especially deficient in language, but some how I always break down when I am out in company and try to talk.

"Can you explain to me the nature of my difficulty and give me some idea of the way to overcome it? You will earn my deepest gratitude by throwing out to me a few helpful suggestions."

With pleasure we will offer such suggestions as we may happen to have, hoping that some of them may be of service to the young woman who has so touchingly appealed to us.

To be able to converse well is a great accomplishment, but it is an accomplishment that one has to work for. Putting aside the "geniuses," who are so rare that they constitute only the exception to the rule, it may be said that the ability to converse comes only as the crown of much labor and self-discipline.

In the first place, in order to be a good, that is, an interesting, conversationalist, one must be well informed. Whatever the subject happens to be, one must know the facts in the case. The subject may be the war in the Far East or the latest neighbor hood dance, the "Darwinian theory" or the newest fad in neckties or headgear; but whatever it is one must be acquainted with the facts of the case in order to be able to talk upon the subject so as to make people listen, and listen with interest.

With your fact well in hand, with your idea clearly outlined in your mind, the language will take care of itself. It is easy to talk if you have something to talk about. As quietly as the vapor in the cloud condenses itself into the raindrops will your ideas clothe themselves in appropriate words—if you only have the ideas.

Get ideas, then—from men and women and children, from books, from the dumb creation, from the great Nature around you—reflect upon what you have learned until you make it a part and parcel of your very being—and it will be no more trouble for you to talk, and to talk well, than it is for a bird to fly.

The conversation that lags, that habits, that "hems and haws," is but a burlesque on the real thing, and such burlesque is inevitable where those who are trying to talk are poorly informed.

The young woman says in her letter that she has a "fairly bright mind," that she has received a "high school education" and that she is not "especially deficient in language," but that, nevertheless, she "breaks down when she is out in company and tries to talk."

It is possible that it is in that word "company" that the secret of her difficulty lies. In company the young woman becomes embarrassed, excited—in a word, loses her head, and, on that account, finds herself unable to converse.

Let the young woman always try to remain self-possessed.—New York American.

### Sentiment, Not Business.

Standing by home enterprise is commendable. It is sometimes, with a show of reason, made the test of true and loyal citizenship. Some people actually parallel this duty with the declaration of "holy writ," that "a man who fails to provide for his household has denied the faith, and is no better than a heathen." We give notice, in good time, that we have abundant sympathy for those who stand by home and all home interests, and yet, like another subject worth thinking of, it admits of more than one viewpoint; or, in other words, there is more than one way of reaching the same conclusion.

"Business is business," is often classed as the hard, icy utterance of the selfish business man, whose heart is set upon personal gain. And yet, when you come to consider it calmly, honestly and practically the adherence to

this principle is the true touchstone of all material advancement and real success. That sentiment is one thing and business quite another, has been so abundantly demonstrated as to need no argument at all. People who pay the price are entitled to the best their money will buy, whether it be a stick broom or a steam engine. No man has a right to expect people to buy what he makes, simply because his factory is local, except what he offers, is as good as the best. And when that point is reached, sentiment disappears.

This is, after all, the only policy which will bring to our local enterprises the highest possible perfection. If sentiment takes the place of business, where is the incentive to strive for the best the world affords?

No sensible man patronizes a young doctor, simply because his name is William Jones, and was brought up in his township. No man who appreciates the best interest of his child can afford to entrust his education to an inferior teacher or school, simply from sentiment, or location. So if a man would make a book or a shoe, let him make them as good as those manufactured in Boston. If he would make cloth let him aim to duplicate the best that's made in Lowell.

Sentiment is a noble impulse, and has its place, but it's not business, and ought not to be so regarded.—Raleigh Times.

### A Southern Man.

According to the Post, there is serious agitation in Washington for the nomination of a Southern man for President on the Democratic ticket this year.

And why not a Southern man? Wherefore this trepidation in the face of a fancied furore of the Northern fanatics?

What, for example, is the matter with:

Hon. John Warwick Daniel, Senator in Congress from the sovereign State of Virginia, or

Hon. Andrew Jackson Montague, Governor of the same State, or

Hon. Charles Brantley Aycock, Governor of North Carolina, and as able a governor as there is in the country, or

Hon. John Sharpe Williams, scholar and statesman, and leader of the minority in the House, or

Hon. Joseph Weldon Bailey, able lawyer, former minority leader, and at present Senator in Congress from Texas.

Either of these men would make a strong candid and a worthy candidate. Either one of them would make a sound and conservative President of the United States. Why should the South hesitate to put some one of them forward?—Norfolk Virginian-Pilot.

### Tunnel Under the Capitol.

The District government today granted the formal permit to the Philadelphia, Washington & Baltimore railroad, as the Pennsylvania road is known here, to construct the twin tunnel under the United States capitol building and the adjacent blocks and streets.

The permit had been held up for several weeks because of a difference between Major Biddle, the engineer commissioner, and the railroad engineers in regard to the motive power to be used to propel cars in the tunnel. Major Biddle insisted that electricity should be used, and the railroad men wanted to be allowed to use steam.

Electricity was finally agreed on.

The tunnel will be 3,000 feet long, beginning at the intersection of Massachusetts avenue and First street, Northeast, going under Capitol Hill to New Jersey avenue and D. street, Southeast. The total cost of the work will be approximately \$300,000.

There will be two branch tunnels connecting with yards and tracks of the Pennsylvania road in South Washington.—New York Times.

### It Saved His Leg

P. A. Danforth of LaGrange, Ga., suffered for six months with a frightful running sore on his leg; but writes that Bucklen's Arnica Salve wholly cured it in five days. For ulcers, wounds, piles, it's the best salve in the world. Cure guaranteed. Only 35 cents. Sold by Rich Square Drug Co., J. L. Outland Woodland, M. H. Futrell, Conway, T. H. Nicholson, Murfreesboro.

### A Touch on the Arm.

When the winter winds blow about old Washington and Essex Streets, Boston, and the blasts of the crystal seasons cause thinly clad people to draw their garments closely about them, there comes to my memory a tale of a past generation, that rises in my soul like a star. It is a simple tale, but it interprets a great heart and a lofty genius, and all life as well, for all human thoughts follow suggestion; that word is the history of all that has helped to make a better and a higher world.

Let me tell you the story as it came to me, and you will not wonder that it has haunted me, though the mighty leader that gave rise to it has long slept in a secluded grave among the mosses of Milton Hills.

It happened more than a half century ago—this little incident, this great parable of life. There had been snowy days; frosts had covered the windows of beautiful Harrison Avenue, and glittered from the arms of the great trees there. The place is now Chintown.

There were toy-shops around Essex Street then; Theodore Parker lived there; he sleeps now in beautiful Florence.

There came out of a square brick house that faced the then prosperous square a tall, lonely man; the world was on his heart, and his heart was full of love and pity. It was early evening and this man went out into the night.

He was looking for something—something to ease his heart. He heard the North Chimes ring out in the clear, crystal air, from the steeple on Copp's Hill.

It was New Year's eve; people were hurrying hither and thither, with arms full of light gifts, and minds full of happy anticipations. There were waiting hearts everywhere.

He came to a glittering gift store, and something caused him to pause. A girl, in her mother's Rob Roy shawl, stood there looking into the windows, beside a bundle of saving, which had been offered for sale for Christmas trees.

A clerk came out of the store hastily, and said to the girl: "You have no right to be standing here; go home."

She turned partly around, reluctantly, and her face wrinkled and her lip trembled.

"No right!"—the words were more bitter than the north wind. The clerk went back to his work, the girl stepped into a dark corner, out of the way of the hurrying procession of buyers, drew her shawl around her, and looked into the gaily windows and wished for the things that others were to share, but which she could not expect to have. But she could dream that she had them; she had the right to dream.

Something made her start. A hand touched her arm. As she turned, a voice said, "Here," it was a voice of silver; it was a voice she had never heard such a voice before. It repeated, "Here," and added, "You have a right to wish."

A form towered above her, with such a face! It was the face of a Roman, and never walked a nobler soul before, or has walked since, such a kindly, grand Roman, it may be, in Boston streets! I can see it in my mind's eye now—for I have met that man, that god among men.

"Here," the bell voice rang again, and the man put into the wistful child's hand a dollar in silver. "You have a right to wish and to live."

He turned, and, his head above the crowd, vanished into the night.

The girl folded her face in her mother's shawl, and cried with a heaving heart. Could such things be in this selfish world? The man went on, perhaps to find some other child as hopeless and forlorn, wishing that he might touch her on the arm and ring the bell of his divine voice.

It was his habit to do such things, to make a wistful child's heart happy in this way, and to disappear in the crowd like a wave in the sea. The child would never know who touched her on the arm, and he could tell his invalid wife the story of his evening's adventures for a winter tale, when he returned to his home, and to his fire among the walls of books.

But the wistful girl in the Rob

roy shawl remembered that glorious face. She still felt that hand on her arm, and could hear in fancy his voice like a bell. She carried home with her that touch on the arm; it was a firm hand that had touched her, a strong hand, a warm hand. Should she ever see that face again?

She dreamed of the man at nights. What a divine light there must have been in his soul; he wanted no return, no money, no honor, no praise, not even love of any recollection.

That child had a happy New Year, and she talked with her mother constantly of the man.

"His head was like a tower," she said, "and when he spoke it was like the ringing of a silver bell. He said, 'You have a right to wish.' I sometimes think that he was Christ."

"He was like him in what he did," said the wondering mother. One summer evening the little girl wandered away from the treeless alley where she lived toward the Common. A crowd of excited men were hurrying toward Tremont Temple. They were talking wildly, and the girl was drawn after them, and she learned that a great orator was to speak there on some question of reform, and that they were to seize him and drag him into the street and maltreat him.

They rushed into the temple, and the girl followed them with the crowd. The temple filled, the people shouting, and some of them hissing. It was a place of tumult.

A tall man arose and lifted his hand. The sea became calm. "All men have a right to wish and to live."

Then everything became still. The child gazed upon that uplifted hand, and exclaimed: "Oh, that is the man who touched me on the arm on New Year's."

The silver voice rang out. The temple was as silent as a night in the deep forest, or as a place of graves. The crowd passed under the spell of the orator. When he had ended his speech, they passed out into the street.

Nearly all, but a company of young men who had come there pledged to assault the orator. They lingered to fulfill their resolutions. They began to assault the speaker with abusive language.

He stood there. The little girl waited. His features did not change. He came down from the pulpit with a look of beneficence which seemed to the child godlike.

He stretched out his hand—I am describing an actual scene—he said to the young men: "Back!"

They became silent and moved a little down the aisle towards the door.

"Back!" They yielded a little more, inch by inch.

"Back!" It was a trumpet tone. The overawed young men broke before it and went out into the street. Nothing could withstand the moral and soul-force of that arm.

He turned to the little girl with a pleasant face. She cried out: "It was you that touched me on the arm."

"When?"

"In the night."

"I remember—we all have a right to live."

The girl went home and told her mother all, and said: "Mother, I will live."

"Of course you will."

"But I will live. He said I might."

"Who?"

"The angel of that New Year's eve."

"And I will send you to school."

She did, and that girl came to live in thousands of lives.

She returned from the lecture field to Boston on a cheerless day.

One of Boston's orators—her greatest—was to lie in state on that day, under the Shaw guard. It was in that hall that the orator had delivered his first oration. She went there in the pouring rain.

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