

scene. The sunbeams fall upon the forms of the mourners, and rest upon the coffin. They would seem to look sadly upon Rachel, as, leaning over the grave, she watches her father's body descend slowly to the earth from whence it came. Oh! awful, heart-rending moment! She feels that now all is indeed over, and that she has looked her last upon her best and dearest earthly friend. At the words "dust to dust" her whole frame trembles with agitation, and Pally is obliged to support her. She listens to the beautiful and hopeful words that follow the lowering of the coffin, and they sink gently into her heart, and calm, in some degree, the excess of her grief. The tears roll down her pale face as she gazes, until the last words of the burial-service are uttered, and silence for a moment succeeds. A few lumps of earth fall heavily upon the coffin, and are echoed upon her ear. Her friends gently endeavour to withdraw her from the grave, and after another long last look, and a supplicating glance heavenward, she resigns herself to their guidance.

The Ivorites now surround the grave. Hand in hand they encircle it, whilst each takes from his bosom a sprig of rosemary, and drops it upon the coffin. This last act completed, they stand for a few moments, solemnly silent, then disunite and form into pairs. Once more Rachel advances and looks into the grave. The sweet smell of the rosemary seems to remind her of the ascension of the soul to that happy region where she trusts her father dwells. She turns more calmly away, and the melancholy procession forms again.

How many hearts were beating with sympathy for the poor girl, and how many kind wishes were inwardly breathed for her! The Ivorites, and most of her other friends, left her at the door of the little cottage, now no longer to be considered her home. She entered, followed by Pally, her uncle, and Mr. Shenkin. Their words of condolence, kindly as they were meant, fell sadly upon her ear. She knew, however, that she must no longer indulge her grief, and she endeavoured to suppress her feelings, and to speak to her friends of her future prospects. She told Mr. Shenkin that she meant to return to Grongar immediately, but begged to be permitted to remain yet a day or two longer at the cottage, to make arrangements for the distribution of its furniture, now her little property. Mr. Shenkin assured her of his wife's permission to stay as long as she chose, adding that they should be glad to see her whenever she came, and the sooner the better, since nothing went on well without her. She fixed the following Monday for her return, and, with many assurances of friendship, Mr. Shenkin took his departure.

(To be continued.)



GOOD BREEDING AS SHOWN IN VISITING THE POOR.

By S. F. A. CAULFEILD.



THE idea of giving advice on such a subject as that above named appears at first sight quite superfluous, for well-bred persons instinctively know how to comport themselves under every circumstance of daily life. Yes, truly, and it is not for them that this little article is written. But the ranks of society are perpetually renewed by the young and inexperienced, and these need an early training to be quickly observant, carefully reflecting, and apt to accommodate themselves to a variety of circumstances and company to which they have never before been accustomed. Over and above this youthful stream of life, which needs direction into right courses, there are the inconsiderate of all ages, who do not know how to mould themselves gracefully into new and peculiar grooves.

There are some "born in the purple" who have been by no means influenced by the refinement of their associations and the careful delicacy of their culture, and the reverse holds equally good. Youth is, at any rate, the time for training, and I offer the following suggestions to those who love what is seemly and gracious in word and action.

Doubtless there are multitudes amongst you, my young friends, for whom the great keynote of genuine good breeding has already been struck by wise and godly parents—the keynote of love—and to it your whole natures have been early attuned. Such as these are the most apt of scholars, and by them little matters of detail will be easily learnt. The great principle of love constrains you ever to place yourself in the position of the person you address, and to make their circumstances and feelings your own; you realise their poverty, their hopes, wishes, and fears, and, it may be, their envy, in contemplation of your superior position, their personal defects, bodily sufferings, lack of external advantages, and inability to meet you on even terms, and an inexorable necessity constraining them to accept obligations without any prospect of ever making a return. My picture is not even yet complete. In addition to any of the troubles enumerated, there may be some resulting from unjust impressions formed of your motives, and an utter inability to appreciate your really unassuming character. Alas! the impression that the wealthy "look down upon" and "despise the poor" is as widespread as it is utterly untrue.

Lay all these trying and bitter feelings before you; endeavour to realise the sting of each, and that they may be all combined in one poor human heart, and then you will have learnt your first lesson in the exercise of the highest type of good breeding when you visit the homes of the poor.

I must now proceed to explain who "the poor" are: for their numbers are far greater, and your delicacy and benevolence must be extended over a much wider field, than may at first sight appear.

The poor are divided into two great sections of the community, and their respective and distinctive sufferings are very evenly balanced between them:—First, there are the poor amongst the untitled gentry, professionals, and tradesmen; and secondly, the

poor amongst the so-called "working classes," who have inherited that condition of life from their ancestors for generations back, and never knew any other and better circumstances themselves.

Now, whether my reader belong to the upper, middle, or lower circles of life, she will have to meet the poor of her own class, as well as those of a different grade; and she should be prepared to adapt her words and her demeanour on each occasion as becomes a "lady" in heart, and a Christian lady above all. For, believe me, just as it is quite possible to have learnt all the rules of harmony, and the act of running with nimble fingers all over an instrument without missing a note, and yet be devoid of one atom of true musical taste, and the performance prove a complete failure; just so you might be fully conversant with every custom of society down to the smallest *minutia* of etiquette, and yet be devoid of the root of the matter, namely, that principle the possession of which alone could stamp you as a highly-bred woman.

I said that the needy of every class have a claim on your sympathy; those of your own immediate family having the first and greatest. I will therefore begin by dealing with the case of the poor in the upper ranks of life.

It is hard to those who were reared amidst the comforts and refinements of life, and once associated with the highest in the land, to forego all luxury, the society of their relatives, and the advantages their interest could have procured for their children. Better never to have known such circumstances, to have been born of the lowly and obscure, and accustomed to manual labour—to be at least on a level with your relations, than to have dropped out of your original sphere, constrained to adopt new circumstances and new associates; or only be invited once in a way, as the notorious "poor relation," who always comes in the same dress, and of whom the hostess seems half-ashamed, since she only invites them for the evening after a dinner, or to finish the broken remains of the feast at luncheon next day.

A propos of your social relations with the poor of your own condition, we will suppose that it behoves you to call on the widow, left in poverty by the early death of her husband. She was by birth a gentlewoman, but one of a large family, and who should have been trained to be self-supporting, but married an officer with little private means—instead—a common error! A family of five or six were thus but just able to exist; the widow having dropped all intercourse with her own original circle of friends and relatives, lest they should suspect her of wanting their interest for her sons or invitations for her daughters. So the sons have emigrated, under unfavourable circumstances; and the daughters "make and mend," and do much household work at home. They live in your neighbourhood, in the grass-grown village street, and you in a handsome country seat within a short walk. You have horses and carriages at your service, extensive pleasure-grounds, "goodly changes of raiment," suitable for every imaginable occasion, and all the county families are your associates. The widow, grown sensitive in her poverty, struggles with a newly-born sentiment of pride, lest she should mar the prospects of her young people, and deprive them of the few recreations within their reach. Thus, an invitation to one of the "great houses" is an event of considerable importance, and for their sakes she would sacrifice her own feelings, and endeavour to shut her eyes to the "cavalier" style of invitation too often given by the *nouveau riche*, or those who, if "gentle" in birth, are otherwise in nature. The young people do not know so much of the world and the "convenances of society." Why overshadow their sunshine by

pointing out little slights and invidious distinctions made between them and the "Manor House," "the Court," or "the Grange"?

You feel, we will suppose, that a visit to the small house in the village is due. Do not imagine that you may treat them in a "free and easy" manner, and that a morning call will do very well, because you happen to be near. Such an ill-timed intrusion could not be justified by the fact that you often look in at "the Court" as early in the morning to see your friend "the Lady Muriel," or else the "Misses Highflifer," when out with your dogs on a "constitutional." Reflect a moment, and you will see that while born in the same rank as they, the circumstances of the widow's family demand very tender consideration. Your friends above named have servants to do the work of the household, and call at any time that your mutual intimacy may permit, you will find them in suitable costume, engaged at agreeable pursuits for pleasure's sake.

But pay a visit at such a time to friends of limited means, and you may find them in working attire, hands white with flour, or dusting their reception-room; no fire yet alight, and no "best foot put foremost" (as homely folks express it) for the reception of the unexpected visitor. I pray you, spare the feelings of the busy inmates by the exercise of a little kindly forethought and tact.

Supposing, however, that you have done so, and you make your visit in the afternoon; the night covers have been removed from the furniture, all is bright and clean, and some of the family are prepared to receive you. You have your dogs with you all the same, and they want to force their way in with you. Of course, you say, "Go out, sir!" and perhaps even use your whip. Your friends beg you politely "not to mind," that "the animals will do no harm," and you allow one, or even two, to enter. They pad all about with dirty feet, rub up against the furniture, and they lie down on the best rug but just turned down to do you honour, and wipe themselves against the dresses of your friends. You may not see it, but anxious eyes note every movement, and endeavour to seem indifferent. Had you reflected a little, you would have been ashamed of your selfish thoughtlessness.

Perhaps you think that the widow looks worn and feeble; or she has a pale, delicate girl, who needs fresh air without exertion. Do not be so *gauche* as to make any remark on their appearance, but take an early opportunity of devoting your carriage to their service, not as an act of grace for which they can make no return, but as though they would be conferring a favour upon you. Tell them that you want to drive to such a place tomorrow or next day, and should be all alone, and ask whether they could spare time to go with you to enliven your solitary expedition. Express a hope they will "not refuse." Such an invitation would be as gratefully accepted as it was graciously given. On such occasions avoid wearing your handsomest costumes; do not let your dress, although really good, contrast painfully with that of the poor neighbours who accompany you.

Just in the same spirit let your invitations to the house be given. Be they to a garden party or an "At Home," with a little adroitness you could make it appear a favour on the part of your guests to come rather than a condescension on yours to invite them. Ask their help to get up a game, to complete the numbers wanted, or to arrange your programme of music, or other ways and means in preparation for the proposed diversion of your guests. They will then have the satisfaction of feeling that they can be of service in the way most acceptable to you.

Do not restrict their invitation to evening

after-dinner parties. Once in a way ask them to dinner also, or the distinction drawn between the poor and the rich will be most invidious and unworthy of you. Why should they always be placed on a lower level of dignity than those who are able to make you a like return?

Perhaps they may wish to make a little effort at entertaining you, and invite you to their early dinner, under the name of "luncheon." Some member of their family, an individual of a certain degree of distinction, has come to see how they fare, and the opportunity is a grand one; of course make a point of accepting. The pies and tarts have been made the night before, and the girls have been up by daybreak, to assist their one maid, and all are in their best attire, ready for your reception before one o'clock. Keep your presence of mind. There will be a scarcity perhaps of the commonest things, even of forks and spoons. Ask for nothing that you do not see.

Not many years ago, a good old country parson, somewhat troubled with deafness, was entertaining a few friends with hearty hospitality. But of plate he had no superfluity, and requiring a tablespoon to help a guest, he appealed two or three times to his old factotum in waiting behind him to bring one. As often as asked, old Paddy responded in what he meant to be a confidential whisper, not wishing to betray "the poverty of the land." At last the old gentleman showed symptoms of irritation. "Why don't you bring me a spoon, I say?" Quoth Pat, in a voice well worthy of a town crier, "Plase, yer Riverence, don't I tell yer they're both on the table!"

See nothing that is not meant to be seen, nor anything that proves a failure. Do not appear to see the rustic maid tripping and prancing over the rugs, nor spilling the wine, or the gravy, even if over your own dress. Try to say a kind thing; praise something or other—fruit, flowers, anything—with honesty. It will be a "red-letter" day to them if their entertainment prove a success, and you will go home a happier woman. But if any little mischance occurred on that occasion, beware of relating the circumstance to any third party, for to eat their bread, and expose them to ridicule, would be not only cruel to them, but odious in you.

I now turn to that portion of the community which has apparently monopolised the descriptive appellation of "the poor." Much that I have already said will apply equally well to your visits among them, such as the avoidance of morning intrusions before they have "cleaned up," and made themselves and their humble surroundings look as well as might be upon a "working day." Be assured, if their feelings be blunted in many ways—as they undoubtedly are—they still have certain human susceptibilities: can feel humbled, affronted, and gratified. In reference to your dress, I repeat the same counsel: put on the plainest and least remarkable. Show as little jewellery as possible, that the eyes of poor "working girls" may not be attracted and dazzled by things unsuitable to their condition in life, and which—even in the imitation—might tarnish in their wear the fair fame of those whose earnings should supply the hungry mouths at home.

Always accept any seat offered to you, without looking suspiciously at it as if it might soil your dress. Banish all other reflections, and give your whole thoughts to what you are told. Inquire kindly after each member of the family, and privately make a note of deficiencies which you may be able to supply. But refrain from taking money with you. Your sympathy or advice would then be thrown away, and perhaps not one syllable would even be heard. Their eyes would follow

the least movement of your hand, and your pocket become the centre of interest.

Always ascertain to what religious denomination those whom you visit belong; and avoid making objectionable remarks. So long as you speak of the fear and love of God, of faith in Christ, of the fruits of that faith to be exhibited in daily life, and of the hope of everlasting blessedness hereafter—you will wound no denominational prejudices, and your conversation will be acceptable.

If any of them be sick or aged, do not prescribe anything of which their circumstances will not allow. Nothing is more grievous than to entertain the idea that something might be done to effect a cure, which is, nevertheless, beyond your attainment—a generous high diet, change to a more genial climate, complete rest from all work, or a sea voyage. Why allude to such means, when the patient has no money for a removal nor for aught but the plainest of daily bread, and when a week's omission of labour would expose his family to starvation or debt? It is depressing to the bodily powers of the invalid, and to the spirits of the care-taker, to moot plans that cannot be carried out. Worse than this, such an injudicious suggestion would prove injurious to their spiritual condition. Ignorant of the dealings and designs of his Maker, man is disposed to complain, "Why hast Thou made me thus?" Rather, I counsel you, whisper in his ear, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

Visiting in country cottages within your own neighbourhood is far safer and more agreeable than in a crowded city. It may be that in your walks you may call upon some humble acquaintance, who, seeing you fatigued, may kindly "make bold" to offer you the refreshment of "a cup o' tea." Do not imagine that it would be cruel to accept hospitality from her straitened resources; you will do a far greater kindness in its acceptance than in its refusal. The uneducated folks are always apt to ascribe a feeling of "pride" to all such delicacy on the part of the upper classes. They think that their ignorance and poverty combined awaken sentiments akin to contempt in all above them. They little know how great a wrong they do to those who go out of their way, and often much deny themselves, to render them kindly assistance. But the manner of the doing is often at fault; remember this, and do not "let your good be evil spoken of."

"The poor shall never cease out of the land;" this is the Divine decree. Make the circumstances of all even, and in a very short time the poor will exist again. Some will fail in business and other enterprises; some will be lazy and worthless; some ruined by others; some by loss of health, or else by the death of the bread-earner. Through one cause or another—and these too many to enumerate—the poor will ever continue to be everywhere, and the duties of those better off apparent. There is much of deception and much of ingratitude to try our patience and fidelity to our trust; but we have the example of One to follow, "Who is kind to the unthankful and the evil." And amidst all the disappointments that follow our self-denials, we have this most blessed assurance to encourage our labours:

"Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me."

