

**GOOD TALKING AND GOOD
MANNERS: FINE ARTS, WITH A
PAPER ON THE SOCIAL LAW OF
MUTUAL HELP AND THE LABOR
PROBLEM**

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Good Talking and Good Manners: Fine Arts, with a Paper on the Social Law of Mutual Help and the Labor Problem by F. D. Huntington

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F. D. HUNTINGTON

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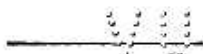
THE SOCIAL LAW OF MUTUAL HELP

AND THE LABOR PROBLEM

BY THE

Federic
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BISHOP OF CENTRAL NEW YORK.



SYRACUSE
WOLCOTT & WEST
1887.

GOOD TALKING A FINE ART.

The two succeeding papers were read before the young ladies of Keble School, Syracuse, N. Y., the first on June 23, 1881, and the second on June 16, 1886.

GOOD TALKING A FINE ART.

Five or six Clubs have been formed by ladies in this city within a short time, I am told, for the study of the Fine Arts. When I have enquired what Fine Arts they are, the old names have always been given, Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, and the rest. The Arts are very Fine, and there is a great deal to be known about them that is worth knowing,—the history of them, and the principles, and the triumphs, and the great names. Art consists in giving form to ideals in every kind,—ideals of nature, of human minds and human life. When men think or do their best, and when a sure hand culls out from

all this best what is most beautiful, or brave, or strong, re-combines the shapes, colors or sounds, and then gives back the image to the intellect through one of the senses,—that is Art. This definition justifies all your Art Clubs. Art will do a great deal, but it will not do all. One of the very latest givings out of a certain school of speculation, I see, is that it will,—that is, that the people of culture, educated people like you, being baffled in philosophy, vexed with science, tired of philanthropy, and doubtful in religion, are going to turn to the Arts and find there a perfect satisfaction. This is what the Agnostics say. I should not use such a word as that if it had not got into use already. Gnostics were men in the East who claimed that they knew everything. Agnostics are men in the West who say that nobody knows anything, except what can be seen and handled. We are certain of nothing ; we only guess ; we must take things as

they come, without caring from whom they come or whither we go : ' We are nothing but matter, and it is no matter''; that is the Agnostic Revelation. I should think one difficulty would be how to get rid of all that formidable part of the Universe, and of our own selves too, with which art has nothing to do, and which in spite of us insists on thrusting itself in our faces, turn which way we will,—love, truth, hope, conscience, sorrow, pain. But however all that may be, I suppose that of all those ladies, in all the Clubs, and some of them in this audience, not more than one, perhaps, in a hundred, expects to be an Artist in any one of those Fine Arts ; that is, not one in a hundred will really practice what she has studied.

I am going to speak to you to-night of one of the Arts, not included in your old list,—yet older than any of them,—and one which every graduate of the Keble School, every woman of you all here, will

certainly practice all her life long, and be in it either a genuine artist or else a clumsy artisan. It is the Art of Talking, in which the Artists are the Good Talkers. If it is an art at all, according to our definition, it is a very fine art indeed. By it the common things which lie all around us, every day, the events, the people that pass by, the perpetual tragi-comedy of society, the business battle with its strategy, struggle, honesty and lies, the tick of the family clock, whose mechanism takes in everything going on in the house with its good time and its bad time, ideas, fancies, recollections, loves and hates, endearments and spites,—all these are first touched with the quality of some personal mind, colored, shaped, and then sent out again in speech, under new combinations of words and accents and gestures and picture-work of the features, to convey a freight of meaning to some other mind. Here you see then are sculpture, painting, music, oratory, mosaic,