

THE ART OF PLEASING

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The Art of Pleasing by George Roy

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GEORGE ROY

**THE ART
OF PLEASING**

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GENERALSHIP;

OR,

HOW I MANAGED MY HUSBAND.

By **GEORGE ROY.**

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BY

GEORGE ROY

AUTHOR OF "GENERALSHIP," "THE OLD, OLD STORY," ETC.

CINCINNATI
ROBERT CLARKE & CO
1875

THE ART OF PLEASING.

IN selecting the Art of Pleasing as my theme, I am quite aware I have chosen a subject which has occupied the thoughts of Adam and all his sons, and of Mother Eve and every one of her daughters. The desire to please is one of the original features of human nature inherited directly from our heavenly Father, in whose image we are made. What a countless throng of beautiful thoughts and fancies stand before us when we think of the power of pleasing exhibited every moment by the God of love! As I write I hear the singing of birds, the humming of bees; I see the sun shining, the wavelets dancing and glancing, the flowers unfolding their matchless beauties, and yielding to the gentle gales their rich perfumes. But why attempt enumeration? It would take an age to tell all the pleasing things provided for us every hour. Do you doubt or not quite understand this? Then pluck a handful of the mossy turf on which you tread, and observe the wondrous beauty of its various parts; or peep into that little pool, and see the beauteous objects it contains; or catch that tiny insect, and inspect its wondrous proportions. All

nature is one manifestation of the art of pleasing, flowing directly from the never-failing fountain of our heavenly Father's love.

How, then, shall we with most advantage take lessons in the art? I think we shall profit most by endeavoring first to have a clear conception of the state of feeling we must cherish in our hearts to produce the pleasing in action, and then by going out in imagination amongst mankind and testing our ability to practice our theories. In tracing the pleasing in nature to its source we are led directly to the love of God, and at once conclude that the source of the pleasing in man must be love. The man who hath in his heart genuine love for his race will not much require to study the Art of Pleasing. Steering his course through the intricate mazes of every-day life under the guidance of the helm, love, in his heart, all his actions will be in beautiful harmony.

This statement of the question, although quite true, is too general. I must try to show you a few of the actions which a man with love in his heart will practice. Perhaps I may best convey my first lesson in the Art of Pleasing by pointing you to the lover, and asking you to observe his actions. In here using the term lover, I use it not in the general, but in the individual sense. Look, then, to the lover. See how careful he is of his personal appearance! He is scrupulously clean; his dress is not only well fitted, but the texture is fine, and the colour most becoming; he walks with a dignified grace, and yet has a truly modest look. Observe him when he meets the object

of his affection. He greets her with a grasp that has true cordiality in it. When he speaks his voice has a most musical tone; he conveys sweet thoughts in honied words; he uses gentle flatteries; they are rejected with smiles; he enforces them with passionate kisses,—and succeeds in the Art of Pleasing. Every one of these actions of the lover is worthy of attention from students of the Art of Pleasing.

The lover, we have seen, is very careful of his personal appearance. So ought we all to be if we would please. There is nothing that so recommends a stranger as his being scrupulously clean; and when, in addition to cleanliness, a man is handsomely and tastefully dressed, his look becomes what is known as prepossessing. Shakespeare says—

“Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy.”

The recent life of Julius Cæsar by the Emperor Napoleon III. discloses that that great man was a great swell, scratched his head with a single finger, to prevent the derangement of his carefully combed locks; and I read the other day that Aristotle, the tutor of Alexander the Great, was quite a dandy, wore a magnificent mantle, and sported a lot of the most costly rings. Our own Garibaldi is simple in his attire, but the soft hat and the scarlet shirt are as becoming a dress as we can conceive, and are nearly the perfection of a modern military uniform. The first step, then, in the Art of Pleasing is to do all we can, by cleanliness, taste, and even finery, to make ourselves personally acceptable.

I noticed, as number two, the lover's mode of greeting the object of his affection. Students of the Art of Pleasing would do well to pay a great deal of attention to the lover's mode of salutation. His hand is stretched forth with frankness, hers is received with a quick and cordial pressure, and the shock imparted, the greeting is over. This seems a very simple matter to imitate, and yet very few can do it. How many people, on meeting you, present their hands without a particle of feeling or even life in them. You catch such a hand and feel repelled; you could fling it from you, and pronounce with emphasis, "Humbug!" Others seize you with both hands, and hold on until you wonder if ever they are going to let go. This, too, suggests thoughts of humbug, and is not pleasing. Some present you with one or two fingers. These people are perhaps more honest than the others I have referred to, but they will never please by this mode of greeting their friends. Perhaps we might get a glimpse of the proper way of shaking hands were we to imagine ourselves having the honor of shaking hands with VICTORIA. Our fingers would have life in them, yet we would not dare to hold on, and we certainly would not extend one or two fingers to her Majesty. I repeat that students of the Art of Pleasing must pay very great attention to this little matter, and give every hand you grasp a quick and cordial squeeze.

My third note was, that when the lover opened his lips his voice was musical; and so the student of the Art of Pleasing will study to give his words the most

melodious tone. I have often wondered when I have seen young ladies thumping away at the piano, devoting years to the mastery of its tones, and speaking to me in the most harsh and commonplace manner, never even seeming to dream that there was music in spoken words, and that it was worth their while to study to make the most of the organs of speech. There is nothing more charming than a well-cultivated voice. Charming speaking is even more witching than charming singing. The angels sing; God speaks. How all hearts thrill with admiration when Miss Faucit, as Portia, says,—

“The quality of mercy is not strained;
 It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven,
 Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed;
 It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
 ’Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
 The thronèd monarch better than his crown:
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
 The attribute to awe and majesty,
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings:
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
 It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
 It is an attribute to God himself;
 And earthly power doth then show likest God’s,
 When mercy seasons justice.

Consider this,—
 That, in the course of justice, none of us
 Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
 The deeds of mercy.”

The natural qualities of Miss Faucit’s voice are no