

Our Boys and Girls.

TABLE MANNERS.

The blue jay is a greedy bird: I often watch him eat,
When crumbs are scattered from our door, he snatches all the treat.
He drives the smaller birds away, his manners are so rude.
It's quite a shocking thing to see him gobble down his food!
And sometimes, when I'm not polite, I hear my mother say,
"Why, now I see a little boy who's eating blue-jay way!"

The sparrows are a noisy set and very quarrelsome,
Because each hungry little bird desires the biggest crumb.
They scold and fight about the food, all chirping, "Me! Me! Me!"
And sometimes, when we children are inclined to disagree
About the sharing of a treat, my mother says, "Why you
Are acting now the very way the silly sparrows do!"

The jolly little chickadees are perfectly polite:
They never snatch, they never bolt, they never, never fight.
They hold the crumbs down daintily with both their little feet,
And peck off tiny little bites,—we love to watch them eat,
And, when my sister's good at meals, my mother says, "I see
A little girl who's eating like a darling chickadee!"
—Hannah G. Fernald, in *Good House-keeping*.

HOLDING OUT A HAND.

"All aboard!"
Phil stepped quickly into the sleeping-car, a lump in his throat, a pain in his heart, and tears so near his eyes as to require the aid of all the dignity of his fifteen years of stalwart boyhood to keep back. But a defiant look and a gruff voice in answer to a question put by him were great helps, and before many miles of the road had been passed he found himself able to compare the sad features with the glad features of his first leaving home.

It was parting with mother and all the rest. That was enough to say for one side of the matter. The headache must be accepted; it could not be ignored or made light of.

But on the other hand, even mother could feel thankful for this grand chance for him. A well-off uncle had sent him an invitation to come to his home in a distant city and attend a first-class school; had even sent him a railroad ticket. So for weeks past his mother and all the others had been putting forth their best efforts and self-denial in order to give Phil what he appreciatingly called a good "send-off," in other words, such an outfit as might do honor to his new surroundings.

"I can only give you a dollar, my dear boy," mother had said, as he was leaving. "I wish it were more."

"Ho! What do I want of any money, mother, when I have my ticket and enough lunch to last?"

"Well, I always think a person ought to have a little over in case of an emergency," said mother; and the dollar, looking very large to both of them, went into Phil's pocketbook, which was carefully placed in his inside vest pocket.

He hoped to keep that dollar unchanged for a long time. Nothing could induce him to spend a cent of it for anything not strictly necessary. No, indeed—that troublesome feeling just behind his eyes came again as the boy recalled the sacrifice which had been made for him at home. This time he overcome it by a more critical look about him.

"Stylish way of travelling, I should say. Wish mother and all of them were along. Three days and three nights whizzing along like this. Wonder if I shall get tired of it?"

The swift motion was so exhilarating, the accommodations so luxurious, and the various experiences belonging with travel so novel, that tiring of it seemed unlikely.

But at the close of the second day the country boy began to find the unusual confinement a heavy tax upon his powers of endurance. Every nerve in his active young limbs seemed rising in protest against a continuance against this sort of things. Phil felt a wild impulse to run a race, scream, shout, leap, whistle—anything that would set the stagnant blood stirring in his veins.

During a stop at a station he wandered restlessly into the next car. It was a day car, crowded, and he could easily perceive, far less comfortable than the one in which he travelled.

"Haven't you a seat?" he asked of a boy about his own age who was standing up. He appeared to belong to a family party, the mother and little girl upon one seat, the other turned toward it being occupied by a smaller child who appeared ill.

"No," answered the boy. "Little Kittv's sick, and she must lie down."

"Been travelling long?"
"Long enough to get pretty tired," said the boy with a sigh. "But it's hardest on mother."

The hell rano, and Phil, in faithful remembrance of his mother's many anxious cautions, hastily returned to his car. But he could not get the weary face out of his mind. The pale woman slightly recalled his mother. If she was taking a long journey, not at the cost of a liberal friend as Uncle George had shown himself (taking such kindly thought to see that Phil occupied a sleeping-car), it would be very unlikely that she would go to the extra expense. But how hard such nights must be!

And that boy! Phil determined that at the next station he would ask him to sit with him for a while. But while he waited for the next stop another thought came to him. Why shouldn't he ask the mother to come with the poor little mite to occupy his berth?

The idea was not a pleasant one. Phil felt so restless that he had intended to have his berth made up early in order that he might sleep away more of the weary hours. But if he, a great, strong boy, were tired, what must that woman be? He felt half ashamed of the comfort he was enjoying.

"A chap like me ought to be willing to rough it a little," he said to himself, as, an hour or two later, he made his way to the other car and proposed the exchange of accommodations. At first the woman would not hear of it.

"I wouldn't think of robbing you of your rest," she protested. "And if I could, I don't think it would be allowed that I should go there."

"That berth's hired for me," said Phil, "and it's likely I'll have a right to put whom I like in my place."

He insisted until he carried his point—the woman raised the two-year-old child and carried her into the sleeping-

car. Whether or not any objection would have been made to the change, had it been observed, can never be known, but as others were passing in and out no one appeared to notice it.

Returning to the day car, Phil and his new friend, Robert, arranged the other little girl on one seat, and the boys settled themselves to spend the night as best they could, sharing the other. The prospect for a comfortable rest was not good, and for a long time the two vainly sought positions of comfort. But the sleep which blesses vigorous boyhood, even under disadvantageous circumstances, did not entirely fail them, and for several hours Phil slept, to awaken early, cold, cramped, and, in general, uncomfortable.

Two or three hours later Robert's mother came back to him.

"Go back to your own place now," she said.

"Have you had a good night's rest?" asked Phil.

"Yes, and the child, too. The Lord will bless you for your kindness to a stranger."

Towards evening of that day Phil became absorbed in a magazine which some one had lent him, and failed to hear some loudly spoken words at the door of the car.

"What is it?" he asked, observing that they seemed to create a great commotion. A confusion of excited voices arose as men left the seats and crowded towards the doors, while women wore faces of anxiety and dismay.

"Do tell me what the matter is?" said Phil, seizing hold of a young man.

"Didn't you hear. There's a strike all along the road. All the hands have left the train."

"Well," said Phil, breathlessly, "when are we going on?"

"That's easier asked than answered. Nobody knows."

Phil stood in bewilderment, scarcely comprehending what this most unlooked for interruption in his journey might mean. Where should he go? What could he do? In the tumult around him he heard people speak of going to hotels. He had never been in one in his life, but easily guessed that his dollar, his precious resource in case of emergency, would not go very far in providing what he might need for the indefinite time which the strike might last.

As others began leaving the car he mechanically picked up his satchel and followed. The greater part of those about him were evidently perplexed as himself, some of them appearing greatly distressed. It had just occurred to him to wonder whether his friends of the night before were still on the train when he caught sight of them on a street a little distance away.

"I wonder what they are going to do," he said to himself. Gazing wistfully after them, half inclined to ask advice, yet shrinking to obtrude himself upon them, he saw Robert sit down on the satchel he was carrying and run back.

"Hello!" he cried, as at length he caught sight of Phil. "We were so busy getting out we didn't quite understand about the strike. Got far to go yet?"

"Three hundred miles," answered Phil.

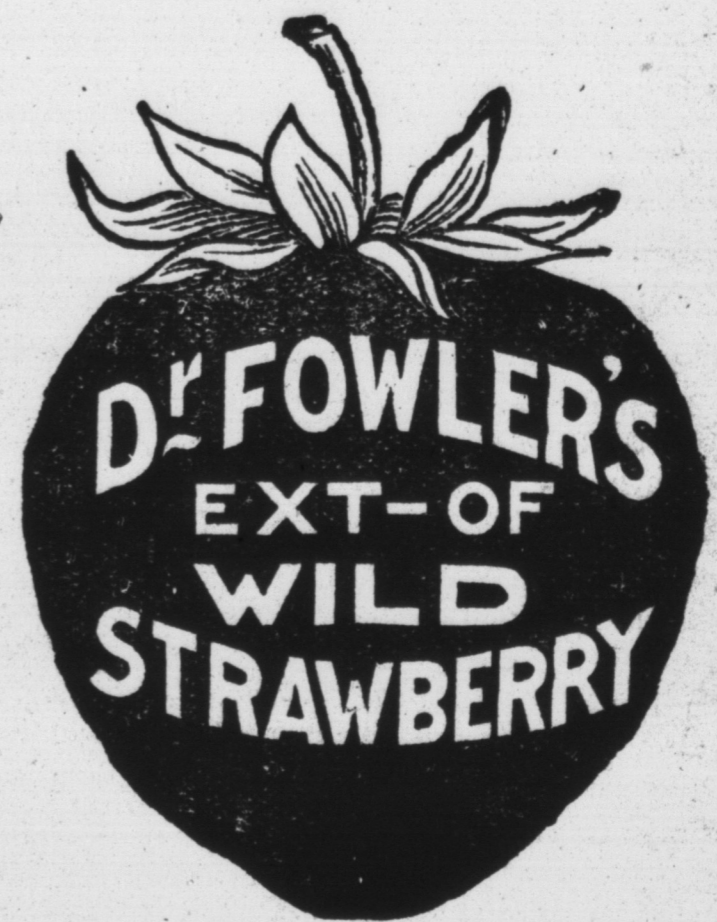
"Bad for you, isn't it? What are you going to do?"

"I hadn't—exactly—"

"Say, now," said Rob, eagerly, "can't you come right along with us and stay till the strike is over? Mother sent me to ask you. We're home, lucky for us."

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Very thankful Phil rejoined the family party. A short walk brought them to the plain, comfortable home of his new friends, where he was made most welcome, for a night and a day until he was able to continue his journey.

"I shall never forget it of you," he said, with beaming eyes, as he at length wished them good-by.

"Don't say a word," said Rob, heartily. "One good turn deserves another all the world over."

"Keep on with your kindness as you go through life," said Robert's mother. "You won't always get it right back, but that isn't what you do it for." She read correctly the unselfishness in the boy's bright eye. "You did it without hope or thought of reward, and the Lord gave it back to you."—*Sidney Dayre, in Advance.*

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