Etiquette & Manners - 1

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Introduction
Manners and Morals

MANY who scoff at a book of etiquette would be shocked to hear the least expression of levity touching the Ten Commandments. But the Commandments do not always prevent such virtuous scoffers from dealings with their neighbor of which no gentleman could be capable and retain his claim to the title. Though it may require ingenuity to reconcile their actions with the Decalogue—the ingenuity is always forthcoming. There is no intention in this remark to intimate that there is any higher rule of life than the Ten Commandments; only it is illuminating as showing the relationship between manners and morals, which is too often overlooked. The polished gentleman of sentimental fiction has so long served as the type of smooth and conscienceless depravity that urbanity of demeanor inspires distrust in ruder minds. On the other hand, the blunt, unpolished hero of melodrama and romantic fiction has lifted brusqueness and pushfulness to a pedestal not wholly merited. Consequently, the kinship between conduct that keeps us within the law and conduct that makes civilized life worthy to be called such, deserves to be noted with emphasis. The Chinese sage, Confucius, could not tolerate the suggestion that virtue is in itself enough without politeness, for he viewed them as inseparable and "saw courtesies as coming from the heart," maintaining that "when they are practised with all the heart, a moral elevation ensues."

People who ridicule etiquette as a mass of trivial and arbitrary conventions, "extremely troublesome to those who practise them and insupportable to everybody else," seem to forget the long, slow progress of social intercourse in the upward climb of man from the primeval state. Conventions were established from the first to regulate the rights of the individual and the tribe. They were and are the rules of the game of life and must be followed if we would "play the game." Ages before man felt the need of indigestion remedies, he ate his food solitary and furtive in some corner, hoping he would not be espied by any stronger and hungrier fellow. It was a long, long time before the habit of eating in common was acquired; and it is obvious that the practise could not have been taken up with safety until the individuals of the race knew enough about one another and about the food resources to be sure that there was food sufficient for all. When eating in common became the vogue, table manners made their appearance and they have been waging an uphill struggle ever since. The custom of raising the hat when meeting an acquaintance derives from the old rule that friendly knights in accosting each other should raise the visor for mutual recognition in amity. In the knightly years, it must be remembered, it was important to know whether one was meeting friend or foe. Meeting a foe meant fighting on the spot. Thus, it is evident that the conventions of courtesy not only tend to make the wheels of life run more smoothly, but also act as safeguards in human relationship. Imagine the Paris Peace Conference, or any of the later conferences in Europe, without the protective armor of diplomatic etiquette!

Nevertheless, to some the very word etiquette is an irritant. It implies a great pother about trifles, these conscientious objectors assure us, and trifles are unimportant. Trifles are unimportant, it is true, but then life is made up of trifles. To those who dislike the word, it suggests all that is finical and superfluous. It means a garish embroidery on the big scheme of life; a clog on the forward march of a strong and courageous nation. To such as these, the words etiquette and politeness connote weakness and timidity. Their notion of a really polite man is a dancing master or a man milliner. They were always willing to admit that the French were the politest nation in Europe and equally ready to assert that the French were the weakest and least valorous, until the war opened their eyes in amazement. Yet, that manners and fighting can go hand in hand appears in the following anecdote:

In the midst of the war, some French soldiers and some non-French of the Allied forces were receiving their rations in a village back of the lines. The non-French fighters belonged to an Army that supplied rations plentifully. They grabbed their allotments and stood about while hastily eating, uninterrupted by conversation or other concern. The French soldiers took their very meager portions of food, improvised a kind of table on the top of a flat rock, and having laid out the rations, including the small quantity of wine that formed part of the repast, sat down in comfort and began their meal amid a chatter of talk. One of the non-French soldiers, all of whom had finished their large supply of food before the French had begun eating, asked sardonically: "Why do you fellows make such a lot

of fuss over the little bit of grub they give you to eat?" The Frenchman replied: "Well, we are making war for civilization, are we not? Very well, we are. Therefore, we eat in a civilized way."

To the French we owe the word etiquette, and it is amusing to discover its origin in the commonplace familiar warning—"Keep off the grass." It happened in the reign of Louis XIV, when the gardens of Versailles were being laid out, that the master gardener, an old Scotsman, was sorely tried because his newly seeded lawns were being continually trampled upon. To keep trespassers off, he put up warning signs or tickets—*etiquettes*—on which was indicated the path along which to pass. But the courtiers paid no attention to these directions and so the determined Scot complained to the King in such convincing manner that His Majesty issued an edict commanding everyone at Court to "keep within the *etiquettes."* Gradually the term came to cover all the rules for correct demeanor and deportment in court circles; and thus through the centuries it has grown into use to describe the conventions sanctioned for the purpose of smoothing personal contacts and developing tact and good manners in social intercourse. With the decline of feudal courts and the rise of empires of industry, much of the ceremony of life was discarded for plain and less formal dealing. Trousers and coats supplanted doublets and hose, and the change in costume was not more extreme than the change in social ideas. The court ceased to be the arbiter of manners, though the aristocracy of the land remained the high exemplar of good breeding.

Yet, even so courtly and materialistic a mind as Lord Chesterfield's acknowledged a connection between manners and morality, of which latter the courts of Europe seemed so sparing. In one of the famous "Letters to His Son" he writes: "Moral virtues are the foundation of society in general, and of friendship in particular; but attentions, manners, and graces, both adorn and strengthen them." Again he says: "Great merit, or great failings, will make you respected or despised; but trifles, little attentions, mere nothings, either done or reflected, will make you either liked or disliked, in the general run of the world." For all the wisdom and brilliancy of his worldly knowledge, perhaps no other writer has done so much to bring disrepute on the "manners and graces" as Lord Chesterfield, and this, it is charged, because he debased them so heavily by considering them merely as the machinery of a successful career. To the moralists, the fact that the moral standards of society in Lord Chesterfield's day were very different from those of the present era rather adds to the odium that has become associated with his attitude. His severest critics, however, do concede that he is candid and outspoken, and many admit that his social strategy is widely practised even in these days.

But the aims of the world in which he moved were routed by the onrush of the ideals of democratic equality, fraternity, and liberty. With the prosperity of the newer shibboleths, the old-time notion of aristocracy, gentility, and high breeding became more and more a curio to be framed suitably in gold and kept in the glass case of an art museum. The crashing advance of the industrial age of gold thrust all courts and their sinuous graces aside for the unmistakable ledger balance of the counting-house. This new order of things had been a long time in process, when, in the first year of this century, a distinguished English social historian, the late The Right Honorable G. W. E. Russell, wrote: "Probably in all ages of history men have liked money, but a hundred years ago they did not talk about it in society... Birth, breeding, rank, accomplishments, eminence in literature, eminence in art, eminence in public service—all these things still count for something in society. But when combined they are only as the dust of the balance when weighed against the all-prevalent power of money. The worship of the Golden Calf is the characteristic cult of modern society." In the Elizabethan Age of mighty glory, three hundred years before this was said, Ben Jonson had railed against money as "a thin membrane of honor," groaning: "How hath all true reputation fallen since money began to have any!" Now the very fact that the debasing effect of money on the social organism has been so constantly reprehended, from Scriptural days onward, proves the instinctive yearning of mankind for a system of life regulated by good taste, high intelligence and sound affections. But, it remains true that, in the succession of great commercial epochs, coincident with the progress of modern science and invention, *almost* everything can be bought and sold, and so *almost* everything is rated by the standard of money.

Yet, this standard is precisely not the ultimate test of the Christianity on which we have been pluming ourselves through the centuries. Still, no one can get along without money; and few of us get along very well with what we have. At least we think so—because everybody else seems to think that way. We Americans are members of the nation which, materially, is the richest, most

prosperous and most promising in the world. This idea is dinned into our heads continually by foreign observers, and publicly we “own the soft impeachment.” Privately, each individual American seems driven with the decision that he must live up to the general conception of the nation as a whole. And he does, but in less strenuous moments he might profitably ponder the counsel of Gladstone to his countrymen: “Let us respect the ancient manners and recollect that, if the true soul of chivalry has died among us, with it all that is good in society has died. Let us cherish a sober mind; take for granted that in our best performances there are latent many errors which in their own time will come to light.”

America, too, has her ancient manners to remember and respect; but, in the rapid assimilation of new peoples into her economic and social organism, more pressing concerns take up nearly all her time. The perfection of manners by intensive cultivation of good taste, some believe, would be the greatest aid possible to the moralists who are alarmed over the decadence of the younger generation. Good taste may not make men or women really virtuous, but it will often save them from what theologians call “occasions of sin.” We may note, too, that grossness in manners forms a large proportion of the offenses that fanatical reformers foam about. Besides grossness, there is also the meaner selfishness. Selfishness is at the polar remove from the worldly manners of the old school, according to which, as Dr. Pusey wrote, others were preferred to self, pain was given to no one, no one was neglected, deference was shown to the weak and the aged, and unconscious courtesy extended to all inferiors. Such was the “beauty” of the old manners, which he felt consisted in “acting upon Christian principle, and if in any case it became soulless, as apart from Christianity, the beautiful form was there, into which the real life might re-enter.”

As a study of all that is admirable in American manners, and as a guide to behavior in the simplest as well as the most complex requirements of life day by day, whether we are at home or away from it, there can be no happier choice than the present volume. It is conceived in the belief that etiquette in its broader sense means the technique of human conduct under all circumstances in life. Yet all minutiæ of correct manners are included and no detail is too small to be explained, from the selection of a visiting card to the mystery of eating corn on the cob. Matters of clothes for men and women are treated with the same fullness of information and accuracy of taste as are questions of the furnishing of their houses and the training of their minds to social intercourse. But there is no exaggeration of the minor details at the expense of the more important spirit of personal conduct and attitude of mind. To dwell on formal trivialities, the author holds, is like “measuring the letters of the sign-boards by the roadside instead of profiting by the directions they offer.” She would have us know also that “it is not the people who make small technical mistakes or even blunders, who are barred from the paths of good society, but those of sham and pretense whose veneered vulgarity at every step tramples the flowers in the gardens of cultivation.” To her mind the structure of etiquette is comparable to that of a house, of which the foundation is ethics and the rest good taste, correct speech, quiet, unassuming behavior, and a proper pride of dignity.

To such as entertain the mistaken notion that politeness implies all give and little or no return, it is well to recall Coleridge’s definition of a gentleman: “We feel the gentlemanly character present with us,” he said, “whenever, under all circumstances of social intercourse, the trivial, not less than the important, through the whole detail of his manners and deportment, and with the ease of a habit, a person shows respect to others in such a way as at the same time implies, in his own feelings, and habitually, an assured anticipation of reciprocal respect from them to himself. In short, the gentlemanly character arises out of the feeling of equality acting as a habit, yet flexible to the varieties of rank, and modified without being disturbed or superseded by them.” Definitions of a gentleman are numerous, and some of them famous; but we do not find such copiousness for choice in definitions of a lady. Perhaps it has been understood all along that the admirable and just characteristics of a gentleman should of necessity be those also of a lady, with the charm of womanhood combined. And, in these days, with the added responsibility of the vote.

Besides the significance of this volume as an indubitable authority on manners, it should be pointed out that as a social document, it is without precedent in American literature. In order that we may better realize the behavior and environment of well-bred people, the distinguished author has introduced actual persons and places in fictional guise. They are the persons and the places of her own world; and whether we can or can not penetrate the incognito of the Worldlys, the Gildings, the Kindharts, the Oldnames, and the others, is of no importance. Fictionally, they are real enough for us

to be interested and instructed in their way of living. That they happen to move in what is known as Society is incidental, for, as the author declares at the very outset: “Best Society is not a fellowship of the wealthy, nor does it seek to exclude those who are not of exalted birth; but it is an association of gentlefolk, of which good form in speech, charm of manner, knowledge of the social amenities, and instinctive consideration for the feelings of others, are the credentials by which society the world over recognizes its chosen members.”

The immediate fact is that the characters of this book are thoroughbred Americans, representative of various sections of the country and free from the slightest tinge of snobbery. Not all of them are even well-to-do, in the post-war sense; and their devices of economy in household outlay, dress and entertainment are a revelation in the science of ways and means. There are parents, children, relatives and friends all passing before us in the pageant of life from the cradle to the grave. No circumstance, from an introduction to a wedding, is overlooked in this panorama and the spectator has beside him a cicerone in the person of the author who clears every doubt and answers every question. In course, the conviction grows upon him that etiquette is no flummery of poseurs “aping the manners of their betters,” nor a code of snobs, who divide their time between licking the boots of those above them and kicking at those below, but a system of rules of conduct based on respect of self coupled with respect of others. Meanwhile, to guard against conceit in his new knowledge, he may at odd moments recall Ben Jonson’s lines:

“Nor stand so much on your gentility,
Which is an airy, and mere borrowed thing,
From dead men’s dust, and bones: And none of yours
Except you make, or hold it.”

Chapter I.

What Is Best Society?

“SOCIETY” is an ambiguous term; it may mean much or nothing. Every human being—unless dwelling alone in a cave—is a member of society of one sort or another, and therefore it is well to define what is to be understood by the term “Best Society” and why its authority is recognized. Best Society abroad is always the oldest aristocracy; composed not so much of persons of title, which may be new, as of those families and communities which have for the longest period of time known highest cultivation. Our own Best Society is represented by social groups which have had, since this is America, widest rather than longest association with old world cultivation. Cultivation is always the basic attribute of Best Society, much as we hear in this country of an “Aristocracy of wealth.”

To the general public a long purse is synonymous with high position—a theory dear to the heart of the “yellow” press and eagerly fostered in the preposterous social functions of screen drama. It is true that Best Society is comparatively rich; it is true that the hostess of great wealth, who constantly and lavishly entertains, will shine, at least to the readers of the press, more brilliantly than her less affluent sister. Yet the latter, through her quality of birth, her poise, her inimitable distinction, is often the jewel of deeper water in the social crown of her time.

The most advertised commodity is not always intrinsically the best, but is sometimes merely the product of a company with plenty of money to spend on advertising. In the same way, money brings certain people before the public—sometimes they are persons of “quality,” quite as often the so-called “society leaders” featured in the public press do not belong to good society at all, in spite of their many published photographs and the energies of their press-agents. Or possibly they do belong to “smart” society; but if too much advertised, instead of being the “queens” they seem, they might more accurately be classified as the court jesters of to-day.

THE IMITATION AND THE GENUINE

New York, more than any city in the world, unless it be Paris, loves to be amused, thrilled and surprised all at the same time; and will accept with outstretched hand any one who can perform this astounding feat. Do not underestimate the ability that can achieve it: a scintillating wit, an arresting originality, a talent for entertaining that amounts to genius, and gold poured literally like rain, are the least requirements.

Puritan America on the other hand demanding, as a ticket of admission to her Best Society, the qualifications of birth, manners and cultivation, clasps her hands tight across her slim trim waist and announces severely that New York’s “Best” is, in her opinion, very “bad” indeed. But this is because Puritan America, as well as the general public, mistakes the jester for the queen.

As a matter of fact, Best Society is not at all like a court with an especial queen or king, nor is it confined to any one place or group, but might better be described as an unlimited brotherhood which spreads over the entire surface of the globe, the members of which are invariably people of cultivation and worldly knowledge, who have not only perfect manners but a perfect manner. Manners are made up of trivialities of deportment which can be easily learned if one does not happen to know them; manner is personality—the outward manifestation of one’s innate character

and attitude toward life. A gentleman, for instance, will never be ostentatious or overbearing any more than he will ever be servile, because these attributes never animate the impulses of a well-bred person. A man whose manners suggest the grotesque is invariably a person of imitation rather than of real position.

Etiquette must, if it is to be of more than trifling use, include ethics as well as manners. Certainly what one is, is of far greater importance than what one appears to be. A knowledge of etiquette is of course essential to one's decent behavior, just as clothing is essential to one's decent appearance; and precisely as one wears the latter without being self-conscious of having on shoes and perhaps gloves, one who has good manners is equally unself-conscious in the observance of etiquette, the precepts of which must be so thoroughly absorbed as to make their observance a matter of instinct rather than of conscious obedience.

Thus Best Society is not a fellowship of the wealthy, nor does it seek to exclude those who are not of exalted birth; but it *is* an association of gentle-folk, of which good form in speech, charm of manner, knowledge of the social amenities, and instinctive consideration for the feelings of others, are the credentials by which society the world over recognizes its chosen members.

Chapter II.
Introductions

THE CORRECT FORM

THE WORD “present” is preferable on formal occasions to the word “introduce.” On informal occasions neither word is expressed, though understood, as will be shown below.

The correct formal introduction is:

“Mrs. Jones, may I present Mr. Smith?”

or,

“Mr. Distinguished, may I present Mr. Young?”

The younger person is always presented to the older or more distinguished, but a gentleman is always presented to a lady, even though he is an old gentleman of great distinction and the lady a mere slip of a girl.

No lady is ever, except to the President of the United States, a cardinal, or a reigning sovereign, presented to a man. The correct introduction of either a man or woman:

To the President,
is,
“Mr. President, I have the honor to present Mrs. Jones, of Chicago.”

To a Cardinal,
is,
“Your Eminence, may I present Mrs. Jones?”

To a King:

Much formality of presenting names on lists is gone through beforehand; at the actual presentation an “accepted” name is repeated from functionary to equerry and nothing is said to the King or Queen except: “Mrs. Jones.”

But a Foreign Ambassador is presented, “Mr. Ambassador, may I present you to Mrs. Jones.”

Very few people in polite society are introduced by their formal titles. A hostess says, “Mrs. Jones, may I present the Duke of Overthere?” or “Lord Blank?”; never “his Grace” or “his Lordship.” The Honorable is merely Mr. Lordson, or Mr. Holdoffice. A doctor, a judge, a bishop, are addressed and introduced by their titles. The clergy are usually Mister unless they formally hold the title of Doctor, or Dean, or Canon. A Catholic priest is “Father Kelly.” A senator is always introduced as Senator, whether he is still in office or not. But the President of the United States, once he is out of office, is merely “Mr.” and not “Ex-president.”

THE PREVAILING INTRODUCTION AND INFLECTION

In the briefer form of introduction commonly used,
“Mrs. Worldly, Mrs. Norman,”

if the two names are said in the same tone of voice it is not apparent who is introduced to whom; but by accentuating the more important person's name, it can be made as clear as though the words "May I present" had been used.

The more important name is said with a slightly rising inflection, the secondary as a mere statement of fact. For instance, suppose you say, "Are you there?" and then "It is raining!" Use the same inflection exactly and say, "Mrs. Worldly?"—"Mrs. Younger!"

Are you there?—It is raining!

Mrs. Worldly?—Mrs. Younger!

The unmarried lady is presented to the married one, unless the latter is very much the younger. As a matter of fact, in introducing two ladies to each other or one gentleman to another, no distinction is made. "Mrs. Smith; Mrs. Norman." "Mr. Brown; Mr. Green."

The inflection is:

I think—it's going to rain!

Mrs. Smith—Mrs. Norman!

A man is also often introduced, "Mrs. Worldly? Mr. Norman!" But to a very distinguished man, a mother would say:

"Mr. Edison—My daughter, Mary!"

To a young man, however, she should say, "Mr. Struthers, have you met my daughter?" If the daughter is married, she should have added, "My daughter, Mrs. Smartlington." The daughter's name is omitted because it is extremely bad taste (except in the South) to call her daughter "Miss Mary" to any one but a servant, and on the other hand she should not present a young man to "Mary." The young man can easily find out her name afterward.

OTHER FORMS OF INTRODUCTION

Other permissible forms of introduction are:

"Mrs. Jones, do you know Mrs. Norman?"

or,

"Mrs. Jones, you know Mrs. Robinson, don't you?" (on no account say "Do you not?" Best Society always says "don't you?")

or,

"Mrs. Robinson, have you met Mrs. Jones?"

or,

"Mrs. Jones, do you know my mother?"

or,

"This is my daughter Ellen, Mrs. Jones."

These are all good form, whether gentlemen are introduced to ladies, ladies to ladies, or gentlemen to gentlemen. In introducing a gentleman to a lady, you may ask Mr. Smith if he has met Mrs. Jones, but you must not ask Mrs. Jones if she has met Mr. Smith!

FORMS OF INTRODUCTIONS TO AVOID

Do *not* say: "Mr. Jones, shake hands with Mr. Smith," or "Mrs. Jones, I want to make you

acquainted with Mrs. Smith." *Never* say: "make you acquainted with" and do not, in introducing one person to another, call one of them "my friend." You can say "my aunt," or "my sister," or "my cousin"—but to pick out a particular person as "my friend" is not only bad style but, unless you have only one friend, bad manners—as it implies Mrs. Smith is "my friend" and you are a stranger.

You may very properly say to Mr. Smith "I want you to meet Mrs. Jones," but this is not a form of introduction, nor is it to be said in Mrs. Jones' hearing. Upon leading Mr. Smith up to Mrs. Jones, you say "Mrs. Jones, may I present Mr. Smith" or "Mrs. Jones; Mr. Smith." Under no circumstances whatsoever say "Mr. Smith meet Mrs. Jones," or "Mrs. Jones meet Mr. Smith." Either wording is equally preposterous.

Do not repeat "Mrs. Jones? Mrs. Smith! Mrs. Smith? Mrs. Jones!" To say each name once is quite enough.

Most people of good taste very much dislike being asked their names. To say "What is your name?" is always abrupt and unflattering. If you want to know with whom you have been talking, you can generally find a third person later and ask "Who was the lady with the grey feather in her hat?" The next time you see her you can say "How do you do, Mrs. ——————" (calling her by name).

WHEN TO SHAKE HANDS

When gentlemen are introduced to each other they always shake hands.

When a gentleman is introduced to a lady, she sometimes puts out her hand—especially if he is some one she has long heard about from friends in common, but to an entire stranger she generally merely bows her head slightly and says: "How do you do!" Strictly speaking, it is always her place to offer her hand or not as she chooses, but if he puts out his hand, it is rude on her part to ignore it. Nothing could be more ill-bred than to treat curtly any overture made in spontaneous friendliness. No thoroughbred lady would ever refuse to shake any hand that is honorable, not even the hand of a coal heaver at the risk of her fresh white glove.

Those who have been drawn into a conversation do not usually shake hands on parting. But there is no fixed rule.

A lady sometimes shakes hands after talking with a casual stranger; at other times she does not offer her hand on parting from one who has been punctiliously presented to her. She may find the former sympathetic and the latter very much the contrary.

Very few rules of etiquette are inelastic and none more so than the acceptance or rejection of the strangers you meet.

There is a wide distance between rudeness and reserve. You can be courteously polite and at the same time extremely aloof to a stranger who does not appeal to you, or you can be welcomingly friendly to another whom you like on sight. Individual temperament has also to be taken into consideration: one person is naturally austere, another genial. The latter shakes hands far more often than the former. As already said, it is unforgivably rude to refuse a proffered hand, but it is rarely necessary to offer your hand if you prefer not to.

WHAT TO SAY WHEN INTRODUCED

Best Society has only one phrase in acknowledgment of an introduction: "How do you do?" It literally accepts no other. When Mr. Bachelor says, "Mrs. Worldly, may I present Mr. Struthers?" Mrs. Worldly says, "How do you do?" Struthers bows, and says nothing. To sweetly echo "Mr. Struthers?" with a rising inflection on "—thers?" is *not* good form. Saccharine chirpings should be classed with crooked little fingers, high hand-shaking and other affectations. All affectations are bad form.

Persons of position do not say: "Charmed," or "Pleased to meet you," etc., but often the first remark is the beginning of a conversation. For instance,

Young Struthers is presented to Mrs. Worldly. She smiles and perhaps says, "I hear that you are going to be in New York all winter?" Struthers answers, "Yes, I am at the Columbia Law School," etc., or since he is much younger than she, he might answer, "Yes, Mrs. Worldly," especially if his answer would otherwise be a curt yes or no. Otherwise he does not continue repeating her name.

TAKING LEAVE OF ONE YOU HAVE JUST MET

After an introduction, when you have talked for some time to a stranger whom you have found agreeable, and you then take leave, you say, "Good-by, I am very glad to have met you," or "Good-by, I hope I shall see you again soon"—or "some time." The other person answers, "Thank you," or perhaps adds, "I hope so, too." Usually "Thank you" is all that is necessary.

In taking leave of a group of strangers—it makes no difference whether you have been introduced to them or merely included in their conversation—you bow "good-by" to any who happen to be looking at you, but you do not attempt to attract the attention of those who are unaware that you are turning away.

INTRODUCING ONE PERSON TO A GROUP

This is never done on formal occasions when a great many persons are present. At a small luncheon, for instance, a hostess always introduces her guests to one another.

Let us suppose you are the hostess: your position is not necessarily near, but it is toward the door. Mrs. King is sitting quite close to you, Mrs. Lawrence also near. Miss Robinson and Miss Brown are much farther away.

Mrs. Jones enters. You go a few steps forward and shake hands with her, then stand aside as it were, for a second only, to see if Mrs. Jones goes to speak to any one. If she apparently knows no one, you say, "Mrs. King, do you know Mrs. Jones?" Mrs. King being close at hand (usually but not necessarily) rises, shakes hands with Mrs. Jones and sits down again. If Mrs. King is an elderly lady, and Mrs. Jones a young one, Mrs. King merely extends her hand and does not rise. Having said "Mrs. Jones" once, you do not repeat it immediately, but turning to the other lady sitting near you, you say, "Mrs. Lawrence," then you look across the room and continue, "Miss Robinson, Miss Brown—Mrs. Jones!" Mrs. Lawrence,

if she is young, rises and shakes hands with Mrs. Jones, and the other two bow but do not rise.

At a very big luncheon you would introduce Mrs. Jones to Mrs. King and possibly to Mrs. Lawrence, so that Mrs. Jones might have some one to talk to. But if other guests come in at this moment, Mrs. Jones finds a place for herself and after a pause, falls naturally into conversation with those she is next to, without giving her name or asking theirs.

A friend's roof is supposed to be an introduction to those it shelters. In Best Society this is always recognized if the gathering is intimate, such as at a luncheon, dinner or house party; but it is not accepted at a ball or reception, or any "general" entertainment. People always talk to their neighbors at table whether introduced or not. It would be a breach of etiquette not to! But if Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Norman merely spoke to each other for a few moments, in the drawing-room, it is not necessary that they recognize each other afterwards.

NEW YORK'S BAD MANNERS

New York's bad manners are often condemned and often very deservedly. Even though the cause is carelessness rather than intentional indifference, the indifference is no less actual and the rudeness inexcusable.

It is by no means unheard of that after sitting at table next to the guest of honor, a New Yorker will meet her the next day with utter unrecognition. Not because the New Yorker means to "cut" the stranger or feels the slightest unwillingness to continue the acquaintance, but because few New Yorkers possess enthusiasm enough to make an effort to remember all the new faces they come in contact with, but allow all those who are not especially "fixed" in their attention, to drift easily out of mind and recognition. It is mortifyingly true; no one is so ignorantly indifferent to everything outside his or her own personal concern as the socially fashionable New Yorker, unless it is the Londoner! The late Theodore Roosevelt was a brilliantly shining exception. And, of course, and happily, there are other men and women like him in this. But there are also enough of the snail-in-shell variety to give color to the very just resentment that those from other and more gracious cities hold against New Yorkers.

Everywhere else in the world (except London), the impulse of self-cultivation, if not the more generous ones of consideration and hospitality, induces people of good breeding to try and make the effort to find out what manner of mind, or experience, or talent, a stranger has; and to remember, at least out of courtesy, anyone for whose benefit a friend of theirs gave a dinner or luncheon. To fashionable New York, however, luncheon was at one-thirty; at three there is something else occupying the moment—that is all.

Nearly all people of the Atlantic Coast dislike general introductions, and present people to each other as little as possible. In the West, however, people do not feel comfortable in a room full of strangers. Whether or not to introduce people therefore becomes not merely a question of propriety, but of consideration for local custom.

NEVER INTRODUCE UNNECESSARILY

The question as to when introductions should be made, or not made, is one of the most elusive points in the entire range of social knowledge. “Whenever necessary to bridge an awkward situation,” is a definition that is exact enough, but not very helpful or clear. The hostess who allows a guest to stand, awkward and unknown, in the middle of her drawing-room is no worse than she who pounces on every chance acquaintance and drags unwilling victims into forced recognition of each other, everywhere and on all occasions.

The fundamental rule never to introduce unnecessarily brings up the question:

WHICH ARE THE NECESSARY OCCASIONS?

First, in order of importance, is the presentation of everyone to guests of honor, whether the “guests” are distinguished strangers for whom a dinner is given, or a bride and groom, or a débutante being introduced to society. It is the height of rudeness for anyone to go to an entertainment given in honor of some one and fail to “meet” him. (Even though one’s memory is too feeble to remember him afterward!)

INTRODUCTIONS AT A DINNER

The host must always see that every gentleman either knows or is presented to the lady he is to “take in” to dinner, and also, if possible, to the one who is to sit at the other side of him. If the latter introduction is overlooked, people sitting next each other at table nearly always introduce themselves. A gentleman says, “How do you do, Mrs. Jones. I am Arthur Robinson.” Or showing her his place card, “I have to introduce myself, this is my name.” Or the lady says first, “I am Mrs. Hunter Jones.” And the man answers, “How do you do, Mrs. Jones, my name is Titherington Smith.”

It is not unusual, in New York, for those placed next each other to talk without introducing themselves—particularly if each can read the name of the other on the place cards.

OTHER NECESSARY INTRODUCTIONS

Even in New York’s most introductionless circles, people always introduce:

A small group of people who are to sit together anywhere.

Partners at dinner.

The guests at a house party.

Everyone at a small dinner or luncheon.

The four who are at the same bridge table.

Partners or fellow-players in any game.

At a dance, when an invitation has been asked for a stranger, the friend who vouched for him should personally present him to the hostess. “Mrs. Worldly, this is Mr. Robinson, whom you said I might bring.” The hostess shakes hands and smiles and says: “I am very glad to see you, Mr. Robinson.”

A guest in a box at the opera always introduces any gentleman who comes to speak to her,

to her hostess, unless the latter is engrossed in conversation with a visitor of her own, or unless other people block the distance between so that an introduction would be forced and awkward.

A newly arriving visitor in a lady's drawing-room is not introduced to another who is taking leave. Nor is an animated conversation between two persons interrupted to introduce a third. Nor is any one ever led around a room and introduced right and left.

If two ladies or young girls are walking together and they meet a third who stops to speak to one of them, the other walks slowly on and does not stand awkwardly by and wait for an introduction. If the third is asked by the one she knows, to join them, the sauntering friend is overtaken and an introduction always made. The third, however, must not join them unless invited to do so.

At a very large dinner, people (excepting the gentlemen and ladies who are to sit next to each other at table) are not collectively introduced. After dinner, men in the smoking room or left at table always talk to their neighbors whether they have been introduced or not, and ladies in the drawing-room do the same. But unless they meet soon again, or have found each other so agreeable that they make an effort to continue the acquaintance, they become strangers again, equally whether they were introduced or not.

Some writers on etiquette speak of "correct introductions" that carry "obligations of future acquaintance," and "incorrect introductions," that seemingly obligate one to nothing.

Degrees of introduction are utterly unknown to best society. It makes not the slightest difference so far as any one's acceptance or rejection of another is concerned how an introduction is worded or, on occasions, whether an introduction takes place at all.

Fashionable people in very large cities take introductions lightly; they are veritable ships that pass in the night. They show their red or green signals—which are merely polite sentences and pleasant manners—and they pass on again.

When you are introduced to some one for the second time and the first occasion was without interest and long ago, there is no reason why you should speak of the former meeting.

If some one presents you to Mrs. Smith for the second time on the same occasion, you smile and say "I have already met Mrs. Smith," but you say nothing if you met Mrs. Smith long ago and she showed no interest in you at that time.

Most rules are elastic and contract and expand according to circumstances. You do not remind Mrs. Smith of having met her before, but on meeting again any one who was brought to your own house, or one who showed you an especial courtesy you instinctively say, "I am so glad to see you again."

INCLUDING SOMEONE IN CONVERSATION WITHOUT AN INTRODUCTION

On occasions it happens that in talking to one person you want to include another in your conversation without making an introduction. For instance: suppose you are talking to a seedsman and a friend joins you in your garden. You greet your friend, and then include her by saying, "Mr. Smith is suggesting that I dig up these cannas and put in delphiniums." Whether your friend gives an opinion as to the change in color of your flower bed or not, she has been made part of your conversation.

This same maneuver of evading an introduction is also resorted to when you are not sure that an acquaintance will be agreeable to one or both of those whom an accidental circumstance has brought together.

INTRODUCTIONS UNNECESSARY

You must never introduce people to each other in public places unless you are certain beyond a doubt that the introduction will be agreeable to both. You cannot commit a greater social blunder than to introduce, to a person of position, some one she does not care to know, especially on shipboard, in hotels, or in other very small, rather public, communities where people are so closely thrown together that it is correspondingly difficult to avoid undesirable acquaintances who have been given the wedge of an introduction.

As said above, introductions in very large cities are unimportant. In New York, where people are meeting new faces daily, seldom seeing the same one twice in a year, it requires a tenacious memory to recognize those one hoped most to see again, and others are blotted out at once.

People in good society rarely ask to be introduced to each other, but if there is a good reason for knowing some one, they often introduce themselves; for instance, Mary Smith says:

"Mrs. Jones, aren't you a friend of my mother's? I am Mrs. Titherington Smith's daughter." Mrs. Jones says:

"Why, my dear child, I am so glad you spoke to me. Your mother and I have known each other since we were children!"

Or, an elder lady asks: "Aren't you Mary Smith? I have known your mother since she was your age." Or a young woman says: "Aren't you Mrs. Worldly?" Mrs. Worldly, looking rather freezingly, politely says "Yes" and waits. And the stranger continues, "I think my sister Millicent Manners is a friend of yours." Mrs. Worldly at once unbends. "Oh, yes, indeed, I am devoted to Millicent! And you must be ———?"

"I'm Alice."

"Oh, of course, Millicent has often talked of you, and of your lovely voice. I want very much to hear you sing some time."

These self-introductions, however, must never presumingly be made. It would be in very bad taste for Alice to introduce herself to Mrs. Worldly if her sister knew her only slightly.

A BUSINESS VISIT NOT AN INTRODUCTION

A lady who goes to see another to get a reference for a servant, or to ask her aid in an organization for charity, would never consider such a meeting as an introduction, even though they talked for an hour. Nor would she offer to shake hands in leaving. On the other hand, neighbors who are continually meeting, gradually become accustomed to say "How do you do?" when they meet, even though they never become acquaintances.

THE RETORT COURTEOUS TO ONE YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN

Let us suppose some one addresses you, and then slightly disconcerted says: “You don’t remember me, do you?” The polite thing—unless his manner does not ring true, is to say “Why, of course, I do.” And then if a few neutral remarks lead to no enlightening topic, and bring no further memory, you ask at the first opportunity who it was that addressed you. If the person should prove actually to be unknown, it is very easy to repel any further advances. But nearly always you find it is some one you ought to have known, and your hiding the fact of your forgetfulness saves you from the rather rude and stupid situation of blankly declaring: “I don’t remember you.”

If, after being introduced to you, Mr. Jones calls you by a wrong name, you let it pass, at first, but if he persists you may say: “My name is Simpson, not Simpkin.”

At a private dance, young men nowadays introduce their men friends to young women without first asking the latter’s permission, because all those invited to a lady’s house are supposed to be eligible for presentation to everyone, or they would not be there.

At a public ball young men and women keep very much to their own particular small circle and are not apt to meet outsiders at all. Under these circumstances a gentleman should be very careful not to introduce a youth whom he knows nothing about to a lady of his acquaintance—or at least he should ask her first. He can say frankly: “There is a man called Sliders who has asked to meet you. I don’t know who he is, but he seems decent. Shall I introduce him?” The lady can say “Yes”; or, “I’d rather not.”

INTRODUCTION BY LETTER

An introduction by letter is far more binding than a casual spoken introduction which commits you to nothing. This is explained fully and example letters are given in the chapter on Letters.

A letter of introduction is handed you unsealed, always. It is correct for you to seal it at once in the presence of its author. You thank your friend for having written it and go on your journey.

If you are a man and your introduction is to a lady, you go to her house as soon as you arrive in her city, and leave the letter with your card at her door. Usually you do not ask to see her; but if it is between four and six o’clock it is quite correct to do so if you choose. Presenting yourself with a letter is always a little awkward. Most people prefer to leave their cards without asking to be received.

If your letter is to a man, you mail it to his house, unless the letter is a business one. In the latter case you go to his office, and send in your card and the letter. Meanwhile you wait in the reception room until he has read the letter and sends for you to come into his private office.

If you are a woman, you mail your letter of social introduction and do nothing further until you receive an acknowledgment. If the recipient of your letter leaves her card on you, you in return leave yours on her. But the obligation of a written introduction is such that only illness can excuse her not asking you to her house—either formally or informally.

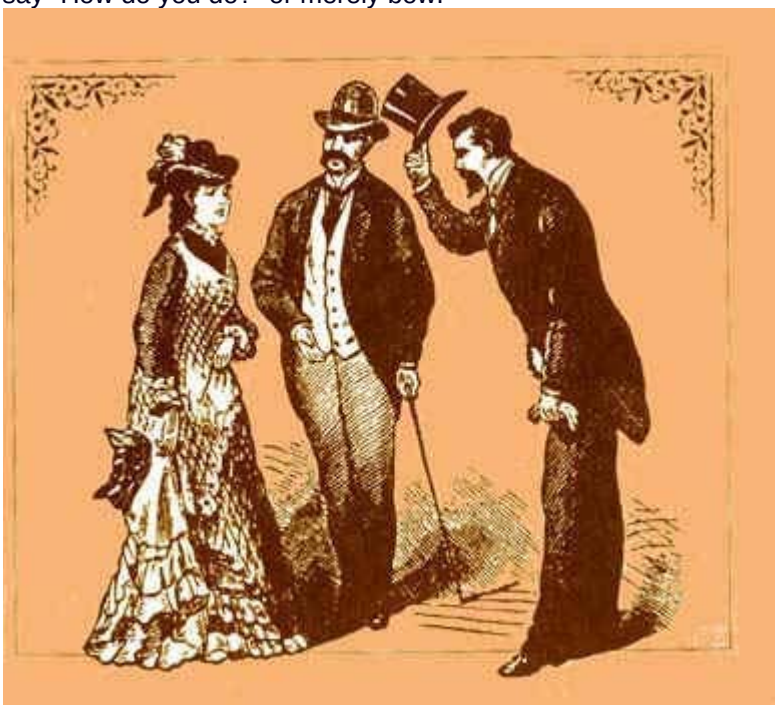
When a man receives a letter introducing another man, he calls the person introduced on

the telephone and asks how he may be of service to him. If he does not invite the newcomer to his house, he may put him up at his club, or have him take luncheon or dinner at a restaurant, as the circumstances seem to warrant.

Chapter III.
Greetings

WHAT TO SAY WHEN INTRODUCED

As explained in the foregoing chapter, the correct formal greeting is: “How do you do?” If Mrs. Younger is presented to Mrs. Worldly, Mrs. Worldly says “How do you do?” If the Ambassador of France is presented to her, she says “How do you do?” Mrs. Younger and the Ambassador likewise say “How do you do?” or merely bow.



There are a few expressions possible under other circumstances and upon other occasions. If you have, through friends in common, long heard of a certain lady, or gentleman, and you know that she, or he, also has heard much of you, you may say when you are introduced to her: “I am very glad to meet you,” or “I am delighted to meet you at last!” Do not use the expression “pleased to meet you”

then or on any occasion. And you must not say you are delighted unless you have reason to be sure that she also is delighted to meet you.

To one who has volunteered to help you in charitable work for instance, you would say: “It is very good of you to help us,” or, “to join us.”

In business a gentleman says: “Very glad to meet you,” or “Delighted to meet you.” Or, if in his own office: “Very glad to see you!”

INFORMAL GREETINGS

Informal greetings are almost as limited as formal, but not quite; for besides saying “How do you do?” you can say “Good morning” and on occasions “How are you?” or “Good evening.”

On very informal occasions, it is the present fashion to greet an intimate friend with “Hello!” This seemingly vulgar salutation is made acceptable by the tone in which it is said. To shout “Hul*ow!”* is vulgar, but “Hello, Mary” or “How ’do John,” each spoken in an ordinary tone of voice, sound much the same. But remember that the “Hello” is spoken, not called out, and never used except between intimate friends who call each other by the first name.

There are only two forms of farewell: “Good-by” and “Good night.” Never say “Au revoir” unless you have been talking French, or are speaking to a French person. Never interlard your conversation with foreign words or phrases when you can possibly translate them into English; and the occasions when our mother tongue will not serve are extremely rare.

Very often in place of the over-worn “How do you do,” perhaps more often than not, people skip the words of actual greeting and plunge instead into conversation: “Why, Mary! When did you get back?” or “What is the news with you?” or “What have you been doing lately?” The weather, too, fills in with equal faithfulness. “Isn’t it a heavenly day!” or “Horrid weather, isn’t it?” It would seem that the

variability of the weather was purposely devised to furnish mankind with unfailing material for conversation.

In bidding good-by to a new acquaintance with whom you have been talking, you shake hands and say, “Good-by. I am very glad to have met you.” To one who has been especially interesting, or who is somewhat of a personage you say: “It has been a great pleasure to meet you.” The other answers: “Thank you.”

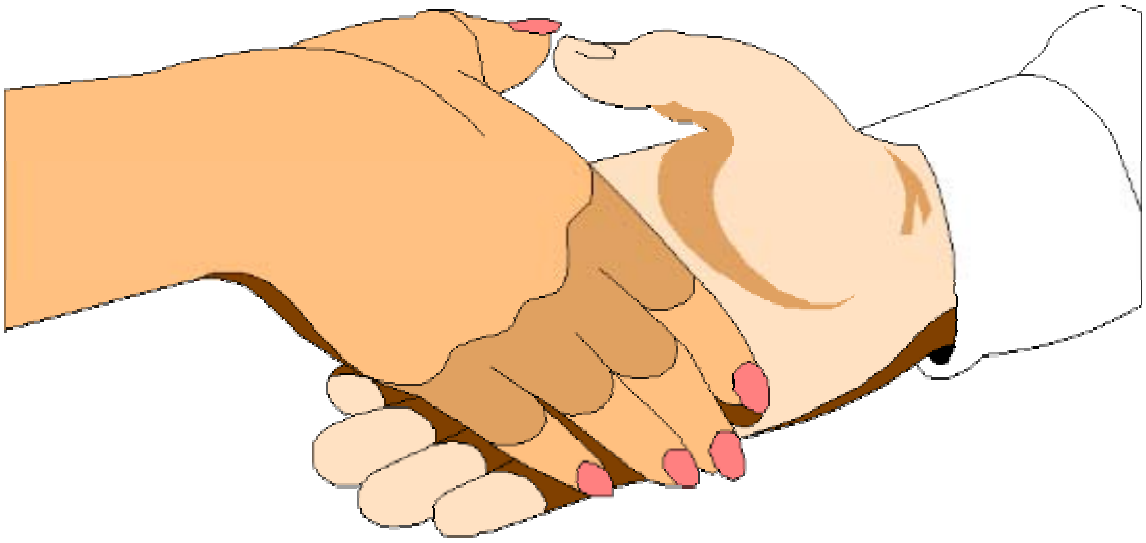
IN CHURCH

People do not greet each other in church, except at a wedding. At weddings people do speak to friends sitting near them, but in a low tone of voice. It would be shocking to enter a church and hear a babel of voices!

Ordinarily in church if a friend happens to catch your eye, you smile, but never actually bow. If you go to a church not your own and a stranger offers you a seat in her pew, you should, on leaving, turn to her and say: “Thank you.” But you do not greet anyone until you are out on the church steps, when you naturally speak to your friends. “Hello” should not be said on this occasion because it is too “familiar” for the solemnity of church surroundings.

SHAKING HANDS

Gentlemen always shake hands when they are introduced to each other. Ladies rarely do so with gentlemen who are introduced to them; but they usually shake hands with other ladies, if they are standing near together. All people who know each other, unless merely passing by, shake hands when they meet.



A gentleman on the street never shakes hands with a lady without first removing his right glove. But at the opera, or at a ball, or if he is usher at a wedding, he keeps his glove on.

PERSONALITY OF A HANDSHAKE

A handshake often creates a feeling of liking or of irritation between two strangers. Who does not dislike a “boneless” hand extended as though it were a spray of sea-weed, or a miniature boiled pudding? It is equally annoying to have one’s hand clutched aloft in grotesque affectation and shaken violently sideways, as though it were being used to clean a spot out of the atmosphere. What woman does not wince at the viselike grasp that cuts her rings into her flesh and temporarily paralyzes every finger?

The proper handshake is made briefly; but there should be a feeling of strength and warmth in the clasp, and, as in bowing, one should at the same time look into the countenance of the person whose hand one takes. In giving her hand to a foreigner, a married woman always relaxes her arm and fingers, as it is customary for him to lift her hand to his lips. But by a relaxed hand is not meant a wet rag; a hand should have life even though it be passive. A woman should always allow a man who is only an acquaintance to shake her hand; she should never shake his. To a very old friend she gives a much firmer clasp, but he shakes her hand more than she shakes his. Younger women usually shake the hand of the older; or they both merely clasp hands, give them a dropping movement rather than a shake, and let go.

POLITE GREETINGS FROM YOUNGER TO OLDER

It is the height of rudeness for young people not to go and shake hands with an older lady of their acquaintance when they meet her away from home, if she is a hostess to whose house they have often gone. It is not at all necessary for either young women or young men to linger and enter into a conversation, unless the older lady detains them, which she should not do beyond the briefest minute.

Older ladies who are always dragging young men up to unprepossessing partners, are studiously avoided and with reason; but otherwise it is inexcusable for any youth to fail in this small exaction of polite behavior. If a young man is talking with some one when an older lady enters the room, he bows formally from where he is, as it would be rude to leave a young girl standing alone while he went up to speak to Mrs. Worldly or Mrs. Toplofty. But a young girl passing near an older lady can easily stop for a moment, say “How do you do, Mrs. Jones!” and pass on.

People do not cross a room to speak to any one unless—to show politeness to an acquaintance who is a stranger there; to speak to an intimate friend; or to talk to some one about something in particular.

Chapter IV.
Salutations of Courtesy

WHEN A GENTLEMAN TAKES OFF HIS HAT

A GENTLEMAN takes off his hat and holds it in his hand when a lady enters the elevator in which he is a passenger, but he puts it on again in the corridor. A public corridor is like the street, but an elevator is suggestive of a room, and a gentleman does not keep his hat on in the presence of ladies in a house.

This is the rule in elevators in hotels, clubs and apartments. In office buildings and stores the elevator is considered as public a place as the corridor. What is more, the elevators in such business structures are usually so crowded that the only room for a man's hat is on his head. But even under these conditions a gentleman can reveal his innate respect for women by not permitting himself to be crowded too near to them.

When a gentleman stops to speak to a lady of his acquaintance in the street, he takes his hat off with his left hand, leaving his right free to shake hands, or he takes it off with his right and transfers it to his left. If he has a stick, he puts his stick in his left hand, takes off his hat with his right, transfers his hat also to his left hand, and gives her his right. If they walk ahead together, he at once puts his hat on; but while he is standing in the street talking to her, he should remain hatless. There is no rudeness greater than for him to stand talking to a lady with his hat on, and a cigar or cigarette in his mouth.

A gentleman always rises when a lady comes into a room. In public places men do not jump up for every strange woman who happens to approach. But if any woman addresses a remark to him, a gentleman at once rises to his feet as he answers her. In a restaurant, when a lady bows to him, a gentleman merely makes the gesture of rising by getting up half way from his chair and at the same time bowing. Then he sits down again.

When a lady goes to a gentleman's office on business he should stand up to receive her, offer her a chair, and not sit down until after she is seated. When she rises to leave, he must get up instantly and stand until she has left the office.

It is not necessary to add that every American citizen stands with his hat off at the passing of the "colors" and when the national anthem is played. If he didn't, some other more loyal citizen would take it off for him. Also every man should stand with his hat off in the presence of a funeral that passes close or blocks his way.

A GENTLEMAN LIFTS HIS HAT

Lifting the hat is a conventional gesture of politeness shown to strangers only, not to be confused with bowing, which is a gesture used to acquaintances and friends. In lifting his hat, a gentleman merely lifts it slightly off his forehead and replaces it; he does not smile nor bow, nor even look at the object of his courtesy. No gentleman ever subjects a lady to his scrutiny or his apparent observation.

If a lady drops her glove, a gentleman should pick it up, hurry ahead of her—on no account nudge her—offer the glove to her and say: "I think you dropped this!" The lady replies: "Thank you." The gentleman should then lift his hat and turn away.

If he passes a lady in a narrow space, so that he blocks her way or in any manner obtrudes upon her, he lifts his hat as he passes.

If he gets on a street car and the car gives a lurch just as he is about to be seated and throws him against another passenger, he lifts his hat and says “Excuse me!” or “I beg your pardon!” He must *not* say “Pardon *me!”* He must not take a seat if there are ladies standing. But if he is sitting and ladies enter, should they be young, he may with perfect propriety keep his seat. If a very old woman, or a young one carrying a baby, enters the car, a gentleman rises at once, lifts his hat slightly, and says: “Please take my seat.” He lifts his hat again when she thanks him.

If the car is very crowded when he wishes to leave it and a lady is directly in his way, he asks: “May I get through, please?” As she makes room for him to pass, he lifts his hat and says: “Thank you!”

If he is in the company of a lady in a street car, he lifts his hat to another gentleman who offers her a seat, picks up something she has dropped, or shows her any civility.

He lifts his hat if he asks anyone a question, and always, if, when walking on the street with either a lady or a gentleman, his companion bows to another person. In other words, a gentleman lifts his hat whenever he says “Excuse me,” “Thank you,” or speaks to a stranger, or is spoken to by a lady, or by an older gentleman. And no gentleman ever keeps a pipe, cigar or cigarette in his mouth when he lifts his hat, takes it off, or bows.

THE BOW OF CEREMONY

The standing bow, made by a gentleman when he rises at a dinner to say a few words, in response to applause, or across a drawing-room at a formal dinner when he bows to a lady or an elderly gentleman, is usually the outcome of the bow taught little boys at dancing school. The instinct of clicking heels together and making a quick bend over from the hips and neck, as though the human body had two hinges, a big one at the hip and a slight one at the neck, and was quite rigid in between, remains in a modified form through life. The man who as a child came habitually into his mother’s drawing-room when there was “company,” generally makes a charming bow when grown, which is wholly lacking in self-consciousness. There is no apparent “heel-clicking” but a camera

would show that the motion is there.

In every form of bow, as distinct from merely lifting his hat, a gentleman looks at the person he is bowing to. In a very formal standing bow, his heels come together, his knees are rigid and his expression is rather serious.

THE INFORMAL BOW

The informal bow is merely a modification of the above; it is easy and unstudied, but it should suggest the ease of controlled muscles, not the floppiness of a rag doll.

In bowing on the street, a gentleman should never take his hat off with a flourish, nor should he sweep it down to his knee; nor is it graceful to bow by pulling the hat over the face as though examining the lining. The correct bow, when wearing a high hat or derby, is to lift it by holding the brim directly in front, take it off merely high enough to escape the head easily, bring it a few inches forward, the back somewhat up, the front down, and put it on again. To a very old lady or gentleman, to show adequate respect, a sweeping bow is sometimes made by a somewhat exaggerated circular motion downward to perhaps the level of the waist, so that the hat's position is upside down.

If a man is wearing a soft hat he takes it by the crown instead of the brim, lifts it slightly off his head and puts it on again.

The bow to a friend is made with a smile, to a very intimate friend often with a broad grin that fits exactly with the word "Hello"; whereas the formal bow is mentally accompanied by the formal salutation: "How do you do!"

THE BOW OF A WOMAN OF CHARM

The reputation of Southern women for having the gift of fascination is perhaps due not to prettiness of feature more than to the brilliancy or sweetness of their ready smile. That Southern women are charming and "feminine" and lovable is proverbial. How many have noticed that Southern women always bow with the grace of a flower bending in the breeze and a smile like sudden sunshine? The unlovely woman bows as though her head were on a hinge and her smile sucked through a lemon.

Nothing is so easy for any woman to acquire as a charming bow. It is such a short and fleeting duty. Not a bit of trouble really; just to incline your head and spontaneously smile as though you thought "Why, *there* is Mrs. Smith! How glad I am to see her!"

Even to a stranger who does her a favor, a woman of charm always smiles as she says "Thank you!" As a possession for either woman or man, a ready smile is more valuable in life than a ready wit; the latter may sometimes bring enemies, but the former always brings friends.

WHEN TO BOW

Under formal circumstances a lady is supposed to bow to a gentleman first; but people who know each other well bow spontaneously without observing this etiquette.

In meeting the same person many times within an hour or so, one does not continue to bow after the second, or at most third meeting. After that one either looks away or merely smiles. Unless one has a good memory for people, it is always better to bow to some one whose face is familiar than to run the greater risk of ignoring an acquaintance.

THE "CUT DIRECT"

For one person to look directly at another and not acknowledge the other's bow is such a breach of civility that only an unforgivable misdemeanor can warrant the rebuke. Nor without the gravest cause may a lady "cut" a gentleman. But there are no circumstances under which a gentleman may "cut" any woman who, even by courtesy, can be called a lady.

On the other hand, one must not confuse absent-mindedness, or a forgetful memory with an intentional "cut." Anyone who is preoccupied is apt to pass others without being aware of them, and without the least want of friendly regard. Others who have bad memories forget even those by whom

they were much attracted. This does not excuse the bad memory, but it explains the seeming rudeness.

A “cut” is very different. It is a direct stare of blank refusal, and is not only insulting to its victim but embarrassing to every witness. Happily it is practically unknown in polite society.

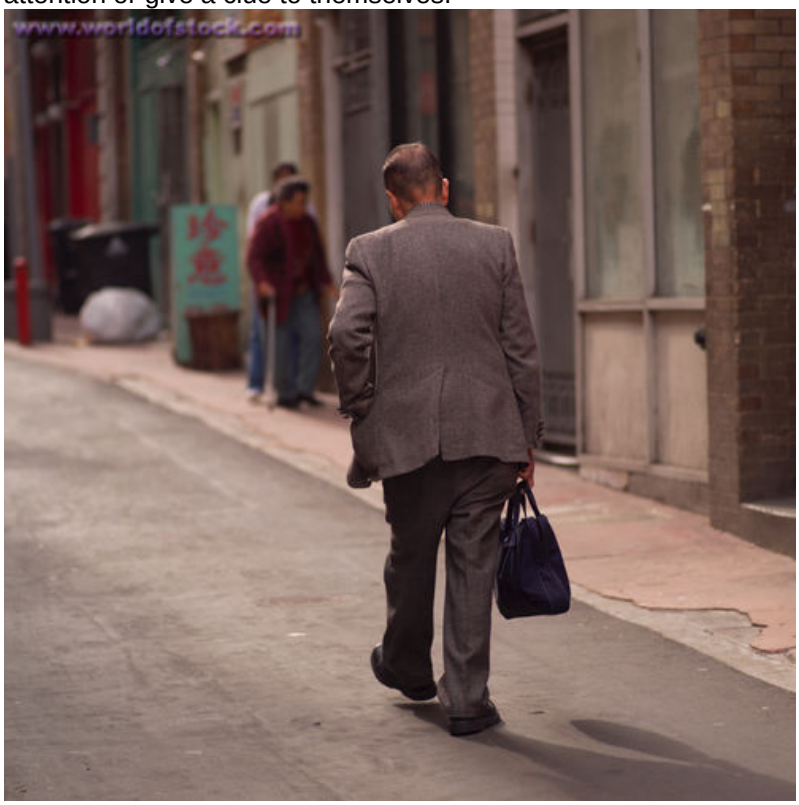
Chapter V.
On the Street and in Public

WALKING ON THE STREET

A GENTLEMAN, whether walking with two ladies or one, takes the curb side of the pavement. He should never sandwich himself between them.

A young man walking with a young woman should be careful that his manner in no way draws attention to her or to himself. Too devoted a manner is always conspicuous, and so is loud talking. Under no circumstances should he take her arm, or grasp her by or above the elbow, and shove her here and there, unless, of course, to save her from being run over! He should not walk along hitting things with his stick. The small boy's delight in drawing a stick along a picket fence should be curbed in the nursery! And it is scarcely necessary to add that no gentleman walks along the street chewing gum or, if he is walking with a lady, puffing a cigar or cigarette.

All people in the streets, or anywhere in public, should be careful not to talk too loud. They should especially avoid pronouncing people's names, or making personal remarks that may attract passing attention or give a clue to themselves.



One should never call out a name in public, unless it is absolutely unavoidable. A young girl who was separated from her friends in a baseball crowd had the presence of mind to put her hat on her parasol and lift it above the people surrounding her so that her friends might find her.

Do not attract attention to yourself in public. This is one of the fundamental rules of good breeding. Shun conspicuous manners, conspicuous clothes, a loud voice, staring at people, knocking into them, talking across anyone—in a word do not attract attention to yourself. Do not expose your private affairs, feelings or innermost thoughts in public. You are knocking down the walls of your house when you do.

GENTLEMEN AND BUNDLES

Nearly all books on etiquette insist that a “gentleman must offer to carry a lady’s bundles.” Bundles do not suggest a lady in the first place, and as for gentlemen and bundles!—they don’t go together at all. Very neat packages that could never without injury to their pride be designated as “bundles” are different. Such, for instance, might be a square, smoothly wrapped box of cigars, candy, or books. Also, a gentleman might carry flowers, or a basket of fruit, or, in fact, any package that looks tempting. He might even stagger under bags and suitcases, or a small trunk—but carry a “bundle”? Not twice! And yet, many an unknowing woman, sometimes a very young and pretty one, too, has asked a relative, a neighbor, or an admirer, to carry something suggestive of a pillow, done up in crinkled paper and odd lengths of joined string. Then she wonders afterwards in unenlightened surprise why her cousin, or her neighbor, or her admirer, who is one of the smartest men in town, never comes to see her any more!

A GENTLEMAN OFFERS HIS ARM

To an old lady or to an invalid a gentleman offers his arm if either of them wants his support. Otherwise a lady no longer leans upon a gentleman in the daytime, unless to cross a very crowded thoroughfare, or to be helped over a rough piece of road, or under other impeding circumstances. In accompanying a lady anywhere at night, whether down the steps of a house, or from one building to another, or when walking a distance, a gentleman always offers his arm. The reason is that in her thin high-heeled slippers, and when it is too dark to see her foothold clearly, she is likely to trip.

Under any of these circumstances when he proffers his assistance, he might say: “Don’t you think you had better take my arm? You might trip.” Or—“Wouldn’t it be easier if you took my arm along here? The going is pretty bad.” Otherwise the only occasions on which a gentleman offers his arm to a lady are in taking her in at a formal dinner, or taking her in to supper at a ball, or when he is an usher at a wedding. Even in walking across a ballroom, except at a public ball in the grand march, it is the present fashion for the younger generation to walk side by side, never arm in arm. This, however, is merely an instance where etiquette and the custom of the moment differ. Old-fashioned gentlemen still offer their arm, and it is, and long will be, in accordance with etiquette to do so. But etiquette does *not* permit a gentleman to take a lady’s arm!

In seeing a lady to her carriage or motor, it is quite correct for a gentleman to put his hand under her elbow to assist her; and in helping her out he should alight first and offer her his hand. He should not hold a parasol over her head unless momentarily while she searches in her wrist-bag for something, or stops perhaps to put on or take off her glove, or do anything that occupies both hands. With an umbrella the case is different, especially in a sudden and driving rain, when she is often very busily occupied in trying to hold “good” clothes out of the wet and a hat on, as well. She may also, under these circumstances, take the gentleman’s arm, if the “going” is thereby made any easier.

A LADY NEVER “ON THE LEFT”

The owner always sits on the right hand side of the rear seat of a carriage or a motor, that is driven by a coachman or a chauffeur. If the vehicle belongs to a lady, she should take her own place always, unless she relinquishes it to a guest whose rank is above her own, such as that of the wife of the President or the Governor. If a man is the owner, he must, on the contrary, give a lady the right hand seat. Whether in a private carriage, a car or a taxi, a lady must *never* sit on a gentleman’s left; because according to European etiquette, a lady “on the left” is *not* a “lady.” Although this etiquette is not strictly observed in America, no gentleman should risk allowing even a single foreigner to misinterpret a lady’s position.

AWKWARD QUESTIONS OF PAYMENT

It is becoming much less customary than it used to be for a gentleman to offer to pay a lady’s way. If in taking a ferry or a subway, a young woman stops to buy magazines, chocolates, or other trifles,

a young man accompanying her usually offers to pay for them. She quite as usually answers: “Don’t bother, I have it!” and puts the change on the counter. It would be awkward for him to protest, and bad taste to press the point. But usually in small matters such as a subway fare, he pays for two. If he invites her to go to a ball game, or to a matinée or to tea, he naturally buys the tickets and any refreshment which they may have.

Very often it happens that a young woman and a young man who are bound for the same house party, at a few hours’ distance from the place where they both live, take the same train—either by accident or by pre-arrangement. In this case the young woman should pay for every item of her journey. She should not let her companion pay for her parlor car seat or for her luncheon; nor should he, when they arrive at their destination, tip the porter for carrying her bag.

A gentleman who is by chance sitting next to a lady of his acquaintance on a train or boat, should never think of offering to pay for her seat or for anything she may buy from the vendor.

THE “ESCORT”

Notwithstanding the fact that he is met, all dressed in his best store clothes, with his “lady friend” leaning on his arm, in the pages of counterfeit society novels and unauthoritative books on etiquette, there is no such actual person known to good society—at least not in New York or any great city—as an escort. He is not only unknown, but he is impossible.

In good society ladies do not go about under the “care of” gentlemen! It is unheard of for a gentleman to “take” a young girl alone to a dance or to dine or to parties of any description; nor can she accept his sponsorship anywhere whatsoever. A well behaved young girl goes to public dances only when properly chaperoned and to a private dance with her mother or else accompanied by her maid, who waits for her the entire evening in the dressing room. It is not only improper, it is *impossible* for any man to take a lady to a party of any sort, to which she has not been personally invited by the hostess.

A lady may never be under the “protection” of a man *anywhere!* A young girl is not even taken about by her betrothed. His friends send invitations to her on his account, it is true, and, if possible, he accompanies her, but correct invitations must be sent by them to her, or she should not go.

Older ladies are often thoughtless and say to a young man: “Bring your fiancée to see me!” His answer should be: “Indeed, I’d love to any time you telephone her”; or, “I know she’d love to come if you’d ask her.” If the lady stupidly persists in casually saying, “Do bring her,” he must smile and say lightly: “But I can’t bring her without an invitation from you.” Or, he merely evades the issue, and does *not* bring her.

THE RESTAURANT CHECK

Everyone has at some time or other been subjected to the awkward moment when the waiter presents the check to the host. For a host to count up the items is suggestive of parsimony, while not to look at them is disconcertingly reckless, and to pay before their faces for what his guests have eaten is embarrassing. Having the check presented to a hostess when gentlemen are among her guests, is more unpleasant. Therefore, to avoid this whole transaction, people who have not charge accounts, should order the meal ahead, and at the same time pay for it in advance, including the waiter’s tip. Charge customers should make arrangements to have the check presented to them elsewhere than at table.

IN STORES OR SHOPS

Lack of consideration for those who in any capacity serve you, is always an evidence of ill-breeding, as well as of inexcusable selfishness. Occasionally a so-called “lady” who has nothing whatever to do but drive uptown or down in her comfortable limousine, vents her irritability upon a saleswoman at a crowded counter in a store, because she does not leave other customers and wait immediately upon her. Then, perhaps, when the article she asked for is not to be had, she complains to the floor-walker about the saleswoman’s stupidity! Or having nothing that she can think of to

occupy an empty hour on her hands, she demands that every sort of material be dragged down from the shelves until, discovering that it is at last time for her appointment, she yawns and leaves.

Of course, on the other hand, there is the genuinely lethargic saleswoman whose mind doesn't seem to register a single syllable that you have said to her; who, with complete indifference to you and your preferences, insists on showing what you distinctly say you do not want, and who caps the climax by drawling "They" are wearing it this season! Does that sort of saleswoman ever succeed in selling anything? Does anyone living buy anything because someone, who knows nothing, tells another, who is often an expert, what an indiscriminating "They" may be doing? That kind of a saleswoman would try to tell Kreisler that "They" are not using violins this season!

There are always two sides to the case, of course, and it is a credit to good manners that there is scarcely ever any friction in stores and shops of the first class. Salesmen and women are usually persons who are both patient and polite, and their customers are most often ladies in fact as well as "by courtesy." Between those before and those behind the counters, there has sprung up in many instances a relationship of mutual goodwill and friendliness. It is, in fact, only the woman who is afraid that someone may encroach upon her exceedingly insecure dignity, who shows neither courtesy nor consideration to any except those whom she considers it to her advantage to please.

REGARD FOR OTHERS

Consideration for the rights and feelings of others is not merely a rule for behavior in public but the very foundation upon which social life is built.

Rule of etiquette the first—which hundreds of others merely paraphrase or explain or elaborate—is:

Never do anything that is unpleasant to others.

Never take more than your share—whether of the road in driving a car, of chairs on a boat or seats on a train, or food at the table.

People who picnic along the public highway leaving a clutter of greasy paper and swill (not a pretty name, but neither is it a pretty object!) for other people to walk or drive past, and to make a breeding place for flies, and furnish nourishment for rats, choose a disgusting way to repay the land-owner for the liberty they took in temporarily occupying his property.

Chapter VI.

At the Opera, the Theatre, and Other Public Gatherings

EXCEPTING a religious ceremonial, there is no occasion where greater dignity of manner is required of ladies and gentlemen both, than in occupying a box at the opera. For a gentleman especially no other etiquette is so exacting.

In walking about in the foyer of the opera house, a gentleman leaves his coat in the box—or in his orchestra chair—but he always wears his high hat. The “collapsible” hat is for use in the seats rather than in the boxes, but it can be worn perfectly well by a guest in the latter if he hasn’t a “silk” one. A gentleman must always be in full dress, tail coat, white waistcoat, white tie and white gloves whether he is seated in the orchestra or a box. He wears white gloves nowhere else except at a ball, or when usher at a wedding.

As people usually dine with their hostess before the opera, they arrive together; the gentlemen assist the ladies to lay off their wraps, one of the gentlemen (whichever is nearest) draws back the curtain dividing the ante-room from the box, and the ladies enter, followed by the gentlemen, the last of whom closes the curtain again. If there are two ladies besides the hostess, the latter places her most distinguished or older guest in the corner nearest the stage. The seat furthest from the stage is always her own. The older guest takes her seat first, then the hostess takes her place, whereupon the third lady goes forward in the center to the front of the box, and stands until one of the gentlemen places a chair for her between the other two. (The chairs are arranged in three rows, of one on either side with an aisle left between.)

One of the duties of the gentlemen is to see that the curtains at the back of the box remain tightly closed, as the light from the ante-room shining in the faces of others in the audience across the house is very disagreeable to them.

A gentleman never sits in the front row of a box, even though he is for a time alone in it.

AS TO VISITING

It is the custom for a gentleman who is a guest in one box to pay visits to friends in other boxes during the entr’actes. He must visit none but ladies of his acquaintance and must never enter a box in which he knows only the gentlemen, and expect to be introduced to the ladies. If Arthur Norman, for instance, wishes to present a gentleman to Mrs. Gilding in her box at the opera, he must first ask her if he may bring his friend James Dawson. (He would on no account speak of him as Mr. Dawson unless he is an elderly person.) A lady’s box at the opera is actually her house, and only those who are acceptable as visitors in her house should ask to be admitted.

But it is quite correct for a gentleman to go into a stranger’s box to speak to a lady who is a friend of his, just as he would go to see her if she were staying in a stranger’s house. But he should not go into the box of one he does not know, to speak to a lady with whom he has only a slight acquaintance, since visits are not paid quite so casually to ladies who are themselves visitors. Upon a gentleman’s entering a box it is obligatory for whoever is sitting behind the lady to whom the arriving gentleman’s visit is addressed, to relinquish his chair. Another point of etiquette is that a gentleman must never leave the ladies of his own box alone. Occasionally it happens that the gentlemen in Mrs. Gilding’s box, for instance, have all relinquished their places to visitors and have themselves gone to Mrs. Worldly’s or Mrs. Jones’ or Mrs. Town’s boxes. Mrs. Gilding’s guests must, from the vantage point of the Worldly, Jones or Town boxes, keep a watchful eye on their hostess and instantly return to her support when they see her visitors about to leave, even though the ladies whom they are momentarily visiting be left to themselves. It is of course the duty of the other gentlemen who came to the opera with Mrs. Worldly, Mrs. Jones or Mrs. Town to hurry to them.

A gentleman must never stay in any box that he does not belong in, after the lowering of the lights for the curtain. Nor, in spite of cartoons to the contrary, does good taste permit conversation during the performance or during the overture. Box holders arriving late or leaving before the final curtain do so as quietly as possible and always without speaking.

A “BRILLIANT OPERA NIGHT”

A “brilliant opera night,” which one often hears spoken of (meaning merely that all the boxes are occupied, and that the ladies are more elaborately dressed than usual) is generally a night when a

leader of fashion such as Mrs. Worldly, Mrs. Gilding, or Mrs. Toplofty, is giving a ball; and most of the holders of the parterre boxes are in ball dresses, with an unusual display of jewels. Or a house will be particularly “brilliant” if a very great singer is appearing in a new rôle, or if a personage be present, as when Marshal Joffre went to the Metropolitan.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

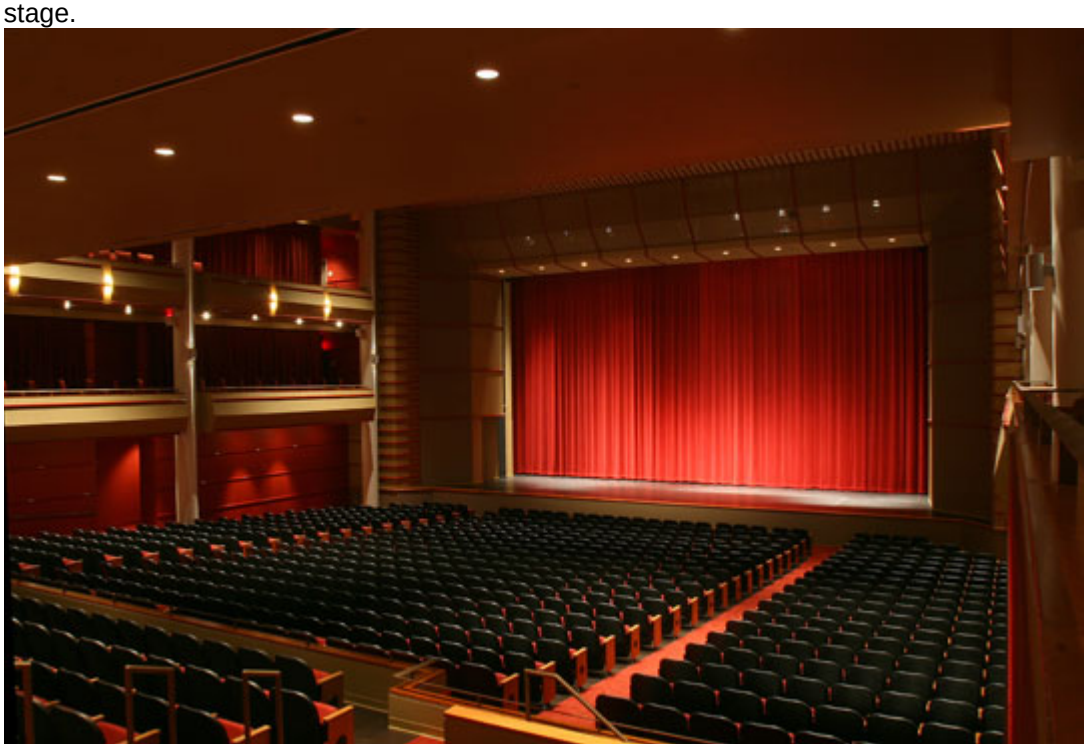
One gentleman, at least, must wait in the carriage lobby until all the ladies in his party have driven away. *Never* under any circumstances may “the last” gentleman leave a lady standing alone on the sidewalk. It is the duty of the hostess to take all unattended ladies home who have not a private conveyance of their own, but the obligation does not extend to married couples or odd men. But if a married lady or widow has ordered her own car to come for her, the odd gentleman waits with her until it appears. It is then considerate for her to offer him a “lift,” but it is equally proper for her to thank him for waiting and drive off alone.

AT THE THEATER

New Yorkers of highest fashion almost never occupy a box at the theater. At the opera the world of

fashion is to be seen in the parterre boxes (not the first tier), and in boxes at some of the horse shows and at many public charity balls and entertainments, but those in boxes at the theater are usually “strangers” or “outsiders.”

No one can dispute that the best theater seats are those in the center of the orchestra. A box in these days of hatlessness has nothing to recommend it except that the people can sit in a group and gentlemen can go out between the acts easily, but these advantages hardly make up for the disadvantage to four or at least three out of the six box occupants who see scarcely a slice of the stage.



WILL YOU DINE AND GO TO THE PLAY?

There is no more popular or agreeable way of entertaining people than to ask them to “dine and go to the play.” The majority do not even prefer to have “opera” substituted for “play,” because those who care for serious music are a minority compared with those who like the theater.

If a bachelor gives a small theater party he usually takes his guests to dine at the Fitz-Cherry or some other fashionable and “amusing” restaurant, but a married couple living in their own house are more likely to dine at home, unless they belong to a type prevalent in New York which is “restaurant mad.” The Gildings, in spite of the fact that their own chef is the best there is, are much more apt to dine in a restaurant before going to a play—or if they don’t dine in a restaurant, they go to one for supper afterwards. But the Normans, if they ask people to dine and go to the theater, invariably dine at home.

A theater party can of course be of any size, but six or eight is the usual number, and the invitations are telephoned: “Will Mr. and Mrs. Lovejoy dine with Mr. and Mrs. Norman at seven-thirty on Tuesday and go to the play?”

Or “Will Mr. and Mrs. Oldname dine with Mr. Clubwin Doe on Saturday at the Toit d’Or and go to the play?”

When Mr. and Mrs. Oldname “accept with pleasure” a second message is given: “Dinner will be at 7.30.”

Mrs. Norman’s guests go to her house. Mr. Doe’s guests meet him in the foyer of the Toit d’Or. But the guests at both dinners are taken to the theater by their host. If a dinner is given by a hostess who has no car of her own, a guest will sometimes ask: “Don’t you want me to have the car come

back for us?" The hostess can either say to an intimate friend "Why, yes, thank you very much," or to a more formal acquaintance, "No, thank you just the same—I have ordered taxis." Or she can accept. There is no rule beyond her own feelings in the matter.

Mr. Doe takes his guests to the theater in taxis. The Normans, if only the Lovejoys are dining with them, go in Mrs. Norman's little town car, but if there are to be six or eight, the ladies go in her car and the gentlemen follow in a taxi. (Unless Mrs. Worldly or Mrs. Gilding are in the party and order their cars back.)

TICKETS BOUGHT IN ADVANCE

Before inviting anyone to go to a particular play, a hostess must be sure that good tickets are to be had. She should also try to get seats for a play that is new; since it is dull to take people to something they have already seen. This is not difficult in cities where new plays come to town every week, but in New York, where the same ones run for a year or more, it is often a choice between an old good one or a new one that is poor. If intimate friends are coming, a hostess usually asks them what they want to see and tries to get tickets accordingly.

It is really unnecessary to add that one must *never* ask people to go to a place of public amusement and then stand in line to get seats at the time of the performance.

GOING DOWN THE AISLE OF A THEATER

The host, or whichever gentleman has the tickets, (if there is no host, the hostess usually hands them to one of the gentlemen before leaving her house), goes down the aisle first and gives the checks to the usher, and the others follow in the order in which they are to sit and which the hostess must direct. It is necessary that each knows who follows whom, particularly if a theater party arrives after the curtain has gone up. If the hostess "forgets," the guests always ask before trooping down the aisle "How do you want us to sit?" For nothing is more awkward and stupid than to block the aisle at the row where their seats are, while their hostess "sorts them"; and worse yet, in her effort to be polite, sends the ladies to their seats first and then lets the gentlemen stumble across them to their own places. Going down the aisle is not a question of precedence, but a question of seating. The one who is to sit eighth from the aisle, whether a lady or a gentleman, goes first, then the seventh, then the sixth, and if the gentleman with the checks is fifth, he goes in his turn and the fourth follows him.

If a gentleman and his wife go to the theater alone, the question as to who goes down the aisle first depends on where the usher is. If the usher takes the checks at the head of the aisle, she follows the usher. Otherwise the gentleman goes first with the checks. When their places are shown him, he stands aside for his wife to take her place first and then he takes his. A lady never sits in the aisle seat if she is with a gentleman.

GOOD MANNERS AT THE THEATER

In passing across people who are seated, always face the stage and press as close to the backs of the seats you are facing as you can. Remember also not to drag anything across the heads of those sitting in front of you. At the moving pictures, especially when it is dark and difficult to see, a coat on an arm passing behind a chair can literally devastate the hair-dressing of a lady occupying it.

If you are obliged to cross in front of some one who gets up to let you pass, say "Thank you," or "Thank you very much" or "I am very sorry." Do *not* say "Pardon *me!"* or "Beg pardon!" Though you can say "I beg your pardon." That, however, would be more properly the expression to use if you brushed your coat over their heads, or spilled water over them, or did something to them for which you should actually *beg* their pardon. But "Beg pardon," which is an abbreviation, is one of the phrases never said in best society.

Gentlemen who want to go out after every act should always be sure to get aisle seats. There are no greater theater pests than those who come back after the curtain has gone up and temporarily snuff out the view of everyone behind, as well as annoy those who are obliged to stand up and let

them by.

Between the acts nearly all gentlemen go out and smoke at least once, but those wedged in far from the aisle, who file out every time the curtain drops are utterly lacking in consideration for others. If there are five acts, they should at most go out for two entr'actes and even then be careful to come back before the curtain goes up.

VERY INCONSIDERATE TO GIGGLE AND TALK

Nothing shows less consideration for others than to whisper and rattle programmes and giggle and even make audible remarks throughout a performance. Very young people love to go to the theater in droves called theater parties and absolutely ruin the evening for others who happen to sit in front of them. If Mary and Johnny and Susy and Tommy want to talk and giggle, why not arrange chairs in rows for them in a drawing-room, turn on a phonograph as an accompaniment and let them sit there and chatter!

If those behind you insist on talking it is never good policy to turn around and glare. If you are young they pay no attention, and if you are older—most young people think an angry older person the funniest sight on earth! The small boy throws a snowball at an elderly gentleman for no other reason! The only thing you can do is to say amiably: "I'm sorry, but I can't hear anything while you talk." If they still persist, you can ask an usher to call the manager.

The sentimental may as well realize that every word said above a whisper is easily heard by those sitting directly in front, and those who tell family or other private affairs might do well to remember this also.

As a matter of fact, comparatively few people are ever anything but well behaved. Those who arrive late and stand long, leisurely removing their wraps, and who insist on laughing and talking are rarely encountered; most people take their seats as quietly and quickly as they possibly can, and are quite as much interested in the play and therefore as attentive and quiet as you are. A very annoying person at the "movies" is one who reads every "caption" out loud.

PROPER THEATER CLOTHES

At the evening performance in New York a lady wears a dinner dress; a gentleman a dinner coat, often called a Tuxedo. Full dress is not correct, but those going afterwards to a ball can perfectly well go to the theater first if they do not make themselves conspicuous. A lady in a ball dress and many jewels should avoid elaborate hair ornamentation and must keep her wrap, or at least a sufficiently opaque scarf, about her shoulders to avoid attracting people's attention. A gentleman in full dress is not conspicuous.

And on the subject of theater dress it might be tentatively remarked that prinking and “making up” in public are all part of an age which can not see fun in a farce without bedroom scenes and actors in pajamas, and actresses running about in negligés with their hair down. An audience which night after night watches people dressing and undressing probably gets into an unconscious habit of dressing or prinking itself. In other days it was always thought that so much as to adjust a hat-pin or glance in a glass was lack of breeding. Every well brought up young woman was taught that she must finish dressing in her bedchamber. But to-day young women in theaters, restaurants, and other public places, are continually studying their reflection in little mirrors and patting their hair and powdering their noses and fixing this or adjusting that in a way that in Mrs. Oldname’s girlhood would have absolutely barred them from good society; nor can Mrs. Worldly or Mrs. Oldname be imagined “preening” and “prinking” anywhere. They dress as carefully and as beautifully as possible, but when they turn away from the mirrors in their dressing rooms they never look in a glass or “take note of their appearance” until they dress again. And it must be granted that Lucy Gilding, Constance Style, Celia Lovejoy, Mary Smartlington and the other well-bred members of the younger set do not put finishing touches on their faces in public—as yet!

THE COURTESY OF SENDING TICKETS EARLY

Most people are at times “obliged” to take tickets for various charity entertainments—balls, theatricals, concerts or pageants—to which, if they do not care to go themselves, they give away their tickets. Those who intend giving tickets should remember that a message, “Can you use two tickets for the Russian ballet to-night?” sent at seven o’clock that same evening, after the Lovejoys have settled themselves for an evening at home (Celia having decided not to curl her hair and Donald having that morning sent his only dinner coat to be re-faced) can not give the same pleasure that their earlier offer would have given. An opera box sent on the morning of the opera is worse, since to find four music-loving people to fill it on such short notice at the height of the season is an undertaking that few care to attempt.

A BIG THEATER PARTY

A big theater party is one of the favorite entertainments given for a débutante. If fifty or more are to be asked, invitations are sometimes engraved.

Mrs. Toplofty

requests the pleasure of

[*Name of guest is written on this line.*]

company at the theater and a small dance afterward

in honor of her great-niece

Miss Millicent Gilding

on Tuesday the sixth of January

at half-past eight o'clock

R. s. v. p.

But—and usually—the "general utility" invitation (see XI¶41) is filled in, as follows:

To meet Miss Millicent Gilding

Mrs. Toplofty

requests the pleasure of

Miss Rosalie Gray's

company at the Theater and at a dance

on Tuesday the sixth of January

at 8.15

R. s. v. p.

Or notes in either wording are written in hand.

All those who accept have a ticket sent them. Each ticket sent a débutante is accompanied by a visiting card on which is written:

"Be in the lobby of the Comedy Theater at
8.15. Order your motor to come for you
at 010 Fifth Avenue at 1 A. M."

On the evening of the theater party, Mrs. Toplofty herself stands in the lobby to receive the guests. As soon as any who are to sit next to each other have arrived, they are sent into the theater; each gives her (or his) ticket to an usher and sits in the place alloted to her (or him). It is well for the hostess to have a seat plan for her own use in case thoughtless young people mix their tickets all up and hand them to an usher in a bunch! And yet—if they do mix themselves to their own satisfaction, she would better "leave them" than attempt to disturb a plan that may have had more method in it than madness.

When the last young girl has arrived, Mrs. Toplofty goes into the theater herself (she does not bother to wait for any boys), and in this one instance she very likely sits in a stage box so as to "keep her eye on them," and with her she has two or three of her own friends.

After the theater, big motor busses drive them all either to the house of the hostess or to a hotel for supper and to dance. If they go to a hotel, a small ballroom must be engaged and the dance is a private one; it would be considered out of place to take a lot of very young people to a public cabaret.

Carelessly chaperoned young girls are sometimes, it is true, seen in very questionable places because some of the so-called dancing restaurants are perfectly fit and proper for them to go to; many other places however, are not, and for the sake of general appearances it is safer to make it a rule that no *very* young girl should go anywhere after the theater except to a private house or a

private dance or ball.

Older people, on the other hand, very often go for a supper to one of the cabarets for which New York is famous (or infamous?), or perhaps go to watch a vaudeville performance at midnight, or dance, or do both together.

Others, if they are among the great majority of “quiet” people, go home after the theater, especially if they have dined with their hostess (or host) before the play.

DON’T BE LATE

When you are dining before going to the opera or theater you must arrive on the stroke of the hour for which you are asked; it is one occasion when it is inexcusable to be late.

In accepting an invitation for lunch or dinner after which you are going to a game, or any sort of performance, you must not be late! Nothing is more unfair to others who are keen about whatever it is you are going to see, than to make them miss the beginning of a performance through your thoughtless selfishness.

For this reason box-holders who are music-lovers do not ask guests who have the “late habit” to dine before the opera, because experience has taught them they will miss the overture and most of the first act if they do. Those, on the other hand, who care nothing for music and go to the opera to see people and be seen, seldom go until most if not all of the first act is over. But these in turn might give music-loving guests their choice of going alone in time for the overture and waiting for them in the box at the opera, or having the pleasure of dining with their hostess but missing most of the first part.

AT GAMES, THE CIRCUS OR ELSEWHERE

Considerate and polite behavior by each member of an audience is the same everywhere. At out-door games, or at the circus, it is not necessary to stop talking. In fact, a good deal of noise is not out of the way in “rooting” at a match, and a circus band does not demand silence in order to appreciate its cheerful blare. One very great annoyance in open air gatherings is cigar smoke when blown directly in one’s face or worse yet the smoke from a smouldering cigar. It is almost worthy of a study in air currents to discover why with plenty of space all around, a tiny column of smoke will make straight for the nostrils of the very one most nauseated by it!

The only other annoyance met with at ball games or parades or wherever people occupy seats on the grandstand, is when some few in front get excited and insist on standing up. If those in front stand—those behind naturally have to! Generally people call out “down in front.” If they won’t stay “down,” then all those behind have to stay “up.” Also umbrellas and parasols entirely blot out the view of those behind.

Chapter VII.
Conversation

NEED OF RECIPROCITY

IDEAL conversation should be a matter of equal give and take, but too often it is all “take.” The voluble talker—or chatterer—rides his own hobby straight through the hours without giving anyone else, who might also like to say something, a chance to do other than exhaustedly await the turn that never comes. Once in a while—a very long while—one meets a brilliant person whose talk is a delight; or still more rarely a wit who manipulates every ordinary topic with the agility of a sleight-of-hand performer, to the ever increasing rapture of his listeners.

But as a rule the man who has been led to believe that he is a brilliant and interesting talker has been led to make himself a rapacious pest. No conversation is possible between others whose ears are within reach of his ponderous voice; anecdotes, long-winded stories, dramatic and pathetic, stock his repertoire; but worst of all are his humorous yarns at which he laughs uproariously though every one else grows solemn and more solemn.

There is a simple rule, by which if one is a voluble chatterer (to be a good talker necessitates a good mind) one can at least refrain from being a pest or a bore. And the rule is merely, to stop and think.

“THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK”

Nearly all the faults or mistakes in conversation are caused by not thinking. For instance, a first rule for behavior in society is: “Try to do and say those things only which will be agreeable to others.” Yet how many people, who really know better, people who are perfectly capable of intelligent understanding if they didn’t let their brains remain asleep or locked tight, go night after night to dinner parties, day after day to other social gatherings, and absent-mindedly prate about this or that without ever taking the trouble to *think* what they are saying and to whom they are saying it! Would a young mother describe twenty or thirty cunning tricks and sayings of the baby to a bachelor who has been helplessly put beside her at dinner if she *thought?* She would know very well, alas! that not even a very dear friend would really care for more than a *hors d’oeuvre* of the subject, at the board of general conversation.

The older woman is even worse, unless something occurs (often when it is too late) to make her

wake up and realize that she not only bores her hearers but prejudices everyone against her children by the unrestraint of her own praise. The daughter who is continually lauded as the most captivating and beautiful girl in the world, seems to the wearied perceptions of enforced listeners annoying and plain. In the same way the “magnificent” son is handicapped by his mother’s—or his father’s—overweening pride and love in exact proportion to its displayed intensity. On the other hand, the neglected wife, the unappreciated husband, the misunderstood child, takes on a glamor in the eyes of others equally out of proportion. That great love has seldom perfect wisdom is one of the great tragedies in the drama of life. In the case of the overloving wife or mother, some one should love *her* enough to make her *stop and think* that her loving praise is not merely a question of boring her hearers but of handicapping unfairly those for whom she would gladly lay down her life—and yet few would have the courage to point out to her that she would far better lay down her tongue.

The cynics say that those who take part in social conversation are bound to be either the bores or the bored; and that which you choose to be, is a mere matter of selection. And there must be occasions in the life of everyone when the cynics seem to be right; the man of affairs who, sitting next to an attractive looking young woman, is regaled throughout dinner with the detailed accomplishments of the young woman’s husband; the woman of intellect who must listen with interest to the droolings of an especially prosy man who holds forth on the super-everything of his own possessions, can not very well consider that the evening was worth dressing, sitting up, and going out for.

People who talk too easily are apt to talk too much, and at times imprudently, and those with vivid imagination are often unreliable in their statements. On the other hand the “man of silence” who never speaks except when he has something “worth while” to say, is apt to wear well among his intimates, but is not likely to add much to the gaiety of a party.

Try not to repeat yourself; either by telling the same story again and again or by going back over details of your narrative that seemed especially to interest or amuse your hearer. Many things are of interest when briefly told and for the first time; *nothing* interests when too long dwelt upon; little interests that is told a second time. The exception is something very pleasant that you have heard about A. or more especially A.’s child, which having already told A. you can then tell B., and later C. in A.’s presence. Never do this as a habit, however, and never drag the incident into the conversation merely to flatter A., since if A. is a person of taste, he will be far more apt to resent than be pleased by flattery that borders on the fulsome.

Be careful not to let amiable discussion turn into contradiction and argument. The tactful person keeps his prejudices to himself and even when involved in a discussion says quietly “No. I don’t think I agree with you” or “It seems to me thus and so.” One who is well-bred never says “You are wrong!” or “Nothing of the kind!” If he finds another’s opinion utterly opposed to his own, he switches to another subject for a pleasanter channel of conversation.

When some one is talking to you, it is inconsiderate to keep repeating “What did you say?” Those who are deaf are often obliged to ask that a sentence be repeated. Otherwise their irrelevant

answers would make them appear half-witted. But countless persons with perfectly good hearing say “What?” from force of habit and careless inattention.

THE GIFT OF HUMOR

The joy of joys is the person of light but unmalicious humor. If you know any one who is gay, beguiling and amusing, you will, if you are wise, do everything you can to make him prefer your house and your table to any other; for where he is, the successful party is also. What he says is of no matter, it is the twist he gives to it, the intonation, the personality he puts into his quip or retort or observation that delights his hearers, and in his case the ordinary rules do not apply.

Eugene Field could tell a group of people that it had rained to-day and would probably rain tomorrow, and make everyone burst into laughter—or tears if he chose—according to the way it was said. But the ordinary rest of us must, if we would be thought sympathetic, intelligent or agreeable, “go fishing.”

GOING FISHING FOR TOPICS

The charming talker is neither more nor less than a fisherman. (Fisherwoman rather, since in America women make more effort to be agreeable than men do.) Sitting next to a stranger she wonders which “fly” she had better choose to interest him. She offers one topic; not much of a nibble. So she tries another or perhaps a third before he “rises” to the bait.

THE DOOR SLAMMERS

There are people whose idea of conversation is contradiction and flat statement. Finding yourself next to one of these, you venture:

"Have you seen any good plays lately?"

"No, hate the theater."

"Which team are you for in the series?"

"Neither. Only an idiot could be interested in baseball."

"Country must have a good many idiots!" mockingly.

"Obviously it has." Full stop. In desperation you veer to the personal.

"I've never seen Mrs. Bobo Gilding as beautiful as she is to-night."

"Nothing beautiful about her. As for the name 'Bobo,' it's asinine."

"Oh, it's just one of those children's names that stick sometimes for life."

"Perfect rot. Ought to be called by his name," etc.

Another, not very different in type though different in method, is the self-appointed instructor whose proper place is on the lecture platform, not at a dinner table.

"The earliest coins struck in the Peloponnesus were stamped on one side only; their alloy———" etc.

Another is the expounder of the obvious: "Have you ever noticed," says he, deeply thinking, "how people's tastes differ?"

Then there is the vulgarian of fulsome compliment: "Why are you so beautiful? It is not fair to the others———" and so on.

TACTLESS BLUNDERERS

Tactless people are also legion. The means-to-be-agreeable elderly man says to a passée acquaintance, "Twenty years ago you were the prettiest woman in town"; or in the pleasantest tone of voice to one whose only son has married. "Why is it, do you suppose, that young wives always dislike their mothers-in-law?"

If you have any ambition to be sought after in society you must not talk about the unattractiveness of old age to the elderly, about the joys of dancing and skating to the lame, or about the advantages of ancestry to the self-made. It is also dangerous, as well as needlessly unkind, to ridicule or criticize others, especially for what they can't help. If a young woman's familiar or otherwise lax behavior deserves censure, a casual unflattering remark may not add to your own popularity if your listener is

a relative, but you can at least, without being shamefaced, stand by your guns. On the other hand to say needlessly “What an ugly girl!” or “What a half-wit that boy is!” can be of no value except in drawing attention to your own tactlessness.

The young girl who admired her own facile adjectives said to a casual acquaintance: “How *can* you go about with that moth-eaten, squint-eyed, bag of a girl!” “Because,” answered the youth whom she had intended to dazzle, “the lady of your flattering epithets happens to be my sister.”

It is scarcely necessary to say that one whose tactless remarks ride rough-shod over the feelings of others, is not welcomed by many.

THE BORE

A bore is said to be “one who talks about himself when you want to talk about yourself!” which is superficially true enough, but a bore might more accurately be described as one who is interested in what does not interest you, and insists that you share his enthusiasm, in spite of your disinclination. To the bore life holds no dullness; every subject is of unending delight. A story told for the thousandth time has not lost its thrill; every tiresome detail is held up and turned about as a morsel of delectableness; to him each pea in a pod differs from another with the entrancing variety that artists find in tropical sunsets.

On the other hand, to be bored is a bad habit, and one only too easy to fall into. As a matter of fact, it is impossible, almost, to meet anyone who has not *something* of interest to tell you if you are but clever enough yourself to find out what it is. There are certain always delightful people who refuse to be bored. Their attitude is that no subject need ever be utterly uninteresting, so long as it is discussed for the first time. Repetition alone is deadly dull. Besides, what is the matter with trying to be agreeable yourself? Not *too* agreeable. Alas! it is true: “Be polite to bores and so shall you have bores always round about you.” Furthermore, there is no reason why you should be bored when you can be otherwise. But if you find yourself sitting in the hedgerow with nothing but weeds, there is no reason for shutting your eyes and seeing nothing, instead of finding what beauty you may in the weeds. To put it cynically, life is too short to waste it in drawing blanks. Therefore, it is up to you to find as many pictures to put on your blank pages as possible.

A FEW IMPORTANT DETAILS OF SPEECH IN CONVERSATION

Unless you wish to stamp yourself a person who has never been out of “provincial” society, never speak of your husband as “Mr.” except to an inferior. Mrs. Worldly for instance in talking with a stranger would say “my husband,” and to a friend, meaning one not only whom she calls by her first name, but anyone on her “dinner list,” she says, “Dick thought the play amusing” or “Dick said——”. This does not give her listener the privilege of calling him “Dick.” The listener in return speaks of her own husband as “Tom” even if he is seventy—unless her hearer is a very young person (either man or woman), when she would say “my husband.” Never “Mr. Older.” To call your husband Mr. means that you consider the person you are talking to, beneath you in station. Mr. Worldly in the same way speaks of Mrs. Worldly as “my wife” to a gentleman, or “Edith” in speaking to a lady. *Always.*

In speaking about other people, one says “Mrs.,” “Miss” or “Mr.” as the case may be. It is bad form to go about saying “Edith Worldly” or “Ethel Norman” to those who do not call them Edith or Ethel, and to speak thus familiarly of one whom you do not call by her first name, is unforgivable. It is also effrontery for a younger person to call an older by her or his first name, without being asked to do so. Only a very underbred, thick-skinned person would attempt it.

Also you must not take your conversation “out of the drawing-room.” Operations, ills or personal blemishes, details and appurtenances of the dressing-room, for instance, are neither suitable nor pleasant topics, nor are personal jokes in good taste.

THE “OMNISCIENCE” OF THE VERY RICH

Why a man, because he has millions, should assume that they confer omniscience in all branches of knowledge, is something which may be left to the psychologist to answer, but most of those thrown much in contact with millionaires will agree that an attitude of infallibility is typical of a fair majority.

A professor who has devoted his life to a subject modestly makes a statement. “You are all wrong,” says the man of millions, “It is this way——”. As a connoisseur he seems to think that because he can pay for anything he fancies, he is accredited expert as well as potential owner. Topics he does not care for are “bosh,” those which he has a smattering of, he simply appropriates; his prejudices are, in his opinion, expert criticism; his taste impeccable; his judgment infallible; and to him the world is a pleasance built for his sole pleasuring. But to the rest of us who also have to live in it with as much harmony as we can, such persons are certainly elephants at large in the garden. We can sometimes induce them to pass through gently, but they are just as likely at any moment to pull up

our fences and push the house itself over on our defenseless heads.

There are countless others of course, very often the richest of all, who are authoritative in all they profess, who are experts and connoisseurs, who are human and helpful and above everything respecters of the garden enclosure of others.

DANGERS TO BE AVOIDED

In conversation the dangers are very much the same as those to be avoided in writing letters. Talk about things which you think will be agreeable to your hearer. Don't dilate on ills, misfortune, or other unpleasantnesses. The one in greatest danger of making enemies is the man or woman of brilliant wit. If sharp, wit is apt to produce a feeling of mistrust even while it stimulates. Furthermore the applause which follows every witty sally becomes in time breath to the nostrils, and perfectly well-intentioned people, who mean to say nothing unkind, in the flash of a second "see a point," and in the next second, score it with no more power to resist than a drug addict can resist a dose put into his hand!

The mimic is a joy to his present company, but the eccentric mannerism of one is much easier to imitate than the charm of another, and the subjects of the habitual mimic are all too apt to become his enemies.

You need not, however, be dull because you refrain from the rank habit of a critical attitude, which like a weed will grow all over the place if you let it have half a chance. A very good resolve to make and keep, if you would also keep any friends you make, is never to speak of anyone without, in imagination, having them overhear what you say. One often hears the exclamation "I would say it to her face!" At least be very sure that this is true, and not a braggart's phrase and then—nine times out of ten think better of it and refrain. Preaching is all very well in a text-book, schoolroom or pulpit, but it has no place in society. Society is supposed to be a pleasant place; telling people disagreeable things to their faces or behind their backs is *not* a pleasant occupation.

Do not be too apparently clever if you would be popular. The cleverest woman is she who, in talking to a man, makes *him* seem clever. This was Mme. Recamier's great charm.

A FEW MAXIMS FOR THOSE WHO TALK TOO MUCH—AND EASILY!

The faults of commission are far more serious than those of omission; regrets are seldom for what you left unsaid.

The chatterer reveals every corner of his shallow mind; one who keeps silent can not have his depth plumbed.

Don't pretend to know more than you do. To say you have read a book and then seemingly to understand nothing of what you have read, proves you a half-wit. Only the very small mind hesitates to say "I don't know."

Above all, stop and *think* what you are saying! This is really the first, last and only rule. If you "stop" you can't chatter or expound or flounder ceaselessly, and if you *think,* you will find a topic and a manner of presenting your topic so that your neighbor will be interested rather than long-suffering.

Remember also that the sympathetic (not apathetic) listener is the delight of delights. The person who looks glad to see you, who is seemingly eager for your news, or enthralled with your conversation; who looks at you with a kindling of the face, and gives you spontaneous and undivided attention, is the one to whom the palm for the art of conversation would undoubtedly be awarded.

Chapter VIII.
Words, Phrases and Pronunciation

PHRASES AVOIDED IN GOOD SOCIETY

IT is difficult to explain why well-bred people avoid certain words and expressions that are admitted by etymology and grammar. So it must be merely stated that they have and undoubtedly always will avoid them. Moreover, this choice of expression is not set forth in any printed guide or book on English, though it is followed in all literature.

To liken Best Society to a fraternity, with the avoidance of certain seemingly unimportant words as the sign of recognition, is not a fantastic simile. People of the fashionable world invariably use certain expressions and instinctively avoid others; therefore when a stranger uses an “avoided” one he proclaims that he “does not belong,” exactly as a pretended Freemason proclaims himself an “outsider” by giving the wrong “grip”—or whatever it is by which Brother Masons recognize one another.

People of position are people of position the world over—and by their speech are most readily known. Appearance on the other hand often passes muster. A “show-girl” may be lovely to look at as she stands in a seemingly unstudied position and in perfect clothes. But let her say “My Gawd!” or “Wouldn’t that jar you!” and where is her loveliness then?

And yet, and this is the difficult part of the subject to make clear, the most vulgar slang like that quoted above, is scarcely worse than the attempted elegance which those unused to good society imagine to be the evidence of cultivation.

People who say “I come,” and “I seen it,” and “I done it” prove by their lack of grammar that they had little education in their youth. Unfortunate, very; but they may at the same time be brilliant, exceptional characters, loved by everyone who knows them, because they are what they seem and nothing else. But the caricature “lady” with the comic picture “society manner” who says “Pardon *me”* and talks of “retiring,” and “residing,” and “desiring,” and “being acquainted with,” and “attending” this and that with “her escort,” and curls her little finger over the handle of her teacup, and prates of “culture,” does *not* belong to Best Society, and *never* will! The offense of pretentiousness is committed oftener perhaps by women than by men, who are usually more natural and direct. A genuine, sincere, kindly American man—or woman—can go anywhere and be welcomed by everyone, provided of course, that he is a man of ability and intellect. One finds him all over the world, neither aping the manners of others nor treading on the sensibilities of those less fortunate than himself.

Occasionally too, there appears in Best Society a provincial in whose conversation is perceptible the influence of much reading of the Bible. Such are seldom if ever stilted or pompous or long-worded, but are invariably distinguished for the simplicity and dignity of their English.

There is no better way to cultivate taste in words, than by constantly reading the best English. None of the words and expressions which are taboo in good society will be found in books of proved literary standing. But it must not be forgotten that there can be a vast difference between literary standing and popularity, and that many of the “best sellers” have no literary merit whatsoever.

To be able to separate best English from merely good English needs a long process of special education, but to recognize bad English one need merely skim through a page of a book, and if a single expression in the left-hand column following can be found (unless purposely quoted in illustration of vulgarity) it is quite certain that the author neither writes best English nor belongs to Best Society.

NEVER SAY:	CORRECT FORM:
In our residence we retire early (or arise)	At our house we go to bed early (or get up)
I desire to purchase	I should like to buy
Make you acquainted with	(See Introductions)
Pardon *me!*	I beg your pardon. Or, Excuse me! Or, sorry!
Lovely food	Good food

Elegant home	Beautiful house—or place
A stylish dresser	She dresses well, or she wears lovely clothes
Charmed! or Pleased to meet you!	How do you do!
Attended	Went to
I trust I am not trespassing	I hope I am not in the way (unless trespassing on private property is actually meant)
Request (meaning ask)	Used only in the third person in formal written invitations.
Will you accord me permission?	Will you let me? or May I?
Permit me to assist you	Let me help you
Brainy	Brilliant or clever
I presume	I suppose
Tendered him a banquet	Gave him a dinner
Converse	Talk
Partook of liquid refreshment	Had something to drink
Perform ablutions	Wash
A song entitled	Called (proper if used in legal sense)
I will ascertain	I will find out
Residence or mansion	House, or big house
In the home	In some one's house or At home
Phone, photo, auto	Telephone, photograph, automobile

"Tintinnabulary summons," meaning bell, and "Bovine continuation," meaning cow's tail, are more amusing than offensive, but they illustrate the theory of bad style that is pretentious.

As examples of the very worst offenses that can be committed, the following are offered:

"Pray, accept my thanks for the flattering ovation you have tendered me."

"Yes," says the preposterous bride, "I am the recipient of many admired and highly prized gifts."

"Will you permit me to recall myself to you?"

Speaking of bridesmaids as "pretty servitors," "dispensing hospitality," asking any one to "step this way."

Many other expressions are provincial and one who seeks purity of speech should, if possible, avoid them, but as "offenses" they are minor:

Reckon, guess, calculate, or figure, meaning think.

Allow, meaning agree.

Folks, meaning family.

Cute, meaning pretty or winsome.

Well, I declare! 'Pon my word!

Box party, meaning sitting in a box at the theater.

Visiting with, meaning talking to.

There are certain words which have been singled out and misused by the undiscriminating until their value is destroyed. Long ago "elegant" was turned from a word denoting the essence of refinement and beauty, into gaudy trumpery. "Refined" is on the verge. But the pariah of the language is culture! A word rarely used by those who truly possess it, but so constantly misused by those who understand nothing of its meaning, that it is becoming a synonym for vulgarity and imitation. To speak of the proper use of a finger bowl or the ability to introduce two people without a blunder as being "evidence of culture of the highest degree" is precisely as though evidence of highest education were claimed for who ever can do sums in addition, and read words of one syllable. Culture in its true meaning is widest possible education, *plus* especial refinement and taste.

The fact that slang is apt and forceful makes its use irresistibly tempting. Coarse or profane slang is beside the mark, but "flivver," "taxi," the "movies," "deadly" (meaning dull), "feeling fit," "feeling blue," "grafter," a "fake," "grouch," "hunch" and "right o!" are typical of words that it would make our spoken

language stilted to exclude.

All colloquial expressions are little foxes that spoil the grapes of perfect diction, but they are very little foxes; it is the false elegance of stupid pretentiousness that is an annihilating blight which destroys root and vine.

In the choice of words, we can hardly find a better guide than the lines of Alexander Pope:

"In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold;
Alike fantastic, if too new, or old:
Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."

PRONUNCIATION

Traits of pronunciation which are typical of whole sections of the country, or accents inherited from European parents must not be confused with crude pronunciations that have their origin in illiteracy. A gentleman of Irish blood may have a brogue as rich as plum cake, or another's accent be soft Southern or flat New England, or rolling Western; and to each of these the utterance of the others may sound too flat, too soft, too harsh, too refined, or drawled, or clipped short, but not uncultivated.

To a New York ear, which ought to be fairly unbiased since the New York accent is a composite of all accents, English women chirrup and twitter. But the beautifully modulated, clear-clipped enunciation of a cultivated Englishman, one who can move his jaws and not swallow his words whole, comes as near to perfection in English as the diction of the Comédie Française comes to perfection in French.

The Boston accent is very crisp and in places suggestive of the best English but the vowels are so curiously flattened that the speech has a saltless effect. There is no rhyming word as flat as the way they say "heart"—"haht." And "bone" and "coat"—"bawn," "cawt," to rhyme with awe!

Then South, there is too much salt—rather too much sugar. Every one's mouth seems full of it, with "I" turned to "ah" and every staccato a drawl. But the voices are full of sweetness and music unknown north of the Potomac.

The Pennsylvania burr is perhaps the mother of the Western one. It is strong enough to have mothered all the r's in the wor-r-rld! Philadelphia's "haow" and "caow" for "how" and "cow," and "me" for "my" is quite as bad as the "water-r" and "thot" of the West.

N'Yawk is supposed to say "yeh" and "Omurica" and "Toosdeh," and "puddin'." Probably five per cent. of it does, but as a whole it has no accent, since it is a composite of all in one.

In best New York society there is perhaps a generally accepted pronunciation which seems chiefly an elimination of the accents of other sections. Probably that is what all people think of their own pronunciation. Or do they not know whether their inflection is right or wrong? Nothing should be simpler to determine. If they pronounce according to a standard dictionary, they are correct; if they don't, they have an "accent" or are ignorant; it is for them to determine which. Such differences as between saying wash or wawsh, ad*ver*tisement or adver*tise*ment are of small importance. But no one who makes the least pretence of being a person of education says: kep for kept, genelmun or gempmun or laydee, vawde-vil, or eye-talian.

HOW TO CULTIVATE AN AGREEABLE SPEECH

First of all, remember that while affectation is odious, crudeness must be overcome. A low voice is always pleasing, not whispered or murmured, but low in pitch. Do not talk at the top of your head, nor at the top of your lungs. Do not slur whole sentences together; on the other hand, do not pronounce as though each syllable were a separate tongue and lip exercise.

As a nation we do not talk so much too fast, as too loud. Tens of thousands twang and slur and shout and burr! Many of us drawl and many others of us race tongues and breath at full speed, but, as already said, the speed of our speech does not matter so much. Pitch of voice matters very much and so does pronunciation—enunciation is not so essential—except to one who speaks in public.

Enunciation means the articulation of whatever you have to say distinctly and clearly. Pronunciation is the proper sounding of consonants, vowels and the accentuation of each syllable.

There is no better way to cultivate a perfect pronunciation, apart from association with cultivated people, than by getting a small pronouncing dictionary of words in ordinary use, and reading it word by word, marking and studying any that you use frequently and mispronounce. When you know them, then read any book at random slowly aloud to yourself, very carefully pronouncing each word. The consciousness of this exercise may make you stilted in conversation at first, but by and by the “sense” or “impulse” to speak correctly will come.

This is a method that has been followed by many men handicapped in youth through lack of education, who have become prominent in public life, and by many women, who likewise handicapped by circumstances, have not only made possible a creditable position for themselves, but have then given their children the inestimable advantage of learning their mother tongue correctly at their mother’s knee.

Chapter IX.
One's Position in the Community

THE CHOICE

FIRST of all, it is necessary to decide what one's personal idea of position is, whether this word suggests merely a social one, comprising a large or an exclusive acquaintance and leadership in social gaiety, or position established upon the foundation of communal consequence, which may, or may not, include great social gaiety. In other words, you who are establishing yourself, either as a young husband or a stranger, would you, if you could have your wish granted by a genie, choose to have the populace look upon you askance and in awe, because of your wealth and elegance, or would you wish to be loved, not as a power conferring favors which belong really to the first picture, but as a fellow-being with an understanding heart? The granting of either wish is not a bit beyond the possibilities of anyone. It is merely a question of depositing securities of value in the bank of life.

THE BANK OF LIFE

Life, whether social or business, is a bank in which you deposit certain funds of character, intellect and heart; or other funds of egotism, hard-heartedness and unconcern; or deposit—nothing! And the bank honors your deposit, and no more. In other words, you can draw nothing out but what you have put in.

If your community is to give you admiration and honor, it is merely necessary to be admirable and honorable. The more you put in, the more will be paid out to you. It is too trite to put on paper! But it is astonishing, isn't it, how many people who are depositing nothing whatever, expect to be paid in admiration and respect?

A man of really high position is always a great citizen first and above all. Otherwise he is a hollow puppet whether he is a millionaire or has scarcely a dime to bless himself with. In the same way, a woman's social position that is built on sham, vanity, and selfishness, is like one of the buildings at an exposition; effective at first sight, but bound when slightly weather-beaten to show stucco and glue.

It would be very presumptuous to attempt to tell any man how to acquire the highest position in his community, especially as the answer is written in his heart, his intellect, his altruistic sympathy, and his ardent civic pride. A subject, however, that is not so serious or over-aweing, and which can perhaps have directions written for it, is the lesser ambition of acquiring a social position.

TAKING OR ACQUIRING A SOCIAL POSITION

A bride whose family or family-in-law has social position has merely to take that which is hers by inheritance; but a stranger who comes to live in a new place, or one who has always lived in a community but unknown to society, have both to acquire a standing of their own. For example:

THE BRIDE OF GOOD FAMILY

The bride of good family need do nothing on her own initiative. After her marriage when she settles down in her own house or apartment, everyone who was asked to her wedding breakfast or reception, and even many who were only bidden to the church, call on her. She keeps their cards, enters them in a visiting or ordinary alphabetically indexed blank book, and within two weeks she returns each one of their calls.

As it is etiquette for everyone when calling for the first time on a bride, to ask if she is in, the bride, in returning her first calls, should do likewise. As a matter of fact, a bride assumes the intimate visiting list of both her own and her husband's families, whether they call on her or not. By and by, if she gives a general tea or ball, she can invite whom, among them, she wants to. She should not, however, ask any mere acquaintances of her family to her house, until they have first invited her and her husband to theirs. But if she would like to invite intimate friends of her own or of her husband, or of her family, there is no valid reason why she should not do so.

Usually when a bride and groom return from their wedding trip, all their personal friends and those of their respective parents, give "parties" for them. And from being seen at one house, they are invited to another. If they go nowhere, they do not lose position but they are apt to be overlooked until people remember them by seeing them. But it is not at all necessary for young people to entertain in order to be asked out a great deal; they need merely be attractive and have engaging manners to be as popular as heart could wish. But they must make it a point to be considerate of everyone and never fail to take the trouble to go up with a smiling "How do you do" to every older lady who has been courteous enough to invite them to her house. That is not "toadying," it is being merely polite. To go up and gush is a very different matter, and to go up and gush over a prominent hostess who has never invited them to her house, *is* toadying and of a very cheap variety.

A really well-bred person is as charming as possible to all, but effusive to none, and shows no difference in manner either to the high or to the lowly when they are of equally formal acquaintance.

THE BRIDE WHO IS A STRANGER

The bride who is a stranger, but whose husband is well known in the town to which he brings her, is in much the same position as the bride noted above, in that her husband's friends call on her; she returns their visits, and many of them invite her to their house. But it then devolves upon her to make herself liked, otherwise she will find herself in a community of many acquaintances but no friends. The best ingredients for likeableness are a happy expression of countenance, an unaffected manner, and a sympathetic attitude. If she is so fortunate as to possess these attributes her path will have roses enough. But a young woman with an affected pose and bad or conceited manners, will find plenty of thorns. Equally unsuccessful is she with a chip-on-her-shoulder who, coming from New York for instance, to live in Brightmeadows, insists upon dragging New York sky-scrapers into every comparison with Brightmeadows' new six-storied building. She might better pack her trunks and go

back where she came from. Nor should the bride from Brightmeadows who has married a New Yorker, flaunt Brightmeadows standards or customs, and tell Mrs. Worldly that she does not approve of a lady's smoking! Maybe she doesn't and she may be quite right, and she should not under the circumstances smoke herself; but she should not make a display of intolerance, or she, too, had better take the first train back home, since she is likely to find New York very, very lonely.

HOW TOTAL STRANGERS ACQUIRE SOCIAL STANDING

When new people move into a community, bringing letters of introduction to prominent citizens, they arrive with an already made position, which ranks in direct proportion to the standing of those who wrote the introductions. Since, however, no one but "persons of position" are eligible to letters of importance, there would be no question of acquiring position—which they have—but merely of adding to their acquaintance.

As said in another chapter, people of position are people of position the world over, and all the cities strung around the whole globe are like so many chapterhouses of a brotherhood, to which letters of introduction open the doors.

However, this is off the subject, which is to advise those who have no position, or letters, how to acquire the former. It is a long and slow road to travel, particularly long and slow for a man and his wife in a big city. In New York people could live in the same house for generations, and do, and not have their next door neighbor know them even by sight. But no other city, except London, is as unaware as that. When people move to a new city, or town, it is usually because of business. The husband at least makes business acquaintances, but the wife is left alone. The only thing for her to do is to join the church of her denomination, and become interested in some activity; not only as an opening wedge to acquaintanceships and possibly intimate friendships, but as an occupation and a respite from loneliness. Her social position is gained usually at a snail's pace—nor should she do anything to hurry it. If she is a real person, if she has qualities of mind and heart, if she has charming manners, sooner or later a certain position will come, and in proportion to her eligibility.

One of the ladies with whom she works in church, having gradually learned to like her, asks her to her house. Nothing may ever come of this, but another one also inviting her, may bring an introduction to a third, who takes a fancy to her. This third lady also invites her where she meets an acquaintance she has already made on one of the two former occasions, and this acquaintance in turn invites her. By the time she has met the same people several times, they gradually, one by one, offer to go and see her, or ask her to come and see them. One inviolable rule she must not forget: it is fatal to be pushing or presuming. She must remain dignified always, natural and sympathetic when anyone approaches her, but she should not herself approach any one more than half way. A smile, the more friendly the better, is never out of place, but after smiling, she should pass on! Never grin weakly, and —— cling!

If she is asked to go to see a lady, it is quite right to go. But not again, until the lady has returned the visit, or asked her to her house. And if admitted when making a first visit, she should remember not to stay more than twenty minutes at most, since it is always wiser to make others sorry to have her leave than run the risk of having the hostess wonder why her visitor doesn't know enough to go!

THE ENTRANCE OF AN OUTSIDER

The outsider enters society by the same path, but it is steeper and longer because there is an outer gate of reputation called "They are not people of any position" which is difficult to unlatch. Nor is it ever unlatched to those who sit at the gate rattling at the bars, or plaintively peering in. The better, and the only way if she has not the key of birth, is through study to make herself eligible. Meanwhile, charitable, or civic work, will give her interest and occupation as well as throw her with ladies of good breeding, by association with whom she can not fail to acquire some of those qualities of manner before which the gates of society always open.

WHEN POSITION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED

When her husband belongs to a club, or perhaps she does too, and the neighbors are friendly and those of social importance have called on her and asked her to their houses, a newcomer does not have to stand so exactly on the chalk line of ceremony as in returning her first visits and sending out her first invitations.

After people have dined with each other several times, it is not at all important to consider whether an invitation is owed or paid several times over. She who is hospitably inclined can ask people half a dozen times to their once if she wants to, and they show their friendliness by coming. Nor need visits be paid in alternate order. Once she is really accepted by people she can be as friendly as she chooses.

When Mrs. Oldname calls on Mrs. Stranger the first time, the latter may do nothing but call in return; it would be the height of presumption to invite one of conspicuous prominence until she has first been invited by her. Nor may the Strangers ask the Oldnames to dine after being merely invited to a tea. But when Mrs. Oldname asks Mrs. Stranger to lunch, the latter might then invite the former to dinner, after which, if they accept, the Strangers can continue to invite them on occasion, whether they are invited in turn or not; especially if the Strangers are continually entertaining, and the Oldnames are not. But on no account must the Strangers' parties be arranged solely for the benefit of any particular fashionables.

The Strangers can also invite to a party any children whom their own children know at school, and Mrs. Stranger can quite properly go to fetch her own children from a party to which their schoolmates invited them.

MONEY NOT ESSENTIAL TO SOCIAL POSITION

Bachelors, unless they are very well off, are not expected to give parties; nor for that matter are very young couples. All hostesses go on asking single men and young people to their houses without it ever occurring to them that any return other than politeness should be made.

There are many couples, not necessarily in the youngest set either, who are tremendously popular in society in spite of the fact that they give no parties at all. The Lovejoys, for instance, who are clamored for everywhere, have every attribute—except money. With fewer clothes perhaps than any fashionable young woman in New York, she can't compete with Mrs. Bobo Gilding or Constance Style for "smartness" but, as Mrs. Worldly remarked: "What would be the use of Celia Lovejoy's beauty if it depended upon continual variation in clothes?"

The only "entertaining" the Lovejoys ever do is limited to afternoon tea and occasional welsh-rarebit suppers. But they return every bit of hospitality shown them by helping to make a party "go" wherever they are. Both are amusing, both are interesting, both do everything well. They can't afford to play cards for money, but they both play a very good game and the table is delighted to "carry them," or they play at the same table against each other.

This, by the way, is another illustration of the conduct of a gentleman; if young Lovejoy played for money he would win undoubtedly in the long run because he plays unusually well, but to use card-playing as a "means of making money" would be contrary to the ethics of a gentleman, just as playing for more than can be afforded turns a game into "gambling."

AN ELUSIVE POINT ESSENTIAL TO SOCIAL SUCCESS

The sense of whom to invite with whom is one of the most important, and elusive, points in social knowledge. The possession or lack of it is responsible more than anything else for the social success of one woman, and the failure of another. And as it is almost impossible, without advice, for any stranger anywhere to know which people like or dislike each other, the would-be hostess must either by means of natural talent or more likely by trained attention, read the signs of liking or prejudice much as a woodsman reads a message in every broken twig or turned leaf.

One who can read expression, perceives at a glance the difference between friendliness and polite aloofness. When a lady is unusually silent, strictly impersonal in conversation, and entirely unapproachable, something is not to her liking. The question is, what? Or usually, whom? The greatest blunder possible would be to ask her what the matter is. The cause of annoyance is

probably that she finds someone distasteful and it should not be hard for one whose faculties are not asleep to discover the offender and if possible separate them, or at least never ask them together again.

Chapter X.
Cards and Visits

USEFULNESS OF CARDS

WHO was it that said—in the Victorian era probably, and a man of course—“The only mechanical tool ever needed by a woman is a hair-pin”? He might have added that with a hair-pin and a visiting card, she is ready to meet most emergencies.

Although the principal use of a visiting card, at least the one for which it was originally invented—to be left as an evidence of one person’s presence at the house of another—is going gradually out of ardent favor in fashionable circles, its usefulness seems to keep a nicely adjusted balance. In New York, for instance, the visiting card has entirely taken the place of the written note of invitation to informal parties of every description. Messages of condolence or congratulation are written on it; it is used as an endorsement in the giving of an order; it is even tacked on the outside of express boxes. The only employment of it which is not as flourishing as formerly is its being left in quantities and with frequency at the doors of acquaintances. This will be explained further on.

A CARD’S SIZE AND ENGRAVING

The card of a lady is usually from about 2 3/4 to 3 1/2 inches wide, by 2 to 2 3/4 inches high, but there is no fixed rule. The card of a young girl is smaller and more nearly square in shape. (About 2 inches high by 2 1/2 or 2 5/8 inches long, depending upon the length of the name.) Young girls use smaller cards than older ladies. A gentleman’s card is long and narrow, from 2 7/8 to 3 1/4 inches long, and from 1 1/4 to 1 5/8 inches high. All visiting cards are engraved on white unglazed bristol board, which may be of medium thickness or thin, as one fancies. A few years ago there was a fad for cards as thin as writing paper, but one seldom sees them in America now. The advantage of a thin card is that a greater quantity may be carried easily.

The engraving most in use to-day is shaded block. Script is seldom seen, but it is always good form and so is plain block, but with the exception of old English all ornate lettering should be avoided. All people who live in cities should have the address in the lower right corner, engraved in smaller letters than the name. In the country, addresses are not important, as every one knows where every one else lives. People who have town and country houses usually have separate cards, though not necessarily a separate plate.

ECONOMICAL ENGRAVING

The economically inclined can have several varieties of cards printed from one plate. The cards would vary somewhat in size in order to “center” the wording.

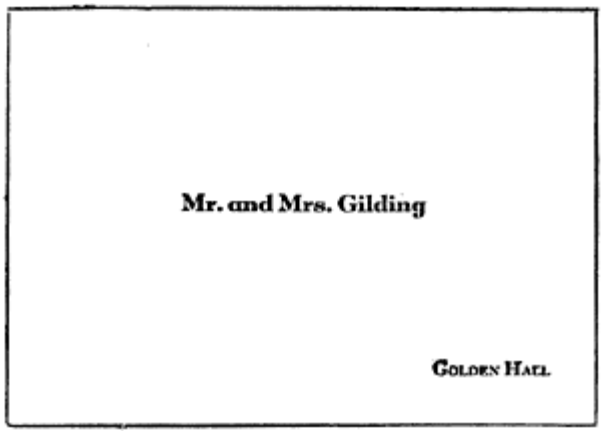
Example:
The plate:

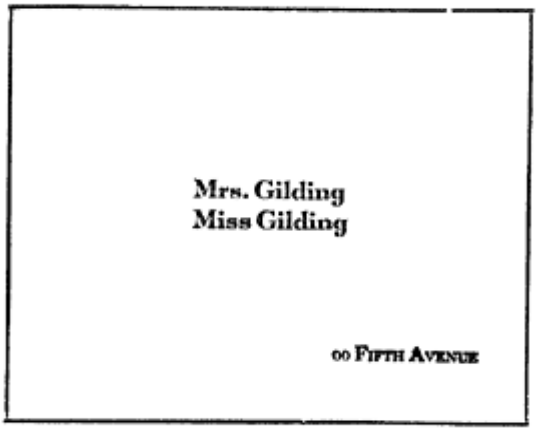
Mr. and Mrs. Gilding
Miss Gilding

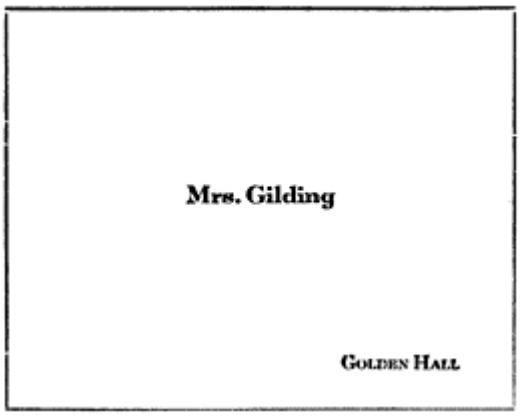
00 Fifth Avenue
Golden Hall

may be printed.

Miss Gilding's name should never appear on a card with both her mother's and father's, so her name being out of line under the "Mr. and Mrs." engraving makes no difference.







The personal card is in a measure an index of one's character. A fantastic or garish note in the type effect, in the quality or shape of the card, betrays a lack of taste in the owner of the card.

It is not customary for a married man to have a club address on his card, and it would be serviceable only in giving a card of introduction to a business acquaintance, under social rather than business circumstances, or in paying a formal call upon a political or business associate. Unmarried men often use no other address than that of a club; especially if they live in bachelor's quarters, but young men who live at home use their home address.

CORRECT NAMES AND TITLES

To be impeccably correct, initials should not be engraved on a visiting card. A gentleman's card should read: Mr. John Hunter Titherington Smith, but since names are sometimes awkwardly long, and it is the American custom to cling to each and every one given in baptism, he asserts his possessions by representing each one with an initial, and engraves his cards Mr. John H. T. Smith, or Mr. J. H. Titherington Smith, as suits his fancy. So, although, according to high authorities, he should drop a name or two and be Mr. Hunter Smith, or Mr. Titherington Smith, it is very likely that to the end of time the American man, and necessarily his wife, who must use the name as he does, will go on cherishing initials.

And a widow no less than a married woman should always continue to use her husband's Christian name, or his name and another initial, engraved on her cards. She is Mrs. John Hunter Titherington Smith, or, to compromise, Mrs. J. H. Titherington Smith, but she is *never* Mrs. Sarah Smith; at least not anywhere in good society. In business and in legal matters a woman is necessarily addressed by her own Christian name, because she uses it in her signature. But no one should ever address an envelope, except from a bank or a lawyer's office, "Mrs. Sarah Smith." When a widow's son, who has the name of his father, marries, the widow has Sr. added to her own name, or if she is the "head" of the family, she very often omits all Christian names, and has her card engraved "Mrs. Smith," and the son's wife calls herself Mrs. John Hunter Smith. Smith is not a very good name as an example, since no one could very well claim the distinction of being *the* Mrs. Smith. It, however, illustrates the point.

For the daughter-in-law to continue to use a card with Jr. on it when her husband no longer uses Jr. on his, is a mistake made by many people. A wife always bears the name of her husband. To have a man and his mother use cards engraved respectively Mr. J. H. Smith and Mrs. J. H. Smith and the son's wife a card engraved Mrs. J. H. Smith, Jr., would announce to whomever the three cards were left upon, that Mr. and Mrs. Smith and *their* daughter-in-law had called.

The cards of a young girl after she is sixteen have always "Miss" before her name, which must be her real and never a nick-name: Miss Sarah Smith, not Miss Sally Smith.

The fact that a man's name has "Jr." added at the end in no way takes the place of "Mr." His card should be engraved Mr. John Hunter Smith, Jr., and his wife's Mrs. John Hunter Smith, Jr. Some people have the "Jr." written out, "junior." It is not spelled with a capital J if written in full.

A boy puts Mr. on his cards when he leaves school though many use cards without Mr. on them while in college. A doctor, or a judge, or a minister, or a military officer have their cards engraved with the abbreviation of their title: Dr. Henry Gordon; Judge Horace Rush; The Rev. William Goode; Col. Thomas

Doyle.

The double card reads: Dr. and Mrs. Henry Gordon; Hon. and Mrs., etc.

A woman who has divorced her husband retains the legal as well as the social right to use her husband's full name, in New York State at least. Usually she prefers, if her name was Alice Green, to call herself Mrs. Green Smith; not Mrs. Alice Smith, and on no account Mrs. Alice Green—unless she wishes to give the impression that she was the guilty one in the divorce.

CHILDREN'S CARDS

That very little children should have visiting cards is not so "silly" as might at first thought be supposed. To acquire perfect manners, and those graces of deportment that Lord Chesterfield so ardently tried to instil into his son, training can not begin early enough, since it is through lifelong familiarity with the niceties of etiquette that much of the distinction of those to the manner born is acquired.

Many mothers think it good training for children to have their own cards, which they are taught not so much to leave upon each other after "parties," as to send with gifts upon various occasions.

At the rehearsal of a wedding, the tiny twin flower girls came carrying their wedding present for the bride between them, to which they had themselves attached their own small visiting cards. One card was bordered and engraved in pink, and the other bordered and engraved in blue, and the address on each read *"Chez Maman."*

And in going to see a new baby cousin each brought a small 1830 bouquet, and sent to their aunt their cards, on which, after seeing the baby, one had printed "He is very little," and the other, "It has a red face." This shows that if modern society believes in beginning social training in the nursery, it does not believe in hampering a child's natural expression.

SPECIAL CARDS AND WHEN TO USE THEM

The double card, reading Mr. and Mrs., is sent with a wedding present, or with flowers to a funeral, or with flowers to a débutante, and is also used in paying formal visits.

The card on which a débutante's name is engraved under that of her mother, is used most frequently when no coming-out entertainment has been given for the daughter. Her name on her mother's card announces, wherever it is left, that the daughter is "grown" and "eligible" for invitations. In the same way a mother may leave her son's card with her own upon any of her own friends—especially upon those likely to entertain for young people. This is the custom if a young man has been away at school and college for so long that he has not a large acquaintance of his own. It is, however, correct under any circumstances when formally leaving cards to leave those of all sons and daughters who are grown.

THE P. P. C. CARD

This is merely a visiting card, whether of a lady or a gentleman, on which the initials P. P. C. (*pour prendre congé*—to take leave) are written in ink in the lower left corner. This is usually left at the door, or sent by mail to acquaintances, when one is leaving for the season, or for good. It never takes the place of a farewell visit when one has received especial courtesy, nor is it in any sense a message of thanks for especial kindness. In either of these instances, a visit should be paid or a note of farewell and thanks written.

CARDS OF NEW OR TEMPORARY ADDRESS

In cities where there is no Social Register or other printed society list, one notifies acquaintances of a change of address by mailing a visiting card.

Cards are also sent, with a temporary address written in ink, when one is in a strange city and wishes to notify friends where one is stopping.

It is also quite correct for a lady to mail her card with her temporary address written on it to any gentleman whom she would care to see, and who she is sure would like to see her.

WHEN CARDS ARE SENT

When not intending to go to a tea or a wedding reception (the invitation to which did not have R. s. v. p. on it and require an answer), one should mail cards to the hostess so as to arrive on the morning of the entertainment. To a tea given for a débutante cards are enclosed in one envelope and addressed:

Mrs. Gilding
Miss
Gilding

00 Fifth Avenue
New York

For a wedding reception, cards are sent to Mr. and Mrs. ———, the mother and father of the bride, and another set of cards sent to Mr. and Mrs. ———, the bride and bridegroom.

THE VISIT OF EMPTY FORM

Not so many years ago, a lady or gentleman, young girl or youth, who failed to pay her or his “party call” after having been invited to Mrs. Social-Leader’s ball was left out of her list when she gave her next one. For the old-fashioned hostess kept her visiting list with the precision of a bookkeeper in a bank; everyone’s credit was entered or cancelled according to the presence of her or his cards in the card receiver. Young people who liked to be asked to her house were apt to leave an extra one at the door, on occasion, so that theirs should not be among the missing when the new list for the season was made up—especially as the more important old ladies were very quick to strike a name off, but seldom if ever known to put one back.

But about twenty years ago the era of informality set in and has been gaining ground ever since. In certain cities old-fashioned hostesses, it is said, exclude delinquents. But New York is too exotic and intractable, and the too exacting hostess is likely to find her tapestried rooms rather empty, while the younger world of fashion flocks to the crystal-fountained ballroom of the new Spendeasy Westerns. And then, too, life holds so many other diversions and interests for the very type of youth which of necessity is the vital essence of all social gaiety. Society can have distinction and dignity without youth—but not gaiety. The country with its outdoor sports, its freedom from exacting conventions, has gradually deflected the interest of the younger fashionables, until at present they care very little whether Mrs. Toplofty and Mrs. Social-Leader ask them to their balls or not. They are glad enough to go, of course, but they don’t care enough for invitations to pay dull visits and to live up to the conventions of “manners” that old-fashioned hostesses demand. And as these “rebels” are invariably the most attractive and the most eligible youths, it has become almost an issue; a hostess must in many cases either invite none but older people and the few young girls and men whose mothers have left cards for them, or ignore convention and invite the rebels.

In trying to find out where the present indifference started, many ascribe it to Bobo Gilding, to whom entering a great drawing-room was more suggestive of the daily afternoon tea ordeal of his early nursery days, than a voluntary act of pleasure. He was long ago one of the first to rebel against old Mrs. Toplofty’s exactions of party calls, by saying he did not care in the least whether his great-aunt Jane Toplofty invited him to her stodgy old ball or not. And then Lucy Wellborn (the present Mrs. Bobo Gilding) did not care much to go either if none of her particular men friends were to be there. Little she cared to dance the cotillion with old Colonel Bluffington or to go to supper with that odious Hector Newman.

And so, beginning first with a few gilded youths, then including young society, the habit has spread until the obligatory paying of visits by young girls and men has almost joined the once universal “day at home” as belonging to a past age. Do not understand by this that visits are never paid on other occasions. Visits to strangers, visits of condolence, and of other courtesies are still paid, quite as punctiliously as ever. But within the walls of society itself, the visit of formality is decreasing. One might almost say that in certain cities society has become a family affair. Its walls are as high as ever, higher perhaps to outsiders, but among its own members, such customs as keeping visiting lists and having days at home, or even knowing who owes a visit to whom, is not only unobserved but is unheard of.

But because punctilious card-leaving, visiting, and “days at home” have gone out of fashion in New York, is no reason why these really important observances should not be, or are not, in the height of fashion

elsewhere. Nor, on the other hand, must anyone suppose because the younger fashionables in New York pay few visits and never have days at home, that they are a bit less careful about the things which they happen to consider essential to good-breeding.

The best type of young men pay few, if any, party calls, because they work and they exercise, and whatever time is left over, if any, is spent in their club or at the house of a young woman, not tête-a-tête, but invariably playing bridge. The Sunday afternoon visits that the youth of another generation used always to pay, are unknown in this, because every man who can, spends the week-end in the country.

It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that not alone men, but many young married women of highest social position, except to send with flowers or wedding presents, do not use a dozen visiting cards a year. But there are circumstances when even the most indifferent to social obligations must leave cards.

WHEN CARDS MUST BE LEFT

Etiquette absolutely demands that one leave a card within a few days after taking a first meal in a lady's house; or if one has for the first time been *invited* to lunch or dine with strangers, it is inexcusably rude not to leave a card upon them, whether one accepted the invitation or not.

One must also unfailingly return a first call, even if one does not care for the acquaintance. Only a real "cause" can excuse the affront to an innocent stranger that the refusal to return a first call would imply. If one does not care to continue the acquaintance, one need not pay a second visit.

Also a card is always left with a first invitation. Supposing Miss Philadelphia takes a letter of introduction to Mrs. Newport—Mrs. Newport, inviting Miss Philadelphia to her house, would not think of sending her invitation without also leaving her card. Good form demands that a visit be paid before issuing a *first invitation.* Sometimes a note of explanation is sent asking that the formality be waived, but it is *never* disregarded, except in the case of an invitation from an older lady to a young girl. Mrs. Worldly, for instance, who has known Jim Smartlington always, might, instead of calling on Mary Smith, to whom his engagement is announced, write her a note, asking her to lunch or dinner. But in inviting Mrs. Greatlake of Chicago she would leave her card with her invitation at Mrs. Greatlake's hotel.

It seems scarcely necessary to add that anyone not entirely heartless must leave a card on, or send flowers to, an acquaintance who has suffered a recent bereavement. One should also leave cards of inquiry or send flowers to sick people.

INVITATION IN PLACE OF RETURNED VISIT

Books on etiquette seem agreed that sending an invitation does not cancel the obligation of paying a visit—which may be technically correct—but fashionable people, who are in the habit of lunching or dining with each other two or three times a season, pay no attention to visits whatever. Mrs. Norman calls on Mrs. Gilding. Mrs. Gilding invites the Normans to dinner. They go. A short time afterward Mrs. Norman invites the Gildings—or the Gildings very likely again invite the Normans. Some evening at all events, the Gildings dine with the Normans. Someday, if Mrs. Gilding happens to be leaving cards, she may leave them at the Normans—or she may not. Some people leave cards almost like the "hares" in a paper chase; others seldom if ever do. Except on the occasions mentioned in the paragraph before this, or unless there is an illness, a death, a birth, or a marriage, people in society invite each other to their houses and don't leave cards at all. Nor do they ever consider whose "turn" it is to invite whom.

"NOT AT HOME"

When a servant at a door says "Not at home," this phrase means that the lady of the house is "Not at home to visitors." This answer neither signifies nor implies—nor is it intended to—that Mrs. Jones is out of the house. Some people say "Not receiving," which means actually the same thing, but the "not at home" is infinitely more polite; since in the former you know she is in the house but won't see you, whereas in the latter case you have the pleasant uncertainty that it is quite possible she is out.

To be told "Mrs. Jones is at home but doesn't want to see you," would certainly be unpleasant. And to "beg to be excused"—except in a case of illness or bereavement—has something very suggestive of a cold shoulder. But "not at home" means that she is not sitting in the drawing room behind her tea tray; that

and nothing else. She may be out or she may be lying down or otherwise occupied. Nor do people of the world find the slightest objection if a hostess, happening to recognize the visitor as a particular friend, calls out, “Do come in! I *am* at home to *you!”* Anyone who talks about this phrase as being a “white lie” either doesn’t understand the meaning of the words, or is going very far afield to look for untruth. To be consistent, these over-literals should also exact that when a guest inadvertently knocks over a tea cup and stains a sofa, the hostess instead of saying “It is nothing at all! Please don’t worry about it,” ought for the sake of truth to say, “See what your clumsiness has done! You have ruined my sofa!” And when someone says “How are you?” instead of answering “Very well, thank you,” the same truthful one should perhaps take an hour by the clock and mention every symptom of indisposition that she can accurately subscribe to.

While “not at home” is merely a phrase of politeness, to say “I am *out”* after a card has been brought to you is both an untruth and an inexcusable rudeness. Or to have an inquiry answered, “I don’t know, but I’ll see,” and then to have the servant, after taking a card, come back with the message “Mrs. Jones is out” can not fail to make the visitor feel rebuffed. Once a card has been admitted, the visitor *must* be admitted also, no matter how inconvenient receiving her may be. You may send a message that you are dressing but will be very glad to see her if she can wait ten minutes. The visitor can either wait or say she is pressed for time. But if she does not wait, then *she* is rather discourteous.

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance always to leave directions at the door such as, “Mrs. Jones is not at home.” “Miss Jones will be home at five o’clock,” “Mrs. Jones will be home at 5.30,” or Mrs. Jones “is at home” in the library to intimate friends, but “not at home” in the drawing-room to acquaintances. It is a nuisance to be obliged to remember either to turn an “in” and “out” card in the hall, or to ring a bell and say, “I am going out,” and again, “I have come in.” But whatever plan or arrangement you choose, no one at your front door should be left in doubt and then repulsed. It is not only bad manners, it is bad housekeeping.

THE OLD-FASHIONED DAY AT HOME

It is doubtful if the present generation of New Yorkers knows what a day at home is! But their mothers, at least, remember the time when the fashionable districts were divided into regular sections, wherein on a given day in the week, the whole neighborhood was “at home.” Friday sounds familiar as the day for Washington Square! And was it Monday for lower Fifth Avenue? At all events, each neighborhood on the day of its own, suggested a local fête. Ladies in visiting dresses with trains and bonnets and nose-veils and tight gloves, holding card cases, tripped demurely into this house, out of that, and again into another; and there were always many broughams and victorias slowly “exercising” up and down, and very smart footmen standing with maroon or tan or fur rugs over their arms in front of Mrs. Wellborn’s house or Mrs. Oldname’s, or the big house of Mrs. Toplofty at the corner of Fifth Avenue. It must have been enchanting to be a grown person in those days! Enchanting also were the C-spring victorias, as was life in general that was taken at a slow carriage pace and not at the motor speed of to-day. The “day at home” is still in fashion in Washington, and it is ardently to be hoped that it also flourishes in many cities and towns throughout the country or that it will be revived, for it is a delightful custom—though more in keeping with Europe than America, which does not care for gentle paces once it has tasted swift. A certain young New York hostess announced that she was going to stay home on Saturday afternoons. But the men went to the country and the women to the opera, and she gave it up.

There are a few old-fashioned ladies, living in old-fashioned houses, and still staying at home in the old-fashioned way to old-fashioned friends who for decades have dropped in for a cup of tea and a chat. And there are two maiden ladies in particular, joint chatelaines of an imposingly beautiful old house where, on a certain afternoon of the week, if you come in for tea, you are sure to meet not alone those prominent in the world of fashion, but a fair admixture of artists, scientists, authors, inventors, distinguished strangers—in a word Best Society in its truest sense. But days at home such as these are not easily duplicated; for few houses possess a “salon” atmosphere, and few hostesses achieve either the social talent or the wide cultivation necessary to attract and interest so varied and brilliant a company.

MODERN CARD LEAVING: A QUESTIONABLE ACT OF POLITENESS

The modern New York fashion in card-leaving is to dash as fast as possible from house to house,

sending the chauffeur up the steps with cards, without ever asking if anyone is home. Some butlers announce “Not at home” from force of habit even when no question is asked. There are occasions when the visitors *must ask* to see the hostess (see X¶54); but cards are left without asking whether a lady is at home under the following circumstances:

Cards are left on the mother of the bride, after a wedding, also on the mother of the groom.

Cards are also left after any formal invitation. Having been asked to lunch or dine with a lady whom you know but slightly you should leave your card whether you accepted the invitation or not, within three days if possible, or at least within a week, of the date for which you were invited. It is not considered necessary (in New York at least) to ask if she is at home; promptness in leaving your card is, in this instance, better manners than delaying your “party call” and asking if she is at home. This matter of asking at the door is one that depends upon the customs of each State and city, but as it is always wiser to err on the side of politeness, it is the better policy, if in doubt, to ask “Is Mrs. Blank at home?” rather than to run the risk of offending a lady who may like to see visitors.

A card is usually left with a first invitation to a stranger who has brought a letter of introduction, but it is more polite—even though not necessary—to ask to be received. Some ladies make it a habit to leave a card on everyone on their visiting list once a season.

It is correct for the mother of a débutante to leave her card as well as her daughter’s on every lady who has invited the daughter to her house, and a courteous hostess returns all of these pasteboard visits. But neither visit necessitates closer or even further acquaintance.

VISITS WHICH EVERYONE MUST PAY

Paying visits differs from leaving cards in that you must ask to be received. A visit of condolence should be paid at once to a friend when a death occurs in her immediate family. A lady does not call on a gentleman, but writes him a note of sympathy.

In going to inquire for sick people, you should ask to be received, and it is always thoughtful to take them gifts of books or fruit or flowers.

If a relative announces his engagement, you must at once go to see his fiancée. Should she be out, you do not ask to see her mother. You do, however, leave a card upon both ladies and you ask to see her mother if received by the daughter.

A visit of congratulation is also paid to a new mother and a gift invariably presented to the baby.

MESSAGES WRITTEN ON CARDS

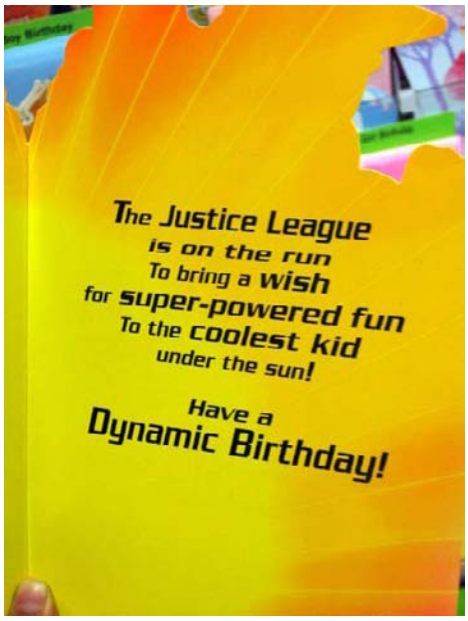
“With sympathy” or “With deepest sympathy” is written on your visiting card with flowers sent to a funeral. This same message is written on a card and left at the door of a house of mourning, if you do not know the family well enough to ask to be received.

“To inquire” is often written on a card left at the house of a sick person, but not if you are received.

In going to see a friend who is visiting a lady whom you do not know, whether you should leave a card on the hostess as well as on your friend depends upon the circumstances; if the hostess is one who is socially prominent and you are unknown, it would be better taste not to leave a card on her, since your card afterward found without explanation might be interpreted as an uncalled-for visit made in an attempt for a place on her list. If, on the other hand, she is the unknown person and you are the prominent one, your card is polite, but unwise unless you mean to include her name on your list. But if she is one with whom you have many interests in common, then you may very properly leave a card for her.

In leaving a card on a lady stopping at a hotel or living in an apartment house, you should write her name in pencil across the top of your card, to insure its being given to her, and not to some one else.

At the house of a lady whom you know well and whom you are sorry not to find at home, it is “friendly” to write “Sorry not to see you!” or “So sorry to miss you!”



Turning down a corner of a visiting card is by many intended to convey that the visit is meant for all the ladies in the family. Other people mean merely to show that the card was left at the door in person and not sent in an envelope. Other people turn them down from force of habit and mean nothing whatever. But whichever the reason, more cards are bent or dog-eared than are left flat.

ENGRAVED CARDS ANNOUNCING ENGAGEMENT, BAD FORM

Someone somewhere asked whether or not to answer an engraved card announcing an engagement. The answer can have nothing to do with etiquette, since an engraved announcement is unknown to good society. (For the proper announcement of an engagement see XX¶19.)

WHEN PEOPLE SEE THEIR FRIENDS

Five o'clock is the informal hour when people are "at home" to friends. The correct hour for leaving cards and paying formal visits is between 3.30 and 4.30. One should hesitate to pay a visit at the "tea hour" unless one is sure of one's welcome among the "intimates" likely to be found around the hostess's tea-table.

Many ladies make it their practise to be home if possible at five o'clock, and their friends who know them well come in at that time. (For the afternoon tea-table and its customs, see XIII¶29.)

INFORMAL VISITING OFTEN ARRANGED BY TELEPHONE

For instance, instead of ringing her door-bell, Mrs. Norman calls Mrs. Kindhart on the telephone: "I haven't seen you for weeks! Won't you come in to tea, or to lunch—just you." Mrs. Kindhart answers, "Yes, I'd love to. I can come this afternoon"; and five o'clock finds them together over the tea-table.

In the same way young Struthers calls up Millicent Gilding, "Are you going to be in this afternoon?" She says, "Yes, but not until a quarter of six." He says, "Fine, I'll come then." Or she says, "I'm so sorry, I'm playing bridge with Pauline—but I'll be in tomorrow!" He says, "All right, I'll come to-morrow."

The younger people rarely ever go to see each other without first telephoning. Or since even young people seldom meet except for bridge, most likely it is Millicent Gilding who telephones the Struthers youth to ask if he can't possibly get uptown before five o'clock to make a fourth with Mary and Jim and herself.

HOW A FIRST VISIT IS MADE

In very large cities, neighbors seldom call on each other. But if strangers move into a neighborhood in a small town or in the country, or at a watering-place, it is not only unfriendly but uncivil for their neighbors not to call on them. The older residents always call on the newer. And the person of greatest social prominence should make the first visit, or at least invite the younger or less prominent one to call on her; which the younger should promptly do.

Or two ladies of equal age or position may either one say, "I wish you would come to see me." To which the other replies "I will with pleasure." More usually the first one offers "I should like to come to see you, if I may." And the other, of course, answers "I shall be delighted if you will."

The first one, having suggested going to see the second, is bound in politeness to do so, otherwise she implies that the acquaintance on second thought seems distasteful to her.

Everyone invited to a wedding should call upon the bride on her return from the honeymoon. And when a man marries a girl from a distant place, courtesy absolutely demands that his friends and neighbors call on her as soon as she arrives in her new home.

ON OPENING THE DOOR TO A VISITOR

On the hall table in every house, there should be a small silver, or other card tray, a pad and a pencil. The nicest kind of pad is one that when folded, makes its own envelope, so that a message when written need not be left open. There are all varieties and sizes at all stationers.

When the door-bell rings, the servant on duty, who can easily see the chauffeur or lady approaching, should have the card tray ready to present, on the palm of the left hand. A servant at the door must never take the cards in his or her fingers.

CORRECT NUMBER OF CARDS TO LEAVE

When the visitor herself rings the door-bell and the message is “not at home,” the butler or maid proffers the card tray on which the visitor lays a card of her own and her daughter’s for each lady in the house and a card of her husband’s and son’s for each lady and gentleman. But three is the greatest number ever left of any one card. In calling on Mrs. Town, who has three grown daughters and her mother living in the house, and a Mrs. Stranger staying with her whom the visitor was invited to a luncheon to meet, a card on each would need a packet of six. Instead, the visitor should leave three—one for Mrs. Town, one for all the other ladies of the house, and one for Mrs. Stranger. In asking to be received, her query at the door should be “Are any of the ladies at home?” Or in merely leaving her cards she should say “For all of the ladies.”

WHEN THE CALLER LEAVES

The butler or maid must stand with the front door open until a visitor re-enters her motor, or if she is walking, until she has reached the sidewalk. It is bad manners ever to close the door in a visitor’s face.

When a chauffeur leaves cards, the door may be closed as soon as he turns away.

WHEN THE LADY OF THE HOUSE IS AT HOME

When the door is opened by a waitress or a parlor-maid and the mistress of the house is in the drawing-room, the maid says “This way, please,” and leads the way. She goes as quickly as possible to present the card tray. The guest, especially if a stranger, lags in order to give the hostess time to read the name on the card.

The maid meanwhile moves aside, to make room for the approaching visitor, who goes forward to shake hands with the hostess. If a butler is at the door, he reads the card himself, picking it up from the tray, and opening the door of the drawing-room announces: “Mrs. Soandso,” after which he puts the card on the hall table.

The duration of a formal visit should be in the neighborhood of twenty minutes. But if other visitors are announced, the first one—on a very formal occasion—may cut her visit shorter. Or if conversation becomes especially interesting, the visit may be prolonged five minutes or so. On no account must a visitor stay an hour!

A hostess always rises when a visitor enters, unless the visitor is a very young woman or man and she herself elderly, or unless she is seated behind the tea-table so that rising is difficult. She should, however, always rise and go forward to meet a lady much older than herself; but she never rises from her tea-table to greet a man, unless he is quite old.

If the lady of the house is “at home” but upstairs, the servant at the door leads the visitor into the reception room, saying “Will you take a seat, please?” and then carries the card to the mistress of the house.

On an exceptional occasion, such as paying a visit of condolence or inquiring for a convalescent, when the question as to whether he will be received is necessarily doubtful, a gentleman does not take off his coat or gloves, but waits in the reception room with his hat in his hand. When the servant returning says either “Will you come this way, please?” or “Mrs. Town is not well enough to see any one, but Miss Alice will be down in a moment,” the visitor divests himself of his coat and gloves, which the servant carries, as well as his hat, out to the front hall.

As said before, few men pay visits without first telephoning. But perhaps two or three times during a winter a young man, when he is able to get away from his office in time, will make a tea-time visit upon a hostess who has often invited him to dinner or to her opera box. Under ordinary circumstances, however, some woman member of his family leaves his card for him after a dinner or a dance, or else it is not left at all.

A gentleman paying visits, always asks if the hostess is at home. If she is, he leaves his hat and stick in the hall and also removes and leaves his gloves—and rubbers should he be wearing them. If the hour is between five and half-past, the hostess is inevitably at her tea-table, in the library, to which, if he is at all well known to the servant at the door, he is at once shown without being first asked to wait in the reception room. A gentleman entering a room in which there are several people who are strangers, shakes hands with his hostess and slightly bows to all the others, whether he knows them personally or not. He, of course, shakes hands with any who are friends, and with all men to whom he is introduced, but with a lady only if she offers him her hand.

HOW TO ENTER A DRAWING-ROOM

To know how to enter a drawing-room is supposed to be one of the supreme tests of good breeding. But there should be no more difficulty in entering the drawing-room of Mrs. Worldly than in entering the sitting-room at home. Perhaps the best instruction would be like that in learning to swim. “Take plenty of time, don’t struggle and don’t splash about!” Good manners socially are not unlike swimming—not the “crawl” or “overhand,” but smooth, tranquil swimming. (Quite probably where the expression “in the swim” came from anyway!) Before actually entering a room, it is easiest to pause long enough to see where the hostess is. Never start forward and then try to find her as an afterthought. The place to pause is on the threshold—not half-way in the room. The way *not* to enter a drawing-room is to dart forward and then stand awkwardly bewildered and looking about in every direction. A man of the world stops at the entrance of the room for a scarcely perceptible moment, until he perceives the most unencumbered approach to the hostess, and he thereupon walks over to her. When he greets his hostess he pauses slightly, the hostess smiles and offers her hand; the gentleman smiles and shakes hands, at the same time bowing. A lady shakes hands with the hostess and with every one she knows who is nearby. She bows to acquaintances at a distance and to strangers to whom she is introduced.

HOW TO SIT GRACEFULLY

Having shaken hands with the hostess, the visitor, whether a lady or a gentleman, looks about quietly, without hurry, for a convenient chair to sit down upon, or drop into. To sit gracefully one should not perch stiffly on the edge of a straight chair, nor sprawl at length in an easy one. The perfect position is one that is easy, but dignified. In other days, no lady of dignity ever crossed her knees, held her hands on her hips, or twisted herself sideways, or even *leaned back in her chair!* To-day all these things are done; and the only etiquette left is on the subject of how not to exaggerate them. No lady should cross her knees so that her skirts go up to or above them; neither should her foot be thrust out so that her toes are at knee level. An arm a-kimbo is *not* a graceful attitude, nor is a twisted spine! Everyone, of course, leans against a chair back, except in a box at the opera and in a ballroom, but a lady should never throw herself almost at full length in a reclining chair or on a wide sofa when she is out in public. Neither does a gentleman in paying a formal visit sit on the middle of his backbone with one ankle supported on the other knee, and both as high as his head.

The proper way for a lady to sit is in the center of her chair, or slightly sideways in the corner of a sofa. She may lean back, of course, and easily; her hands relaxed in her lap, her knees together, or if crossed, her foot must not be thrust forward so as to leave a space between the heel and her other ankle. On informal occasions she can lean back in an easy chair with her hands on the arms. In a ball dress a lady of distinction never leans back in a chair; one can not picture a beautiful and high-bred woman, wearing a tiara and other ballroom jewels, leaning against anything. This is, however, not so much a rule of etiquette as a question of beauty and fitness.

A gentleman, also on very formal occasions, should sit in the center of his chair; but unless it is a deep lounging one, he always leans against the back and puts a hand or an elbow on its arms.

POSTSCRIPTS ON VISITS

A lady never calls on another under the sponsorship of a gentleman—unless he is her husband or father. A young girl can very properly go with her fiancé to return visits paid to her by members or friends of his family; but she should not pay an initial visit unless to an invalid who has written her a note asking her to do so.

If, when arriving at a lady's house, you find her motor at the door, you should leave your card as though she were not at home. If she happens to be in the hall, or coming down the steps, you say "I see you are going out, and I won't keep you!"

If she insists on your coming in, you should stay only a moment. Do not, however, fidget and talk about leaving. Sit down as though your leaving immediately were not on your mind, but after two or three minutes say "Good-by" and go.

A young man may go to see a young girl as often as he feels inclined and she cares to receive him. If she continually asks to be excused, or shows him scant attention when he is talking to her, or in any other way indicates that he annoys or bores her, his visits should cease.

It is very bad manners to invite one person to your house and leave out another with whom you are also talking. You should wait for an opportunity when the latter is not included in your conversation.

In good society ladies do not kiss each other when they meet either at parties or in public.

It is well to remember that nothing more blatantly stamps an ill-bred person than the habit of patting, nudging or taking hold of people. "Keep your hands to yourself!" might almost be put at the head of the first chapter of every book on etiquette.

Be very chary of making any such remarks as "I am afraid I have stayed too long," or "I must apologize for hurrying off," or "I am afraid I have bored you to death talking so much." All such expressions are self-conscious and stupid. If you really think you are staying too long or leaving too soon or talking too much—don't!

AN INVALID'S VISIT BY PROXY

It is not necessary that an invalid make any attempt to return the visits to her friends who are attentive enough to go often to see her. But if a stranger calls on her—particularly a stranger who may not know that she is always confined to the house, it is correct for a daughter or sister or even a friend to leave the invalid's card for her and even to pay a visit should she find a hostess "at home." In this event the visitor by proxy lays her own card as well as that of the invalid on the tray proffered her. Upon being announced to the hostess, she naturally explains that she is appearing in place of her mother (or whatever relation the invalid is to her) and that the invalid herself is unable to make any visits.

A lady never pays a party call on a gentleman. But if the gentleman who has given a dinner has his mother (or sister) staying with him and if the mother (or sister) chaperoned the party, cards should of course be left upon her.

Having risen to go, *go!* Don't stand and keep your hostess standing while you say good-by, and make a last remark last half an hour!

Few Americans are so punctilious as to pay their dinner calls within twenty-four hours; but it is the height of correctness and good manners.

When a gentleman, whose wife is away, accepts some one's hospitality, it is correct for his wife to pay the party call with (or for) him, since it is taken for granted that she would have been included had she been at home.

In other days a hostess thought it necessary to change quickly into a best dress if important company rang her door-bell. A lady of fashion to-day receives her visitors at once in whatever dress she happens to be wearing, since not to keep them waiting is the greater courtesy.

Chapter XI.
Invitations, Acceptances and Regrets

THE FORMAL INVITATION

AS an inheritance from the days when Mrs. Brown presented her compliments and begged that Mrs. Smith would do her the honor to take a dish of tea with her, we still—notwithstanding the present flagrant disregard of old-fashioned convention—send our formal invitations, acceptances and regrets, in the prescribed punctiliousness of the third person.

All formal invitations, whether they are to be engraved or to be written by hand (and their acceptances and regrets) are invariably in the third person, and good usage permits of no deviation from this form.

WEDDING INVITATIONS

The invitation to the ceremony is engraved on the front sheet of white note-paper. The smartest, at present, is that with a raised margin—or plate mark. At the top of the sheet the crest (if the family of the bride has the right to use one) is embossed without color. Otherwise the invitation bears no device. The engraving may be in script, block, shaded block, or old English. The invitation to the ceremony should always request “the honour” of your “presence,” and never the “pleasure” of your “company.” (Honour is spelled in the old-fashioned way, with a “u” instead of “honor.”)

Enclosed in Two Envelopes

Two envelopes are never used except for wedding invitations or announcements; but wedding invitations and all accompanying cards are always enclosed first in an inner envelope that has no mucilage on the flap, and is superscribed “Mr. and Mrs. Jameson Greatlake,” without address. This

is enclosed in an outer envelope which is sealed and addressed:

Mr. and Mrs. Jameson
Greatlake,
24 Michigan Avenue,
Chicago.

To those who are only “asked to the church” no house invitation is enclosed.

THE CHURCH INVITATION

The proper form for an invitation to a church ceremony is:

(*Form No. 1.*)

Mr. and Mrs. John Huntington Smith
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Mary Katherine
to
Mr. James Smartlington
on Tuesday the first of November
at twelve o'clock
at St. John's Church
in the City of New York

(*Form No. 2.*)

Mr. and Mrs. John Huntington Smith

request the honour of

Miss Pauline Town's

presence at the marriage of their daughter

Mary Katherine

to

Mr. James Smartlington

on Tuesday the first of November

at twelve o'clock

at St. John's Church

(*The size of invitations is 5 1/8 wide by 7 3/8 deep.*)

(*When the parents issue the invitations for a wedding at a house other than their own.*)

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Littlehouse

request the honour of

presence at the marriage of their daughter

Betty

to

Mr. Frederic Robinson

on Saturday the fifth of November

at four o'clock

at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Sterlington

Tuxedo Park

New York

R. s. v. p.

No variation is permissible in the form of a wedding invitation. Whether fifty guests are to be invited or five thousand, the paper, the engraving and the wording, and the double envelope are precisely the same.

Church Card of Admittance

In cities or wherever the general public is not to be admitted, a card of about the size of a small

visiting card is enclosed with the church invitation:

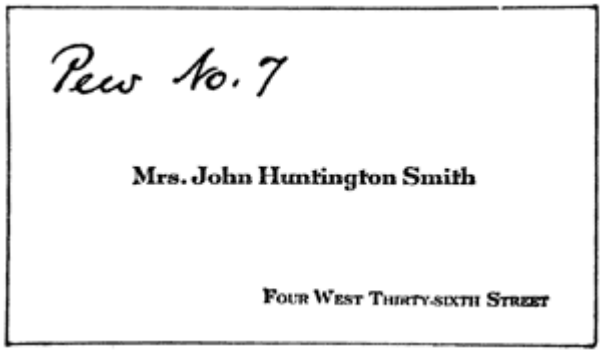
Please present this card
at St. John's Church
on Tuesday the first of November

Cards to Reserved Pews

To the family and very intimate friends who are to be seated in especially designated pews:

Please present this to an usher
Pew No.....
on Thursday the ninth of May

Engraved pew cards are ordered only for very big weddings where twenty or more pews are to be reserved. The more usual custom—at all small and many big weddings—is for the mother of the bride, and the mother of the bridegroom each to write on her personal visiting card:



A card for the reserved enclosure but no especial pew is often inscribed "Within the Ribbons."

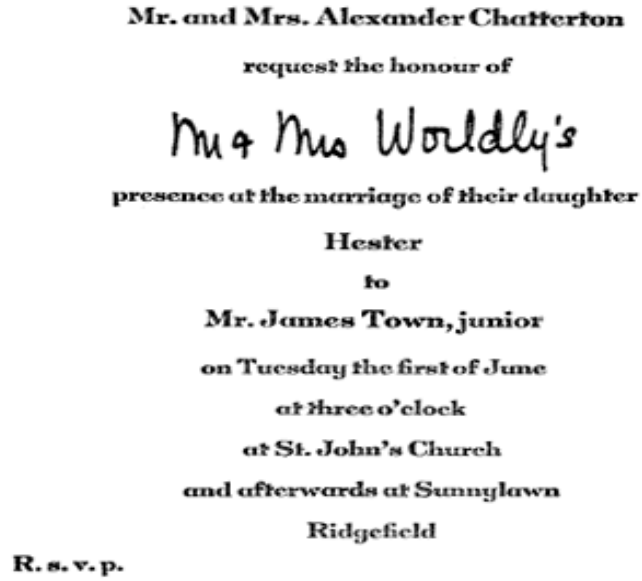
INVITATION TO THE HOUSE

The invitation to the breakfast or reception following the church ceremony is engraved on a card to match the paper of the church invitation and is the size of the latter after it is folded for the envelope:

Mr. and Mrs. John Huntington Smith
request the pleasure of
Mr. Mrs. James Groatlake's
company on Tuesday the first of November
at half after four o'clock
at Four West Thirty-sixth Street
R. s. v. p.

CEREMONY AND RECEPTION INVITATION IN ONE

Occasionally, especially for a country wedding, the invitation to the breakfast or the reception is added to the one to the ceremony:



Or the invitation reads “at twelve o’clock, at St. John’s Church, and afterwards at breakfast at Sunnylawn”; but “afterwards to the reception at Sunnylawn” is wrong.

THE INVITATION TO A HOUSE WEDDING

Is precisely the same except that “at Sunnylawn” or “at Four West Thirty-sixth Street” is put in place of “at St. John’s Church,” and an invitation to stay on at a house, to which the guest is already invited, is not necessary.

The Train Card

If the wedding is to be in the country, a train card is enclosed:

A special train will leave Grand Central Station at 12:45 P.M., arriving at Ridgefield at 2:45. Returning, train will leave Ridgefield at 5:10 P.M., arriving New York at 7.02 P.M.

Show this card at the gate.

INVITATION TO RECEPTION AND NOT TO CEREMONY

It sometimes happens that the bride prefers none but her family at the ceremony, and a big reception. This plan is chosen where the mother of the bride or other very near relative is an invalid. The ceremony may take place at a bedside, or it may be that the invalid can go down to the drawing-room with only the immediate families, and is unequal to the presence of many people.

Under these circumstances the invitations to the breakfast or reception are sent on sheets of note paper like that used for church invitations, but the wording is:

The “pleasure of your company” is requested in this case instead of the “honour of your presence.”

THE WRITTEN WEDDING INVITATION

If a wedding is to be so small that no invitations are engraved, the notes of invitation should be personally written by the bride:

Sally Dear:
Our wedding is to be on Thursday the tenth at half-past twelve, Christ Church Chantry. Of course we want you and Jack and the children! And we want all of you to come afterward to Aunt Mary’s, for a bite to eat and to wish us luck.

Affectionately,

Helen.

or

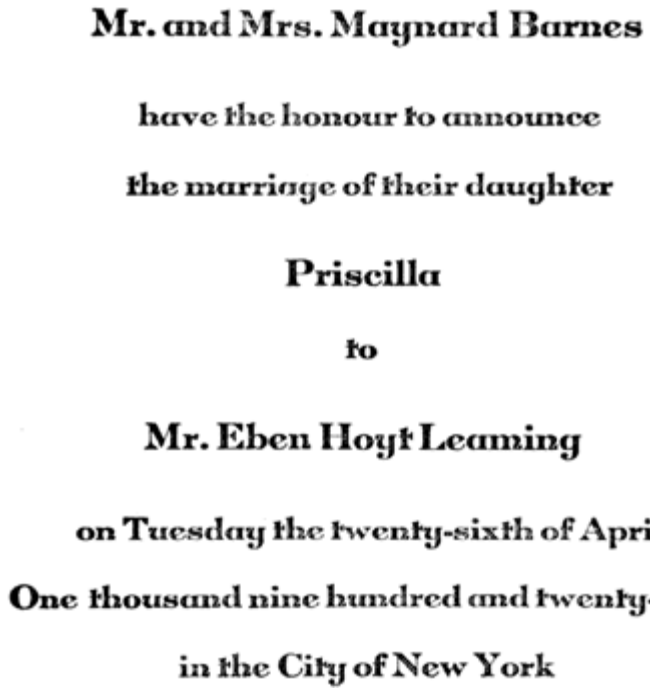
Dear Mrs. Kindhart:
Dick and I are to be married at Christ Church Chantry at noon on Thursday the tenth. We both want you and Mr. Kindhart to come to the church and afterward for a very small breakfast to my Aunt’s—Mrs. Slade—at Two Park Avenue.
With much love from us both,

Affectionately,

Helen.

WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

If no general invitations were issued to the church, an announcement engraved on note paper like that of the invitation to the ceremony, is sent to the entire visiting list of both the bride’s and the groom’s family:



THE SECOND MARRIAGE

INVITATIONS

Invitations to the marriage of a widow—if she is very young—are sent in the name of her parents exactly as were the invitations to her first wedding, excepting that her name instead of being merely Priscilla is now written Priscilla Barnes Leaming, thus:

Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Barnes
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Priscilla Barnes Leaming
to
etc.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For a young widow's marriage are also the same as for a first wedding:

Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Barnes
have the honour to announce
the marriage of their daughter
Priscilla Barnes Leaming
to
Mr. Worthington Adams
etc.

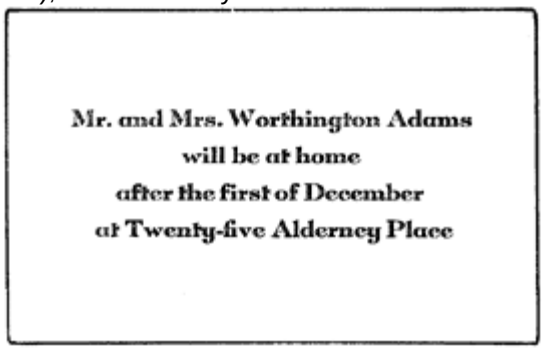
But the announcement of the marriage of a widow of maturer years is engraved on note paper and reads:

Mrs. Priscilla Barnes Leaming
and
Mr. Worthington Adams

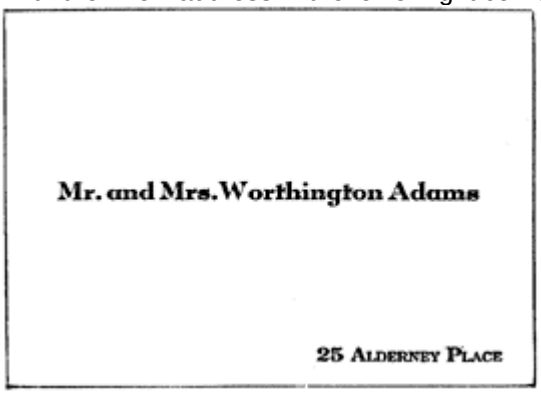
have the honour to announce their marriage
on Monday the second of November
at Saratoga Springs
New York

CARDS OF ADDRESS

If the bride and groom wish to inform their friends of their future address (especially in cities not covered by the Social Register), it is customary to enclose a card with the announcement:



Or merely their visiting card with their new address in the lower right corner:



INVITATION TO WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

For a wedding anniversary celebration, the year of the wedding and the present year are usually stamped across the top of an invitation. Sometimes the couple's initials are added.

1898-1922

Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Johnson

request the pleasure of

company at the

Twenty-fifth Anniversary of their marriage

on Wednesday the first of June

at nine o'clock

Twenty-four Austin Avenue

R. s. v. p.

ANSWERING A WEDDING INVITATION

An invitation to the church only requires no answer whatever. An invitation to the reception or breakfast is answered on the first page of a sheet of note paper, and although it is written "by hand" the spacing of the words must be followed as though they were engraved. This is the form of acceptance:

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gilding, Jr.,
accept with pleasure
Mr. and Mrs. John Huntington Smith's
kind invitation for
Tuesday the first of June

The regret reads:

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Brown
regret that they are unable to accept
Mr. and Mrs. John Huntington Smith's
kind invitation for
Tuesday the first of June

OTHER FORMAL INVITATIONS

All other formal invitations are engraved (never printed) on cards of thin white matte Bristol board, either plain or plate-marked like those for wedding reception cards. Note paper such as that used for wedding invitations is occasionally, but rarely, preferred.

Monograms, addresses, personal devices are not used on engraved invitations.

The size of the card of invitation varies with personal preference from four and a half to six inches in width, and from three to four and a half inches in height. The most graceful proportion is three units in height to four in width.

The lettering is a matter of personal choice, but the plainer the design, the better. Scrolls and ornate trimmings are bad taste always. Punctuation is used only after each letter of the R.s.v.p. and

it is absolutely correct to use small letters for the s.v.p. Capitals R.S.V.P. are permissible; but fastidious people prefer “R.s.v.p.”

INVITATION TO A BALL

The word “ball” is never used excepting in an invitation to a public one, or at least a semi-public one, such as may be given by a committee for a charity or a club, or association of some sort.

For example:
The Committee of the Greenwood Club
request the pleasure of your company

at a Ball

to be held in the Greenwood Clubhouse
on the evening of November the seventh
at ten o’clock.
for the benefit of
The Neighborhood Hospital

Tickets five dollars

Invitations to a private ball, no matter whether the ball is to be given in a private house, or whether the hostess has engaged an entire floor of the biggest hotel in the world, announce merely that Mr. and Mrs. Somebody will be “At Home,” and the word “dancing” is added almost as though it were an afterthought in the lower left corner, the words “At Home” being slightly larger than those of the rest of the invitation. When both “At” and “Home” are written with a capital letter, this is the most punctilious and formal invitation that it is possible to send. It is engraved in script usually, on a card of white Bristol board about five and a half inches wide and three and three-quarters of an inch high. Like the wedding invitation it has an embossed crest without color, or nothing.

The precise form is:

Mr. and Mrs. Titherington de Puyster

At Home

On Monday the third of January

at ten o'clock

One East Fiftieth Street

The favour of an answer is requested

Dancing

or

Mr. and Mrs. Davis Jefferson

At Home

On Monday the third of January

at ten o'clock

Town and Country Club

Kindly send reply to
Three Mt. Vernon Square

Dancing

(*If preferred, the above invitations may be engraved in block or shaded block type.*)

BALL FOR DÉBUTANTE DAUGHTER

Very occasionally an invitation is worded

Mr. and Mrs. Davis Jefferson

Miss Alice Jefferson

At Home

if the daughter is a débutante and the ball is for her, but it is not strictly correct to have any names but those of the host and his wife above the words “At Home.”

The proper form of invitation when the ball is to be given for a débutante, is as follows:

Mr. and Mrs. de Puyster

request the pleasure of

Miss Rosalie Gray's

company at a dance in honour of their daughter

Miss Alice de Puyster

on Monday evening, the third of January

at ten o'clock

One East Fiftieth Street

R. s. v. p.

or

Mr. and Mrs. Titherington de Puyster
Miss Alice de Puyster
request the pleasure of

Mr. & Mrs. Greatlakes

company on Monday evening the third of January
at ten o'oclock
One East Fiftieth Street

Dancing
R. s. v. p.

The form most often used by fashionable hostesses in New York and Newport is:

Mr. and Mrs. Gilding

request the pleasure of

company at a small dance

on Monday the first of January

at Ought Ought Fifth Avenue

Even if given for a débutante daughter, her name does not appear, and it is called a “small dance,” whether it is really small or big. The request for a reply is often omitted, since everyone is supposed to know that an answer is necessary. But if the dance, or dinner, or whatever the entertainment is to be, is given at one address and the hostess lives at another, both addresses are always given:

Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Oldname

request the pleasure of

company at a dance

on Monday evening the sixth of January

at ten o'clock

The Fitz-Cherry

Kindly send response to
Brookmeadows
L. I.

If the dance is given for a young friend who is not a relative, Mr. and Mrs. Oldname’s invitations should

request the pleasure of

company at a dance in honour of

Miss Rosalie Grey

WHEN AND HOW ONE MAY ASK FOR AN INVITATION FOR A STRANGER

One may never ask for an invitation for oneself anywhere! And one may not ask for an invitation to a luncheon or a dinner for a stranger. But an invitation for any general entertainment may be asked for a stranger—especially for a house-guest.

Example:

Dear Mrs. Worldly,

A young cousin of mine, David Blakely from Chicago, is staying with us.

May Pauline take him to your dance on Friday? If it will be inconvenient for you to include him, please do not hesitate to say so frankly.

Very sincerely yours,

Caroline Robinson Town.

Answer:

Dear Mrs. Town,

I shall be delighted to have Pauline bring Mr. Blakely on the tenth.

Sincerely yours,

Edith Worldly.

Or

A man might write for an invitation for a friend. But a very young girl should not ask for an invitation for a man—or anyone—since it is more fitting that her mother ask for her. An older girl might say to Mrs. Worldly, “My cousin is staying with us, may I bring him to your dance?” Or if she knows Mrs. Worldly very well she might send a message by telephone: “Miss Town would like to know whether she may bring her cousin, Mr. Michigan, to Mrs. Worldly’s dance.”

CARD OF GENERAL INVITATION

Invitations to important entertainments are nearly always especially engraved, so that nothing is written except the name of the person invited; but, for the hostess who entertains constantly, a card which is engraved in blank, so that it may serve for dinner, luncheon, dance, garden party, musical, or whatever she may care to give, is indispensable.

The spacing of the model shown below, the proportion of the words, and the size of the card, are especially good.

Mrs. Stevens

requests the pleasure of

company at

on

at **o’clock**

Two Elm Place

THE DINNER INVITATION

The blank which may be used only for dinner:

Mr. and Mrs. Huntington Jones
request the pleasure of

company at dinner
on
at eight o’clock
at Two Thousand Fifth Avenue

(*For type and spacing follow model above.*)

INVITATIONS TO RECEPTIONS AND TEAS

Invitations to receptions and teas differ from invitations to balls in that the cards on which they are engraved are usually somewhat smaller, the words “At Home” with capital letters are changed to “will be at home” with small letters, and the time is not set at the hour. Also, except on very unusual occasions, a man’s name does not appear. The name of the débutante for whom the tea is given is put under that of her mother, and sometimes under that of her sister or the bride of her brother.

Mrs. James Town
Mrs. James Town, junior
Miss Pauline Town
will be at home
On Tuesday the eighth of December
from four until six o’clock
Two Thousand Fifth Avenue.

Mr. Town’s name would probably appear with that of his wife if he were an artist, and the reception was given in his studio to view his pictures, or if a reception were given to meet a distinguished guest such as a bishop or a governor, in which case “In honour of the Right Reverend William Powell,” or “To meet His Excellency the Governor,” is at the top of the invitation.

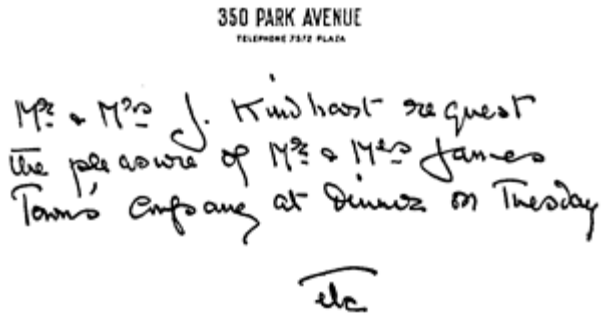
THE FORMAL INVITATION WHICH IS WRITTEN

When the formal invitation to dinner or lunch is written instead of engraved, note paper stamped with house or personal device is used. The wording and spacing must follow the engraved models exactly.

350 PARK AVENUE

Mr and Mrs John Kindhart
request the pleasure of
Mr and Mrs Robert Fielding Jr.'s
company at dinner
on Tuesday the sixth of December
at eight o'clock.

It must *not* be written:



The foregoing example has four faults:

(1) Letters in the third person must follow the prescribed form. This does not. (2) The writing is crowded against the margin. (3) The telephone number should be used only for business and informal notes and letters. (4) The full name John should be used instead of the initial "J." "Mr. and Mrs." is better form than "Mr. & Mrs."

RECALLING AN INVITATION

If for illness or other reason invitations have to be recalled the following forms are correct. They are always printed instead of engraved, there being no time for engraving.

Owing to sudden illness
Mr. and Mrs. John Huntington Smith
are obliged to recall their invitations
for Tuesday the tenth of June.

The form used when the invitation is postponed:

Mr. and Mrs. John Huntington Smith
regret exceedingly
that owing to the illness of Mrs. Smith
their dance is temporarily postponed.

When a wedding is broken off after the invitations have been issued:

Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Nottingham
announce
that the marriage of their daughter
Mary Katharine
and
Mr. Jerrold Atherton
will not take place

FORMAL ACCEPTANCE OR REGRET

Acceptances or regrets are always written. An engraved form to be filled in is vulgar—nothing could be in worse taste than to flaunt your popularity by announcing that it is impossible to answer your numerous invitations without the time-saving device of a printed blank. If you have a dozen or more invitations a day, if you have a hundred, hire a staff of secretaries if need be, but answer "by hand."

The formal acceptance to an invitation, whether it is to a dance, wedding breakfast or a ball, is identical:

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Lovejoy
accept with pleasure
Mr. and Mrs. Smith's

kind invitation for dinner
on Monday the tenth of December
at eight o'clock

The formula for regret:

Mr. Clubwin Doe
regrets extremely that a previous engagement
prevents his accepting
Mr. and Mrs. Smith's
kind invitation for dinner
on Monday the tenth of December

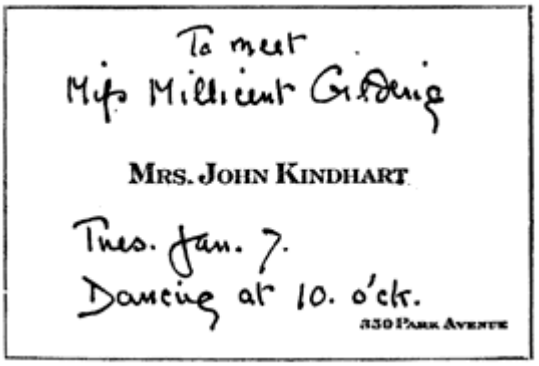
or

Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Kerry
regret that they are unable to accept
Mr. and Mrs. Smith's
kind invitation for dinner
on Monday the tenth of December

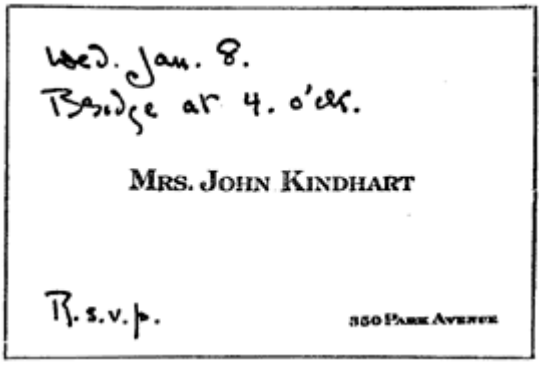
In accepting an invitation the day and hour must be repeated, so that in case of mistake it may be rectified and prevent one from arriving on a day when one is not expected. But in declining an invitation it is not necessary to repeat the hour.

VISITING CARD INVITATIONS

With the exception of invitations to house-parties, dinners and luncheons, the writing of notes is past. For an informal dance, musical, picnic, for a tea to meet a guest, or for bridge, a lady uses her ordinary visiting card:



or



Answers to invitations written on visiting cards are always formally worded in the third person, precisely as though the invitation had been engraved.

INVITATIONS IN THE SECOND PERSON

The informal dinner and luncheon invitation is not spaced according to set words on each line, but is written merely in two paragraphs. Example:

Dear Mrs. Smith:
Will you and Mr. Smith dine with us on Thursday, the seventh of January, at eight o'clock?
Hoping so much for the pleasure of seeing you,

Very sincerely,
Caroline Robinson Town.

THE INFORMAL NOTE OF ACCEPTANCE OR REGRET

Dear Mrs. Town:
It will give us much pleasure to dine with you on Thursday the seventh, at eight o'clock.
Thanking you for your kind thought of us,

Sincerely yours,
Margaret Smith.

Wednesday.

or

Dear Mrs. Town:
My husband and I will dine with you on Thursday the seventh, at eight o'clock, with greatest pleasure.
Thanking you so much for thinking of us,

Always sincerely,
Margaret Smith.

or

Dear Mrs. Town:
We are so sorry that we shall be unable to dine with you on the seventh, as we have a previous engagement.
With many thanks for your kindness in thinking of us,

Very sincerely,
Ethel Norman.

INVITATION TO COUNTRY HOUSE

To an intimate friend:

Dear Sally:
Will you and Jack (and the baby and nurse, of course) come out the 28th (Friday), and stay for ten days? Morning and evening trains take only forty minutes, and it won't hurt Jack to commute for the weekdays between the two Sundays! I am sure the country will do you and the baby good, or at least it will do me good to have you here.
With much love, affectionately,

Ethel Norman.

To a friend of one's daughter:

Dear Mary:

Will you and Jim come on Friday the first for the Worldly dance, and stay over Sunday? Muriel asks me to tell you that Helen and Dick, and also Jimmy Smith are to be here and she particularly hopes that you will come, too.

The three-twenty from New York is the best train—much. Though there is a four-twenty and a five-sixteen, in case Jim is not able to take the earlier one.

Very sincerely,
Alice Jones.

Confirming a verbal invitation:

Dear Helen:

This note is merely to remind you that you and Dick are coming here for the Worldly dance on the sixth. Mother is expecting you on the three-twenty train, and will meet you here at the station.

Affectionately,
Muriel.

Invitation to a house party at a camp:

Dear Miss Strange:

Will you come up here on the sixth of September and stay until the sixteenth? It would give us all the greatest pleasure.

There is a train leaving Broadway Station at 8.03 A. M. which will get you to Dustville Junction at 5 P. M. and here in time for supper.

It is only fair to warn you that the camp is very primitive; we have no luxuries, but we can make you fairly comfortable if you like an outdoor life and are not too exacting. Please do not bring a maid or any clothes that the woods or weather can ruin. You will need nothing but outdoor things: walking boots (if you care to walk), a bathing suit (if you care to swim in the lake), and something comfortable rather than smart for evening (if you care to dress for supper). But on no account bring evening, or any *good* clothes!

Hoping so much that camping appeals to you and that we shall see you on the evening of the sixth,

Very sincerely yours,
Martha Kindhart.

THE INVITATION BY TELEPHONE

Custom which has altered many ways and manners has taken away all opprobrium from the message by telephone, and with the exception of those of a very small minority of letter-loving hostesses, all informal invitations are sent and answered by telephone. Such messages, however, follow a prescribed form:

"Is this Lenox 0000? Will you please ask Mr. and Mrs. Smith if they will dine with Mrs. Grantham Jones next Tuesday the tenth at eight o'clock? Mrs. Jones' telephone number is Plaza, one two ring two."

The answer:

"Mr. and Mrs. Huntington Smith regret that they will be unable to dine with Mrs. Jones on Tuesday the tenth, as they are engaged for that evening.

Or

"Will you please tell Mrs. Jones that Mr. and Mrs. Huntington Smith are very sorry that they will be unable to dine with her next Tuesday, and thank her for asking them."

Or

"Please tell Mrs. Jones that Mr. and Mrs. Huntington Smith will dine with her on Tuesday the tenth, with pleasure."

The formula is the same, whether the invitation is to dine or lunch, or play bridge or tennis, or golf, or motor, or go on a picnic.

“Will Mrs. Smith play bridge with Mrs. Grantham Jones this afternoon at the Country Club, at four o’clock?”

“Hold the wire please * * * Mrs. Jones will play bride with pleasure at four o’clock.”

In many houses, especially where there are several grown sons or daughters, a blank form is kept in the pantry:

Will
with M
on the
at o’clock. Telephone number
Accept
Regret

These slips are taken to whichever member of the family has been invited, who crosses off “regret” or “accept” and hands the slip back for transmission by the butler, the parlor-maid or whoever is on duty in the pantry.

If Mr. Smith and Mrs. Jones are themselves telephoning there is no long conversation, but merely:
Mrs. Jones:

“Is that you Mrs. Smith (or Sarah)? This is Mrs. Jones (or Alice). Will you and your husband (or John) dine with us to-morrow at eight o’clock?”

Mrs. Smith:

“I’m so sorry we can’t. We are dining with Mabel.”

Or

“We have people coming here.”

Invitations to a house party are often as not telephoned:

“Hello, Ethel? This is Alice. Will you and Arthur come on the sixteenth for over Sunday?”

“The sixteenth? That’s Friday. We’d love to!”

“Will you take the 3:20 train? etc.”

Chapter XII.

The Well-Appointed House

EVERY house has an outward appearance to be made as presentable as possible, an interior continually to be set in order, and incessantly to be cleaned. And for those that dwell within it there are meals to be prepared and served; linen to be laundered and mended; personal garments to be brushed and pressed; and perhaps children to be cared for. There is also a door-bell to be answered in which manners as well as appearance come into play.

Beyond these fundamental necessities, luxuries can be added indefinitely, such as splendor of architecture, of gardening, and of furnishing, with every refinement of service that executive ability can produce. With all this genuine splendor possible only to the greatest establishments, a little house can no more compete than a diamond weighing but half a carat can compete with a stone weighing fifty times as much. And this is a good simile, because the perfect little house may be represented by a corner cut from precisely the same stone and differing therefore merely in size (and value naturally), whereas the house in bad taste and improperly run may be represented by a diamond that is off color and full of flaws; or in some instances, merely a piece of glass that to none but those as ignorant as its owner, for a moment suggests a gem of value.

A gem of a house may be no size at all, but its lines are honest, and its painting and window curtains in good taste. As for its upkeep, its path or sidewalk is beautifully neat, steps scrubbed, brasses polished, and its bell answered promptly by a trim maid with a low voice and quiet courteous manner; all of which contributes to the impression of “quality” even though it in nothing suggests the luxury of a palace whose opened bronze door reveals a row of powdered footmen.

But the “mansion” of bastard architecture and crude paint, with its brass indifferently clean, with coarse lace behind the plate glass of its golden-oak door, and the bell answered at eleven in the morning by a butler in an ill-fitting dress suit and wearing a mustache, might as well be placarded: “Here lives a vulgarian who has never had an opportunity to acquire cultivation.” As a matter of fact, the knowledge of how to make a house distinguished both in appearance and in service, is a much higher test than presenting a distinguished appearance in oneself and acquiring presentable manners. There are any number of people who dress well, and in every way appear well, but a lack of breeding is apparent as soon as you go into their houses. Their servants have not good manners, they are not properly turned out, the service is not well done, and the decorations and furnishings show lack of taste and inviting arrangement.

The personality of a house is indefinable, but there never lived a lady of great cultivation and charm whose home, whether a palace, a farm-cottage or a tiny apartment, did not reflect the charm of its owner. Every visitor feels impelled to linger, and is loath to go. Houses without personality are a series of rooms with furniture in them. Sometimes their lack of charm is baffling; every article is “correct” and beautiful, but one has the feeling that the decorator made chalk-marks indicating the exact spot on which each piece of furniture is to stand. Other houses are filled with things of little intrinsic value, often with much that is shabby, or they are perhaps empty to the point of bareness, and yet they have that “inviting” atmosphere, and air of unmistakable quality which is an unfailing indication of high-bred people.

“BECOMING” FURNITURE

Suitability is the test of good taste always. The manner to the moment, the dress to the occasion, the article to the place, the furniture to the background. And yet to combine many periods in one and commit no anachronism, to put something French, something Spanish, something Italian, and something English into an American house and have the result the perfection of American taste—is a feat of legerdemain that has been accomplished time and again.

A woman of great taste follows fashion in house furnishing, just as she follows fashion in dress, in general principles only. She wears what is becoming to her own type, and she puts in her house only such articles as are becoming to it.

That a quaint old-fashioned house should be filled with quaint old-fashioned pieces of furniture, in size proportionate to the size of the rooms, and that rush-bottomed chairs and rag-carpets have no

place in a marble hall, need not be pointed out. But to an amazing number of persons, proportion seems to mean nothing at all. They will put a huge piece of furniture in a tiny room so that the effect is one of painful indigestion; or they will crowd things all into one corner—so that it seems about to capsize; or they will spoil a really good room by the addition of senseless and inappropriately cluttering objects, in the belief that because they are valuable they must be beautiful, regardless of suitability. Sometimes a room is marred by “treasures” clung to for reasons of sentiment.

THE BLINDNESS OF SENTIMENT

It is almost impossible for any of us to judge accurately of things which we have throughout a lifetime been accustomed to. A chair that was grandmother’s, a painting father bought, the silver that has always been on the dining table—are all so part of ourselves that we are sentiment-blind to their defects.

For instance, the portrait of a Colonial officer, among others, has always hung in Mrs. Oldname’s dining-room. One day an art critic, whose knowledge was better than his manners, blurted out, “Will you please tell me why you have that dreadful thing in this otherwise perfect room?” Mrs. Oldname, somewhat taken back, answered rather wonderingly: “Is it dreadful?—Really? I have a feeling of affection for him and his dog!”

The critic was merciless. “If you call a cotton-flannel effigy, a dog! And as for the figure, it is equally false and lifeless! It is amazing how any one with your taste can bear looking at it!” In spite of his rudeness, Mrs. Oldname saw that what he said was quite true, but not until the fact had been pointed out to her. Gradually she grew to dislike the poor officer so much that he was finally relegated to the attic. In the same way most of us have belongings that have “always been there” or perhaps “treasures” that we love for some association, which are probably as bad as can be, to which habit has blinded us, though we would not have to be told of their hideousness were they seen by us in the house of another.

It is not to be expected that all people can throw away every esthetically unpleasing possession, with which nearly every house twenty-five years ago was filled, but those whose pocket-book and sentiment will permit, would add greatly to the beauty of their houses by sweeping the bad into the ash can! Far better have stone-ware plates that are good in design than expensive porcelain that is horrible in decoration.

The only way to determine what is good and what is horrible is to study what is good in books, in museums, or in art classes in the universities, or even by studying the magazines devoted to decorative art.

Be very careful though. Do not mistake modern eccentricities for “art.” There are frightful things in vogue to-day—flamboyant colors, grotesque, triangular and oblique designs that can not possibly be other than bad, because aside from striking novelty, there is nothing good about them. By no standard can a room be in good taste that looks like a perfume manufacturer’s phantasy or a design reflected in one of the distorting mirrors that are mirth-provokers at county fairs.

TO DETERMINE AN OBJECT’S WORTH

In buying an article for a house one might formulate for oneself a few test questions:

First, is it useful? Anything that is really useful has a reason for existence.

Second, has it *really* beauty of form and line and color?

(Texture is not so important.) Or is it merely striking, or amusing?

Third, is it entirely suitable for the position it occupies?

Fourth, if it were eliminated would it be missed? Would something else look as well or better, in its place? Or would its place look as well empty? A truthful answer to these questions would at least help in determining its value, since an article that failed in any of them could not be “perfect.”

Fashion affects taste—it is bound to. We abominate Louis the Fourteenth and Empire styles at the moment, because curves and super-ornamentation are out of fashion; whether they are really bad or not, time alone can tell. At present we are admiring plain silver and are perhaps exacting that it be too plain? The only safe measure of what is good, is to choose that which has best endured. The

“King” and the “Fiddle” pattern for flat silver, have both been in use in houses of highest fashion ever since they were designed, so that they, among others, must have merit to have so long endured.

In the same way examples of old potteries and china and glass, at present being reproduced, are very likely good, because after having been for a century or more in disuse, they are again being chosen. Perhaps one might say that the “second choice” is “proof of excellence.”

SERVICE

The subject of furnishings is however the least part of this chapter—appointments meaning decoration being of less importance (since this is not a book on architecture or decoration!), than appointments meaning *service.*

But before going into the various details of service, it might be a good moment to speak of the unreasoning indignity cast upon the honorable vocation of a servant.

There is an inexplicable tendency, in this country only, for working people in general to look upon domestic service as an unworthy, if not altogether degrading vocation. The cause may perhaps be found in the fact that this same scorning public having for the most part little opportunity to know high-class servants, who are to be found only in high-class families, take it for granted that ignorant “servant girls” and “hired men” are representative of their kind. Therefore they put upper class servants in the same category—regardless of whether they are uncouth and illiterate, or persons of refined appearance and manner who often have considerable cultivation, acquired not so much at school as through the constant contact with ultra refinement of surroundings, and not infrequently through the opportunity for world-wide travel.

And yet so insistently has this obloquy of the word “servant” spread that every one sensitive to the feelings of others avoids using it exactly as one avoids using the word “cripple” when speaking to one who is slightly lame. Yet are not the best of us “servants” in the Church? And the highest of us “servants” of the people and the State?

To be a slattern in a vulgar household is scarcely an elevated employment, but neither is working in a sweat-shop, or belonging to a calling that is really degraded; which is otherwise about all that equal lack of ability would procure. On the other hand, consider the vocation of a lady’s maid or *“courier”* valet and compare the advantages these enjoy (to say nothing of their never having to worry about overhead expenses), with the opportunities of those who have never been out of the “factory” or the “store” or further away than the adjoining town in their lives. As for a nurse, is there any vocation more honorable? No character in E. F. Benson’s “Our Family Affairs” is more beautiful or more tenderly drawn than that of “Beth,” who was not only nurse to the children of the Archbishop of Canterbury but one of the most dearly beloved of the family’s members—her place was absolutely next to their mother’s in the very heart of the household always.

Two years ago, Anna, who had for a lifetime been Mrs. Gilding’s personal maid, died. Every engagement of that seemingly frivolous family was cancelled, even the invitations for their ball. Not one of the family but mourned for what she truly was, their humble but nearest friend. Would it have been so much better, so much more dignified, for these two women, who lived long useful years in closest association with every cultivating influence of life, to have lived on in their native villages and worked in a factory, or to have had a little store of their own? Does this false idea of dignity—since it *is* false—go so far as that?

HOW MANY SERVANTS FOR CORRECT SERVICE?

It stands to reason that one may expect more perfect service from a “specialist” than from one whose functions are multiple. But small houses that have a double equipment—meaning an alternate who can go in the kitchen, and two for the dining-room—can be every bit as well run, so far as essentials go, as the palaces of the Gildings and the Worldlys, though of course not with the same impressiveness. But good service is badly handicapped if, when the waitress goes out, there is no one to open the door, or when the cook goes out, there is no one to prepare a meal.

For what one might call “complete” service, (meaning service that is adequate for constant entertaining and can stand comparison with the most luxurious establishments, three are the

minimum—a cook, a butler (or waitress) and a housemaid. The reason why luncheons and dinners can not be “perfectly” given with a waitress alone is because two persons are necessary for the exactions of modern standards of service. Yet one alone can, on occasion, manage very well, if attention is paid to ordering an especial menu for single-handed service—described at XV¶14. Aside from the convenience of a second person in the dining-room, a house can not be run very comfortably and smoothly without alternating shifts in staying in and going out. The waitress being on “duty” to answer bell and telephone and serve tea one afternoon, and the housemaid taking her place the next. They also alternate in going out every other evening after dinner.

It should be realized that above the number necessary for essentials, each additional chambermaid, parlor-maid, footman, scullery maid or useful man, is made necessary by the size of the house and by the amount of entertaining usual, rather than (as is often supposed) for the mere reason of show. The seemingly superfluous number of footmen at Golden Hall and Great Estates are, aside from standing on parade at formal parties, needed actually to do the immense amount of work that houses of such size entail; whereas a small apartment can be fairly well looked after by one alone.

All house employees and details of their several duties, manners, and appearances, are enumerated below. Beginning with the greatest and most complicated establishments possible, the employee of highest rank is:

THE SECRETARY WHO IS ALSO COMPANION

The position of companion, which is always one of social equality with her employer, exists only when the lady of the house is an invalid, or very elderly, or a widow, or a young girl. (In the latter case the “companion” is a “chaperon.”)

Her secretarial duties consist in writing impersonal letters and notes and probably paying bills; she may have occasional invitations to send out, and to answer, though a lady needing a companion is not apt to be greatly interested in social activities. The companion never performs the services of a maid—but she occasionally does the housekeeping. Otherwise her duties can not very well be set down, because they vary with individual requirements. One lady likes continually to travel and merely wants a companion, (usually a poor relative or friend) to go with her. Another who is a semi-invalid never leaves her room, and the duties of her companion are almost those of a trained nurse. The average requirement is in being personally agreeable, tactful, intelligent, and—companionable!

A companion dresses as any other lady does; according to the occasion, her personal taste, her age, and her means.

VARIED SOCIAL STANDING OF THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

The private secretary to a diplomat, since he must first pass the diplomatic examination in order to qualify, is invariably a young man of education, if not of birth, and his social position is always that of a member of his “chief’s” family.

The position of an ordinary private secretary is sometimes that of an upper servant; or, on the other hand, his own social position may be much higher than that of his employer. A secretary who either has position of his own or is given position by his employer, is in every way treated as a member of the family; he is present at all general entertainments; and quite as often as not at lunches and dinners. The duties of a private secretary are naturally to attend to all correspondence, take shorthand notes of speeches or conversations, file papers and documents and in every way serve as extra eyes and hands and supplementary brain for his employer.

THE SOCIAL SECRETARY

The position of social secretary is an entirely clerical one, and never confers any “social privileges” unless the secretary is also “companion.”

Her duties are to write all invitations, acceptances, and regrets; keep a record of every invitation received and every one sent out, and to enter in an engagement book every engagement made for

her employer, whether to lunch, dinner, to be fitted, or go to the dentist. She also writes all impersonal notes, takes longer letters in shorthand, and writes others herself after being told their purport. She also audits all bills and draws the checks for them; the checks are filled in and then presented to her employer to be signed, after which they are put in their envelopes, sealed and sent. When the receipted bills are returned, the secretary files them according to her own method, where they can at any time be found by her if needed for reference. In many cases it is she (though it is most often the butler) who telephones invitations and other messages.

Occasionally a social secretary is also a social manager; devises entertainments and arranges all details such as the decorations of the house for a dance, or a programme of entertainment following a very large dinner. The social secretary very rarely lives in the house of her employer; more often than not she goes also to one or two other houses—since there is seldom work enough in one to require her whole time.

Miss Brisk, who is Mrs. Gilding's secretary, has little time for any one else. She goes every day for from two to sometimes eight or nine hours in town, and at Golden Hall lives in the house. Usually a secretary can finish all there is to do in an average establishment in about an hour, or at most two, a day, with the addition of five or six hours on two or three other days each month for the paying of bills.

Supposing she takes three positions; she goes to Mrs A. from 8.30 to 10 every day, and for three extra hours on the 10th and 11th of every month. To Mrs. B. from 10.30 to 1 (her needs being greater) and for six extra hours on the 12th, 13th and 14th of every month. And to Mrs C. every day at 3 o'clock for an indefinite time of several hours or only a few minutes.

Her dress is that of any business woman. Conspicuous clothes are out of keeping as they would be out of keeping in an office; which, however, is no reason why she should not be well dressed. Well-cut tailor-made suits are the most appropriate with a good-looking but simple hat; as good shoes as she can possibly afford, and good gloves and immaculately clean shirt waists, represent about the most dignified and practical clothes. But why describe clothes! Every woman with good sense enough to qualify as a secretary has undoubtedly sense enough to dress with dignity.

THE HOUSEKEEPER

In a very big house the housekeeper usually lives in the house. Smaller establishments often have a "visiting housekeeper" who comes for as long as she is needed each morning. The resident housekeeper has her own bedroom and bath and sitting-room always. Her meals are brought to her by an especial kitchen-maid, called in big houses the "hall girl," or occasionally the butler details an under footman to that duty.

In an occasional house all the servants, the gardener as well as the cook and butler and nurses, come under the housekeeper's authority; in other words, she superintends the entire house exactly as a very conscientious and skilled mistress would do herself, if she gave her whole time and attention to it. She engages the servants, and if necessary, dismisses them; she sees the cook, orders meals, goes to the market, or at least supervises the cook's market orders, and likewise engages and apportions the work of the men servants.

Ordinarily, however, she is in charge of no one but the housemaids, parlor-maids, useful man and one of the scullery maids. The cook, butler, nurses and lady's maid do not come under her supervision. But should difficulties arise between herself and them it would be within her province to ask for their dismissal which would probably be granted; since she would not ask without grave cause that involved much more than her personal dislike. A good housekeeper is always a woman of experience and tact, and often a lady; friction is, therefore, extremely rare.

THE ORGANIZATION OF A GREAT HOUSE

The management of a house of greatest size, is divided usually into several distinct departments, each under its separate head. The housekeeper has charge of the appearance of the house and of its contents; the manners and looks of the housemaids and parlor-maids, as well as their work in cleaning walls, floors, furniture, pictures, ornaments, books, and taking care of linen.

The butler has charge of the pantry and dining-room. He engages all footmen, apportions their work and is responsible for their appearance, manners and efficiency.

The cook is in charge of the kitchen, under-cook and kitchen-maids.

The nurse and the personal maid and cook are under the direction of the lady of the house. The butler and the valet as well as the chauffeur and gardener are engaged by the gentleman of the house.

THE BUTLER

The butler is not only the most important servant in every big establishment, but it is by no means unheard of for him to be in supreme command, not only as steward, but as housekeeper as well.

At the Worldly's for instance, Hastings who is actually the butler, orders all the supplies, keeps the household accounts and engages not only the men servants but the housemaids, parlor-maids and even the chef.

But normally in a great house, the butler has charge of his own department only, and his own department is the dining-room and pantry, or possibly the whole parlor floor. In all smaller establishments the butler is always the valet—and in many great ones he is valet to his employer, even though he details a footman to look after other gentlemen of the family or visitors.

In a small house the butler works a great deal with his hands and not so much with his head. In a great establishment, the butler works very much with his head, and with his hands not at all.

At Golden Hall where guests come in dozens at a time (both in the house and the guest annex), his stewardship—even though there is a housekeeper—is not a job which a small man can fill. He has perhaps thirty men under him at big dinners, ten who belong under him in the house always; he has the keys to the wine cellar and the combination of the silver safe. (The former being in this day by far the greater responsibility!) He also chooses the china and glass and linen as well as the silver to be used each day, oversees the setting of the table, and the serving of all food.

When there is a house party every breakfast tray that leaves the pantry is first approved by him.

At all meals he stands behind the chair of the lady of the house—in other words, at the head of the table. In occasional houses, the butler stands at the opposite end as he is supposed to be better able to see any directions given him. At Golden Hall the butler stands behind Mr. Gilding but at Great Estates Hastings invariably stands behind Mrs. Worldly's chair so that at the slightest turn of her head, he need only take a step to be within reach of her voice. (The husband by the way is "head of the house," but the wife is "head of the table.")

At tea time, he oversees the footmen who place the tea-table, put on the tea cloth and carry in the tea tray, after which Hastings himself places the individual tables.

When there is "no dinner at home" he waits in the hall and assists Mr. Worldly into his coat, and hands him his hat and stick, which have previously been handed to the butler by one of the footmen.

The Butler in a Smaller House

In a smaller house, the butler also takes charge of the wines and silver, does very much the same as the butler in the bigger house, except that he has less overseeing of others and more work to do himself. Where he is alone, he does all the work—naturally. Where he has either one footman or a parlor-maid, he passes the main courses at the table and his assistant passes the secondary dishes.

He is also valet not only for the gentleman of the house but for any gentleman guests as well.

What the Butler Wears

The butler never wears the livery of a footman and on no account knee breeches or powder. In the early morning he wears an ordinary sack suit—black or very dark blue—with a dark, inconspicuous tie. For luncheon or earlier, if he is on duty at the door, he wears black trousers, with gray stripes, a double-breasted, high-cut, black waistcoat, and black swallowtail coat without satin on the reverse, a white stiff-bosomed shirt with standing collar, and a black four-in-hand tie.

In fashionable houses, the butler does not put on his dress suit until six o'clock. The butler's evening dress differs from that of a gentleman in a few details only: he has no braid on his trousers, and the satin on his lapels (if any) is narrower, but the most distinctive difference is that a butler wears a black waistcoat and a white lawn tie, and a gentleman always wears a white waistcoat with a white tie, or a white waistcoat and a black tie with a dinner coat, but never the reverse.

Unless he is an old-time colored servant in the South a butler who wears a "dress suit" in the daytime is either a hired waiter who has come in to serve a meal, or he has never been employed by persons of position; and it is unnecessary to add that none but vulgarians would employ a butler (or any other house servant) who wears a mustache! To have him open the door collarless and in shirt-sleeves is scarcely worse!

A butler never wears gloves, nor a flower in his buttonhole. He sometimes wears a very thin watch chain in the daytime but none at night. He never wears a scarf-pin, or any jewelry that is for ornament alone. His cuff-links should be as plain as possible, and his shirt studs white enamel ones that look like linen.

THE HOUSE FOOTMEN

All house servants who assist in waiting on the table come under the direction of the butler, and are known as footmen. One who never comes into the dining-room is known as a useful man. The duties of the footmen (and useful man) include cleaning the dining-room, pantry, lower hall, entrance vestibule, sidewalk, attending to the furnace, carrying coal to the kitchen, wood to all the open fireplaces in the house, cleaning the windows, cleaning brasses, cleaning all boots, carrying everything that is heavy, moving furniture for the parlor-maids to clean behind it, valeting all gentlemen, setting and waiting on table, attending the front door, telephoning and writing down messages, and—incessantly and ceaselessly, cleaning and polishing silver.

In a small house, the butler polishes silver, but in a very big house one of the footmen is silver specialist, and does nothing else. Nothing! If there is to be a party of any sort he puts on his livery and joins the others who line the hall and bring dishes to the table. But he does not assist in setting the table or washing dishes or in cleaning anything whatsoever—except silver.

The butler also usually answers the telephone—if not, it is answered by the first footman. The first footman is deputy butler.

The footmen also take turns in answering the door. In houses of great ceremony like those of the Worldlys' and the Gildings', there are always two footmen at the door if anyone is to be admitted. One to open the door and the other to conduct a guest into the drawing-room. But if formal company is expected, the butler himself is in the front hall with one or two footmen at the door.

The Footmen's Livery

People who have big houses usually choose a color for their livery and never change it. Maroon and buff, for instance, are the colors of the Gildings; all their motor cars are maroon with buff lines and cream-colored or maroon linings. The chauffeurs and outside footmen wear maroon liveries. The house footmen, for everyday, wear ordinary footmen's liveries, maroon trousers and long-tailed coats with brass buttons and maroon-and-buff striped waistcoats.

For gala occasions, Mrs. Gilding adds as many caterer's men as necessary, but they all are dressed in her full-dress livery, consisting of a "court" coat which comes together at the neck in front, and then cuts away to long tails at the back. The coat is of maroon broadcloth with frogs and epaulets of black braiding. There is a small standing collar of buff cloth, and a falling cravat of pleated cream-colored lace worn in front. The waistcoat is of buff satin, the breeches of black satin, cream-colored stockings, pumps, and the hair is powdered. It is first pomaded and then thickly powdered. Wigs are never worn.

Mrs. Worldly however compromises between the "court" footman and the ordinary one, and puts her footmen in green cloth coats cut like the everyday liveries, with silver buttons on which the crest is raised in relief, but adds black velvet collars, and black satin waistcoats in place of the everyday striped ones. Black satin knee breeches, black silk stockings, and pumps with silver buckles, and

their ordinary hair, cut short.

The powdered footman's "court" livery is, as a matter of fact, very rarely seen. Three or four houses in New York, and one or two otherwhere, would very likely include them all. Knee breeches are more usual, but even those are seen in none but very lavish houses.

To choose servants who are naturally well-groomed is more important than putting them in smart liveries. Men must be close shaven and have their hair well cut. Their linen must be immaculate, their shoes polished, their clothes brushed and in press, and their finger nails clean and well cared for. If a man's fingers are indelibly stained he would better wear white cotton gloves.

THE COOK

The kitchen is always in charge of the cook. In a small house, or in an apartment, she is alone and has all the cooking, cleaning of kitchen and larder, to do, the basement or kitchen bell to answer, and the servants' table to set and their dishes to wash as well as her kitchen utensils. In a bigger house, the kitchen-maid lights the kitchen fire, and does all cleaning of kitchen and pots and pans, answers the basement bell, sets the servants' table and washes the servants' table dishes. In a still bigger house, the second cook cooks for the servants always, and for the children sometimes, and assists the cook by preparing certain plainer portions of the meals, the cook preparing all dinner dishes, sauces and the more elaborate items on the menu. Sometimes there are two or more kitchen-maids who merely divide the greater amount of work between them.

In most houses of any size, the cook does all the marketing. She sees the lady of the house every morning, and submits menus for the day. In smaller houses, the lady does the ordering of both supplies and menus.

How a Cook Submits the Menu

In a house of largest size—at the Gildings for instance, the chef writes in his "book" every evening, the menus for the next day, whether there is to be company or not. (None, of course, if the family are to be out for all meals.) This "book" is sent up to Mrs. Gilding with her breakfast tray. It is a loose-leaf blank book of rather large size. The day's menu sheet is on top, but the others are left in their proper sequence underneath, so that by looking at her engagement book to see who dined with her on such a date, and then looking at the menu for that same date, she knows—if she cares to—exactly what the dinner was.

If she does not like the chef's choice, she draws a pencil through and writes in something else. If she has any orders or criticisms to make, she writes them on an envelope pad, folds the page, and seals it and puts the "note" in the book.

If the menu is to be changed, the chef re-writes it, if not the page is left as it is, and the book put in a certain place in the kitchen.

The butler always goes into the kitchen shortly after the book has come down, and copies the day's menus on a pad of his own. From this he knows what table utensils will be needed.

This system is not necessary in medium sized or small houses, but where there is a great deal of entertaining it is much simpler for the butler to be able to go and "see for himself" than to ask the cook and—forget. And ask again, and the cook forget, and then—disturbance!—because the butler did not send down the proper silver dishes or have the proper plates ready, or had others heated unnecessarily.

THE KITCHEN-MAID

The kitchen-maids are under the direction of the cook, except one known colloquially as the "hall girl" who is supervised by the housekeeper. She is evidently a survival of the "between maid" of the English house. Her sobriquet comes from the fact that she has charge of the servants' hall, or dining-room, and is in fact the waitress for them. She also takes care of the housekeeper's rooms, and carries all her meals up to her. If there is no housekeeper, the hall girl is under the direction of the cook.

THE PARLOR-MAID

The parlor-maid keeps the drawing-room and library in order. The useful man brings up the wood for the fireplaces, but the parlor-maid lays the fire. In some houses the parlor-maid takes up the breakfast trays; in other houses, the butler does this himself and then hands them to the lady's maid, who takes them into the bedrooms. The windows and the brasses are cleaned by the useful man and heavy furniture moved by him so she can clean behind them.

The parlor-maid assists the butler in waiting at table, and washing dishes, and takes turns with him in answering the door and the telephone.

In huge houses like the Worldlys' and the Gildings', the footmen assist the butler in the dining-room and at the door—and there is always a "pantry maid" who washes dishes and cleans the pantry.

THE HOUSEMAID

The housemaid does all the chamber work, cleans all silver on dressing-tables, polishes fixtures in the bathroom—in other words takes care of the bedroom floors.

In a bigger house, the head housemaid has charge of the linen and does the bedrooms of the lady and gentleman of the house and a few of the spare rooms. The second housemaid does the nurseries, extra spare rooms, and the servants' floor. The bigger the establishment, the more housemaids, and the work is further divided. The housemaid is by many people called the chambermaid.

UNIFORMS

In all houses of importance and fashion, the parlor-maid and the housemaids, and the waitress (where there is no butler), are all dressed alike. Their "work" dresses are of plain cambric and in whatever the "house color" may be, with large white aprons with high bibs, and Eton collars, but no cuffs (as they must be able to unbutton their sleeves and turn them up.) Those who serve in the dining-room must always dress before lunch, and the afternoon dresses vary according to the taste—and purse—of the lady of the house. Where no uniforms are supplied, each maid is supposed to furnish herself with a plain black dress for afternoon, on which she wears collars and cuffs of embroidered muslin usually (always supplied her), and a small afternoon apron, with or without shoulder straps, and with or without a cap.

In very "beautifully done" houses (all the dresses of the maids are furnished them), the color of the uniforms is chosen to harmonize with the dining-room. At the Gildings', Jr., for instance, where there are no men servants because Mr. Gilding does not like them, but where the house is as perfect as a picture on the stage, the waitress and parlor-maid wear in the blue and yellow dining-room, dresses of Nattier blue taffeta with aprons and collars and cuffs of plain hemstitched cream-colored organdie, that is as transparent as possible; blue stockings and patent leather slippers with silver buckles, their hair always beautifully smooth. Sometimes they wear caps and sometimes not, depending upon the waitress' appearance. Twenty years ago, every maid in a lady's house wore a cap except the personal maid, who wore (and still does) a velvet bow, or nothing. But when every little slattern in every sloppy household had a small mat of whitish Swiss pinned somewhere on an untidy head, and was decked out in as many yards of embroidery ruffling on her apron and shoulders as her person could carry, fashionable ladies began taking caps and trimmings off, and exacting instead that clothes be good in cut and hair be neatly arranged.

A few ladies of great taste dress their maids according to individual becomingness; some faces look well under a cap, others look the contrary. A maid whose hair is rather fluffy—especially if it is dark—looks pretty in a cap, particularly of the coronet variety. No one looks well in a doily laid flat, but fluffy fair hair with a small mat tilted up against a knot of hair dressed high can look very smart. A young woman whose hair is straight and rebellious to order, can be made to look tidy and even attractive in a headdress that encircles the whole head. A good one for this purpose has a very narrow ruche from 9 to 18 inches long on either side of a long black velvet ribbon. The ruche goes

part way, or all the way, around the head, and the velvet ribbon ties, with streamers hanging down the back. On the other hand, many extremely pretty young women with hair worn flat do not look well in caps of any description—except “Dutch” ones which are, in most houses, too suggestive of fancy dress. If no caps are worn the hair must be faultlessly smooth and neat; and of course where two or more maids are seen together, they must be alike. It would not do to have one wear a cap and the other not.

THE LADY’S MAID

A first class lady’s maid is required to be a hairdresser, a good packer and an expert needlewoman. Her first duty is to keep her lady’s clothes in order and to help her dress, and undress. She draws the bath, lays out underclothes, always brushes her lady’s hair and usually dresses it, and gets out the dress to be worn, as well as the stockings, shoes, hat, veil, gloves, wrist bag, parasol, or whatever accessories go with the dress in question.

As soon as the lady is dressed, everything that has been worn is taken to the sewing room and each article is gone over, carefully brushed if of woolen material, cleaned if silk. Everything that is mussed is pressed, everything that can be suspected of not being immaculate is washed or cleaned with cleaning fluid, and when in perfect order is replaced where it belongs in the closet. Underclothes as mended are put in the clothes hamper. Stockings are looked over for rips or small holes, and the maid usually washes very fine stockings herself, also lace collars or small pieces of lace trimming.

Some maids have to wait up at night, no matter how late, until their ladies return; but as many, if not more, are never asked to wait longer than a certain hour.

But the maid for a débutante in the height of the season, between the inevitable “go fetching” at this place and that, and mending of party dresses danced to ribbons and soiled by partner’s hands on the back, and slippers “walked on” until there is quite as much black part as satin or metal, has no sinecure.

Why Two Maids?

In very important houses where mother and daughters go out a great deal there are usually two maids, one for the mother and one for the daughters. But even in moderate households it is seldom practical for a débutante and her mother to share a maid—at least during the height of the season. That a maid who has to go out night after night for weeks and even months on end, and sit in the dressing-rooms at balls until four and five and even six in the morning, is then allowed to go to bed and to sleep until luncheon is merely humane. And it can easily be seen that it is more likely that she will need the help of a seamstress to refurbish dance-frocks, than that she will have any time to devote to her young lady’s mother—who in “mid-season,” therefore, is forced to have a maid of her own, ridiculous as it sounds, that two maids for two ladies should be necessary! Sometimes this is overcome by engaging an especial maid “by the evening” to go to parties and wait, and bring the débutante home again. And the maid at home can then be “maid for two.”

Dress of a Lady’s Maid

A lady’s maid wears a black skirt, a laundered white waist, and a small white apron, the band of which buttons in the back.

In traveling, a lady’s maid always wears a small black silk apron and some maids wear black taffeta ones always. In the afternoon, she puts on a black waist with white collar and cuffs. Mrs. Gilding, Jr., puts her maid in black taffeta with embroidered collar and cuffs. For “company occasions,” when she waits in the dressing-room, she wears light gray taffeta with a very small embroidered mull apron with a narrow black velvet waist-ribbon, and collar and cuffs of mull to match—which is extremely pretty, but also extremely extravagant.

THE VALET

The valet (pronounced val-et not vallay) is what Beau Brummel called a gentleman’s gentleman.

His duties are exactly the same as those of the lady's maid—except that he does not sew! He keeps his employer's clothes in perfect order, brushes, cleans and presses everything as soon as it has been worn—even if only for a few moments. He lays out the clothes to be put on, puts away everything that is a personal belonging. Some gentlemen like their valet to help them dress; run the bath, shave them and hold each article in readiness as it is to be put on. But most gentlemen merely like their clothes "laid out" for them, which means that trousers have belts or braces attached, shirts have cuff links and studs; and waistcoat buttons are put in.

The valet also unpacks the bags of any gentleman guests when they come, valets them while there, and packs them when they go. He always packs for his own gentleman, buys tickets, looks after the luggage, and makes himself generally useful as a personal attendant, whether at home or when traveling.

At big dinners, he is required (much against his will) to serve as a footman—in a footman's, not a butler's, livery.

The valet wears no livery except on such occasions. His "uniform" is an ordinary business suit, dark and inconspicuous in color, with a black tie.

In a bachelor's quarters a valet is often general factotum; not only valeting but performing the services of cook, butler, and even housemaid.

THE NURSE

Everybody knows the nurse is either the comfort or the torment of the house. Everyone also knows innumerable young mothers who put up with inexcusable crankiness from a crotchety middle-aged woman because she was "so wonderful" to the baby. And here let it be emphasized that such an one usually turns out to have been not wonderful to the baby at all. That she does not actually abuse a helpless infant is merely granting that she is not a "monster."

Devotion must always be unselfish; the nurse who is *really* "wonderful" to the baby is pretty sure to be a person who is kind generally. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the sooner a domineering nurse—old or young—is got rid of, the better. It has been the experience of many a mother whose life had been made perfectly miserable through her belief that if she dismissed the tyrant the baby would suffer, that in the end—there *is* always an end!—the baby was quite as relieved as the rest of the family when the "right sort" of a kindly and humane person took the tyrant's place.

It is unnecessary to add that one can not be too particular in asking for a nurse's reference and in never failing to get a personal one from the lady she is leaving. Not only is it necessary to have a sweet-tempered, competent and clean person, but her moral character is of utmost importance, since she is to be the constant and inseparable companion of the children whose whole lives are influenced by her example, especially where busy parents give only a small portion of time to their children.

COURTESY TO ONE'S HOUSEHOLD

In a dignified house, a servant is never spoken to as Jim, Maisie, or Katie, but always as James or Margaret or Katherine, and a butler is called by his last name, nearly always. The Worldly's butler, for instance, is called Hastings, not John. In England, a lady's maid is also called by her last name, and the cook, if married, is addressed as Mrs. and the nurse is always called "Nurse." A chef is usually called "Chef" or else by his last name.

Always abroad, and every really well-bred lady or gentleman here, says "please" in asking that something be brought her or him. "Please get me the book I left on the table in my room!" Or "Please give me some bread!" Or "Some bread, please." Or one can say equally politely and omit the please, "I'd like some toast," but it is usual and instinctive to every lady or gentleman to add "please."

In refusing a dish at the table, one must say "No, thank you," or "No, thanks," or else one shakes one's head. A head can be shaken politely or rudely. To be courteously polite, and yet keep one's walls up is a thing every thoroughbred person knows how to do—and a thing that everyone who is trying to become such must learn to do.

A rule can't be given because there isn't any. As said in another chapter, a well-bred person always

lives within the walls of his personal reserve, a vulgarian has no walls—or at least none that do not collapse at the slightest touch. But those who think they appear superior by being rude to others whom fortune has placed below them, might as well, did they but know it, shout their own unexalted origin to the world at large, since by no other method could it be more widely published.

THE HOUSE WITH LIMITED SERVICE

The fact that you live in a house with two servants, or in an apartment with only one, need not imply that your house lacks charm or even distinction, or that it is not completely the home of a lady or gentleman. But, as explained in the chapter on Dinners, if you have limited service you must devise systematic economy of time and labor or you will have disastrous consequences.

Every person, after all, has only one pair of hands, and a day has only so many hours, and one thing is inevitable, which young housekeepers are apt to forget, a few can not do the work of many, and do it in the same way. It is all very well if the housemaid can not get into young Mrs. Gilding's room until lunch time, nor does it matter if its confusion looks like the aftermath of a cyclone. The housemaid has nothing to do the rest of the day but put that one room and bath in order. But in young Mrs. Gaily's small house where the housemaid is also the waitress, who is supposed to be "dressed" for lunch, it does not have to be pointed out that she can not sweep, dust, tidy up rooms, wash out bathtubs, polish fixtures, and at the same time be dressed in afternoon clothes. If Mrs. Gaily is out for lunch, it is true the chambermaid-waitress need not be dressed to wait on table, but her thoughtless young mistress would not be amiable if a visitor were to ring the doorbell in the early afternoon and have it opened by a maid in a rumpled "working" dress.

Supposing the time to put the bedroom in order is from ten to eleven each morning: it is absolutely necessary that Mrs. Gaily take her bath before ten so that even if she is not otherwise "dressed" she can be out of her bedroom and bath at ten o'clock promptly. She can go elsewhere while her room is done up and then come back and finish dressing later. In this case she must herself "tidy" any disorder that she makes in dressing; put away her négligé and slippers and put back anything out of place. On the days when Mr. Gaily does not go to the office he too must get up and out so that the house can be put in order.

THE ONE MAID ALONE

But where one maid alone cooks, cleans, waits on table, and furthermore serves as lady's maid and valet, she must necessarily be limited in the performance of each of these duties in direct proportion to their number. Even though she be eagerly willing, quality must give way before quantity produced with the same equipment, or if quality is necessary then quantity must give way. In the house of a fashionable gay couple like the Lovejoys' for instance, the time spent in "maiding" or "valeting" has to be taken from cleaning or cooking. Besides cleaning and cooking, the one maid in their small apartment can press out Mrs. Lovejoy's dresses and do a little mending, but she can not sit down and spend one or two hours going over a dress in the way a specialist maid can. Either Mrs. Lovejoy herself must do the sewing or the housework, or one or the other must be left undone.

THE MANAGEMENT OF SERVANTS

It is certainly a greater pleasure and incentive to work for those who are appreciative than for those who continually find fault. Everyone who did war work can not fail to remember how easy it was to work for, or with, some people, and how impossible to get anything done for others. And just as the "heads" of work-rooms or "wards" or "canteens" were either stimulating or dispiriting, so must they and their types also be to those who serve in their households.

This, perhaps, explains why some people are always having a "servant problem"; finding servants difficult to get, more difficult to keep, and most difficult to get efficient work from. It is a question whether the "servant problem" is not more often a mistress problem. It must be! Because, if you notice, those who have woes and complaints are invariably the same, just as others who never have any trouble are also the same. It does not depend on the size of the house; the Lovejoys never have any trouble, and yet their one maid of all work has a far from "easy" place, and a vacancy at

Brookmeadows is always sought after, even though the Oldnames spend ten months of the year in the country. Neither is there any friction at the Golden Hall or Great Estates, even though the latter house is run by the butler—an almost inevitable cause of trouble. These houses represent a difference in range of from one alone, to nearly forty on the household payroll.

THOSE WHO HAVE PERSISTENT "TROUBLE"

It might be well for those who have trouble to remember a few rules which are often overlooked: Justice must be the foundation upon which every tranquil house is constructed. Work must be as evenly divided as possible; one servant should not be allowed liberties not accorded to all.

It is not just to be too lenient, any more than it is just to be unreasonably strict. To allow impertinence or sloppy work is inexcusable, but it is equally inexcusable to show causeless irritability or to be overbearing or rude. And there is no greater example of injustice than to reprimand those about you because you happen to be in a bad humor, and at another time overlook offenses that are greater because you are in an amiable mood.

There is also no excuse for "correcting" either a servant or a child before people.

And when you do correct, do not forget to make allowances, if there be any reason why allowance should be made.

If you live in a palace like Golden Hall, or any completely equipped house of important size, you overlook *nothing!* There is no more excuse for delinquency than there is in the Army. If anything happens, such as illness of one servant, there is another to take his (or her) place. A huge household is a machine and it is the business of the engineers—in other words, the secretary, housekeeper, chef or butler, to keep it going perfectly.

But in a little house, it may not be fair to say "Selma, the silver is dirty!" when there is a hot-air furnace and you have had company to every meal, and you have perhaps sent her on errands between times, and she has literally not had a moment. If you don't know whether she has had time or not, you could give her the benefit of the doubt and say (trustfully, not haughtily) "You have not had time to clean the silver, have you?" This—in case she has really been unable to clean it—points out just as well the fact that it is not shining, but is not a criticism. Carelessness, on the other hand, when you know she has had plenty of time, should never be overlooked.

Another type that has "difficulties" is the distrustful—sometimes actually suspicious—person who locks everything tight and treats all those with whom she comes in contact as though they were meddlesomely curious at least, or at worst, dishonest. It is impossible to overstate the misfortune of this temperament. The servant who is "watched" for fear she "won't work," listened to for fear she may be gossiping, suspected of wanting to take a liberty of some sort, or of doing something else she shouldn't do, is psychologically encouraged, almost driven, to do these very things.

The perfect mistress expects perfect service, but it never occurs to her that perfect service will not be voluntarily and gladly given. She, on her part, shows all of those in her employ the consideration and trust due them as honorable, self-respecting and conscientious human beings. If she has reason to think they are not all this, a lady does not keep them in her house.

ETIQUETTE OF SERVICE

The well-trained high-class servant is faultlessly neat in appearance, reticent in manner, speaks in a low voice, walks and moves quickly but silently, and is unfailingly courteous and respectful. She (or he) always knocks on a door, even of the library or sitting-room, but opens it without waiting to hear "Come in," as knocking on a downstairs door is merely politeness. At a bedroom door she would wait for permission to enter. In answering a bell, she asks "Did you ring, sir?" or if especially well-mannered she asks "Did Madam ring?"

A servant always answers "Yes, Madam," or "Very good, sir," *never* "Yes," "No," "All right," or "Sure."

Young people in the house are called "Miss Alice" or "Mr. Ollie," possibly "Mr. Oliver," but they are generally called by their familiar names with the prefix of Miss or Mister. Younger children are called Miss Kittie and Master Fred, but never by the nurse, who calls them by their first names until they

are grown—sometimes always.

All cards and small packages are presented on a tray.

TIME “OUT” AND “IN”

No doubt in the far-off districts there are occasional young women who work long and hard and for little compensation, but at least in all cities, servants have their definite time out. Furthermore, they are allowed in humanely run houses to have “times in” when they can be at home to friends who come to see them. In every well-appointed house of size there is a sitting-room which is furnished with comfortable chairs and sofa if possible, a good droplight to read by, often books, and always magazines (sent out as soon as read by the family). In other words, they have an inviting room to use as their own exactly as though they were living at home. If no room is available, the kitchen has a cover put on the table, a droplight, and a few restful chairs are provided.

THE MAIDS’ MEN FRIENDS

Are maids allowed to receive men friends? Certainly they are! Whoever in remote ages thought it was better to forbid “followers” the house, and have Mary and Selma slip out of doors to meet them in the dark, had very distorted notions to say the least. And any lady who knows so little of human nature as to make the same rule for her maids to-day is acting in ignorant blindness of her own duties to those who are not only in her employ but also under her protection.

A pretty young woman whose men friends come in occasionally and play cards with the others, or dance to a small and not loud phonograph in the kitchen, is merely being treated humanly. Because she wears a uniform makes her no less a young girl, with a young girl’s love of amusement, which if not properly provided for her “at home” will be sought for in sinister places.

This responsibility is one that many ladies who are occupied with charitable and good works elsewhere often overlook under their own roof. It does not mean that the kitchen should be a scene of perpetual revelry and mirth that can by any chance disturb the quiet of the neighborhood or even the family. Unseemly noise is checked at once, much as it would be if young people in the drawing-room became disturbing. Continuous company is not suitable either, and those who abuse privileges naturally must have them curtailed, but the really high-class servant who does not appreciate kindness and requite it with considerate and proper behavior is rare.

SERVICE IN FORMAL ENTERTAINING

ON THE SIDEWALK AND IN THE HALL

For a wedding, or a ball, and sometimes for teas and big dinners, there is an awning from curb to front door. But usually, especially in good weather, a dinner or other moderate sized evening entertainment is prepared for by stretching a carpet (a red one invariably!) down the front steps and across the pavement to the curb’s edge. At all important functions there is a chauffeur (or a caterer’s man) on the sidewalk to open the door of motors, and a footman or waitress stationed inside the door of the house to open it on one’s approach. This same servant, or more often another stationed in the hall beyond, directs arriving guests to the dressing-rooms.

DRESSING-ROOMS

Houses especially built for entertaining, have two small rooms on the ground floor, each with its lavatory, and off of it, a rack for the hanging of coats and wraps. In most houses, however, guests have to go upstairs where two bedrooms are set aside, one as a ladies’, and the other as a gentlemen’s coat room.

At an afternoon tea in houses where dressing-rooms have not been installed by the architect, the end of the hall, if it is wide, is sometimes supplied with a coat rack (which may be rented from a caterer) for the gentlemen. Ladies are in this case supposed to go into the drawing-room as they

are, or go upstairs to the bedroom put at their disposal and in charge of a lady's maid or housemaid.

If the entertainment is very large, checks are always given to avoid confusion in the dressing-rooms exactly as in public "check rooms." In the ladies' dressing-room—whether downstairs or up—there must be an array of toilet necessities such as brushes and combs; well-placed mirrors, hairpins, powder with stacks of individual cotton balls, or a roll of cotton in a receptacle from which it may be pulled. In the lavatory there must be fresh soap and plenty of small hand towels. The lady's personal maid and one or two assistants if necessary, depending upon the size of the party, but one and all of them as neatly dressed as possible, assist ladies off and on with their wraps, and give them coat checks.

A lady's maid should always look the arriving guests over—not boldly nor too apparently, but with a quick glance for anything that may be amiss. If the drapery of a dress is caught up on its trimming, or a fastening undone, it is her duty to say: "Excuse me, madam (or miss), but there is a hook undone"—or "the drapery of your gown is caught—shall I fix it?" Which she does as quietly and quickly as possible. If there is a rip of any sort, she says: "I think there is a thread loose, I'll just tack it. It will only be a moment."

The well-bred maid instinctively makes little of a guest's accident, and is as considerate as the hostess herself. Employees instinctively adopt the attitude of their employer.

In the gentlemen's coat room of a perfectly appointed house the valet's attitude is much the same. If a gentleman's coat should have met with any accident, the valet says: "Let me have it fixed for you, sir, it'll only take a moment!" And he divests the gentleman of his coat and takes it to a maid and asks her please to take a stitch in it. Meanwhile he goes back to his duties in the dressing-room until he is sure the coat is finished, when he gets it and politely helps the owner into it.

In a small country house where dressing-room space is limited, the quaint tables copied from old ones are very useful, screened off at the back of the downstairs hall, or in a very small lavatory. They look, when shut, like an ordinary table, but when the top is lifted a mirror, the height of the table's width, swings forward and a series of small compartments and trays both deep and shallow are laid out on either side. The trays of course are kept filled with hairpins, pins and powder, and the compartments have sunburn lotion and liquid powder, brush, comb and whisk-broom, and whatever else the hostess thinks will be useful.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF GUESTS

The butler's duty is to stand near the entrance to the reception or drawing-room, and as each guest arrives (unless they are known to him) he asks: "What name, please?" He then leads the way into the room where the hostess is receiving, and says distinctly: "Mr. and Mrs. Jones." If Mrs. Jones is considerably in advance of her husband, he says: "Mrs. Jones!" then waits for Mr. Jones to approach before announcing: "Mr. Jones!"

At a very large party such as a ball, or a very big tea or musical, he does not leave his place, but stands just outside the drawing-room, and the hostess stands just within, and as the guests pass through the door, he announces each one's name.

It is said to be customary in certain places to have waitresses announce people. But in New York guests are never announced if there are no men servants. At a very large function such as a ball or tea, a hostess who has no butler at home, always employs one for the occasion. If, for instance, she is giving a ball for her daughter, and all the sons and daughters of her own acquaintance are invited, the chances are that not half or even a quarter of her guests are known to her by sight, so that their announcement is not a mere matter of form but of necessity.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF DINNER

When the butler on entering the room to announce dinner, happens to catch the attention of the hostess, he merely bows. Otherwise he approaches within speaking distance and says, "Dinner is served." He never says, "Dinner is ready."

At a large dinner where it is quite a promenade to circle the table in search of one's name, the butler stands just within the dining-room and either reads from a list or says from memory "right" or

“left” as the case may be, to each gentleman and lady on approaching. In a few of the smartest houses a leaf has been taken from the practise of royalty and a table plan arranged in the front hall, which is shown to each gentleman at the moment when he takes the envelope enclosing the name of his partner at dinner. This table plan is merely a diagram made in leather with white name cards that slip into spaces corresponding to the seats at the table. On this a gentleman can see exactly where he sits and between whom; so that if he does not know the lady who is to be on his left as well as the one he is to “take in,” he has plenty of time before going to the table to ask his host to present him.

At the end of the evening, the butler is always at the front door—and by that time, unless the party is very large, he should have remembered their names, if he is a perfect butler, and as Mr. and Mrs. Jones appear he opens the door and calls down to the chauffeur “Mr. Jones’ car!” And in the same way “Mr. Smith’s car!” “Miss Gilding’s car!” When a car is at the door, the chauffeur runs up the steps and says to the butler: “Miss Gilding’s car” or “Mrs. Jones’ car.” The butler then announces to either Mr. or Mrs. Jones, “Your car, sir,” or “Your car, madam,” and holds the door open for her to go out, or he may say, “Your car, Miss,” if the Gilding car comes first.

DINING-ROOM SERVICE AT PRIVATE ENTERTAINMENTS

Supper at a ball in a great house (big enough for a ball) is usually in charge of the butler, who by “supper time” is free from his duties of “announcing” and is able to look after the dining-room service. The sit-down supper at a ball is served exactly like a dinner—or a wedding breakfast; and the buffet supper of a dance is like the buffet of a wedding reception.

At a large tea where the butler is on duty “announcing” at the same time that other guests are going into the dining-room for refreshments, the dining-room service has to be handed over to the first footman and his assistants or a capable waitress is equally able to meet the situation. She should have at least two maids with her, as they have to pour all cups of tea and bouillon and chocolate as well as to take away used cups and plates and see that the food on the table is replenished.

At a small tea where ladies perform the office of pouring, one man or maid in the dining-room is plenty, to bring in more hot water or fresh cups, or whatever the table hostesses have need of.

FORMAL SERVICE WITHOUT MEN SERVANTS

Many, and very fastidious, people, who live in big houses and entertain constantly, have neither men servants nor employ a caterer, ever. Efficient women take men’s places equally well, though two services are omitted. Women never (in New York at least) announce guests or open the doors of motors. But there is no difference whatsoever in the details of the pantry, dining-room, hall or dressing-room, whether the services are performed by men or women. (No women, of course, are ever on duty in the gentlemen’s dressing-rooms.)

At an evening party, the door is opened by the waitress, assisted by the parlor-maid who directs the way to the dressing-rooms. The guests, when they are ready to go in the drawing-room, approach the hostess unannounced. A guest who may not be known by sight does not wait for her hostess to recognize her but says at once, “How do you do, Mrs. Eminent, I’m Mrs. Joseph Blank”; or a young girl says, “I am Constance Style” (not “Miss Style,” unless she is beyond the “twenties”); or a married woman merely announces herself as “Mrs. Town.” She does not add her husband’s name as it is taken for granted that the gentleman following her is Mr. Town.

Chapter XIII.
Teas and Other Afternoon Parties

TEAS

Except at a wedding, the function strictly understood by the word “reception” went out of fashion, in New York at least, during the reign of Queen Victoria, and its survivor is a public or semi-public affair presided over by a committee, and is a serious, rather than a merely social event.

The very word “reception” brings to mind an aggregation of personages, very formal, very dressed up, very pompous, and very learned, among whom the ordinary mortal can not do other than wander helplessly in the labyrinth of the specialist’s jargon. Art critics on a varnishing day reception, are sure to dwell on the effect of a new technique, and the comment of most of us, to whom a painting ought to look like a “picture,” is fatal. Equally fatal to meet an explorer and not know where or what he explored; or to meet a celebrated author and not have the least idea whether he wrote detective stories or expounded Taoism. On the other hand it is certainly discouraging after studying up on the latest Cretan excavations in order to talk intelligently to Professor Diggs, to be pigeon-holed for the afternoon beside Mrs. Newmother whose interest in discovery is limited to “a new tooth in baby’s head.”

Yet the difference between a reception and a tea is one of atmosphere only, like the difference in furnishing twin houses. One is enveloped in the heavy gloom of the mid-Victorian period, the other is light and alluring in the fashion of to-day.

A “tea,” even though it be formal, is nevertheless friendly and inviting. One does not go in “church” clothes nor with ceremonious manner; but in an informal and every-day spirit, to see one’s friends and be seen by them.

THE AFTERNOON TEA WITH DANCING

The afternoon tea with dancing is usually given to “bring out” a daughter, or to present a new daughter-in-law. The invitations are the same whether one hundred or two thousand are sent out. For instance:

Mrs. Grantham Jones

Miss Muriel Jones

will be at home

on Tuesday, the third of December

from four until seven o'clock

The Fitz-Cherry

Dancing

As invitations to formal teas of this sort are sent to the hostess' "general" visiting list, and very big houses are comparatively few, a ballroom is nearly always engaged at a hotel. Many hotels have a big and a small ballroom, and unless one's acquaintance is enormous the smaller room is preferable.

Too much space for too few people gives an effect of emptiness which always is suggestive of failure; also one must not forget that an undecorated room needs more people to make it look “trimmed” than one in which the floral decoration is lavish. On the other hand, a “crush” is very disagreeable, even though it always gives the effect of “success.”

The arrangements are not as elaborate as for a ball. At most a screen of palms behind which the musicians sit (unless they sit in a gallery), perhaps a few festoons of green here and there, and the débutante’s own flowers banked on tables where she stands to receive, form as much decoration as is ever attempted.

Whether in a public ballroom or a private drawing-room, the curtains over the windows are drawn and the lights lighted as if for a ball in the evening. If the tea is at a private house there is no awning unless it rains, but there is a chauffeur or coachman at the curb to open motor doors, and a butler, or caterer’s man, to open the door of the house before any one has time to ring.

Guests as they arrive are announced either by the hostess’ own butler or a caterer’s “announcer.” The hostess receives everyone as at a ball; if she and her daughter are for the moment standing alone, the new arrival, if a friend, stands talking with them until a newer arrival takes his or her place.

After “receiving” with her mother or mother-in-law for an hour or so, as soon as the crowd thins a little, the débutante or bride may be allowed to dance.

The younger people, as soon as they have shaken hands with the hostess, dance. The older ones sit about, or talk to friends or take tea.

At a formal tea, the tea-table is exactly like that at a wedding reception, in that it is a large table set as a buffet, and is always in charge of the caterer’s men, or the hostess’ own butler or waitress and assistants. It is never presided over by deputy hostesses.

THE MENU IS LIMITED

Only tea, bouillon, chocolate, bread and cakes are served. There can be all sorts of sandwiches, hot biscuits, crumpets, muffins, sliced cake and little cakes in every variety that a cook or caterer can devise—whatever can come under the head of “bread and cake” is admissible; but nothing else, or it becomes a “reception,” and not a “tea.” At the end of the table or on a separate table near by, there are bowls or pitchers of orangeade or lemonade or “punch” (meaning in these days something cold that has fruit juice in it) for the dancers, exactly as at a ball.

Guests go to the table and help themselves to their own selection of bread and cakes. The chocolate, already poured into cups and with whipped cream on top, is passed on a tray by a servant. Tea also poured into cups, not mixed but accompanied by a small pitcher of cream, bowl of sugar, and dish of lemon, is also passed on a tray. A guest taking her plate of food in one hand and her tea or chocolate in the other, finds herself a chair somewhere, if possible, near a table, so that

she can take her tea without discomfort.

AFTERNOON TEAS WITHOUT DANCING

Afternoon teas without dancing are given in honor of visiting celebrities or new neighbors or engaged couples, or to “warm” a new house; or, most often, for a house-guest from another city.

The invitation is a visiting card of the hostess with “to meet Mrs. So-and-So” across the top of it and “Jan. 10, Tea at 4 o’clock” in the lower corner, opposite the address.

At a tea of this description, tea and chocolate may be passed on trays or poured by two ladies, as will be explained below.

Unless the person for whom the tea is given is such a celebrity that the “tea” becomes a “reception,” the hostess does not stand at the door, but merely near it so that anyone coming in may easily find her. The ordinary afternoon tea given for one reason or another is, in winter, merely and literally, being at home on a specified afternoon with the blinds and curtains drawn, the room lighted as at night, a fire burning and a large tea-table spread in the dining-room or a small one near the hearth. An afternoon tea in summer is the same, except that artificial light is never used, and the table is most often on a veranda.

“DO COME IN FOR A CUP OF TEA”

This is Best Society’s favorite form of invitation. It is used on nearly every occasion whether there is to be music or a distinguished visitor, or whether a hostess has merely an inclination to see her friends. She writes on her personal visiting card: “Do come in on Friday for a cup of tea and hear Ellwin play, or Farrish sing, or to meet Senator West, or Lady X.” Or even more informally: “I have not seen you for so long.”

Invitations to a tea of this description are never “general.” A hostess asks either none but close friends, or at most her “dining” list; sometimes this sort of a “tea” is so small that she sits behind her own tea-table—exactly as she does every afternoon.

But if the tea is of any size, from twenty upwards, the table is set in the dining-room and two

intimate friends of the hostess “pour” tea at one end, and chocolate at the other. The ladies who “pour” are always especially invited beforehand and always wear afternoon dresses, with hats, of course, as distinguished from the street clothes of other guests. As soon as a hostess decides to give a tea, she selects two friends for this duty who are, in her opinion, decorative in appearance and also who (this is very important) can be counted on for gracious manners to everyone and under all circumstances.

It does not matter if a guest going into the dining-room for a cup of tea or chocolate does not know the deputy hostesses who are “pouring.” It is perfectly correct for a stranger to say “May I have a cup of tea?”

The one pouring should answer very responsively, “Certainly! How do you like it? Strong or weak?”

If the latter, she deluges it with hot water, and again watching for the guest’s negative or approval, adds cream or lemon or sugar. Or, preferring chocolate, the guest perhaps goes to the other end of the table and asks for a cup of chocolate. The table hostess at that end also says “Certainly,” and pours out chocolate. If she is surrounded with people, she smiles as she hands it out, and that is all. But if she is unoccupied and her momentary “guest by courtesy” is alone, it is merest good manners on her part to make a few pleasant remarks. Very likely when asked for chocolate she says: “How nice of you! I have been feeling very neglected at my end. Everyone seems to prefer tea.” Whereupon the guest ventures that people are afraid of chocolate because it is so fattening or so hot. After an observation or two about the weather, or the beauty of the china or how good the little cakes look, or the sandwiches taste, the guest finishes her chocolate.

If the table hostess is still unoccupied the guest smiles and slightly nods “Good-by,” but if the other’s attention has been called upon by someone else, she who has finished her chocolate, leaves unnoticed.

If another lady coming into the dining-room is an acquaintance of one of the table hostesses, the new visitor draws up a chair, if there is room, and drinks her tea or chocolate at the table. But as soon as she has finished, she should give her place up to a newer arrival. Or perhaps a friend appears, and the two take their tea together over in another part of the room, or at vacant places farther down the table. The tea-table is not set with places; but at a table where ladies are pouring, and especially at a tea that is informal, a number of chairs are usually ready to be drawn up for those who like to take their tea at the table.

In many cities, strangers who find themselves together in the house of a friend in common, always talk. In New York smart people always do at dinners or luncheons, but never at a general entertainment. Their cordiality to a stranger would depend largely upon the informal, or intimate, quality of the tea party; it would depend on who the stranger might be, and who the New Yorker. Mrs. Worldly would never dream of speaking to anyone—no matter whom—if it could be avoided. Mrs. Kindhart on the other hand, talks to everyone, everywhere and always. Mrs. Kindhart’s position is as good as Mrs. Worldly’s every bit, but perhaps she can be more relaxed; not being the conspicuous hostess that Mrs. Worldly is, she is not so besieged by position-makers and invitation-seekers. Perhaps Mrs. Worldly, finding that nearly every one who approaches her wants something, has come instinctively to avoid each new approach.

THE EVERY-DAY AFTERNOON TEA TABLE

The every-day afternoon tea table is familiar to everyone; there is not the slightest difference in its service whether in the tiny bandbox house of the newest bride, or in the drawing-room of Mrs. Worldly of Great Estates, except that in the little house the tray is brought in by a woman—often a picture in appearance and appointment—instead of a butler with one or two footmen in his wake. In either case a table is placed in front of the hostess. A tea-table is usually of the drop-leaf variety because it is more easily moved than a solid one. There are really no “correct” dimensions; any small table is suitable. It ought not to be so high that the hostess seems submerged behind it, nor so small as to be overhung by the tea tray and easily knocked over. It is usually between 24 and 26 inches wide and from 27 to 36 inches long, or it may be oval or oblong. A double-decked table that has its second deck above the main table is not good because the tea tray perched on the upper deck is neither graceful nor convenient. In proper serving, not only of tea but of cold drinks of all sorts, even where a quantity of bottles, pitchers and glasses need space, everything should be

brought on a tray and not trundled in on a tea-wagon!

A cloth must always be first placed on the table, before putting down the tray. The tea cloth may be a yard, a yard and a half, or two yards square. It may barely cover the table, or it may hang half a yard over each edge. A yard and a quarter is the average size. A tea cloth can be colored, but the conventional one is of white linen, with little or much white needlework or lace, or both.

On this is put a tray big enough to hold everything except the plates of food. The tray may be a massive silver one that requires a footman with strong arms to lift it, or it may be of Sheffield or merely of effectively lacquered tin. In any case, on it should be: a kettle which ought to be already boiling, with a spirit lamp under it, an empty teapot, a caddy of tea, a tea strainer and slop bowl, cream pitcher and sugar bowl, and, on a glass dish, lemon in slices. A pile of cups and saucers and a stack of little tea plates, all to match, with a napkin (about 12 inches square, hem-stitched or edged

to match the tea cloth) folded on each of the plates, like the filling of a layer cake, complete the paraphernalia. Each plate is lifted off with its own napkin. Then on the tea-table, back of the tray, or on the shelves of a separate “curate,” a stand made of three small shelves, each just big enough for one good-sized plate, are always two, usually three, varieties of cake and hot breads.

THINGS PEOPLE EAT AT TEA

The top dish on the “curate” should be a covered one, and holds hot bread of some sort; the two lower dishes may be covered or not, according to whether the additional food is hot or cold; the second dish usually holds sandwiches, and the third cake. Or perhaps all the dishes hold cake; little fancy cakes for instance, and pastries and slices of layer cakes. Many prefer a simpler diet, and have bread and butter, or toasted crackers, supplemented by plain cookies. Others pile the “curate” until it literally staggers, under pastries and cream cakes and sandwiches of pâté de foie gras or mayonnaise. Others, again, like marmalade, or jam, or honey on bread and butter or on buttered toast or muffins. This necessitates little butter knives and a dish of jam added to the already overloaded tea tray.

Selection of afternoon tea food is entirely a matter of whim, and new food-fads sweep through communities. For a few months at a time, everyone, whether in a private house or a country club, will eat nothing but English muffins and jam, then suddenly they like only toasted cheese crackers, or Sally Lunn, or chocolate cake with whipped cream on top. The present fad of a certain group in New York is bacon and toast sandwiches and fresh hot gingerbread. Let it be hoped for the sake of the small household that it will die out rather than become epidemic, since the gingerbread must be baked every afternoon, and the toast and bacon are two other items that come from a range.

Sandwiches for afternoon tea as well as for all collations, are made by buttering the end of the loaf, spreading on the “filling” and then cutting off the prepared slice as thin as possible. A second slice, unspread, makes the other side of the sandwich. When it is put together, the crust is either cut off leaving a square and the square again divided diagonally into two triangular sandwiches, or the sandwich is cut into shape with a regular cutter. In other words, a “party” sandwich is not the sort of sandwich to eat—or order—when hungry!

The tea served to a lady who lives alone and cares for only one dish of eatables would naturally eliminate the other two. But if a visitor is “received,” the servant on duty should, without being told, at once bring in at least another dish and an additional cup, saucer, plate and napkin.

Afternoon tea at a very large house party or where especially invited people are expected for tea, should include two plates of hot food such as toast or hot biscuits split open and buttered, toasted and buttered English muffins, or crumplets, corn muffins or hot gingerbread. Two cold plates should contain cookies or fancy cakes, and perhaps a layer cake. In hot weather, in place of one of the hot dishes, there should be pâté or lettuce sandwiches, and always a choice of hot or iced tea, or perhaps iced coffee or chocolate frappé, but rarely if ever, anything else.

THE ETIQUETTE OF TEA SERVING AND DRINKING

As tea is the one meal of intimate conversation, a servant never comes to the room at tea-time unless rung for, to bring fresh water or additional china or food, or to take away used dishes. When the tray and curate are brought in, individual tables, usually glass topped and very small and low, are put beside each of the guests, and the servant then withdraws. The hostess herself “makes” the tea and pours it. Those who sit near enough to her put out their hands for their cup-and-saucer. If any ladies are sitting farther off, and a gentleman is present, he, of course, rises and takes the tea from the hostess to the guest. He also then passes the curate, afterward putting it back where it belongs and resuming his seat. If no gentleman is present, a lady gets up and takes her own tea which the hostess hands her, carries it to her own little individual table, comes back, takes a plate and napkin, helps herself to what she likes and goes to her place.

If the cake is very soft and sticky or filled with cream, small forks must be laid on the tea-table.

As said above, if jam is to be eaten on toast or bread, there must be little butter knives to spread it with. Each guest in taking her plate helps herself to toast and jam and a knife and carries her plate over to her own little table. She then carries her cup of tea to her table and sits down comfortably to drink it. If there are no little tables, she either draws her chair up to the tea-table, or manages as best she can to balance plate, cup and saucer on her lap—a very difficult feat!

In fact, the hostess who, providing no individual tables, expects her guest to balance knife, fork, jam, cream cake, plate and cup and saucer, all on her knees, should choose her friends in the circus rather than in society.

THE GARDEN PARTY

The garden party is merely an afternoon tea out of doors. It may be as elaborate as a sit-down wedding breakfast or as simple as a miniature strawberry festival. At an elaborate one (in the rainy section of our country) a tent or marquise with sides that can be easily drawn up in fine weather and dropped in rain, and with a good dancing floor, is often put up on the lawn or next to the veranda, so that in case of storm people will not be obliged to go out of doors. The orchestra is placed within or near open sides of the tent, so that it can be heard on the lawn and veranda as well as where they are dancing. Or instead of a tea with dancing, if most of the guests are to be older, there may be a concert or other form of professional entertainment.

On the lawn there are usually several huge bright-colored umbrella tents, and under each a table and a group of chairs, and here and there numerous small tables and chairs. For, although the afternoon tea is always put in the dining-room footmen or maids carry varieties of food out on large trays to the lawn, and the guests hold plates on their knees and stand glasses on tables nearby.

At a garden party the food is often much more prodigal than at a tea in town. Sometimes it is as elaborate as at a wedding reception. In addition to hot tea and chocolate, there is either iced coffee or a very melted café parfait, or frosted chocolate in cups. There are also pitchers of various drinks that have rather mysterious ingredients, but are all very much iced and embellished with crushed fruits and mint leaves. There are often berries with cream, especially in strawberry season, on an estate that prides itself on those of its own growing, as well as the inevitable array of fancy sandwiches and cakes.

At teas and musicales and all entertainments where the hostess herself is obliged to stand at the door, her husband or a daughter (if the hostess is old enough, and lucky enough to have one) or else a sister or a very close friend, should look after the guests, to see that any who are strangers are not helplessly wandering about alone, and that elderly ladies are given seats if there is to be a performance, or to show any other courtesies that devolve upon a hostess.

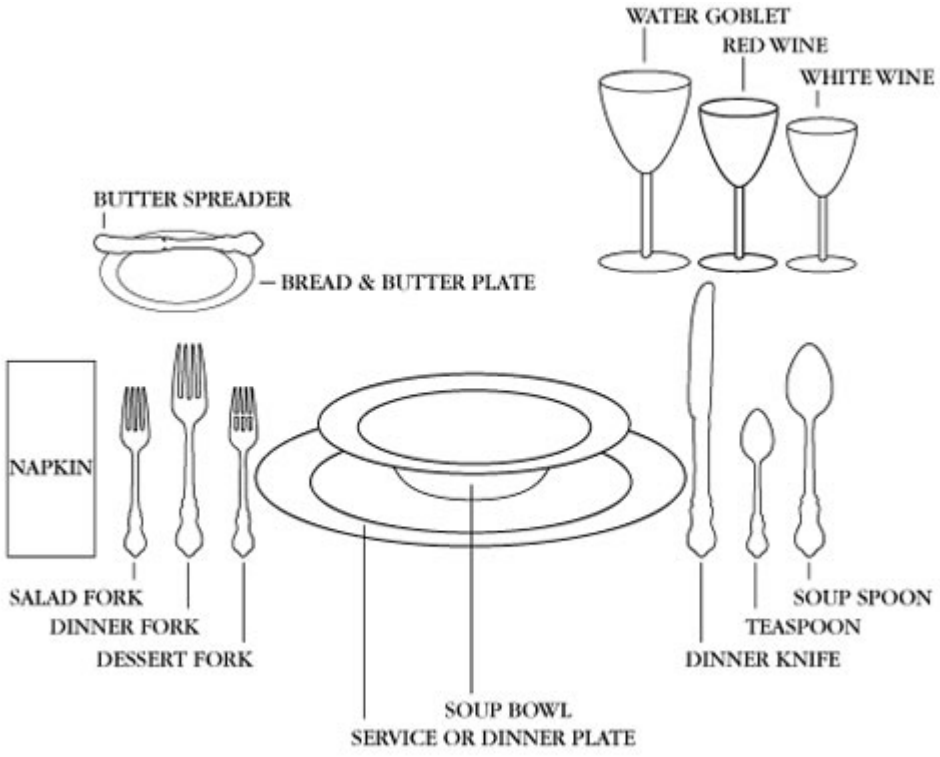
THE ATMOSPHERE OF HOSPITALITY

The atmosphere of hospitality is something very intangible, and yet nothing is more actually felt—or missed. There are certain houses that seem to radiate warmth like an open wood fire, there are others that suggest an arrival by wireless at the North Pole, even though a much brighter actual fire may be burning on the hearth in the drawing-room of the second than of the first. Some people have the gift of hospitality; others whose intentions are just as kind and whose houses are perfection in luxury of appointments, seem to petrify every approach. Such people appearing at a picnic color the entire scene with the blue light of their austerity. Such people are usually not masters, but slaves, of etiquette. Their chief concern is whether this is correct, or whether that is properly done, or is this person or that such an one as they care to know? They seem, like *Hermione* (Don Marquis's heroine), to be anxiously asking themselves, "Have I failed to-day, or have I not?"

Introspective people who are fearful of others, fearful of themselves, are never successfully popular hosts or hostesses. If you for instance, are one of these, if you are *really* afraid of knowing some one who might some day prove unpleasant, if you are such a snob that you can't take people at their face value, then why make the effort to bother with people at all? Why not shut your front door tight and pull down the blinds and, sitting before a mirror in your own drawing-room, order tea for two?

Chapter XIV.

Formal Dinners



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NOT FOR THE NOVICE TO ATTEMPT

IF the great world of society were a university which issued degrees to those whom it trains to its usages, the *magna cum laude* honors would be awarded without question, not to the hostess who may have given the most marvelous ball of the decade, but to her who knows best every component detail of preparation and service, no less than every inexorable rule of etiquette, in formal dinner-giving.

To give a perfect dinner of ceremony is the supreme accomplishment of a hostess! It means not alone perfection of furnishing, of service, of culinary skill, but also of personal charm, of tact. The only other occasion when a hostess must have equal—and possibly even greater ability—is the large and somewhat formal week-end party, which includes a dinner or two as by no means its least formidable features.

There are so many aspects to be considered in dinner giving that it is difficult to know whether to begin upstairs or down, or with furnishing, or service, or people, or manners! One thing is certain, no novice should ever begin her social career by attempting a formal dinner, any more than a pupil swimmer, upon being able to take three strokes alone, should attempt to swim three miles out to sea. The former will as surely drown as the latter.

HOW A DINNER IS GIVEN IN A GREAT HOUSE

When Mrs. Worldly gives a dinner, it means no effort on her part whatsoever beyond deciding upon the date and the principal guests who are to form the nucleus; every further detail is left to her subordinates—even to the completion of her list of guests. For instance, she decides that she will have an “older” dinner, and finding that the tenth is available for herself, she tells her secretary to send out invitations for that date. She does not have especial cards engraved but uses the dinner blank described in the chapter on Invitations. She then looks through her “dinner list” and orders her secretary to invite the Oldworlds, the Eminents, the Learneds, the Wellborns, the Highbrows, and the Onceweres. She also picks out three or four additional names to be substituted for those who regret.

Then turning to the “younger married” list she searches for a few suitable but “amusing” or good-looking ones to give life to her dinner which might otherwise be heavy. But her favorites do not seem appropriate. It will not do to ask the Bobo Gildings, not because of the difference in age but because Lucy Gilding smokes like a furnace and is miserable unless she can play bridge for high stakes, and, just as soon as she can bolt through dinner, sit at a card table; while Mrs. Highbrow and Mrs. Oncewere quite possibly disapprove of women’s smoking and are surely horrified at “gambling.” The Smartlings won’t do either, for the same reason, nor the Gaylies. She can’t ask the Newell Riches either, because Mrs. Oldworld and Mrs. Wellborn both dislike vulgarity too much to find compensation in qualities which are merely amusing. So she ends by adding her own friends the Kindharts and the Normans, who “go” with everyone, and a few somewhat younger people, and approves her secretary’s suggestions as to additional names if those first invited should “regret.”

The list being settled, Mrs. Worldly’s own work is done. She sends word to her cook that there will be twenty-four on the tenth; the menu will be submitted to her later, which she will probably merely glance at and send back. She never sees or thinks about her table, which is in the butler’s province.

On the morning of the dinner her secretary brings her the place cards, (the name of each person expected, written on a separate card) and she puts them in the order in which they are to be placed on the table, very much as though playing solitaire. Starting with her own card at one end and her husband’s at the other, she first places the lady of honor on his right, the second in importance on his left. Then on either side of herself, she puts the two most important gentlemen. The others she fits in between, trying to seat side by side those congenial to each other.

When the cards are arranged, the secretary attends to putting the name of the lady who sits on each gentleman’s right in the envelope addressed to him. She then picks up the place cards still stacked in their proper sequence, and takes them to the butler who will put them in the order arranged on the table after it is set.

Fifteen minutes before the dinner hour, Mrs. Worldly is already standing in her drawing-room. She has no personal responsibility other than that of being hostess. The whole machinery of equipment and service runs seemingly by itself. It does not matter whether she knows what the menu is. Her cook is more than capable of attending to it. That the table shall be perfect is merely the every-day duty of the butler. She knows without looking that one of the chauffeurs is on the sidewalk; that footmen are in the hall; that her own maid is in the ladies’ dressing-room, and the valet in that of the gentlemen; and that her butler is just outside the door near which she is standing.

So with nothing on her mind (except a jewelled ornament and perfectly “done” hair) she receives her guests with the tranquillity attained only by those whose household—whether great or small—can be counted on to run like a perfectly coordinated machine.

HOW A DINNER CAN BE BUNGLED

This is the contrasting picture to the dinner at the Worldly’s—a picture to show you particularly who are a bride how awful an experiment in dinner giving can be.

Let us suppose that you have a quite charming house, and that your wedding presents included everything necessary to set a well-appointed table. You have not very experienced servants, but they would all be good ones with a little more training.

You have been at home for so few meals you don't quite know how experienced they are. Your cook at least makes good coffee and eggs and toast for breakfast, and the few other meals she has cooked seemed to be all right, and she is such a nice clean person!

So when your house is "in order" and the last pictures and curtains are hung, the impulse suddenly comes to you to give a dinner! Your husband thinks it is a splendid idea. It merely remains to decide whom you will ask. You hesitate between a few of your own intimates, or older people, and decide it would be such fun to ask a few of the hostesses whose houses you have almost lived at ever since you "came out." You decide to ask Mrs. Toplofty, Mr. Clubwin Doe, the Worldlys, the Gildings, and the Kindharts and the Wellborns. With yourselves that makes twelve. You can't have more than twelve because you have only a dozen of everything; in fact you decide that twelve will be pretty crowded, but that it will be safe to ask that number because a few are sure to "regret." So you write notes (since it is to be a formal dinner), and—they all accept! You are a little worried about the size of the dining-room, but you are overcome by the feeling of your popularity. Now the thing to do is to prepare for a dinner. The fact that Nora probably can't make fancy dishes does not bother you a bit. In your mind's eye you see delicious plain food passed; you must get Sigrid a dress that properly fits her, and Delia, the chambermaid (who was engaged with the understanding that she was to serve in the dining-room when there was company), has not yet been at table, but she is a very willing young person who will surely look well.

Nora, when you tell her who are coming, eagerly suggests the sort of menu that would appear on the table of the Worldlys or the Gildings. You are thrilled at the thought of your own kitchen producing the same. That it may be the same in name only, does not occur to you. You order flowers for the table, and candy for your four compotiers. You pick out your best tablecloth, but you find rather to your amazement that when the waitress asks you about setting the table, you have never noticed in detail how the places are laid. Knives and spoons go on the right of the plate, of course, and forks on the left, but which goes next to the plate, or whether the wine glasses should stand nearer or beyond the goblet you can only guess. It is quite simple, however, to give directions in serving; you just tell the chambermaid that she is to follow the waitress, and pass the sauces and the vegetables. And you have already explained carefully to the latter that she must not deal plates around the table like a pack of cards, or ever take them off in piles either. (*That* much at least you do know.) You also make it a point above everything that the silver must be very clean; Sigrid seems to understand, and with the optimism of youth, you approach the dinner hour without misgiving. The

table, set with your wedding silver and glass, looks quite nice. You are a little worried about the silver—it does look rather yellow, but perhaps it is just a shadow. Then you notice there are a great many forks on the table! You ask your husband what is the matter with the forks? He does not see anything wrong. You need them all for the dinner you ordered, how can there be less? So you straighten a candlestick that was out of line, and put the place cards on.

Then you go into the drawing-room. You don't light the fire until the last moment, because you want it to be burning brightly when your guests arrive. Your drawing-room looks a little stiff somehow, but an open fire more than anything else makes a room inviting, and you light it just as your first guest rings the bell. As Mr. Clubwin Doe enters, the room looks charming, then suddenly the fire smokes, and in the midst of the smoke your other guests arrive. Every one begins to cough and blink. They are very polite, but the smoke, growing each moment denser, is not to be overlooked. Mrs. Toplofty takes matters in her own hands and makes Mr. Doe and your husband carry the logs, smoke and all, and throw them into the yard. The room still thick with smoke is now cheerlessly fireless, and another factor beginning to distress you is that, although everyone has arrived, there is no sign of dinner. You wait, at first merely eager to get out of the smoke-filled drawing-room. Gradually you are becoming nervous—what can have happened? The dining-room door might be that of a tomb for all the evidence of life behind it. You become really alarmed. Is dinner never going to be served? Everyone's eyes are red from the smoke, and conversation is getting weaker and weaker. Mrs. Toplofty—evidently despairing—sits down. Mrs. Worldly also sits, both hold their eyes shut and say nothing. At last the dining-room door opens, and Sigrid instead of bowing slightly and saying in a low tone of voice, "Dinner is served," stands stiff as a block of wood, and fairly shouts: "Dinner's all ready!"

You hope no one heard her, but you know very well that nothing escaped any one of those present. And between the smoke and the delay and your waitress' manners, you are already thoroughly mortified by the time you reach the table. But you hope that at least the dinner will be good. For the first time you are assailed with doubt on that score. And again you wait, but the oyster course is all right. And then comes the soup. You don't have to taste it to see that it is wrong. It looks not at all as "clear" soup should! Its color, instead of being glass-clear amber, is greasy-looking brown. You taste it, fearing the worst, and the worst is realized. It tastes like dish-water—and is barely tepid. You look around the table; Mr. Kindhart alone is trying to eat it.

In removing the plates, Delia, the assistant, takes them up by piling one on top of the other, clashing them together as she does so. You can feel Mrs. Worldly looking with almost hypnotized fascination—as her attention might be drawn to a street accident against her will. Then there is a wait. You wait and wait, and looking in front of you, you notice the bare tablecloth without a plate. You know instantly that the service is wrong, but you find yourself puzzled to know how it should have been done. Finally Sigrid comes in with a whole dozen plates stacked in a pile, which she proceeds to deal around the table. You at least know that to try to interfere would only make matters worse. You hold your own cold fingers in your lap knowing that you must sit there, and that you can do nothing.

The fish which was to have been a *mousse* with Hollandaise sauce, is a huge mound, much too big for the platter, with a narrow gutter of water around the edge and the center dabbed over with a curdled yellow mess. You realize that not only is the food itself awful, but that the quantity is too great for one dish. You don't know what to do next; you know there is no use in apologizing, there is no way of dropping through the floor, or waking yourself up. You have collected the smartest and the most critical people around your table to put them to torture such as they will never forget. Never! You have to bite your lips to keep from crying. Whatever possessed you to ask these people to your horrible house?

Mr. Kindhart, sitting next to you, says gently, "Cheer up, little girl, it doesn't really matter!" And then you know to the full how terrible the situation is. The meal is endless; each course is equally unappetizing to look at, and abominably served. You notice that none of your guests eat anything. They can't.

You leave the table literally sick, but realizing fully that the giving of a dinner is not as easy as you thought. And in the drawing-room, which is now fireless and freezing, but at least smokeless, you start to apologize and burst into tears!

As you are very young, and those present are all really fond of you, they try to be comforting, but

you know that it will be years (if ever) before any of them will be willing to risk an evening in your house again. You also know that without malice, but in truth and frankness, they will tell everyone: “Whatever you do, don’t dine with the Newweds unless you eat your dinner before you go, and wear black glasses so no sight can offend you.”

When they have all gone, you drag yourself miserably upstairs, feeling that you never want to look in that drawing-room or dining-room again. Your husband, remembering the trenches, tries to tell you it was not so bad! But you *know!* You lie awake planning to let the house, and to discharge each one of your awful household the next morning, and then you realize that the fault is not a bit more theirs than yours.

If you had tried the chimney first, and learned its peculiarities; if you yourself had known every detail of cooking and service, of course you would not have attempted to give the dinner in the first place; not at least until, through giving little dinners, the technique of your household had become good enough to give a big one.

On the other hand, supposing that you had had a very experienced cook and waitress; dinner would, of course, not have been bungled, but it would have lacked something, somewhere, if you added nothing of your own personality to its perfection. It is almost safe to make the statement that no dinner is ever really well done unless the hostess herself knows every smallest detail thoroughly. Mrs. Worldly pays seemingly no attention, but nothing escapes her. She can walk through a room without appearing to look either to the right or left, yet if the slightest detail is amiss, an ornament out of place, or there is one dull button on a footman’s livery, her house telephone is rung at once!

Having generalized by drawing two pictures, it is now time to take up the specific details to be considered in giving a dinner.

DETAILED DIRECTIONS FOR DINNER GIVING

The requisites at every dinner, whether a great one of 200 covers, or a little one of six, are as follows:

Guests. People who are congenial to one another. This is of first importance.

Food. A suitable menu perfectly prepared and dished. (Hot food to be *hot,* and cold, *cold.*)

Table furnishing. Faultlessly laundered linen, brilliantly polished silver, and all other table accessories suitable to the occasion and surroundings.

Service. Expert dining-room servants and enough of them.

Drawing-room. Adequate in size to number of guests and inviting in arrangement.

A cordial and hospitable host.

A hostess of charm. Charm says everything—tact, sympathy, poise and perfect manners—always.

And though for all dinners these requisites are much the same, the necessity for perfection increases in proportion to the formality of the occasion.

TASTE IN SELECTION OF PEOPLE

The proper selection of guests is the first essential in all entertaining, and the hostess who has a talent for assembling the right people has a great asset. Taste in house furnishings or in clothes or in selecting a cook, is as nothing compared to taste in people! Some people have this "sense"—others haven't. The first are the great hosts and hostesses; the others are the mediocre or the failures.

It is usually a mistake to invite great talkers together. Brilliant men and women who love to talk want hearers, not rivals. Very silent people should be sandwiched between good talkers, or at least voluble talkers. Silly people should never be put anywhere near learned ones, nor the dull near the clever, unless the dull one is a young and pretty woman with a talent for listening, and the clever, a man with an admiration for beauty, and a love for talking.

Most people think two brilliant people should be put together. Often they should, but with discretion. If both are voluble or nervous or "temperamental," you may create a situation like putting two operatic sopranos in the same part and expecting them to sing together.

The endeavor of a hostess, when seating her table, is to put those together who are likely to be interesting to each other. Professor Bugge might bore *you* to tears, but Mrs. Entomoid would probably delight in him; just as Mr. Stocksan Bonds and Mrs. Rich would probably have interests in common. Making a dinner list is a little like making a Christmas list. You put down what *they* will (you hope) like, not what you like. Those who are placed between congenial neighbors remember your dinner as delightful—even though both food and service were mediocre; but ask people out of their own groups and seat them next to their pet aversions, and wild horses could not drag them to your house again!

HOW A DINNER LIST IS KEPT

Nearly every hostess keeps a dinner list—apart from her general visiting list—of people with whom she is accustomed to dine, or to invite to dinner or other small entertainments. But the prominent hostess, if she has grown daughters and continually gives parties of all sorts and sizes and ages, usually keeps her list in a more complete and "ready reference" order.

Mrs. Gilding, for instance, has guest lists separately indexed. Under the general heading "Dinners," she has older married, younger married, girls, men. Her luncheon list is taken from her dinner list. "Bridge" includes especially good players of all ages; "dances," young married people, young girls, and dancing men. Then she has a cross-index list of "Important Persons," meaning those of real distinction who are always the foundation of all good society; "Amusing," usually people of talent—invaluable for house parties; and "New People," including many varieties and unassorted. Mrs. Gilding exchanges invitations with a number of these because they are interesting or amusing, or because their parties are diverting and dazzling. And Mrs. Gilding herself, being typical of New York's Cavalier element rather than its Puritan strain, personally prefers diversion to edification. Needless to say, "Boston's Best," being ninety-eight per cent. Puritan, has no "new" list. Besides her list of "New People," she has a short "frivolous" list of other Cavaliers like herself, and a "Neutral" list, which is the most valuable of all because it comprises those who "go" with everyone. Besides her own lists she has a "Pantry" list, a list that is actually made out for the benefit of the butler, so that on occasions he can invite guests to "fill in." The "Pantry" list comprises only intimate friends who belong on the "Neutral" list and fit in everywhere; young girls and young and older single men.

Allowing the butler to invite guests at his own discretion is not quite as casual as it sounds. It is very often an unavoidable expedient. For instance, at four o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Blank telephones that he cannot come to dinner that same evening. Mrs. Gilding is out; to wait until she returns will make it too late to fill the place. Her butler who has been with her for years knows quite as well as Mrs. Gilding herself exactly which people belong in the same group. The dinner cards being already in his possession, he can see not only who is expected for dinner but the two ladies between whom Mr. Blank has been placed, and he thereupon selects some one on the "Pantry" list who is suitable for Mr. Blank's place at the table, and telephones the invitation. Perhaps he calls up a dozen before he finds one disengaged. When Mrs. Gilding returns he says, "Mr. Blank telephoned he would not be able to come for dinner as he was called to Washington. Mr. Bachelor will be happy to come in his place." Married people are seldom on this list, because the butler need not undertake to fill any but an odd place—that of a gentleman particularly. Otherwise two ladies would be seated together.

ASKING SOMEONE TO FILL A PLACE

Since no one but a fairly intimate friend is ever asked to fill a place, this invitation is always telephoned. A very young man is asked by the butler if he will dine with Mrs. Gilding that evening, and very likely no explanation is made; but if the person to be invited is a lady or an older gentleman (except on such occasions as noted above), the hostess herself telephones:

"Can you do me a great favor and fill a place at dinner tonight?" The one who receives this invitation is rather bound by the rules of good manners to accept if possible.

IMPORTANCE OF DINNER ENGAGEMENTS

Dinner invitations must be answered immediately; engraved or written ones by return post, or those which were telephoned, by telephone and at once! Also, nothing but serious illness or death or an utterly unavoidable accident can excuse the breaking of a dinner engagement.

To accept a dinner at Mrs. Nobody's and then break the obligation upon being invited to dine with the Worldlys, proclaims anyone capable of such rudeness an unmitigated snob, whom Mrs. Worldly would be the first to cut from her visiting list if she knew of it. The rule is: "Don't accept an invitation if you don't care about it." Having declined the Nobody invitation in the first place, you are then free to accept Mrs. Worldly's, or to stay at home. There are times, however, when engagements between very close friends or members of the family may perhaps be broken, but only if made with the special stipulation: "Come to dinner with us alone Thursday if nothing better turns up!" And the other answers, "I'd love to—and you let me know too, if you want to do anything else." Meanwhile if one of them is invited to something unusually tempting, there is no rudeness in telephoning her friend, "Lucy has asked us to hear Galli-Curci on Thursday!" and the other says, "Go, by all means! We can dine Tuesday next week if you like, or come Sunday for supper." This privilege of intimacy can, however, be abused. An engagement, even with a member of one's family, ought never to be broken twice within a brief period, or it becomes apparent that the other's presence is more a fill-in of idle time than a longed-for pleasure.

THE MENU

It may be due to the war period, which accustomed everyone to going with very little meat and to marked reduction in all food, or it may be, of course, merely vanity that is causing even grandparents to aspire to svelte figures, but whatever the cause, people are putting much less food on their tables than formerly. The very rich, living in the biggest houses with the most imposing array of servants, sit down to three, or at most four, courses when alone, or when intimate friends who are known to have moderate appetites, are dining with them.

Under no circumstances would a private dinner, no matter how formal, consist of more than:

1. Hors d'oeuvre
2. Soup

3. Fish
4. Entrée
5. Roast
6. Salad
7. Dessert
8. Coffee

The menu for an informal dinner would leave out the entrée, and possibly either the hors d'oeuvre or the soup.

As a matter of fact, the marked shortening of the menu is in informal dinners and at the home table of the well-to-do. Formal dinners have been as short as the above schedule for twenty-five years. A dinner interlarded with a row of extra entrées, Roman punch, and hot dessert is unknown except at a public dinner, or in the dining-room of a parvenu. About thirty-five years ago such dinners are said to have been in fashion!

THE BALANCED MENU

One should always try to choose well-balanced dishes; an especially rich dish balanced by a simple one. Timbale with a very rich sauce of cream and pâté de foie gras might perhaps be followed by French chops, broiled chicken or some other light, plain meat. An entrée of about four broiled mushrooms on a small round of toast should be followed by boned capon or saddle of mutton or spring lamb. It is equally bad to give your guests very peculiar food unless as an extra dish. Some people love highly flavored Spanish or Indian dishes, but they are not appropriate for a formal dinner. At an informal dinner an Indian curry or Spanish enchillada for one dish is delicious for those who like it, and if you have another substantial dish such as a plain roast which practically everyone is able to eat, those who don't like Indian food can make their dinner of the other course.

It is the same way with the Italian dishes. One hating garlic and onions would be very wretched if onions were put in each and every course, and liberally. With Indian curry, a fatally bad selection would be a very peppery soup, such as croute au pot filled with pepper, and fish with green peppers, and then the curry, and then something casserole filled again with peppers and onions and other throat-searing ingredients, finishing with an endive salad. Yet more than one hostess has done exactly this. Or equally bad is a dinner of flavorless white sauces from beginning to end; a creamed soup, boiled fish with white sauce, then vol au vent of creamed sweetbreads, followed by breast of chicken and mashed potatoes and cauliflower, palm root salad, vanilla ice cream and lady-cake. Each thing is good in itself but dreadful in the monotony of its combination.

Another thing: although a dinner should not be long, neither should it consist of samples, especially if set before men who are hungry!

The following menu might seem at first glance a good dinner, but it is one from which the average man would go home and forage ravenously in the ice box:

A canapé (good, but merely an appetizer)
Clear soup (a dinner party helping, and no substance)
Smelts (one apiece)
Individual croutards of sweetbreads (holding about a dessert-spoonful)
Broiled squab, small potato croquette, and string beans
Lettuce salad, with about one small cracker apiece
Ice cream

The only thing that had any sustaining quality, barring the potato which was not more than a mouthful, was the last, and very few men care to make their dinner of ice cream. If instead of squab there had been filet of beef cut in generous slices, and the potato croquettes had been more numerous, it would have been adequate. Or if there had been a thick cream soup, and a fish with more substance—such as salmon or shad, or a baked thick fish of which he could have had a generous helping—the squab would have been adequate also. But many women order trimmings rather than food; men usually like food.

THE DINNER TABLE OF YESTERDAY

All of us old enough to remember the beginning of this century can bring to mind the typical (and most fashionable) dinner table of that time. Occasionally it was oblong or rectangular, but its favorite shape was round, and a thick white damask cloth hung to the floor on all sides. Often as not there was a large lace centerpiece, and in the middle of it was a floral mound of roses (like a funeral piece, exactly), usually red. The four compotiers were much scrolled and embossed, and the four candlesticks, also scrolled, but not to match, had shades of perforated silver over red silk linings, like those in restaurants to-day. And there was a gas droplight thickly petticoated with fringed red silk. The plates were always heavily "jewelled" and hand painted, and enough forks and knives and spoons were arrayed at each "place" for a dozen courses. The glasses numbered at least six, and the entire table was laden with little dishes—and spoons! There were olives, radishes, celery and salted nuts in glass dishes; and about ten kinds of sugar-plums in ten different styles of ornate and bumpy silver dishes; and wherever a small space of tablecloth showed through, it was filled with either a big "Apostle" spoon or little Dutch ones criss-crossed.

Bread was always rolled in the napkin (and usually fell on the floor) and the oysters were occasionally found already placed on the table when the guests came in to dinner! Loading a table to the utmost of its capacity with useless implements which only in rarest instances had the least value, would seem to prove that quantity without quality must have been thought evidence of elegance and generous hospitality! And the astounding part of the bad taste epidemic was that few if any escaped. Even those who had inherited colonial silver and glass and china of consummate beauty, sent it dust-gathering to the attic and cluttered their tables with stuffy and spurious lumber.

But to-day the classic has come into its own again! As though recovering from an illness, good taste is again demanding severe beauty of form and line, and banishing everything that is useless or superfluous. During the last twenty years most of us have sent an army of lumpy dishes to the melting-pot, and junky ornaments to the ash heap along with plush table covers, upholstered mantel-boards and fern dishes! To-day we are going almost to the extreme of bareness, and putting nothing on our tables not actually needed for use.

THE DINING-ROOM

It is scarcely necessary to point out that the bigger and more ambitious the house, the more perfect its appointments must be. If your house has a great Georgian dining-room, the table should be set with Georgian or an *earlier* period English silver. Furthermore, in a "great" dining-room, all the silver should be real! "Real" meaning nothing so trifling as "sterling," but genuine and important "period" pieces made by Eighteenth Century silversmiths, such as de Lamerie or Crespell or Buck or Robertson, or perhaps one of their predecessors. Or if, like Mrs. Oldname, you live in an old Colonial house, you are perhaps also lucky enough to have inherited some genuine American pieces made by Daniel Rogers or Paul Revere! Or if you are an ardent admirer of Early Italian architecture and have built yourself a Fifteenth Century stone-floored and frescoed or tapestry-hung dining room, you must set your long refectory table with a "runner" of old hand-linen and altar embroidery, or perhaps Thirteenth Century damask and great cisterns or ewers and beakers in high-relief silver and gold; or in Callazzioli or majolica, with great bowls of fruit and church candlesticks of gilt, and even follow as far as is practicable the crude table implements of that time. It need not be pointed out that Twentieth Century appurtenances in a Thirteenth or Fifteenth Century room are anachronisms. But because the dining-table in the replica of a palace (whether English, Italian, Spanish or French) may be equipped with great "standing cups" and candelabra so heavy a man can scarcely lift one, it does not follow that all the rest of us who live in medium or small houses, should attempt anything of the sort. Nothing could be more out of proportion—and therefore in worse taste. Nor is it necessary, in order to have a table that is inviting, to set it with any of the completely exquisite things which all people of taste long for, but which are possessed (in quantity at least) only through wealth, inheritance, or "collector's luck."

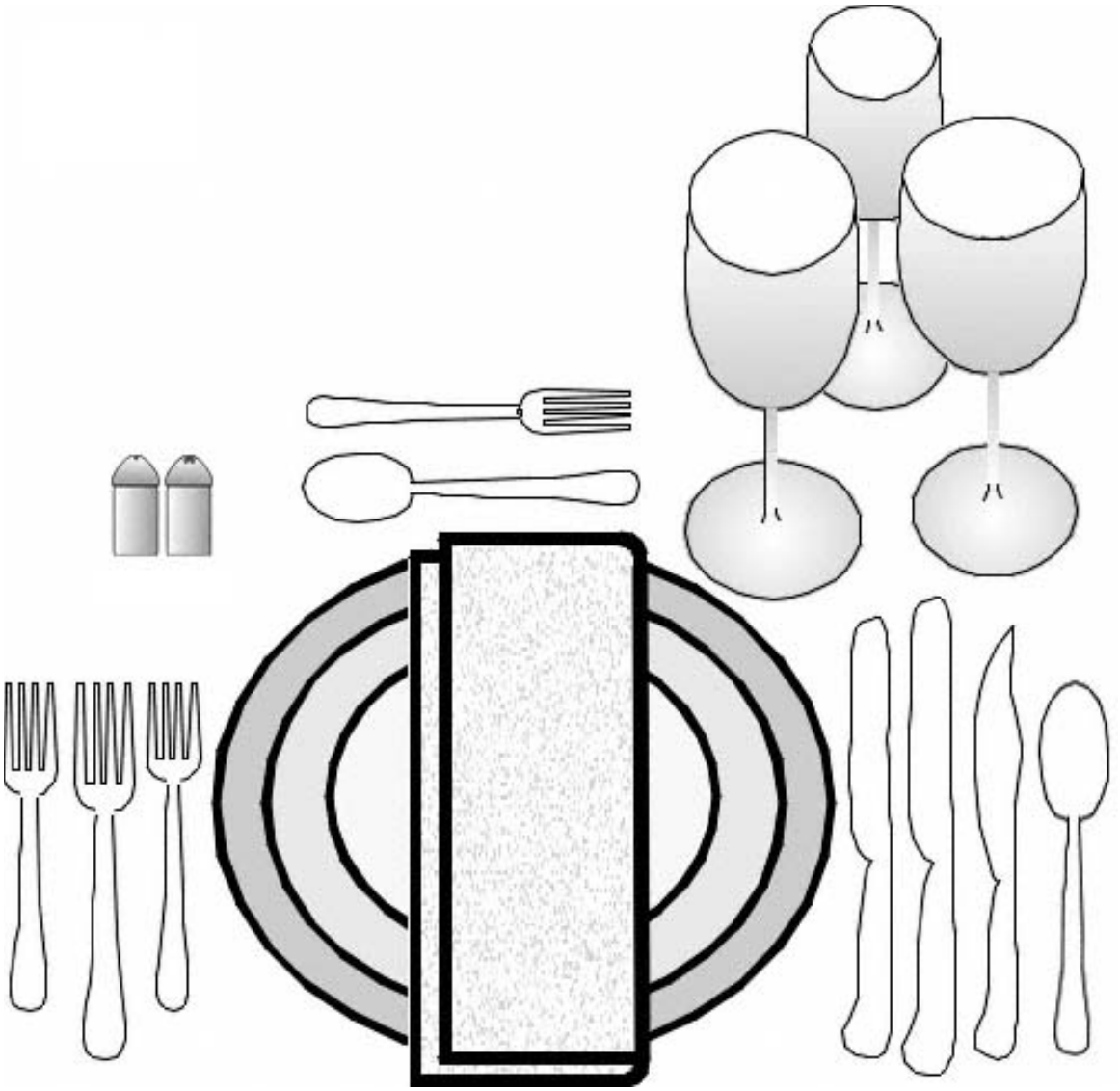
A PLEASING DINING-ROOM AT LIMITED COST

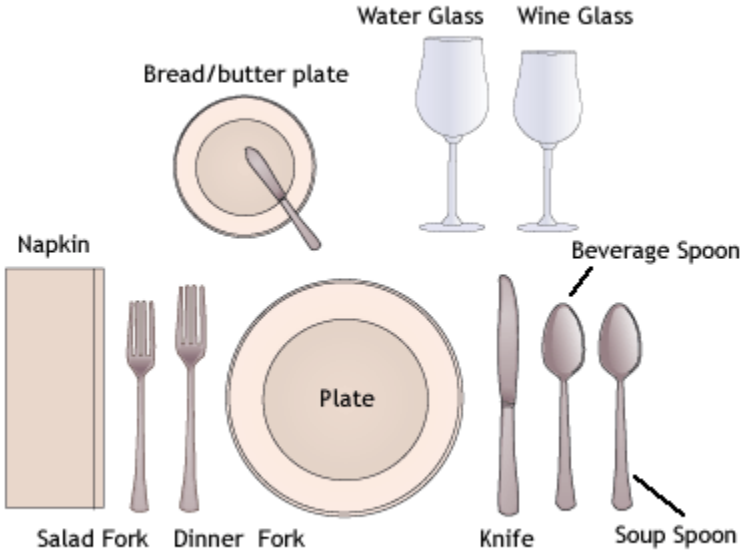
Enchanting dining-rooms and tables have been achieved with an outlay amounting to comparatively nothing.

There is a dining-room in a certain small New York house that is quite as inviting as it is lacking in expensiveness. Its walls are rough-plastered “French gray.” Its table is an ordinary drop-leaf kitchen one painted a light green that is almost gray; the chairs are wooden ones, somewhat on the Windsor variety, but made of pine and painted like the table, and the side tables or consoles are made of a cheap round pine table which has been sawed in half, painted gray-green, and the legless sides fastened to the walls. The glass curtains are point d’esprit net with a deep flounce at the bottom and outside curtains are (expensive) watermelon pink changeable taffeta. There is a gilt mirror over a cream (absolutely plain) mantel and over each console a picture of a conventional bouquet of flowers in a flat frame the color of the furniture, with the watermelon color of the curtains predominating in a neutral tint background. The table is set with a rather coarse cream-colored linen drawn-work centerpiece (a tea cloth actually) big enough to cover all but three inches of table edge. In the middle of the table is a glass bowl with a wide turn-over rim, holding deep pink flowers (roses or tulips) standing upright in glass flower holders as though growing. In midwinter, when real flowers are too expensive, porcelain ones take their place—unless there is a lunch or dinner party. The compotiers are glass urns and the only pieces of silver used are two tall Sheffield candelabra at night, without shades, the salts and peppers and the necessary spoons and forks. The knives are “ivory” handled.

SETTING THE TABLE

Everything on the table must be geometrically spaced; the centerpiece in the actual center, the “places” at equal distances, and all utensils balanced; beyond this one rule you may set your table as you choose.




Water Glass
Wine Glass
Bread/butter plate
Napkin
Beverage Spoon
Plate
Salad Fork
Dinner Fork
Knife
Soup Spoon

If the tablecloth is of white damask, which for dinner is always good style, a “felt” must be put under it. (To say that it must be smooth and white, in other words perfectly laundered, is as beside the mark as to say that faces and hands should be clean!) If the tablecloth has lace insertions, it must on no account be put over satin or over a color. In a very “important” dining-room and on a very large table, a cloth of plain and finest quality damask with no trimming other than a monogram (or crest) embroidered on either side, is in better taste than one of linen with elaborations of lace and embroidery. Damask is the old-fashioned but essentially conservative (and safely best style) tablecloth, especially suitable in a high-ceilinged room that is either English, French, or of no special period, in decoration. Lace tablecloths are better suited to an Italian room—especially if the table is a refectory one. Handkerchief linen tablecloths embroidered and lace-inserted are also, strangely enough, suited to all quaint, low-ceilinged, old-fashioned but beautifully appointed rooms; the reason being that the lace cloth is put over a bare table. The lace cloth must also go over a refectory table without felt or other lining.

Very high-studded rooms (unless Italian) on the other hand, seem to need the thickness of damask. To be sure, one does see in certain houses—at the Gildings’ for instance—an elaborate lace and embroidery tablecloth put on top of a plain one which in turn goes over a felt, but this combination is always somewhat overpowering, whereas lace over a bare table is light and fragile.

Another thing—very ornate, large, and arabesqued designs, no matter how marvellous as examples of workmanship, inevitably produce a vulgar effect.

All needlework, whether to be used on the table or on a bed, must, in a beautifully finished house, be fine rather than striking. Coarse linen, coarse embroideries, all sorts of Russian drawn-work, Italian needlework or mosaic (but avoiding big scrolled patterns), are in perfect keeping—and therefore in good taste—in a cottage, a bungalow or a house whose furnishings are not too fine.

But whatever type of cloth is used, the middle crease must be put on so that it is an absolutely straight and unwavering line down the exact center from head to foot. If it is an embroidered one, be sure the embroidery is “right side out.” Next goes the centerpiece which is always the chief ornament. Usually this is an arrangement of flowers in either a bowl or a vase, but it can be any one of an almost unlimited variety of things; flowers or fruit in any arrangement that taste and ingenuity can devise; or an ornament in silver that needs no flowers, such as a covered cup; or an epergne, which, however, necessitates the use of fruit, flowers or candy. Mrs. Wellborn, for instance, whose heirlooms are better than her income, rarely uses flowers, but has a wonderful old centerpiece that is

ornament enough in itself. The foundation is a mirror representing a lake, surrounded by silver rocks and grass. At one side, jutting into the lake, is a knoll with a group of trees sheltering a stag and doe. The ornament is entirely of silver, almost twenty inches high, and about twenty inches in diameter across the “lake.”

The Normans have a full-rigged silver ship in the center of their table and at either end rather tall lanterns, Venetian really, but rather appropriate to the ship; and the salt cellars are very tall ones (about ten inches high), of sea shells supported on the backs of dolphins.

However, to go back to table setting: A cloth laid straight; then a centerpiece put in the middle; then four candlesticks at the four corners, about half-way between the center and the edge of the table, or two candelabra at either end halfway between the places of the host and hostess and the centerpiece. Candles are used with or without shades. Fashion at the moment, says “without,” which means that, in order to bring the flame well above people’s eyes, candlesticks or candelabra must be high and the candles as long as the proportion can stand. Longer candles can be put in massive candlesticks than in fragile ones. But whether shaded or not, there are candles on all dinner tables always! The center droplight has gone out entirely. Electroliers in candlesticks were never good style, and kerosene lamps in candlesticks—horrible! Fashion says, “Candles! preferably without shades, but shades if you insist, and few or many—but candles!”

Next comes the setting of the places. (If it is an extension table, leaves have, of course, been put in; or if it is stationary, guests have been invited according to its size.) The distance between places at the table must never be so short that guests have no elbow room, and that the servants can not pass the dishes properly; when the dining-room chairs are very high backed and are placed so close as to be almost touching, it is impossible for them not to risk spilling something over some one. On the other hand, to place people a yard or more apart so that conversation has to be shouted into the din made by everyone else’s shouting, is equally trying. About two feet from plate center to plate center is ideal. If the chairs have narrow and low backs, people can sit much closer together, especially at a small round table, the curve of which leaves a spreading wedge of space between the chairs at the back even if the seats touch at the front corners. But on the long straight sides of a rectangular table in a very large—and impressive—dining-room there should be at least a foot of space between the chairs.

SETTING THE PLACES

The necessary number of plates, with the pattern or initials right side up, are first put around the table at equal distances (spaced with a tape measure if the butler or waitress has not an accurate eye). Then on the left of each plate, handle towards the edge of the table, and prongs up, is put the salad fork, the meat fork is put next, and then the fish fork. The salad fork, which will usually be the third used, is thus laid nearest to the plate. If there is an entrée, the fork for this course is placed between the fish fork and that for the roast and the salad fork is left to be brought in later. On the right of the plate, and nearest to it, is put the steel meat knife, then the silver fish knife, the edge of each toward the plate. Then the soup spoon and then the oyster fork or grape fruit spoon. Additional forks and knives are put on the table during dinner.

In putting on the glasses, the water goblet is at the top and to the right of the knives, and the wine glasses are either grouped to the right of the goblet, or in a straight line slanting down from the goblet obliquely towards the right. (Butter plates are never put on a dinner table.) A dinner napkin folded square and flat is laid on each “place” plate; very fancy foldings are not in good taste, but if the napkin is very large, the sides are folded in so as to make a flattened roll a third the width of its height. (Bread should *not* be put in the napkin—not nowadays.) The place cards are usually put above the plate on the tablecloth, but some people put them on top of the napkin because they are more easily read.

When the places have been set, four silver dishes (or more on a very big table), either bowl or basket or paten shaped, are put at the four corners, between the candlesticks (or candelabra) and the centerpiece; or wherever there are four equally spaced vacancies on the table. These dishes, or compotiers, hold candy or fruit, chosen less for taste than for decorative appearance.

On a very large table the four compotiers are filled with candy, and two or four larger silver dishes or baskets are filled with fruit and put on alternately with the candy dishes. Flowers are also often put

in two or four smaller vases, in addition to a larger and dominating one in the center.

Peppers and salts should be put at every other place. For a dinner of twelve there should be six salt cellars at least, if not six pepper pots.

Olives and radishes are served from the side table, but salted nuts are often put on the dinner table either in two big silver dishes, or in small individual ones.

HAVE SILVER THAT SHINES OR NONE

Lots of people who would not dream of using a wrinkled tablecloth or chipped glass or china, seem perfectly blind to dirty silver—silver that is washed clean of food of course, but so dull that it looks like jaundiced pewter.

Don't put any silver on your table if you can't have it cleaned. Infinitely rather have every ornament of glass or china—and if knives and forks have crevices in the design of their handles that are hard to clean, buy plain plated ones, or use tin! Anything is better than yellow-faced dirty-finger-nailed silver. The first thing to ask in engaging a waitress is, "Can you clean silver?" If she can't, she would better be something else.

Of course no waitress and no single-handed butler can keep silver the way it is kept in such houses as the Worldlys', nor is such perfection expected. The silver polishing of perfection in huge houses is done by such an expert that no one can tell whether a fork has that moment been sent from the silversmiths or not. It is not merely polished until it is bright, but burnished so that it is new! Every piece of silver in certain of the great establishments, or in smaller ones that are run like a great one, is never picked up by a servant except with a rouged chamois. No piece of silver is ever allowed by the slightest chance to touch another piece. Every piece is washed separately. The footman who gathers two or three forks in a bunch will never do it a second time, and keep his place. If the ring of a guest should happen to scratch a knife handle or a fork, the silver-polisher may have to spend an entire day using his thumb or a silver buffer, and rub and rub until no vestige of a scratch remains.

Perfection such as this is attainable only in a great house where servants are specialists of super-efficiency; but in every perfectly run house, where service is not too limited, every piece of silver that is put on the table, at every meal, is handled with a rouged chamois and given a quick wipe-off as it is laid on the dining table. No silver should ever be picked up in the fingers as that always leaves a mark.

And the way "moderate" households, which are nevertheless perfectly run for their size and type, have burnished silver, is by using not more than they can have cleaned.

In view of the present high cost of living (including wages) and the consequent difficulty, with a reduced number of servants, of keeping a great quantity of silver brilliant, even the most fashionable people are more and more using only what is essential, and in occasional instances, are taking to china! People who are lucky enough to have well-stored attics these days are bringing treasures out of them.

But services of Swansea or Lowestoft or Spode, while easily cleaned, are equally easily broken, so that genuine Eighteenth Century pieces are more apt to see a cabinet than a dinner table.

But the modern manufacturers are making enchanting "sets" that are replicas of the old. These tea sets with cups and saucers to match and with a silver kettle and tray, are seen almost as often as silver services in simple houses in the country, as well as in the small apartment in town.

DON'TS IN TABLE SETTING!

Don't put ribbon trimmings on your table. Satin bands and bows have no more place on a lady's table than have chop-house appurtenances. Pickle jars, catsup bottles, toothpicks and crackers are not private-house table ornaments. Crackers are passed with oyster stew and with salad, and any one who wants "relishes" can have them in his own house (though they insult the cook!). At all events, pickles and tomato sauces and other cold meat condiments are never presented at table in a bottle, but are put in glass dishes with small serving spoons. Nothing is ever served from the jar or bottle it comes in except certain kinds of cheese, Bar-le-Duc preserves (only sometimes) and wines. Pickles, jellies, jams, olives, are all put into small glass dishes.

Saucers for vegetables are contrary to all etiquette. The only extra plates ever permitted are the bread and butter plates which are put on at breakfast and lunch and supper above and to the left of the forks, but *never* at dinner. The crescent-shaped salad plate, made to fit at the side of the place plate, is seen rarely in fashionable houses. When two plates are made necessary by the serving of game or broiled chicken or squab, for which the plate should be very hot, at the same time as the salad which is cold, the crescent-shaped plate is convenient in that it takes little room.

A correct and very good serving dish for a family of two, is the vegetable dish that has a partition dividing it into two or even three divisions, so that a small quantity of two or three vegetables can be passed at the same time.

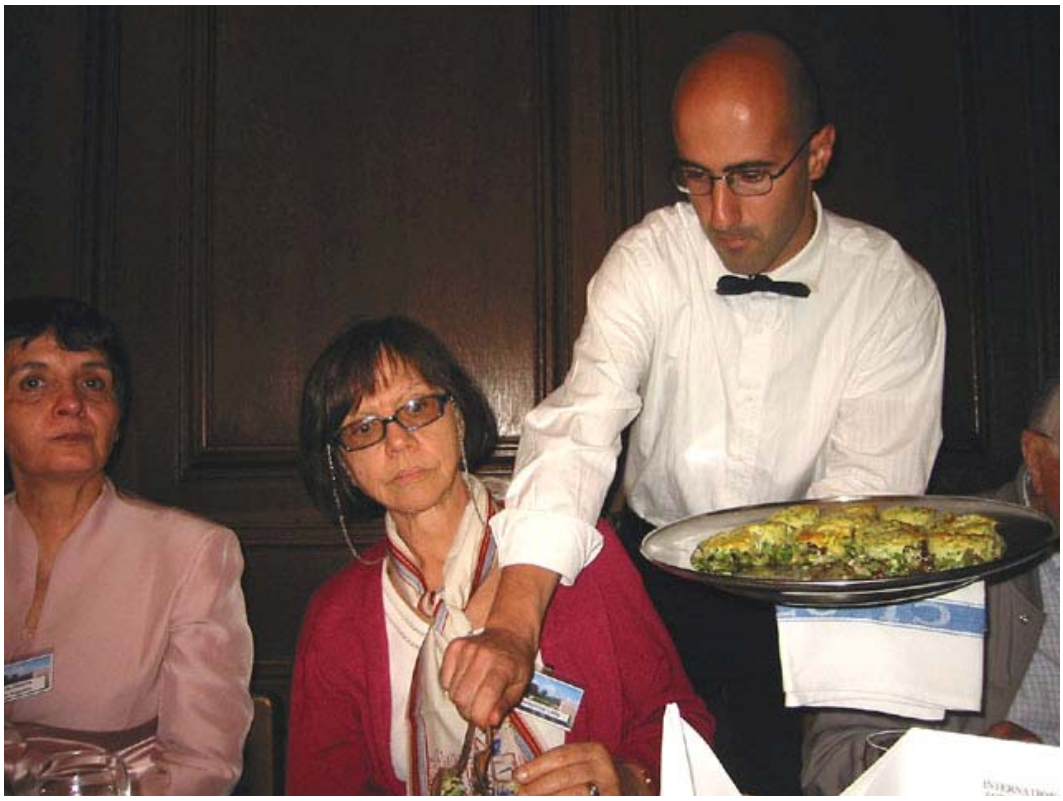
Napkin rings are unknown in fashionable houses outside of the nursery. But in large families where it is impossible to manage such a wash as three clean napkins a day entail, napkin rings are probably necessary. In most moderately run houses, a napkin that is unrumpled and spotless after a meal, is put aside and used again for breakfast; but to be given a napkin that is not perfectly clean is a horrid thought. Perhaps though, the necessity for napkin rings results in the achievement of the immaculate napkin—which is quite a nice thought.

CORRECT SERVICE OF DINNER

Whether there are two at table or two hundred, plates are changed and courses presented in precisely the same manner.

For faultless service, if there are many “accompanied” dishes, two servants are necessary to wait on as few as two persons. But two can also efficiently serve eight; or with unaccompanied dishes an expert servant can manage eight alone, and with one assistant, he can perfectly manage twelve.

In old-fashioned times people apparently did not mind waiting tranquilly through courses and between courses, even though meat grew cold long before the last of many vegetables was passed, and they waited endlessly while a slow talker and eater finished his topic and his food. But people of to-day do not like to wait an unnecessary second. The moment fish is passed them, they expect the cucumbers or sauce, or whatever should go with the fish, to follow immediately. And when the first servant hands the meat course, they consider that they should not be expected to wait a moment for a second servant to hand the gravy or jelly or whatever goes with the meat. No service is good in this day unless swift—and, of course, soundless.



A late leader of Newport society who had a world-wide reputation for the brilliancy of her entertainments, had an equally well-known reputation for rapidly served dinners. “Twenty minutes is quite long enough to sit at table—ever!” is what she used to say, and what her household had to live up to. She had a footman to about every two guests and any one dining with her had to cling to the edge of his plate or it would be whisked away! One who looked aside or “let go” for a second found his plate gone! That was extreme; but, even so, better than a snail-paced dinner!

THE DINNER HOUR

In America the dinner hour is not a fixture, since it varies in various sections of the country. The ordinary New York hour when “giving a dinner” is eight o’clock, half past eight in Newport. In New York, when dining and going to the opera, one is usually asked for seven-fifteen, and for seven-thirty before going to a play. Otherwise only “quiet” people dine before eight. But invitations should, of course, be issued for whatever hour is customary in the place where the dinner is given.

THE BUTLER IN THE DINING-ROOM

When the dinner guests enter the dining-room, it is customary for the butler to hold out the chair of the mistress of the house. This always seems a discourtesy to the guests. And an occasional hostess insists on having the chair of the guest of honor held by the butler instead of her own. If there are footmen enough, the chair of each lady is held for her; otherwise the gentleman who takes her in to dinner helps her to be seated. Ordinarily where there are two servants, the head one holds the chair of the hostess and the second, the chair on the right of the host. The hostess always seats herself as quickly as possible so that the butler may be free to assist a guest to draw her chair up to the table.

In a big house the butler always stands throughout a meal back of the hostess’ chair, except when giving one of the men under him a direction, or when pouring wine. He is not supposed to leave the dining-room himself or ever to handle a dish. In a smaller house where he has no assistant, he naturally does everything himself; when he has a second man or parlor-maid, he passes the principal dishes and the assistant follows with the accompanying dishes or vegetables.

So-called “Russian” service is the only one known in New York which merely means that nothing to eat is ever put on the table except ornamental dishes of fruit and candy. The meat is carved in the kitchen or pantry, vegetables are passed and returned to the side table. Only at breakfast or possibly at supper are dishes of food put on the table.

THE EVER-PRESENT PLATE

From the setting of the table until it is cleared for dessert, a plate must remain at every cover. Under the first two courses there are always two plates. The plate on which oysters or hors d’oeuvres are served is put on top of the place plate. At the end of the course the used plate is removed, leaving the place plate. The soup plate is also put on top of this same plate. But when the soup plate is removed, the underneath plate is removed with it, and a hot plate immediately exchanged for the two taken away. The place plate merely becomes a hot fish plate, but it is there just the same.

The Exchange Plate

If the first course had been a canapé or any cold dish that was offered in bulk instead of being brought on separate plates, it would have been eaten on the place plate, and an exchange plate would have been necessary before the soup could be served. That is, a clean plate would have been exchanged for the used one, and the soup plate then put on top of that. The reason for it is that a plate with food on it can never be exchanged for a plate that has had food on it; a clean one must come between.

If an entrée served on individual plates follows the fish, clean plates are first exchanged for the used ones until the whole table is set with clean plates. Then the entrée is put at each place in exchange for the clean plate. Although dishes are always presented at the left of the person served, plates are removed and replaced at the right.

Glasses are poured and additional knives placed at the right, but forks are put on as needed from the left.

May the Plates for Two Persons Be Brought in Together?

The only plates that can possibly be brought into the dining-room one in each hand are for the hors

d'oeuvres, soup and dessert. The first two plates are placed on others which have not been removed, and the dessert plates need merely be put down on the tablecloth. But the plates of every other course have to be exchanged and therefore each individual service requires two hands. Soup plates, two at a time, would better not be attempted by any but the expert and sure-handed, as it is in placing one plate, while holding the other aloft that the mishap of "soup poured down some one's back" occurs! If only one plate of soup is brought in at a time, that accident at least cannot happen. In the same way the spoon and fork on the dessert plate can easily fall off, unless it is held level. "Two plates at a time" therefore is not a question of etiquette, but of the servant's skill.

Plate Removed When Fork Is Laid Down

Once upon a time it was actually considered impolite to remove a single plate until the last guest at the table had finished eating! In other days people evidently did not mind looking at their own dirty plates indefinitely, nor could they have minded sitting for hours at table. Good service to-day requires the removal of each plate as soon as the fork is laid upon it; so that by the time the last fork is put down, the entire table is set with clean plates and is ready for the next course.

DOUBLE SERVICE AND THE ORDER OF TABLE PRECEDENCE

At every well-ordered dinner, there should be a double service for ten or twelve persons; that is, no hot dish should, if avoidable, be presented to more than six, or nine at the outside. At a dinner of twelve, for instance, two dishes each holding six portions, are garnished exactly alike and presented at opposite ends of the table. One to the lady on the right of the host, and the other to the lady at the opposite end of the table. The services continue around to the right, but occasional butlers direct that after serving the "lady of honor" on the right of the host, the host is skipped and the dish presented to the lady on his left, after which the dish continues around the table to the left, to ladies and gentlemen as they come. In this event the second service starts opposite the lady of honor and also skips the first gentleman, after which it goes around the table to the left, skips the lady of honor and ends with the host. The first service when it reaches the other end of the table skips the lady who was first served and ends with the gentleman who was skipped.

It is perhaps more polite to the ladies to give them preference, but it is complicated, and leaves another gentleman as well as the host, sitting between two ladies who are eating while he is apparently forgotten. The object (which is to prevent the lady who is second in precedence from being served last) can be accomplished by beginning the first service from the lady on the right of the host and continuing on the right 6 places; the second service begins with the lady on the left of the host and continues on the left five places, and then comes back to the host. The best way of all, perhaps, is to vary the "honor" by serving the entrée and salad courses first to the lady on the left instead of to the lady on the right and continue the service of these two courses to the left.

A dinner of eighteen has sometimes two services, but if *very* perfect, three. Where there are three services they start with the lady of honor and the sixth from her on either side and continue to the right.

FILLING GLASSES

As soon as the guests are seated and the first course put in front of them, the butler goes from guest to guest on the right hand side of each, and asks "Apollinaris or plain water!" and fills the goblet accordingly. In the same way he asks later before pouring wine: "Cider, sir?" "Grape fruit cup, madam?" Or in a house which has the remains of a cellar, "Champagne?" or "Do you care for whisky soda, sir?"

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But the temperature and service of wines which used to be an essential detail of every dinner have now no place at all. Whether people will offer frappéd cider or some other iced drink in the middle of dinner, and a warmed something else to take the place of claret with the fish, remains to be seen. A water glass standing alone at each place makes such a meager and untrimmed looking table that most people put on at least two wine glasses, sherry and champagne, or claret and sherry, and pour something pinkish or yellowish into them. A rather popular drink at present is an equal mixture of white grape-juice and ginger ale with mint leaves and much ice. Those few who still have cellars, serve wines exactly as they used to, white wine, claret, sherry and Burgundy warm, champagne ice cold; and after dinner, green mint poured over crushed ice in little glasses, and other liqueurs of room temperature. Whisky is always poured at the table over ice in a tall tumbler, each gentleman "saying when" by putting his hand out. The glass is then filled with soda or Apollinaris.

As soon as soup is served the parlor-maid or a footman passes a dish or a basket of dinner rolls. If rolls are not available, bread cut in about two-inch-thick slices, is cut cross-ways again in three. An old-fashioned silver cake basket makes a perfect modern bread-basket. Or a small wicker basket that is shallow and inconspicuous will do. A guest helps himself with his fingers and lays the roll or bread on the tablecloth, always. No bread plates are ever on a table where there is no butter, and no butter is ever served at a dinner. Whenever there is no bread left at any one's place at table, more should be passed. The glasses should also be kept filled.

PRESENTING DISHES

Dishes are presented held flat on the palm of the servant's right hand; every hot one must have a napkin placed as a pad under it. An especially heavy meat platter can be steadied if necessary by holding the edge of the platter with the left hand, the fingers protected from being burned by a second folded napkin.

Each dish is supplied with whatever implements are needed for helping it; a serving spoon (somewhat larger than an ordinary tablespoon) is put on all dishes and a fork of large size is added for fish, meat, salad and any vegetables or other dishes that are hard to help. String beans, braised celery, spinach en branche, etc., need a fork and spoon. Asparagus has various special lifters and

tongs, but most people use the ordinary spoon and fork, putting the spoon underneath and the fork, prongs down, to hold the stalks on the spoon while being removed to the plate. Corn on the cob is taken with the fingers, but is *never* served at a dinner party. A galantine or mousse, as well as peas, mashed potatoes, rice, etc., are offered with a spoon only.

THE SERVING TABLE

The serving table is an ordinary table placed in the corner of the dining-room near the door to the pantry, and behind a screen, so that it may not be seen by the guests at table. In a small dining-room where space is limited, a set of shelves like a single bookcase is useful.

The serving table is a halfway station between the dinner table and the pantry. It holds stacks of cold plates, extra forks and knives, and the finger bowls and dessert plates. The latter are sometimes put out on the sideboard, if the serving table is small or too crowded.

At little informal dinners all dishes of food after being passed are left on the serving table in case they are called upon for a second helping. But at formal dinners, dishes are never passed twice, and are therefore taken direct to the pantry after being passed.

CLEARING TABLE FOR DESSERT

At dinner always, whether at a formal one, or whether a member of the family is alone, the salad plates, or the plates of whatever course precedes dessert, are removed, leaving the table plateless. The salt cellars and pepper pots are taken off on the serving tray (without being put on any napkin or doily, as used to be the custom), and the crumbs are brushed off each place at table with a folded napkin onto a tray held under the table edge. A silver crumb scraper is still seen occasionally when the tablecloth is plain, but its hard edge is not suitable for embroidery and lace, and ruinous to a bare table, so that a napkin folded to about the size and thickness of an iron-holder is the crumb-scraper of to-day.

DESSERT

The captious say “dessert means the fruit and candy which come after the ices.” “Ices” is a misleading word too, because suggestive of the individual “ices” which flourished at private dinners in the Victorian age, and still survive at public dinners, suppers at balls, and at wedding breakfasts, but which are seen at not more than one private dinner in a thousand—if that.

In the present world of fashion the “dessert” is ice cream, served in one mold; not ices (a lot of little frozen images). And the refusal to call the “sweets” at the end of the dinner, which certainly include ice cream and cake, “dessert,” is at least not the interpretation of either good usage or good society. In France, where the word “dessert” originated, “ices” were set apart from dessert merely because French chefs delight in designating each item of a meal as a separate course. But chefs and cook-books notwithstanding, dessert means everything sweet that comes at the end of a meal. And the great American dessert is ice cream—or pie. Pie, however, is not a “company” dessert. Ice cream on the other hand is the inevitable conclusion of a formal dinner. The fact that the spoon which is

double the size of a teaspoon is known as nothing but a dessert spoon, is offered in further proof that “dessert” is “spoon” and not “finger” food!

Dessert Service

There are two, almost equally used, methods of serving dessert. The first or “hotel method,” also seen in many fashionable private houses, is to put on a china plate for ice cream or a first course, and the finger bowl on a plate by itself, afterwards. In the “private house” service, the entire dessert paraphernalia is put on at once.

In detail: In the two-course, or hotel, service, the “dessert” plate is of china, or if of glass, it must have a china one under it. A china dessert plate is just a fairly deep medium sized plate and it is always put on the table with a “dessert” spoon and fork on it. After the inevitable ice cream has been eaten, a fruit plate with a finger bowl on it, is put on in exchange. A doily goes under the finger bowl, and a fruit knife and fork on either side.

In the single course, or private house, service, the ice cream plate is of glass and belongs under the finger bowl which it matches. The glass plate and finger bowl in turn are put on the fruit plate with a doily between, and the dessert spoon and fork go on either side of the finger bowl (instead of the fruit knife and fork). This arrangement of plates is seen in such houses as the Worldlys’ and the Oldnames’, and in fact in most very well done houses. The finger bowls and glass plates that match make a prettier service than the finger bowl on a china plate by itself; also it eliminates a change—but not a removal—of plates. In this service, a guest lifts the finger bowl off and eats his ice cream on the glass plate, after which the glass plate is removed and the china one is left for fruit.

Some people think this service confusing because an occasional guest, in lifting off the finger bowl, lifts the glass plate too, and eats his dessert on his china plate. It is merely necessary for the servants to notice at which place the china plate has been used and to bring a clean one; otherwise a “cover” is left with a glass plate or a bare tablecloth for fruit. Also any one taking fruit must have a fruit knife and fork brought to him. Fruit is passed immediately after ice-cream; and chocolates, conserves, or whatever the decorative sweets may be, are passed last.

This single service may sound as though it were more complicated than the two-course service, but actually it is less. Few people use the wrong plate and usually the ice-cream plates having others under them can be taken away two at a time. Furthermore, scarcely any one takes fruit, so that the extra knives and forks are few, if any.

Before finishing dessert, it may be as well to add in detail, that the finger bowl doiley is about five or six inches in diameter; it may be round or square, and of the finest and sheerest needlework that can be found (or afforded). It must always be cream or white. Colored embroideries look well sometimes on a country lunch table but not at dinner. No matter where it is used, the finger bowl is less than half filled with cold water; and at dinner parties, a few violets, sweet peas, or occasionally a gardenia, is put in it. (A slice of lemon is never seen outside of a chop-house where eating with the fingers may necessitate the lemon in removing grease. Pretty thought!)

Black coffee is never served at a fashionable dinner table, but is brought afterwards with cigarettes

and liqueurs into the drawing-room for the ladies, and with cigars, cigarettes and liqueurs into the smoking room for the gentlemen.

If there is no smoking-room, coffee and cigars are brought to the table for the gentlemen after the ladies have gone into the drawing-room.

PLACE CARDS

The place cards are usually about an inch and a half high by two inches long, sometimes slightly larger. People of old family have their crest embossed in plain white; occasionally an elderly hostess, following a lifelong custom, has her husband's crest stamped in gold. Nothing other than a crest must ever be engraved on a place card; and usually they are plain, even in the houses of old families.

Years ago "hand-painted" place cards are said to have been in fashion. But excepting on such occasions as a Christmas or a birthday dinner, they are never seen in private houses to-day.

MENU CARDS

Small, standing porcelain slates, on which the menu is written, are seen on occasional dinner tables. Most often there is only one which is placed in front of the host; but sometimes there is one between every two guests.

SEATING THE TABLE

As has already been observed, the most practical way to seat the table is to write the names on individual cards first, and then "place" them as though playing solitaire; the guest of honor on the host's right, the second lady in rank on his left; the most distinguished or oldest gentleman on the right of the hostess, and the other guests filled in between.

WHO IS THE GUEST OF HONOR?

The guest of honor is the oldest lady present, or a stranger whom you wish for some reason to honor. A bride at her first dinner in your house, after her return from her honeymoon, takes, if you choose to have her, precedence over older people. Or if a younger woman has been long away she, in this instance of welcoming her home, takes precedence over her elders. The guest of honor is always led in to dinner by the host and placed on his right, the second in importance sits on his left and is taken in to dinner by the gentleman on whose right she sits. The hostess is always the last to go into the dining-room at a formal dinner.

THE ENVELOPES FOR THE GENTLEMEN

In an envelope addressed to each gentleman is put a card on which is written the name of the lady he is to take down to dinner. This card just fits in the envelope, which is an inch or slightly less high and about two inches long. When the envelopes are addressed and filled, they are arranged in two neat rows on a silver tray and put in the front hall. The tray is presented to each gentleman just before he goes into the drawing-room, on his arrival.

THE TABLE DIAGRAM

A frame made of leather, round or rectangular, with small openings at regular intervals around the edge in which names written on cards can be slipped, shows the seating of the table at a glance. In a frame holding twenty-four cards, twelve guests would be indicated by leaving every other card place blank, or for eight, only one in three is filled. This diagram is shown to each gentleman upon his arrival, so that he can see who is coming for dinner and where he himself is placed. At a dinner of ten or less this diagram is especially convenient as "envelopes" are used only at formal dinners of

twelve and over.

WHEN THE HOSTESS SITS AT THE SIDE

When the number of guests is a multiple of four, the host and hostess never sit opposite each other. It would bring two ladies and two gentlemen together if they did. At a table which seats two together at each end, the fact that the host is opposite a gentleman and the hostess opposite a lady is not noticeable; nor is it ever noticeable at a round table. But at a narrow table which has room for only one at the end, the hostess invariably sits in the seat next to that which is properly her own, putting in her place a gentleman at the end. The host usually keeps his seat rather than the hostess because the seat of honor is on his right; and in the etiquette governing dinners, the host and not the hostess is the more important personage!

When there are only four, they keep their own places, otherwise the host and hostess would sit next to each other. At a dinner of eight, twelve, sixteen, twenty, etc., the host keeps his place, but at supper for eight or twelve, the hostess keeps *her* place and the host moves a place to the right or left because the hostess at supper pours coffee or chocolate. And although the host keeps his seat at a formal dinner in honor of the lady he takes in, at a little dinner of eight, where there is no guest of honor, the host does not necessarily keep his seat at the expense of his wife unless he carves, in which case he must have the end place; just as at supper she has the end place in order to pour.

SIDEWALK, HALL, AND DRESSING ROOMS

One can be pretty sure on seeing a red velvet carpet spread down the steps of a house (or up! since there are so many sunken American basement entrances) that there are people for dinner. The carpet is kept rolled, or turned under near the foot (or top) of the steps until a few minutes before the dinner hour when it is spread across the width of the pavement by the chauffeur or whoever is on duty on the sidewalk. Very big or formal dinners often have an awning, especially at a house where there is much entertaining and which has an awning of its own; but at an ordinary house, for a dinner of twelve or so, the man on the pavement must, if it is raining, shelter each arriving guest under his coachman's umbrella from carriage to door. If it does not rain, he merely opens the doors of vehicles. Checks are never given at dinners, no matter how big; every motor is called by address at the end of the evening. The Worldly car is not shouted for as "Worldly!" but "xox Fifth Avenue!" The typical coachman of another day used to tell you "carriages are ordered for ten-fifteen." Carriages were nearly always ordered for that hour, though with slow and long dinners no one ever actually left until the horses had exercised for at least an hour! But the chauffeur of to-day opens the door in silence—unless there is to be a concert or amateur theatricals, when he, like the coachman says, "Motors are ordered for twelve o'clock," or whatever hour he is told to say.

In this day of telephone and indefinite bridge games, many people prefer to have their cars telephoned for, when they are ready to go home. Those who do not play bridge leave an eight o'clock dinner about half past ten, or at least order their cars for that hour.

In all modern houses of size there are two rooms on the entrance floor, built sometimes as dressing-rooms and nothing else, but more often they are small reception rooms, each with a lavatory off of it. In the one given to the ladies, there is always a dressing-table with toilet appointments on it, and the lady's maid should be on duty to give whatever service may be required; when there is no dressing-room on the ground floor, the back of the hall is arranged with coat-hangers and an improvised dressing-table for the ladies, since modern people—in New York at least—never go upstairs to a bedroom if they can help it. In fact, nine ladies out of ten drop their evening cloaks at the front door, handing them to the servant on duty, and go at once without more ado to the drawing-room. A lady arriving in her own closed car can't be very much blown about, in a completely air tight compartment and in two or three minutes of time!

Gentlemen also leave their hats and coats in the front part of the hall. A servant presents to each a tray of envelopes, and if there is one, the table diagram. Envelopes are not really necessary when there is a table diagram, since every gentleman knows that he "takes in" the lady placed on his right! But at very big dinners in New York or Washington, where many people are sure to be strangers to one another, an absent-minded gentleman might better, perhaps, have his partner's name safely in

his pocket.

ANNOUNCING GUESTS

A gentleman always falls behind his wife in entering the drawing-room. If the butler knows the guests, he merely announces the wife's name first and then the husband's. If he does not know them by sight he asks whichever is nearest to him, "What name, please?" And whichever one is asked, answers: "Mr. and Mrs. Lake."

The butler then precedes the guests a few steps into the room where the hostess is stationed, and standing aside says in a low tone but very distinctly: "Mrs. Lake," a pause and then, "Mr. Lake." Married people are usually announced separately as above, but occasionally people have their guests announced "Mr. and Mrs.——."

ANNOUNCING PERSONS OF RANK

All men of high executive rank are not alone announced first, but take precedence of their wives in entering the room. The President of the United States is announced simply, "The President and Mrs. Harding." His title needs no qualifying appendage, since he and he solely, is *the* President. He enters first, and alone, of course; and then Mrs. Harding follows. The same form precisely is used for "The Vice-President and Mrs. Coolidge." A governor is sometimes in courtesy called "Excellency" but the correct announcement would be "the Governor of New Jersey and Mrs. Edwards." He enters the room and Mrs. Edwards follows. "The Mayor and Mrs. Thompson" observe the same etiquette; or in a city other than his own he would be announced "The Mayor of Chicago and Mrs. Thompson."

Other announcements are "The Chief Justice and Mrs. Taft," "The Secretary of State and Mrs. Hughes." "Senator and Mrs. Washington," but in this case the latter enters the room first, because his office is not executive.

According to diplomatic etiquette an Ambassador and his wife should be announced, "Their Excellencies the Ambassador and Ambassadress of Great Britain." The Ambassador enters the room first. A Minister Plenipotentiary is announced "The Minister of Sweden." He enters a moment later and "Mrs. Ogren" follows. But a First Secretary and his wife are announced, if they have a title of their own, "Count and Countess European," or "Mr. and Mrs. American."

The President, the Vice-President, the Governor of a State, the Mayor of a city, the Ambassador of a foreign Power—in other words, all executives—take precedence over their wives and enter rooms and vehicles first. But Senators, Representatives, Secretaries of legations and all other officials who are not executive, allow their wives to precede them, just as they would if they were private individuals.

Foreigners who have hereditary titles are announced by them: "The Duke and Duchess of Overthere." "The Marquis and Marchioness of Landsend," or "Sir Edward and Lady Blank," etc. Titles are invariably translated into English, "Count and Countess Lorraine," not "M. le Comte et Mme. la Comtesse Lorraine."

HOW A HOSTESS RECEIVES AT A FORMAL DINNER

On all occasions of formality, at a dinner as well as at a ball, the hostess stands near the door of her drawing-room, and as guests are announced, she greets them with a smile and a hand-shake and says something pleasant to each. What she says is nothing very important, charm of expression and of manner can often wordlessly express a far more gracious welcome than the most elaborate phrases (which as a matter of fact should be studiously avoided). Unless a woman's loveliness springs from generosity of heart and sympathy, her manners, no matter how perfectly practised, are nothing but cosmetics applied to hide a want of inner beauty; precisely as rouge and powder are applied in the hope of hiding the lack of a beautiful skin. One device is about as successful as the other; quite pleasing unless brought into comparison with the real.

Mrs. Oldname, for instance, usually welcomes you with some such sentences as, "I am very glad to see you" or "I am so glad you could come!" Or if it is raining, she very likely tells you that you were

very unselfish to come out in the storm. But no matter what she says or whether anything at all, she takes your hand with a firm pressure and her smile is really a *smile* of welcome, not a mechanical exercise of the facial muscles. She gives you always—even if only for the moment—her complete attention; and you go into her drawing-room with a distinct feeling that you are under the roof, not of a mere acquaintance, but of a friend. Mr. Oldname who stands never very far from his wife, always comes forward and, grasping your hand, accentuates his wife's more subtle but no less vivid welcome. And either you join a friend standing near, or he presents you, if you are a man, to a lady; or if you are a lady, he presents a man to you.

Some hostesses, especially those of the Lion-Hunting and the New-to-Best-Society variety are much given to explanations, and love to say "Mrs. Jones, I want you to meet Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith is the author of 'Dragged from the Depths,' a most enlightening work of psychic insight." Or to a good-looking woman, "I am putting you next to the Assyrian Ambassador—I want him to carry back a flattering impression of American women!"

But people of good breeding do not over-exploit their distinguished guests with embarrassing hyperbole, or make personal remarks. Both are in worst possible taste. Do not understand by this that explanations can not be made; it is only that they must not be embarrassingly made to their faces. Nor must a "specialist's" subject be forced upon him, like a pair of manacles, by any exploiting hostess who has captured him. Mrs. Oldname might perhaps, in order to assist conversation for an interesting but reticent person, tell a lady just before going in to dinner, "Mr. Traveler who is sitting next to you at the table, has just come back from two years alone with the cannibals." This is not to exploit her "Traveled Lion" but to give his neighbor a starting point for conversation at table. And although personal remarks are never good form, it would be permissible for an older lady in welcoming a very young one, especially a débutante or a bride, to say, "How lovely you look, Mary dear, and what an adorable dress you have on!"

But to say to an older lady, "That is a very handsome string of pearls you are wearing," would be objectionable.

THE DUTY OF THE HOST

The host stands fairly near his wife so that if any guest seems to be unknown to all of the others, he can present him to some one. At formal dinners introductions are never general and people do not as a rule speak to strangers, except those next to them at table or in the drawing-room after dinner. The host therefore makes a few introductions if necessary. Before dinner, since the hostess is standing (and no gentleman may therefore sit down) and as it is awkward for a lady who is sitting, to talk with a gentleman who is standing, the ladies usually also stand until dinner is announced.

WHEN DINNER IS ANNOUNCED

It is the duty of the butler to "count heads" so that he may know when the company has arrived. As soon as he has announced the last person, he notifies the cook. The cook being ready, the butler, having glanced into the dining-room to see that windows have been closed and the candles on the table lighted, enters the drawing-room, approaches the hostess, bows, and says quietly, "Dinner is served."

The host offers his arm to the lady of honor and leads the way to the dining-room. All the other gentlemen offer their arms to the ladies appointed to them, and follow the host, in an orderly procession, two and two; the only order of precedence is that the host and his partner lead, while the hostess and her partner come last. At all formal dinners, place cards being on the table, the hostess does not direct people where to sit. If there was no table diagram in the hall, the butler, standing just within the dining-room door, tells each gentleman as he approaches "Right" or "Left."

"R" or "L" is occasionally written on the lady's name card in the envelopes given to the gentlemen, or if it is such a big dinner that there are many separate tables, the tables are numbered with standing placards (as at a public dinner) and the table number written on each lady's name card.

THE MANNERS OF A HOSTESS

First of all, a hostess must show each of her guests equal and impartial attention. Also, although engrossed in the person she is talking to, she must be able to notice anything amiss that may occur. The more competent her servants, the less she need be aware of details herself, but the hostess giving a formal dinner with uncertain dining-room efficiency has a far from smooth path before her. No matter what happens, if all the china in the pantry falls with a crash, she must not appear to have heard it. No matter what goes wrong she must cover it as best she may, and at the same time cover the fact that she is covering it. To give hectic directions, merely accentuates the awkwardness. If a dish appears that is unpresentable, she as quietly as possible orders the next one to be brought in. If a guest knocks over a glass and breaks it, even though the glass be a piece of genuine Steigel, her only concern must seemingly be that her guest's place has been made uncomfortable. She says, "I am so sorry, but I will have it fixed at once!" The broken glass is *nothing!* And she has a fresh glass brought (even though it doesn't match) and dismisses all thought of the matter.

Both the host and hostess must keep the conversation going, if it lags, but this is not as definitely their duty at a formal, as at an informal dinner. It is at the small dinner that the skilful hostess has need of what Thackeray calls the "showman" quality. She brings each guest forward in turn to the center of the stage. In a lull in the conversation she says beguilingly to a clever but shy man, "John, what was that story you told me——" and then she repeats briefly an introduction to a topic in which "John" particularly shines. Or later on, she begins a narrative and breaks off suddenly, turning to some one else, *"You* tell them!"

These examples are rather bald, and overemphasize the method in order to make it clear. Practise and the knowledge of human nature, or of the particular temperament with which she is trying to deal, can alone tell her when she may lead or provoke this or that one to being at his best, to his own satisfaction as well as that of the others who may be present. Her own character and sympathy are the only real "showman" assets, since no one "shows" to advantage except in a congenial environment.

THE LATE GUEST

A polite hostess waits twenty minutes after the dinner hour, and then orders dinner served. To wait more than twenty minutes, or actually fifteen after those who took the allowable five minutes grace, would be showing lack of consideration to many for the sake of one. When the late guest finally enters the dining-room, the hostess rises, shakes hands with her, but does not leave her place at table. She doesn't rise for a gentleman. It is the guest who must go up to the hostess and apologize for being late. The hostess must never take the guest to task, but should say something polite and conciliatory such as, "I was sure you would not want us to wait dinner!" The newcomer is usually served with dinner from the beginning unless she is considerate enough to say to the butler, "Just let me begin with this course."

Old Mrs. Toplofty's manners to late guests are an exception: on the last stroke of eight o'clock in winter and half after eight in Newport, dinner is announced. She waits for no one! Furthermore, a guest arriving after a course has been served, does not have to protest against disarranging the order of dinner since the rule of the house is that a course which has passed a chair is not to be returned. A guest missing his "turn" misses that course. The result is that everyone dining with Mrs. Toplofty arrives on the stroke of the dinner hour; which is also rather necessary, as she is one of those who like the service to be rushed through at top speed, and anyone arriving half an hour late would find dinner over.

It would be excellent discipline if there were more hostesses like her, but no young woman could be so autocratic and few older ones care (or dare) to be. Nothing shows selfish want of consideration more than being habitually late for dinner. Not only are others, who were themselves considerate, kept waiting, but dinner is dried and ruined for everyone else through the fault of the tardy one. And though expert cooks know how to keep food from becoming uneatable, no food can be so good as at the moment for which it is prepared, and the habitually late guest should be made to realize how unfairly she is meeting her hostess' generosity by destroying for every one the hospitality which she was invited to share.

On the other hand, before a formal dinner, it is the duty of the hostess to be dressed and in her

drawing-room fifteen, or ten minutes at least, before the hour set for dinner. For a very informal dinner it is not important to be ready ahead of time, but even then a late hostess is an inconsiderate one.

ETIQUETTE OF GLOVES AND NAPKIN

Ladies always wear gloves to formal dinners and take them off at table. Entirely off. It is hideous to leave them on the arm, merely turning back the hands. Both gloves and fan are supposed to be laid across the lap, and one is supposed to lay the napkin folded once in half across the lap too, on top of the gloves and fan, and all three are supposed to stay in place on a slippery satin skirt on a little lap, that more often than not slants downward.

It is all very well for etiquette to say “They stay there,” but every woman knows they don’t! And this is quite a nice question: If you obey etiquette and lay the napkin on top of the fan and gloves loosely across your satin-covered knees, it will depend merely upon the heaviness and position of the fan’s

handle whether the avalanche starts right, left or forward, onto the floor. There is just *one* way to keep these four articles (including the lap as one) from disintegrating, which is to put the napkin cornerwise across your knees and tuck the two side corners under like a lap robe, with the gloves and the fan tied in place as it were. This ought not to be put in a book of etiquette, which should say you must do nothing of the kind, but it is either do that or have the gentleman next you groping under the table at the end of the meal; and it is impossible to imagine that etiquette should wish to conserve the picture of "gentlemen on all fours" as the concluding ceremonial at dinners.

THE TURNING OF THE TABLE

The turning of the table is accomplished by the hostess, who merely turns from the gentleman (on her left probably) with whom she has been talking through the soup and the fish course, to the one on her right. As she turns, the lady to whom the "right" gentleman has been talking, turns to the gentleman further on, and in a moment everyone at table is talking to a new neighbor. Sometimes a single couple who have become very much engrossed, refuse to change partners and the whole table is blocked; leaving one lady and one gentleman on either side of the block, staring alone at their plates. At this point the hostess has to come to the rescue by attracting the blocking lady's attention and saying, "Sally, you cannot talk to Professor Bugge any longer! Mr. Smith has been trying his best to attract your attention."

"Sally" being in this way brought awake, is obliged to pay attention to Mr. Smith, and Professor Bugge, little as he may feel inclined, must turn his attention to the other side. To persist in carrying on their own conversation at the expense of others, would be inexcusably rude, not only to their hostess but to every one present.

At a dinner not long ago, Mr. Kindhart sitting next to Mrs. Wellborn and left to himself because of the assiduity of the lady's farther partner, slid his own name-card across and in front of her, to bring her attention to the fact that it was "his turn."

ENEMIES MUST BURY HATCHETS

One inexorable rule of etiquette is that you must talk to your next door neighbor at a dinner table. You *must,* that is all there is about it!

Even if you are placed next to some one with whom you have had a bitter quarrel, consideration for your hostess, who would be distressed if she knew you had been put in a disagreeable place, and further consideration for the rest of the table which is otherwise "blocked," exacts that you give no outward sign of your repugnance and that you make a pretence at least for a little while, of talking together.

At dinner once, Mrs. Toplofty, finding herself next to a man she quite openly despised, said to him with apparent placidity, "I shall not talk to you—because I don't care to. But for the sake of my hostess I shall say my multiplication tables. Twice one are two, twice two are four ——" and she continued on through the tables, making him alternate them with her. As soon as she politely could she turned again to her other companion.

MANNERS AT TABLE

It used to be an offense, and it still is considered impolite, to refuse dishes at the table, because your refusal implies that you do not like what is offered you. If this is true, you should be doubly careful to take at least a little on your plate and make a pretence of eating some of it, since to refuse course after course can not fail to distress your hostess. If you are "on a diet" and accepted the invitation with that stipulation, your not eating is excusable; but even then to sit with an empty plate in front of you throughout a meal makes you a seemingly reproachful table companion for those of good appetite sitting next to you.

ATTACKING A COMPLICATED DISH

When a dinner has been prepared by a chef who prides himself on being a decorative artist, the guest of honor and whoever else may be the first to be served have quite a problem to know which part of an intricate structure is to be eaten, and which part is scenic effect!

The main portion is generally clear enough; the uncertainty is in whether the flowers are eatable vegetables and whether the things that look like ducks are potatoes, or trimming. If there are six or more, the chances are they are edible, and that one or two of a kind are embellishments only. Rings around food are nearly always to be eaten; platforms under food seldom, if ever, are. Anything that looks like pastry is to be eaten; and anything divided into separate units should be taken on your plate complete. You should not try to cut a section from anything that has already been divided into portions in the kitchen. Aspics and desserts are, it must be said, occasionally Chinese puzzles, but if you do help yourself to part of the decoration, no great harm is done.

Dishes are *never* passed from hand to hand at a dinner, not even at the smallest and most informal one. Sometimes people pass salted nuts to each other, or an extra sweet from a dish near by, but not circling the table.

LEAVING THE TABLE

At the end of dinner, when the last dish of chocolates has been passed and the hostess sees that no one is any longer eating, she looks across the table, and catching the eye of one of the ladies, slowly stands up. The one who happens to be observing also stands up, and in a moment everyone is standing. The gentlemen offer their arms to their partners and conduct them back to the drawing-room or the library or wherever they are to sit during the rest of the evening.

Each gentleman then slightly bows, takes leave of his partner, and adjourns with the other gentlemen to the smoking-room, where after-dinner coffee, liqueurs, cigars and cigarettes are passed, and they all sit where they like and with whom they like, and talk.

It is perfectly correct for a gentleman to talk to any other who happens to be sitting near him, whether he knows him or not. The host on occasions—but it is rarely necessary—starts the conversation if most of the guests are inclined to keep silent, by drawing this one or that into discussion of a general topic that everyone is likely to take part in. At the end of twenty minutes or so, he must take the opportunity of the first lull in the conversation to suggest that they join the ladies in the drawing-room.

In a house where there is no smoking-room, the gentlemen do not conduct the ladies to the drawing-room, but stay where they are (the ladies leaving alone) and have their coffee, cigars, liqueurs and conversation sitting around the table.

In the drawing-room, meanwhile, the ladies are having coffee, cigarettes, and liqueurs passed to them. There is not a modern New York hostess, scarcely even an old-fashioned one, who does not have cigarettes passed after dinner.

At a dinner of ten or twelve, the five or six ladies are apt to sit in one group, or possibly two sit by themselves, and three of four together, but at a very large dinner they inevitably fall into groups of four or five or so each. In any case, the hostess must see that no one is left to sit alone. If one of her guests is a stranger to the others, the hostess draws a chair near one of the groups and offering it to her single guest sits beside her. After a while when this particular guest has at least joined the outskirts of the conversation of the group, the hostess leaves her and joins another group where perhaps she sits beside some one else who has been somewhat left out. When there is no one who needs any especial attention, the hostess nevertheless sits for a time with each of the different groups in order to spend at least a part of the evening with all of her guests.

WHEN THE GENTLEMEN RETURN TO THE DRAWING-ROOM

When the gentlemen return to the drawing-room, if there is a particular lady that one of them wants to talk to, he naturally goes directly to where she is, and sits down beside her. If, however, she is securely wedged in between two other ladies, he must ask her to join him elsewhere. Supposing Mr. Jones, for instance, wants to talk to Mrs. Bobo Gilding, who is sitting between Mrs. Stranger and Miss Stiffleigh: Mr. Jones saunters up to Mrs. Gilding—he must not look too eager or seem too

directly to prefer her to the two who are flanking her position, so he says rather casually, “Will you come and talk to me?” Whereupon she leaves her sandwiched position and goes over to another part of the room, and sits down where there is a vacant seat beside her. Usually, however, the ladies on the ends, being accessible are more apt to be joined by the first gentleman entering than is the one in the center, whom it is impossible to reach. Etiquette has always decreed that gentlemen should not continue to talk together after leaving the smoking-room, as it is not courteous to those of the ladies who are necessarily left without partners.

At informal dinners, and even at many formal ones, bridge tables are set up in an adjoining room, if not in the drawing-room. Those few who do not play bridge spend a half hour (or less) in conversation and then go home, unless there is some special diversion.

MUSIC OR OTHER ENTERTAINMENT AFTER DINNER

Very large dinners of fifty or over are almost invariably followed by some sort of entertainment. Either the dinner is given before a ball or a musicale or amateur theatricals, or professionals are brought in to dance or sing.

In this day when conversation is not so much a “lost” as a “wilfully abandoned” art, people in numbers can not be left to spend an evening on nothing but conversation. Grouped together by the hundred and with bridge tables absent, the modern fashionables in America, and in England, too, are as helpless as children at a party without something for them to do, listen to, or look at!

VERY BIG DINNERS

A dinner of sixty, for instance, is always served at separate tables: a center one of twenty people, and four corner tables of ten each. Or if less, a center table of twelve and four smaller tables of eight. A dinner of thirty-six or less is seated at a single table.

But whether there are eighteen, eighty, or one or two hundred, the setting of each individual table and the service is precisely the same. Each one is set with centerpiece, candles, compotiers, and evenly spaced plates, with the addition of a number by which to identify it; or else each table is decorated with different colored flowers, pink, yellow, orchid, white. Whatever the manner of identification, the number or the color is written in the corner of the ladies’ name cards that go in the envelopes handed to each arriving gentleman at the door: “pink,” “yellow,” “orchid,” “white,” or “center table.”

In arranging for the service of dinner the butler details three footmen, usually, to each table of ten, and six footmen to the center table of twenty. There are several houses (palaces really) in New York that have dining-rooms big enough to seat a hundred or more easily. But sixty is a very big dinner, and even thirty does not “go” well without an entertainment following it.

Otherwise the details are the same in every particular as well as in table setting: the hostess receives at the door; guests stand until dinner is announced; the host leads the way with the guest of honor. The hostess goes to table last. The host and hostess always sit at the big center table and the others at that table are invariably the oldest present. No one resents being grouped according to “age,” but many do resent a segregation of ultra fashionables. You must never put all the prominent ones at one table, unless you want forever to lose the acquaintance of those at every other.

After dinner, the gentlemen go to the smoking-room and the ladies sit in the ballroom, where, if there is to be a theatrical performance, the stage is probably arranged. The gentlemen return, the guests take their places, and the performance begins. After the performance the leave-taking is the same as at all dinners or parties.

TAKING LEAVE

That the guest of honor must be first to take leave was in former times so fixed a rule that everyone used to sit on and on, no matter how late it became, waiting for her whose duty it was, to go! More often than not, the guest of honor was an absent-minded old lady, or celebrity, who very likely was vaguely saying to herself, “Oh, my! are these people never going home?” until by and by it dawned

upon her that the obligation was her own!

But to-day, although it is still the obligation of the guest who sat on the host's right to make the move to go, it is not considered ill-mannered, if the hour is growing late, for another lady to rise first. In fact, unless the guest of honor is one *really,* meaning a stranger or an elderly lady of distinction, there is no actual precedence in being the one first to go. If the hour is very early when the first lady rises, the hostess, who always rises too, very likely says: "I *hope* you are not thinking of going!"

The guest answers, "We don't want to in the least, but Dick has to be at the office so early!" or "I'm sorry, but I must. Thank you so much for asking us."

Usually, however, each one merely says, "Good night, thank you so much." The hostess answers, "I am so glad you could come!" and she then presses a bell (not one that any guest can hear!) for the servants to be in the dressing-rooms and hall. When one guest leaves, they all leave—except those at the bridge tables. They all say, "Good night" to whomever they were talking with and shake hands, and then going up to their hostess, they shake hands and say, "Thank you for asking us," or "Thank you so much."

"Thank you so much; good night," is the usual expression. And the hostess answers, "It was so nice to see you again," or "I'm glad you could come." But most usually of all she says merely, "Good night!" and suggests friendliness by the tone in which she says it—an accent slightly more on the "good" perhaps than on the "night."

In the dressing-room, or in the hall, the maid is waiting to help the ladies on with their wraps, and the butler is at the door. When Mr. and Mrs. Jones are ready to leave, he goes out on the front steps and calls, "Mr. Jones' car!" The Jones' chauffeur answers, "Here," the butler says to either Mr. or Mrs. Jones, "Your car is at the door!" and they go out.

The bridge people leave as they finish their games; sometimes a table at a time or most likely two together. (Husbands and wives are never, if it can be avoided, put at the same table.) Young people in saying good night say, "Good night, it has been too wonderful!" or "Good night, and thank you *so* much." And the hostess smiles and says, "So glad you could come!" or just "Good night!"

THE LITTLE DINNER

The little dinner is thought by most people to be the very pleasantest social function there is. It is always informal, of course, and intimate conversation is possible, since strangers are seldom, or at least very carefully, included. For younger people, or others who do not find great satisfaction in conversation, the dinner of eight and two tables of bridge afterwards has no rival in popularity. The formal dinner is liked by most people now and then (and for those who don't especially like it, it is at least salutary as a spine stiffening exercise), but for night after night, season after season, the little dinner is to social activity what the roast course is to the meal.

The service of a "little" dinner is the same as that of a big one. As has been said, proper service in properly run houses is never relaxed, whether dinner is for eighteen or for two alone. The table appointments are equally fine and beautiful, though possibly not quite so rare. Really priceless old glass and china can't be replaced because duplicates do not exist and to use it three times a day would be to court destruction; replicas, however, are scarcely less beautiful and can be replaced if chipped. The silver is identical; the food is equally well prepared, though a course or two is eliminated; the service is precisely the same. The clothes that fashionable people wear every evening they are home alone, are, if not the same, at least as beautiful of their kind. Young Gilding's lounge suit is quite as "handsome" as his dinner clothes, and he tubs and shaves and changes his linen when he puts it on. His wife wears a tea gown, which is classified as a negligé rather in irony, since it is apt to be more elaborate and gorgeous (to say nothing of dignified) than half of the garments that masquerade these days as evening dresses! They wear these informal clothes only if very intimate friends are coming to dinner alone. "Alone" may include as many as eight!—but never includes a stranger.

Otherwise, at informal dinners, the host wears a dinner coat and the hostess a simple evening dress, or perhaps an elaborate one that has been seen by everyone and which goes on at little dinners for the sake of getting some "wear out of it." She never, however, receives formally standing, though she rises when a guest comes into the room, shakes hands and sits down again. When

dinner is announced, gentlemen do not offer their arms to the ladies. The hostess and the other ladies go into the dining-room together, not in a procession, but just as they happen to come. If one of them is much older than the others, the younger ones wait for her to go ahead of them, or one who is much younger goes last. The men stroll in the rear. The hostess on reaching the dining-room goes to her own place where she stands and tells everyone where she or he is to sit. “Mary, will you sit next to Jim, and Lucy on his other side; Kate, over there, Bobo, next to me,” etc.

CARVING ON THE TABLE

Carving is sometimes seen at “home” dinner tables. A certain type of man always likes to carve, and such a one does. But in forty-nine houses out of fifty, in New York at least, the carving is done by the cook in the kitchen—a roast while it is still in the roasting pan, and close to the range at that, so that nothing can possibly get cooled off in the carving. After which the pieces are carefully put together again, and transferred to an intensely hot platter. This method has two advantages over table carving; quicker service, and hotter food. Unless a change takes place in the present fashion, none except cooks will know anything about carving, which was once considered an art necessary to every gentleman. The boast of the high-born Southerner, that he could carve a canvas-back holding it on his fork, will be as unknown as the driving of a four-in-hand.

Old-fashioned butlers sometimes carve in the pantry, but in the most modern service *all* carving is done by the cook. Cold meats are, in the English service, put whole on the sideboard and the family and guests cut off what they choose themselves. In America cold meat is more often sliced and laid on a platter garnished with finely chopped meat jelly and water cress or parsley.

THE “STAG” OR “BACHELOR” DINNER

A man’s dinner is sometimes called a “stag” or a “bachelor” dinner; and as its name implies, is a dinner given by a man and for men only. A man’s dinner is usually given to celebrate an occasion of welcome or farewell. The best-known bachelor dinner is the one given by the groom just before his wedding. Other dinners are more apt to be given by one man (or a group of men) in honor of a noted citizen who has returned from a long absence, or who is about to embark on an expedition or a foreign mission. Or a young man may give a dinner in honor of a friend’s twenty-first birthday; or an older man may give a dinner merely because he has a quantity of game which he has shot and wants to share with his especial friends.

Nearly always a man’s dinner is given at the host’s club or his bachelor quarters or in a private room in a hotel. But if a man chooses to give a stag dinner in his own house, his wife (or his mother) should *not* appear. For a wife to come downstairs and receive the guests for him, can not be too strongly condemned as out of place. Such a maneuver on her part, instead of impressing his guests with her own grace and beauty, is far more likely to make them think what a “poor worm” her husband must be, to allow himself to be hen-pecked. And for a mother to appear at a son’s dinner is, if anything, worse. An essential piece of advice to every woman is: No matter how much you may want to say “How do you do” to your husband’s or your son’s friends—*don’t!*

Chapter XV.

Dinner-Giving with Limited Equipment

THE SERVICE PROBLEM

PEOPLE who live all the year in the country are not troubled with formal dinner giving, because (excepting on great estates) formality and the country do not go together.

For the one or two formal dinners which the average city dweller feels obliged to give every season, nothing is easier than to hire professionals; it is also economical, since nothing is wasted in experiment. A cook equal to the Gildings' chef can be had to come in and cook your dinner at about the price of two charwomen; skilled butlers or waitresses are to be had in all cities of any size at comparatively reasonable fees.

The real problem is in giving the innumerable casual and informal dinners for which professionals are not only expensive, but inappropriate. The problem of limited equipment would not present great difficulty if the tendency of the age were toward a slower pace, but the opposite is the case; no one wants to be kept waiting a second at table, and the world of fashion is growing more impatient and critical instead of less.

The service of a dinner can however be much simplified and shortened by choosing dishes that do not require accessories.

DISHES THAT HAVE ACCOMPANYING CONDIMENTS

Nothing so delays the service of a dinner as dishes that must immediately be followed by necessary accessories. If there is no one to help the butler or waitress, no dish must be included on the menu—unless you are only one or two at table, or unless your guests are neither critical nor "modern"—that is not complete in itself.

For instance, fish has nearly always an accompanying dish. Broiled fish, or fish meunière, has ice-cold cucumbers sliced as thin as Saratoga chips, with a very highly seasoned French dressing, or a mixture of cucumbers and tomatoes. Boiled fish always has mousseline, Hollandaise, mushroom or egg sauce, and round scooped boiled potatoes sprinkled with parsley. Fried fish must always be accompanied by tartar sauce and pieces of lemon, and a boiled fish even if covered with sauce

when served, is usually followed by additional sauce.

Many meats have condiments. Roast beef is never served at a dinner party—it is a family dish and generally has Yorkshire pudding or roast potatoes on the platter with the roast itself, and is followed by pickles or spiced fruit.

Turkey likewise, with its chestnut stuffing and accompanying cranberry sauce, is not a “company” dish, though excellent for an informal dinner. Saddle of mutton is a typical company dish—all mutton has currant jelly. Lamb has mint sauce—or mint jelly.

Partridge or guinea hen must have two sauce boats—presented on one tray—browned bread-crumbs in one, and cream sauce in the other.

Apple sauce goes with barnyard duck.

The best accompaniment to wild duck is the precisely timed 18 minutes in a quick oven! And celery salad, which goes with all game, need not be especially hurried.

Salad is always the accompaniment of “tame game,” aspics, cold meat dishes of all sorts, and is itself “accompanied by” crackers and cheese or cheese soufflé or cheese straws.

SPECIAL MENUS OF UNACCOMPANIED DISHES

One person can wait on eight people if dishes are chosen which need no supplements. The fewer the dishes to be passed, the fewer the hands needed to pass them. And yet many housekeepers thoughtlessly order dishes with in the list above, and then wonder why the dinner is so hopelessly slow, when their waitress is usually so good!

The following suggestions are merely offered in illustration; each housekeeper can easily devise further for herself. It is not necessary to pass anything whatever with melon or grapefruit, or a macédoine of fruit, or a canapé. Oysters, on the other hand, have to be followed by tabasco and buttered brown bread. Soup needs nothing with it (if you do not choose split pea which needs croutons, or petite marmite which needs grated cheese). Fish dishes which are “made” with sauce in the dish, such as sole au vin blanc, lobster Newburg, crab ravigote, fish mousse, especially if in a ring filled with plenty of sauce, do not need anything more. Tartar sauce for fried fish can be put in baskets made of hollowed-out lemon rind—a basket for each person—and used as a garnishing around the dish.

Filet mignon, or fillet of beef, both of them surrounded by little clumps of vegetables share with chicken casserole in being the life-savers of the hostess who has one waitress in her dining-room.

Another dish, but more appropriate to lunch than to dinner, is of French chops banked against mashed potatoes, or purée of chestnuts, and surrounded by string beans or peas. None of these dishes requires any following dish whatever, not even a vegetable.

Fried chicken with corn fritters on the platter is almost as good as the two beef dishes, since the one green vegetable which should go with it, can be served leisurely, because fried chicken is not quickly eaten. And a ring of aspic with salad in the center does not require accompanying crackers as immediately as plain lettuce.

Steak and broiled chicken are fairly practical since neither needs gravy, condiment, or sauce—especially if you have a divided vegetable dish so that two vegetables can be passed at the same time.

If a hostess chooses not necessarily the above dishes but others which approximately take their places, she need have no fear of a slow dinner, if her one butler or waitress is at all competent.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE PLAIN COOK

In giving informal or little dinners, you need never worry because you cannot set the dishes of a "professional" dinner-party cook before your friends or even strangers; so long as the food that you are offering is good of its kind.

It is by no means necessary that your cook should be able to make the "clear" soup that is one of the tests of the perfect cook (and practically never produced by any other); nor is it necessary that she be able to construct comestible mosaics and sculptures. The essential thing is to prevent her from attempting anything she can't do well. If she can make certain dishes that are pretty as well as good to taste, so much the better. But remember, the more pretentious a dish is, the more it challenges criticism.

If your cook can make neither clear nor cream soup, but can make a delicious clam chowder, better far to have a clam chowder! On no account let her attempt clear green turtle, which has about as good a chance to be perfect as a suprême of boned capon—in other words, none whatsoever! And the same way throughout dinner. Whichever dishes your own particular Nora or Selma or Marie can do best, those are the ones you must have for your dinners. Another thing: it is not important to have variety. Because you gave the Normans chicken casserole the last time they dined with you is no reason why you should not give it to them again—if that is the "specialty of the house" as the French say. A late, and greatly loved, hostess whose Sunday luncheons at a huge country house just outside of Washington were for years one of the outstanding features of Washington's smartest society, had the same lunch exactly, week after week, year after year. Those who went to her house knew just as well what the dishes would be as they did where the dining-room was situated. At her few enormous and formal dinners in town, her cook was allowed to be magnificently architectural, but if you dined with her alone, the chances were ten to one that the Sunday chicken and pancakes would appear before you.

DO NOT EXPERIMENT FOR STRANGERS

Typical dinner-party dishes are invariably the temptation no less than the downfall of ambitious ignorance. Never let an inexperienced cook *attempt a new dish* for company, no matter how attractive her description of it may sound. Try it yourself, or when you are having family or most intimate friends who will understand if it turns out all wrong that it is a "trial" dish. In fact, it is a very good idea to share the testing of it with some one who can help you in suggestions, if they are needed for its improvement. Or supposing you have a cook who is rather poor on all dinner dishes, but makes delicious bread and cake and waffles and oyster stew and creamed chicken, or even hash! You can make a specialty of asking people to "supper." Suppers are necessarily informal, but there is no objection in that. Formal parties play a very small rôle anyway compared to informal ones. There are no end of people, and the smartest ones at that, who entertain only in the most informal possible way. Mrs. Oldname gives at most two formal dinners a year; her typical dinners and suppers are for eight.

PROPER DISHING

The “dishing” is quite as important as the cooking; a smear or thumb-mark on the edge of a dish is like a spot on the front of a dress!

Water must not be allowed to collect at the bottom of a dish (that is why a folded napkin is always put under boiled fish and sometimes under asparagus). And dishes must be hot; they cannot be too hot! Meat juice that has started to crust is nauseating. Far better have food too hot to eat and let people take their time eating it than that others should suffer the disgust of cold victuals! Sending in cold food is one of the worst faults (next to not knowing how to cook) that a cook can have.

PROFESSIONAL OR HOME DINING ROOM SERVICE

Just as it is better to hire a professional dinner-party cook than to run the risk of attempting a formal dinner with your own Nora or Selma unless you are very sure she is adequate, in the same way it is better to have a professional waitress as captain over your own, or a professional butler over your own inexperienced one, than to have your meal served in spasms and long pauses. But if your waitress, assisted by the chambermaid, perfectly waits on six, you will find that they can very nicely manage ten, even with accompanied dishes.

BLUNDERS IN SERVICE

If an inexperienced servant blunders, you should pretend, if you can, not to know it. Never attract anyone’s attention to anything by apologizing or explaining, unless the accident happens to a guest. Under ordinary circumstances “least said, soonest mended” is the best policy.

If a servant blunders, it makes the situation much worse to take her to task, the cause being usually that she is nervous or ignorant. Speak, if it is necessary to direct her, very gently and as kindly as possible; your object being to restore confidence, not to increase the disorder. Beckon her to you and tell her as you might tell a child you were teaching: “Give Mrs. Smith a tablespoon, not a teaspoon.” Or, “You have forgotten the fork on that dish.” Never let her feel that you think her stupid, but encourage her as much as possible and when she does anything especially well, tell her so.

THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRAISE

Nearly all people are quick to censure but rather chary of praise. Admonish of course where you must, but censure only with justice, and don't forget that whether of high estate or humble, we all of us like praise—sometimes. When a guest tells you your dinner is the best he has ever eaten, remember that the cook cooked it, and tell her it was praised. Or if the dining-room service was silent and quick and perfect, then tell those who served it how well it was done. If you are entertaining all the time, you need not commend your household after every dinner you give, but if any especial willingness, attentiveness, or tact is shown, don't forget that a little praise is not only merest justice but is beyond the purse of no one.

Chapter XVI.

Luncheons, Breakfasts and Suppers

THE INVITATIONS

ALTHOUGH the engraved card is occasionally used for an elaborate luncheon, especially for one given in honor of a noted person, formal invitations to lunch in very fashionable houses are nearly always written in the first person, and rarely sent out more than a week in advance. For instance:

Dear Mrs. Kindhart (or Martha):

Will you lunch with me on Monday the tenth at half after one o'clock?

Hoping so much to see you,

Sincerely (or affectionately),
Jane Toplofty.

If the above lunch were given in honor of somebody—Mrs. Eminent, for instance—the phrase "to meet Mrs. Eminent" would have been added immediately after the word "o'clock." At a very large luncheon for which the engraved card might be used, "To meet Mrs. Eminent" would be written across the top of the card of invitation.

Informal invitations are telephoned nearly always.

Invitation to a stand-up luncheon (or breakfast; it is breakfast if the hour is twelve or half after, and lunch if at one, or one-thirty), is either telephoned or written on an ordinary visiting card:

Sat. Oct. 2.
Luncheon at 1 o'clock.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilding

GOLDEN HALL

If R.s.v.p. is added in the lower corner, the invitation should be answered, otherwise the hostess is obliged to guess how many to provide for.

Or, if the hostess prefers, a personal note is always courteous:

Dear Mrs. Neighbor:

We are having a stand-up luncheon on Saturday, October Second, at one o'clock, and hope that you and your husband and any guests who may be staying with you will come,

Very sincerely yours,
Alice Toplofty Gilding.

Golden Hall
Sept. 27.

A personal note always exacts a reply—which may however be telephoned, unless the invitation was worded in the formal third person. A written answer is more polite, if the hostess is somewhat of a stranger to you.

THE FORMAL LUNCHEON OF TO-DAY

Luncheon, being a daylight function, is never so formidable as a dinner, even though it may be every bit as formal and differ from the latter in minor details only. Luncheons are generally given by, and for, ladies, but it is not unusual, especially in summer places or in town on Saturday or Sunday,

to include an equal number of gentlemen.

But no matter how large or formal a luncheon may be, there is rarely a chauffeur on the sidewalk, or a carpet or an awning. The hostess, instead of receiving at the door, sits usually in the center of the room in some place that has an unobstructed approach from the door. Each guest coming into the room is preceded by the butler to within a short speaking distance of the hostess, where he announces the new arrival's name, and then stands aside. Where there is a waitress instead of a butler, guests greet the hostess unannounced. The hostess rises, or if standing takes a step forward, shakes hands, says "I'm so glad to see you," or "I am delighted to see you," or "How do you do!" She then waits for a second or two to see if the guest who has just come in speaks to anyone; if not, she makes the necessary introduction.

When the butler or waitress has "counted heads" and knows the guests have arrived, he or she enters the room, bows to the hostess and says, "Luncheon is served."

If there is a guest of honor, the hostess leads the way to the dining-room, walking beside her. Otherwise, the guests go in twos or threes, or even singly, just as they happen to come, except that the very young make way for their elders, and gentlemen stroll in with those they happen to be talking to, or, if alone, fill in the rear. The gentlemen *never* offer their arms to ladies in going in to a luncheon—unless there should be an elderly guest of honor, who might be taken in by the host, as at a dinner. But the others follow informally.

THE TABLE

Candles have no place on a lunch or breakfast table; and are used only where a dining-room is unfortunately without daylight. Also a plain damask tablecloth (which must always be put on top of a thick table felt) is correct for dinner but not for luncheon. The traditional lunch table is "bare"—which does not mean actually bare at all, but that it has a centerpiece, either round or rectangular or square, with place mats to match, made in literally unrestricted varieties of linen, needlework and lace. The centerpiece is anywhere from 30 inches to a yard and a half square, on a square or round table, and from half a yard to a yard wide by length in proportion to the length of a rectangular table. The place mats are round or square or rectangular to match, and are put at the places.

Or if the table is a refectory one, instead of centerpiece and doilies, the table is set with a runner not reaching to the edge at the side, but falling over both ends. Or there may be a tablecloth made to fit the top of the table to within an inch or two of its edge. Occasionally there is a real cloth that hangs over like a dinner cloth, but it always has lace or open-work and is made of fine linen so that the table shows through.

The decorations of the table are practically the same as for dinner: flowers, or a silver ornament or epergne in the center, and flower dishes or compotiers or patens filled with ornamental fruit or candy at the corners. If the table is very large and rather bare without candles, four vases or silver bowls of flowers, or ornamental figures are added.

If the center ornament is of porcelain, four porcelain figures to match have at least a logical reason for their presence, or a bisque “garden” set of vases and balustrades, with small flowers and vines

put in the vases to look as though they were growing, follows out the decoration. Most people, however, like a sparsely ornamented table.

The places are set as for dinner, with a place plate, three forks, two knives and a small spoon. The lunch napkin, which should match the table linen, is much smaller than the dinner napkin, and is not folded quite the same: it is folded like a handkerchief, in only four folds (four thicknesses). The square is laid on the place plate diagonally, with the monogrammed (or embroidered) corner pointing down toward the edge of the table. The upper corner is then turned sharply under in a flat crease for about a quarter of its diagonal length; then the two sides are rolled loosely under, making a sort of pillow effect laid sideways; with a straight top edge and a pointed lower edge, and the monogram displayed in the center.

Another feature of luncheon service, which is always omitted at dinner, is the bread and butter plate.

The Bread and Butter Plate

The butter plate has been entirely dispossessed by the bread and butter plate, which is part of the luncheon service always—as well as of breakfast and supper. It is a very small plate about five and a half to six and a half inches in diameter, and is put at the left side of each place just beyond the forks. Butter is sometimes put on the plate by the servant (as in a restaurant) but usually it is passed. Hot breads are an important feature of every luncheon; hot crescents, soda biscuits, bread biscuits, dinner rolls, or corn bread, the latter baked in small pans like pie plates four inches in diameter. Very thin bread that is roasted in the oven until it is curled and light brown (exactly like a large Saratoga chip), is often made for those who don't eat butter, and is also suitable for dinner. This "double-baked" bread, toast, and one or two of the above varieties, are all put in an old-fashioned silver cake-basket, or actual basket of wicker, and passed as often as necessary. Butter is also passed (or helped) throughout the meal until the table is cleared for dessert. Bread and butter plates are always removed with the salt and pepper pots.

THE SERVICE OF LUNCHEON

The service is identical with that of dinner. Carving is done in the kitchen and no food set on the table except ornamental dishes of fruit, candy and nuts. The plate service is also the same as at dinner. The places are never left plateless, excepting after salad, when the table is cleared and crumbed for dessert. The dessert plates and finger bowls are arranged as for dinner. Flowers are usually put in the finger bowls, a little spray of any sweet-scented flower, but "corsage bouquets" laid at the places with flower pins complete are in very bad taste.

THE LUNCHEON MENU

Five courses at most (not counting the passing of a dish of candy or after-dinner coffee as a course), or more usually four actual courses, are thought sufficient in the smartest houses. Not even at the Worldlys' or the Gildings' will you ever see a longer menu than:

1. Fruit, or soup in cups
2. Eggs
3. Meat and vegetables
4. Salad
5. Dessert

or

1. Fruit
2. Soup
3. Meat and vegetables

4. Salad
5. Dessert

or

1. Fruit
2. Soup
3. Eggs
4. Fowl or “tame” game with salad
5. Dessert

An informal lunch menu is seldom more than four courses and would eliminate either No. 1 or No. 2 or No. 5.

The most popular fruit course is a macédoine or mixture of fresh orange, grape fruit, malaga grapes, banana, and perhaps a peach or a little pineapple; in fact, any sort of fruit cut into very small pieces, with sugar and maraschino, or rum, for flavor—or nothing but sugar—served in special bowl-shaped glasses that fit into long-stemmed and much larger ones, with a space for crushed ice between; or it can just as well be put in champagne or any bowl-shaped glasses, after being kept as cold as possible in the ice-box until sent to the table.

If the first course is grape fruit, it is cut across in half, the sections cut free and all dividing skin and seeds taken out with a sharp vegetable knife, and sugar put in it and left standing for an hour or so. A slice of melon is served plain.

Soup at luncheon, or at a wedding breakfast or a ball supper, is never served in soup plates, but in two-handled cups, and is eaten with a teaspoon or a bouillon spoon. It is limited to a few varieties: either chicken, or clam broth, with a spoonful of whipped cream on top; or bouillon, or green turtle, or strained chicken, or tomato broth; or in summer, cold bouillon or broth.

Lunch party egg dishes must number a hundred varieties. (See any cook book!) Eggs that are substantial and “rich,” such as eggs Benedict, or stuffed with pâté de foie gras and a mushroom sauce, should then be “balanced” by a simple meat, such as broiled chicken and salad, combining meat and salad courses in one. On the other hand, should you have a light egg course, like “eggs surprise,” you could have meat and vegetables, and plain salad; or an elaborate salad and no dessert. Or with fruit and soup, omit eggs, especially if there is to be an aspic with salad.

The menu of an informal luncheon, if it does not leave out a course, at least chooses simpler dishes. A bouillon or broth, shirred eggs or an omelette; or scrambled eggs on toast which has first been spread with a pâté or meat purée; then chicken or a chop with vegetables, a salad of plain lettuce with crackers and cheese, and a pudding or pie or any other “family” dessert. Or broiled chicken, chicken croquettes, or an aspic, is served with the salad in very hot weather. While cold food is both appropriate and palatable, no meal should ever be chosen without at least one course of hot food. Many people dislike cold food, and it disagrees with others, but if you offer your guests soup, or even tea or chocolate, it would then do to have the rest of the meal cold.

LUNCHEON BEVERAGES

It is an American custom—especially in communities where the five o’clock tea habit is neither so strong nor so universal as in New York, for the lady of a house to have the tea set put before her at the table, not only when alone, but when having friends lunching informally with her, and to pour tea, coffee, or chocolate. And there is certainly not the slightest reason why, if she is used to these beverages and would feel their omission, she should not “pour out” what she chooses. In fact, although tea is never served hot at formal New York luncheons, iced tea is customary in all country houses in summer; and chocolate, not poured by the hostess, but brought in from the pantry and put down at the right of each plate, is by no means unusual at informal lunch parties.

Iced tea at lunch in summer is poured at the table by a servant from a glass pitcher, and is prepared like a “cup” with lemon and sugar, and sometimes with cut up fresh fruit and a little squeezed fruit juice. Plain cold tea may be passed in glasses, and lemon and sugar separately. At an informal luncheon, cold coffee, instead of tea, is passed around in a glass pitcher, on a tray that also holds a bowl of powdered sugar and a pitcher of cold milk, and another of as thick as possible cream. The guests pour their coffee to suit themselves into tall glasses half full of broken ice, and furnished with very long-handled spoons.

If tea or coffee or chocolate are not served during the meal, there is always a cup of some sort: grape or orange juice (in these days) with sugar and mint leaves, and ginger ale or carbonic water.

If dessert is a hot pudding or pastry, the “hotel service” of dessert plates should be used. The glass plate is particularly suitable for ice cream or any cold dessert, but is apt to crack if intensely hot food is put on it.

DETAILS OF ETIQUETTE AT LUNCHEONS

Gentlemen leave their coats, hats, sticks, in the hall; ladies leave heavy outer wraps in the hall, or dressing-room, but always go into the drawing-room with their hats and gloves on. They wear their fur neck pieces and carry their muffs in their hands, if they choose, or they leave them in the hall or dressing-room. But fashionable ladies *never* take off their hats. Even the hostess herself almost invariably wears a hat at a formal luncheon in her own house, though there is no reason why she should not be hatless if she prefers, or if she thinks she is prettier without! Guests, however, do not take off their hats at a lunch party even in the country. They take off their gloves at the table, or sooner if they choose, and either remove or turn up, their veils. The hostess does not wear gloves, ever. It is also very unsuitable for a hostess to wear a face veil in her own house, unless there is something the matter with her face, that must not be subjected to view! A hostess in a veil does not give her guests the impression of “veiled beauty,” but the contrary. Guests, on the other hand, may with perfect fitness keep their veils on throughout the meal, merely fastening the lower edge up over their noses. They must *not* allow a veil to hang loose, and carry food under and behind it, nor must they eat with gloves on. A veil kept persistently over the face, and gloves kept persistently over the hands, means one thing: Ugliness behind. So unless you have to—don’t!

The wearing of elaborate dresses at luncheons has gone entirely out of fashion; and yet one does once in a while see an occasional lady—rarely a New Yorker—who outshines a bird of paradise and a jeweler's window; but New York women of distinction wear rather simple clothes—simple meaning untrimmed, not inexpensive. Very conspicuous clothes are chosen either by the new rich, to assure themselves of their own elegance—which is utterly lacking—or by the muttons dressed lamb-fashion, to assure themselves of their own youth—which alas, is gone!

Gentlemen at luncheon in town on a Sunday wear cutaway coats; in other words, what they wear to church. On a Saturday, they wear their business suits, sack coat with either stiff or pleated-bosom shirts, and a starched collar. In the country, they wear country clothes.

WHAT THE SERVANTS WEAR

A butler wears his “morning” clothes; cutaway coat, gray striped trousers, high black waistcoat, black tie. A “hired waiter” wears a dress suit, but never a butler in a “smart” house; he does not put on his evening clothes until after six o’clock. In a smart house, the footmen wear their dress liveries, and a waitress and other maids wear their best uniforms.

THE GUESTS LEAVE

The usual lunch hour is half past one. By a quarter to three the last guest is invariably gone, unless, of course, it is a bridge luncheon, or for some other reason they are staying longer. From half an hour to three-quarters at the table, and from twenty minutes to half an hour’s conversation afterwards, means that by half past two (if lunch was prompt) guests begin leaving. Once in a while, especially at a mixed lunch where perhaps talented people are persuaded to become “entertainers” the audience stays on for hours! But such parties are so out of the usual that they have nothing to do with the ordinary procedure, which is to leave about twenty minutes after the end of the meal.

The details for leaving are also the same as for dinners. One lady rises and says good-by, the hostess rises and shakes hands and rings a bell (if necessary) for the servant to be in the hall to open the door. When one guest gets up to go, the others invariably follow. They say “Good-by” and “Thank you so much.”

Or, at a little luncheon, intimate friends often stay on indefinitely; but when lunching with an acquaintance one should never stay a moment longer than the other guests. The guest who sits on and on, unless earnestly pressed to do so, is wanting in tact and social sense. If a hostess invites a stranger who might by any chance prove a barnacle, she can provide for the contingency by instructing her butler or waitress to tell her when her car is at the door. She then says: “I had to have the car announced, because I have an appointment at the doctor’s. Do wait while I put on my things—I shall be only a moment! And I can take you wherever you want to go!” This expedient should not be used when a hostess has leisure to sit at home, but on the other hand, a guest should never create an awkward situation for her hostess by staying too long.

In the country where people live miles apart, they naturally stay somewhat longer than in town.

Or two or three intimate friends who perhaps (especially in the country) come to spend the day, are

not bound by rules of etiquette but by the rules of their own and their hostess' personal preference. They take off their hats or not as they choose, and they bring their sewing or knitting and sit all day, or they go out and play games, and in other ways behave as house-guests rather than visitors at luncheon. The only rule about such an informal gathering as this is, that no one should ever go and spend the day and make herself at home unless she is in the house of a really very intimate friend or relative, or unless she has been especially and specifically invited to do that very thing.

THE STAND-UP LUNCHEON

This is nothing more nor less than a buffet lunch. It is popular because it is a very informal and jolly sort of party—an indoor picnic really—and never attempted except among people who know each other well.

The food is all put on the dining table and every one helps himself. There is always bouillon or oyster stew or clam chowder. The most "informal" dishes are suitable for this sort of a meal, as for a picnic. There are two hot dishes and a salad, and a dessert which may be, but seldom is, ice cream.

Stand-up luncheons are very practical for hostesses who have medium sized houses, or when an elastic number of guests are expected at the time of a ball game, or other event that congregates a great many people.

A hunt breakfast is usually a stand-up luncheon. It is a "breakfast" by courtesy of half an hour in time. At twelve-thirty it is breakfast, at one o'clock it is lunch.

Regular weekly stand-up luncheons are given by hospitable people who have big places in the country and encourage their friends to drive over on some especial day when they are "at home"—Saturdays or Sundays generally—and intimate friends drop in uninvited, but always prepared for. On such occasions, luncheon is made a little more comfortable by providing innumerable individual tables to which people can carry the plates, glasses or cups and sit down in comfort.

SUPPERS

Supper is the most intimate meal there is, and since none but family or closest friends are ever included, invitations are invariably by word of mouth.

The atmosphere of a luncheon is often formal, but informal luncheons and suppers differ in nothing except day and evening lights, and clothes. Strangers are occasionally invited to informal luncheons, but only intimate friends are bidden to supper.

THE SUPPER TABLE

The table is set, as to places and napery, exactly like the lunch table, with the addition of candlesticks or candelabra as at dinner. Where supper differs from the usual lunch table is that in front of the hostess is a big silver tea-tray with full silver service for tea or cocoa or chocolate or breakfast coffee, most often chocolate or cocoa and either tea or coffee. At the host's end of the table there is perhaps a chafing dish—that is, if the host fancies himself a cook!

A number of people whose establishments are not very large, have very informal Sunday night suppers on their servants' Sundays out, and forage for themselves. The table is left set, a cold dish of something and salad are left in the icebox; the ingredients for one or two chafing dish specialties are also left ready. At supper time a member of the family, and possibly an intimate friend or two, carry the dishes to the table and make hot toast on a toaster.

This kind of supper is, in fact as well as spirit, an indoor picnic; thought to be the greatest fun by the Kindharts, but little appreciated by the Gildings, which brings it down, with so many other social customs, to a mere matter of personal taste.

Chapter XVII.

Balls and Dances

A BALL is the only social function in America to which such qualifying words as splendor and magnificence can with proper modesty of expression be applied. Even the most elaborate wedding is not quite “a scene of splendor and magnificence” no matter how luxurious the decorations or how costly the dress of the bride and bridesmaids, because the majority of the wedding guests do not complete the picture. A dinner may be lavish, a dance may be beautiful, but a ball alone is prodigal, meaning, of course, a private ball of greatest importance.

Dances, 1958 (ADa62-I.2)

On rare occasions, a great ball is given in a private house, but since few houses are big enough to provide dancing space for several hundred and sit-down supper space for a greater number still, besides smoking-room, dressing-room and sitting-about space, it would seem logical to describe a typical ball as taking place in the ballroom suite built for the purpose in nearly all hotels.

A HOSTESS PREPARES TO GIVE A BALL

The hostess who is not giving the ball in her own house goes first of all to see the manager of the hotel (or of whatever suitable assembly rooms there may be) and finds out which evenings are available. She then telephones—probably from the manager's office—and engages the two best orchestras for whichever evening both the orchestras and the ballroom are at her disposal. Of the two, music is of more importance than rooms. With perfect music the success of a ball is more than three-quarters assured; without it, the most beautiful decorations and most delicious supper are as flat as a fallen soufflé. You cannot give a ball or a dance that is anything but a dull promenade if you have dull music.

To illustrate the importance that prominent hostesses attach to music: a certain orchestra in New York to-day is forced to dash almost daily, not alone from party to party, but from city to city. Time and again its leader has conducted the music at a noon wedding in Philadelphia, and a ball in Boston; or a dancing tea in Providence and a ball that evening in New York; because Boston, Providence, New York and Philadelphia hostesses all at the present moment clamor for this one especial orchestra. The men have a little more respite than the leader since it is his "leading" that every one insists upon. Tomorrow another orchestra will probably make the daily tour of various cities' ballrooms.

At all balls, there must be two orchestras, so that each time one finishes playing the other begins. At very dignified private balls, dancers should not stand in the middle of the floor and clap as they do in a dance hall or cabaret if the music ends. On the other hand, the music should not end.

Having secured the music and engaged the ballroom, reception rooms, dressing-rooms and smoking-room, as well as the main restaurant (after it is closed to the public), the hostess next makes out her list and orders and sends out her invitations.

INVITATIONS

The fundamental difference between a ball and a dance is that people of all ages are asked to a ball, while only those of approximately one age are asked to a dance. Once in a while a ball is given to which the hostess invites every person on her visiting list. Mr. and Mrs. Titherington de Puyster give one every season, which although a credit to their intentions is seldom a credit to their sense of beauty!

Snobbish as it sounds and *is,* a brilliant ball is necessarily a collection of brilliantly fashionable people, and the hostess who gathers in all the oddly assorted frumps on the outskirts of society cannot expect to achieve a very distinguished result.

Ball invitations properly include all of the personal friends of the hostess no matter what their age, and all her better-known social acquaintances—meaning every one she would be likely to invite to a formal dinner. She does not usually invite a lady with whom she may work on a charitable committee, even though she may know her well, and like her. The question as to whether an outsider may be invited is not a matter of a hostess' own inclination so much as a question whether the "outsider" would be agreeable to all the "insiders" who are coming. If the co-worker is in everything a lady and a fitting ornament to society, the hostess might very possibly ask her.

If the ball to be given is for a débutante, all the débutantes whose mothers are on the "general visiting list" are asked as well as all young dancing men in these same families. In other words the children of all those whose names are on the general visiting list of a hostess are selected to receive invitations, but the parents on whose standing the daughters and sons are asked, are rarely invited.

When a List is Borrowed

A lady who has a débutante daughter, but who has not given any general parties for years—or ever, and whose daughter, having been away at boarding-school or abroad, has therefore very few acquaintances of her own, must necessarily in sending out invitations to a ball take the list of young girls and men from a friend or a member of her family. This of course could only be done by a

hostess whose position is unquestioned, but having had no occasion to keep a young people's list, she has not the least idea who the young people of the moment are, and takes a short-cut as above. Otherwise she would send invitations to children of ten and spinsters of forty, trusting to their being of suitable age.

To take a family or intimate friend's list is also important to the unaccustomed hostess, because to leave out any of the younger set who "belong" in the groups which are included, is not the way to make a party a success. Those who don't find their friends go home, or stay and are bored, and the whole party sags in consequence. So that if a hostess knows the parents personally of, let us say, eighty per cent. of young society, she can quite properly include the twenty per cent. she does not know, so that the hundred per cent. can come together. In a small community it is rather cruel to leave out any of the young people whose friends are all invited. In a very great city on the other hand, an habitual hostess does not ask any to her house whom she does not know, but she can of course be as generous as she chooses in allowing young people to have invitations for friends.

Asking for an Invitation to a Ball

It is always permissible to ask a hostess if you may "bring" a dancing man who is a stranger to her. It is rather difficult to ask for an invitation for an extra girl, and still more difficult to ask for older people, because the hostess has no ground on which she can refuse without being rude; she can't say there is no room since no dance is really limited, and least of all a ball. Men who dance are always an asset, and the more the better; but a strange young girl hung around the neck of the hostess is about as welcome as a fog at a garden party. If the girl is to be brought and "looked after" by the lady asking for the invitation—who has herself been already invited—that is another matter, and the hostess can not well object. Or if the young girl is the fiancée of the man whose mother asks for the invitation, that is all right too; since he will undoubtedly come with her and see that she is not left alone. Invitations for older people are never asked for unless they are rather distinguished strangers and unquestionably suitable.

Invitations are never asked for persons whom the hostess already knows, since if she had cared to invite them she would have done so. It is, however, not at all out of the way for an intimate friend to remind her of some one who in receiving no invitation has more than likely been overlooked. If the omission was intentional, nothing need be said; if it was an oversight, the hostess is very glad to repair her forgetfulness.

Invitations for Strangers

An invitation that has been asked for a stranger is sent direct and without comment. For instance, when the Greatlakes of Chicago came to New York for a few weeks, Mrs. Norman asked both Mrs. Worldly and Mrs. Gilding to send them invitations; one to a musicale and the other to a ball. The Greatlakes received these invitations without Mrs. Norman's card enclosed or any other word of explanation, as it was taken for granted that Mrs. Norman would tell the Greatlakes that it was through her that the invitations were sent. The Greatlakes said "Thank you very much for asking us" when they bid their hostess good night, and they also left their cards immediately on the Worldlys and Gildings after the parties—but it was also the duty of Mrs. Norman to thank both hostesses—verbally—for sending the invitations.

DECORATIONS

So far as good taste is concerned, the decorations for a ball cannot be too lavish or beautiful. To be sure they should not be lavish if one's purse is limited, but if one's purse is really limited, one should not give a ball! A small dance or a dancing tea would be more suitable.

Ball decorations have on occasions been literally astounding, but as a rule no elaboration is undertaken other than hanging greens and flowers over the edge of the gallery, if there is a gallery, banking palms in corners, and putting up sheaves of flowers or trailing vines wherever most effective.

In any event the hostess consults her florist, but if the decorations are to be very important, an architect or an artist is put in charge, with a florist under him.

THE BALL BEAUTIFUL

Certain sounds, perfumes, places, always bring associated pictures to mind: Restaurant suppers; Paris! Distinguished-looking audiences; London! The essence of charm in society; Rome! Beguiling and informal joyousness; San Francisco! Recklessness; Colorado Springs! The afternoon visit; Washington! Hectic and splendid gaiety; New York! Beautiful balls; Boston!

There are three reasons (probably more) why the balls in Boston have what can be described only

by the word “quality.” The word “elegance” before it was misused out of existence expressed it even better.

First: Best Society in Boston having kept its social walls intact, granting admission only to those of birth and breeding, has therefore preserved a quality of unmistakable cultivation. There are undoubtedly other cities, especially in the South, which have also kept their walls up and their traditions intact—but Boston has been the wise virgin as well, and has kept her lamp filled.

Second: Boston hostesses of position have never failed to demand of those who would remain on their lists, strict obedience to the tenets of ceremonies and dignified behavior; nor ceased themselves to cultivate something of the “grand manner” that should be the birthright of every thoroughbred lady and gentleman.

Third: Boston’s older ladies and gentlemen always dance at balls, and they neither rock around the floor, nor take their dancing violently. And the fact that older ladies of distinction dance with dignity, has an inevitable effect upon younger ones, so that at balls at least, dancing has not degenerated into gymnastics or contortions.

The extreme reverse of a “smart” Boston ball is one—no matter where—which has a roomful of people who deport themselves abominably, who greet each other by waving their arms aloft, who dance like Apaches or jiggling music-box figures, and who scarcely suggest an assemblage of even decent—let alone well-bred—people.

SUPPER

A sit-down supper that is served continuously for two or three hours, is the most elaborate ball supper. Next in importance is the sit-down supper at a set time. Third, the buffet supper which is served at dances but not at balls.

At the most fashionable New York balls, supper service begins at one and continues until three and people go when they feel like it. The restaurant is closed to the public at one o’clock; the entrance is then curtained or shut off from the rest of the hotel. The tables are decorated with flowers and the supper service opened for the ball guests. Guests sit where they please, either “making up a table,” or a man and his partner finding a place wherever there are two vacant chairs. At a private ball guests do not pay for anything or sign supper checks, or tip the waiter, since the restaurant is for the time being the private dining-room of the host and hostess.

At a sit-down supper at a set hour, the choice of menu is unlimited, but suppers are never as elaborate now as they used to be. Years ago few balls were given without terrapin, and a supper without champagne was as unheard of. In fact, champagne was the heaviest item of expenditure always. Decorations might be very limited, but champagne was as essential as music! Cotillion favors were also an important item which no longer exists; and champagne has gone its way with nectar, to the land of fable, so that if you eliminate elaborate decorations, ball-giving is not half the

expense it used to be.

FOR A SIT-DOWN SUPPER THAT IS CONTINUOUS

When the service of supper continues for several hours, it is necessary to select food that can be kept hot indefinitely without being spoiled. Birds or broiled chicken, which should be eaten the moment they are cooked, are therefore unsuitable. Dishes prepared in sauce keep best, such as lobster Newburg, sweetbreads and mushrooms, chicken à la King, or creamed oysters. Pâtés are satisfactory as the shells can be heated in a moment and hot creamed chicken or oysters poured in. Of course all cold dishes and salads can stand in the pantry or on a buffet table all evening.

The menu for supper at a ball is entirely a matter of the hostess' selection, but whether it is served at one time or continuously, the supper menu at an important ball includes:

1. Bouillon or green turtle (clear) in cups.
2. Lobster a la Newburg (or terrapin or oyster pâté or another hot dish of shell-fish or fowl).
3. A second choice hot dish of some sort, squab, chicken and peas (if supper is served at a special hour) or croquettes and peas if continuous.
4. Salad, which includes every variety known, with or without an aspic.
5. Individual ices, fancy cakes.
6. Black coffee in little cups.

Breakfast served at about four in the morning and consisting of scrambled eggs with sausages or bacon and breakfast coffee and rolls is an occasional custom at both dances and balls.

There is always an enormous glass bowl of punch or orangeade—sometimes two or three bowls each containing a different iced drink—in a room adjoining the ballroom. And in very cold climates it is the thoughtful custom of some hostesses to have a cup of hot chocolate or bouillon offered each departing guest. This is an especially welcome attention to those who have a long drive home.

A DANCE

A dance is merely a ball on a smaller scale, fewer people are asked to it and it has usually, but not necessarily, simpler decorations.

But the real difference is that invitations to balls always include older people—as many if not more than younger ones—whereas invitations to a dance for a débutante, for instance, include none but very young girls, young men and the merest handful of the hostess' most intimate friends.

Supper may equally be a simple buffet or an elaborate sit-down one, depending upon the size and type of the house.

Or a dance may equally well as a ball be given in the "banquet" or smaller ballroom of a hotel, or in the assembly or ballroom of a club.

A formal dance differs from an informal one merely in elaboration, and in whether the majority of those present are strangers to one another; a really informal dance is one to which only those who know one another well are invited.

DETAILS OF PREPARATION FOR A BALL OR DANCE IN A PRIVATE HOUSE

There is always an awning and a red carpet down the steps (or up), and a chauffeur to open the carriage doors and a policeman or detective to see that strangers do not walk uninvited into the house. If there is a great crush, there is a detective in the hall to “investigate” anyone who does not have himself announced to the hostess.

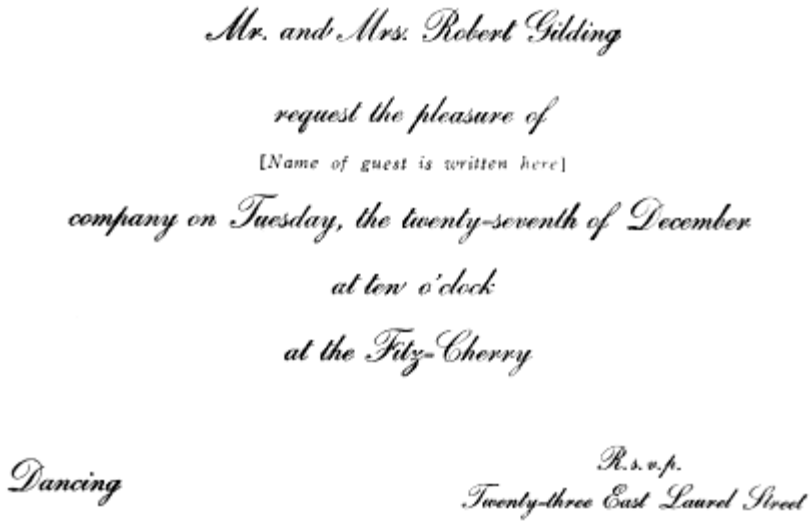
All the necessary appurtenances such as awning, red carpet, coat hanging racks, ballroom chairs, as well as crockery, glass, napkins, waiters and food are supplied by hotels or caterers. (Excepting in houses like the Gildings’, where footmen’s liveries are kept purposely, the caterer’s men are never in footmen’s liveries.)

Unless a house has a ballroom the room selected for dancing must have all the furniture moved out of it; and if there are adjoining rooms and the dancing room is not especially big, it adds considerably to the floor space to put no chairs around it. Those who dance seldom sit around a ballroom anyway, and the more informal grouping of chairs in the hall or library is a better arrangement than the wainscot row or wall-flower exposition grounds. The floor, it goes without saying, must be smooth and waxed, and no one should attempt to give a dance whose house is not big enough.

ETIQUETTE IN THE BALLROOM

New York’s invitations are usually for “ten o’clock” but first guests do not appear before ten-thirty and most people arrive at about eleven or after. The hostess, however, must be ready to receive on the stroke of the hour specified in her invitations, and the débutante or any one the ball may be given for, must also be with her.

It is not customary to put the débutante’s name on the formal “At Home” invitation, and it is even occasionally omitted on invitations that “request the pleasure of——” so that the only way acquaintances can know the ball is being given for the daughter is by seeing her standing beside her mother.



The hostess never leaves her post, wherever it is she is standing, until she goes to supper. If, as at the Ritz in New York, the ballroom opens on a foyer at the head of a stairway, the hostess always receives at this place. In a private house where guests go up in an elevator to the dressing rooms, and then walk down to the ballroom floor, the hostess receives either at the foot of the stairway, or just outside the ballroom.

THE HOSTESS AT A BALL

Guests arriving are announced, as at a dinner or afternoon tea, and after shaking hands with the hostess, they must pass on into the ballroom. It is not etiquette to linger beside the hostess for more than a moment, especially if later arrivals are being announced. A stranger ought never go to a ball alone, as the hostess is powerless to "look after" any especial guests; her duty being to stand in one precise place and receive. A stranger who is a particular friend of the hostess would be looked after by the host; but a stranger who is invited through another guest should be looked after by that other.

A gentleman who has received an invitation through a friend is usually accompanied by the friend who presents him. Otherwise when the butler announces him to the hostess, he bows, and says "Mrs. Norman asked you if I might come." And the hostess shakes hands and says "How do you do, I am very glad to see you." If other young men or any young girls are standing near, the hostess very likely introduces him. Otherwise, if he knows no one, he waits among the stags until his own particular sponsor appears.

After supper, when she is no longer receiving, the hostess is free to talk with her friends and give her attention to the roomful of young people who are actually in her charge.

When her guests leave she does not go back to where she received, but stands wherever she happens to be, shakes hands and says "Good night." There is one occasion when it is better not to bid one's hostess good night, and that is, if one finds her party dull and leaves again immediately; in this one case it is more polite to slip away so as to attract the least attention possible, but late in the evening it is inexcusably ill mannered not to find her and say "Good night" and "Thank you."

The duty of seeing that guests are looked after, that shy youths are presented to partners, that shyer girls are not left on the far wall-flower outposts, that the dowagers are taken in to supper, and that the elderly gentlemen are provided with good cigars in the smoking-room, falls to the host and his son or son-in-law, or any other near male member of the family.

MASQUERADE VOUCHERS

Vouchers or tickets of admission like those sent with invitations to assembly or public balls should be enclosed in invitations to a masquerade; it would be too easy otherwise for dishonest or other

undesirable persons to gain admittance. If vouchers are not sent with the invitations, or better yet, mailed afterwards to all those who have accepted, it is necessary that the hostess receive her guests singly in a small private room and request each to unmask before her.

HOW TO WALK ACROSS A BALLROOM

If you analyze the precepts laid down by etiquette you will find that for each there is a perfectly good reason. Years ago a lady never walked across a ballroom floor without the support of a gentleman's arm, which was much easier than walking alone across a very slippery surface in high-heeled slippers. When the late Ward McAllister classified New York society as having four hundred people who were "at ease in a ballroom," he indicated that the ballroom was the test of the best manners. He also said at a dinner—after his book was published and the country had already made New York's "Four Hundred" a theme for cartoons and jests—that among the "Four hundred who were at ease," not more than ten could gracefully cross a ballroom floor alone. If his ghost is haunting the ballrooms of our time, it is certain the number is still further reduced. The athletic young woman of to-day strides across the ballroom floor as though she were on the golf course; the happy-go-lucky one ambles—shoulders stooped, arms swinging, hips and head in advance of chest; others trot, others shuffle, others make a rush for it. The young girl who could walk across a room with the consummate grace of Mrs. Oldname (who as a girl of eighteen was one of Mr. McAllister's ten) would have to be very assiduously sought for.

How does Mrs. Oldname walk? One might answer by describing how Pavlowa dances. Her body is perfectly balanced, she holds herself straight, and yet in nothing suggests a ramrod. She takes steps of medium length, and, like all people who move and dance well, walks from the hip, not the knee. On no account does she swing her arms, nor does she rest a hand on her hip! Nor when walking, does she wave her hands about in gesticulation.

Some one asked her if she had ever been *taught* to cross a ballroom floor. As a matter of fact, she had. Her grandmother, who was a Toplofty, made all her grandchildren walk daily across a polished floor with sand-bags on their heads. And the old lady directed the drill herself. No shuffling of feet and no stamping, either; no waggling of hips, no swinging of arms, and not a shoulder stooped. Furthermore, they were taught to enter a room and to sit for an indefinite period in self-effacing

silence while their elders were talking.

Older gentlemen still give their arms to older ladies in all “promenading” at a ball, since the customs of a lifetime are not broken by one short and modern generation. Those of to-day walk side by side, except in going down to supper when supper is at a set hour.

At public balls when there is a grand march, ladies take gentlemen’s arms.

DISTINCTION VANISHED WITH COTILLION

The glittering display of tinsel satin favors that used to be the featured and gayest decoration of every ballroom, is gone; the cotillion leader, his hands full of “seat checks,” his manners a cross between those of Lord Chesterfield and a traffic policeman, is gone; and much of the distinction that used to be characteristic of the ballroom is gone with the cotillion. There is no question that a cotillion was prettier to look at than a mob scene of dancers crowding each other for every few inches of progress.

The reason why cotillions were conducive to good manners was that people were on exhibition, where now they are unnoticed components of a general crowd. When only a sixth, at most, of those in the room danced while others had nothing to do but watch them, it was only natural that those “on exhibition” should dance as well as they possibly could, and since their walking across the room and asking others to dance by “offering a favor” was also watched, grace of deportment and correct manners were not likely to deteriorate, either.

The cotillion was detested and finally banned by the majority who wanted to dance ceaselessly throughout the evening. But it was of particular advantage to the very young girl who did not know many men, as well as to what might be called the helpless type. Each young girl, if she had a partner, had a place where she belonged and where she sat throughout the evening. And since no couple could dance longer than the few moments allowed by the “figure,” there was no chance of anyone’s being “stuck”; so that the average girl had a better chance of being asked to dance than now—when, without programmes, and without cotillions, there is nothing to relieve the permanency of a young man’s attachment to an unknown young girl once he asks her to dance.

THE ORDEAL BY BALLROOM

Instead of being easier, it would seem that time makes it increasingly difficult for any but distinct

successes to survive the ordeal by ballroom. Years ago a débutante was supposed to flutter into society in the shadow of mamma's protecting amplitude; to-day she is packed off by herself and with nothing to relieve her dependence upon whoever may come near her. To liken a charming young girl in the prettiest of frocks to a spider is not very courteous; and yet the rôle of spider is what she is forced by the exigencies of ballroom etiquette to play. She *must* catch a fly, meaning a trousered companion, so as not to be left in placarded disgrace; and having caught him she must hang on to him until another takes his place.

There should be drastic revision of ballroom customs. There is a desperate need of what in local dancing classes was called the "Dump," where without rudeness a gentleman could leave a lady as soon as they had finished dancing.

There used to be a chaperon into whose care a young girl could be committed; there used to be the "dance card" or programme (still in vogue at public balls) that allotted a certain dance to a certain gentleman and lady equally. There used to be the cotillion which, while cruel, at least committed its acts of cruelty with merciful dispatch. When the cotillion began, the girl who had no partner—went home. She had to. Now, once she has acquired a companion, he is planted beside her until another takes his place. It is this fact and no other which is responsible for the dread that the average young girl feels in facing the ordeal of a ballroom, and for the discourteous unconcern shown by dancing men who under other conditions would be friendly.

The situation of a young girl, left cruelly alone, draws its own picture, but the reason for the callous and ill-mannered behavior of the average dancing man, may perhaps need a word of explanation.

For instance: Jim Smartlington, when he was a senior at college, came down to the Toploftys' ball on purpose to see Mary Smith. Very early, before Mary arrived, he saw a Miss Blank, a girl he had met at a dinner in Providence, standing at the entrance of the room. Following a casual impulse of friendliness he asked her to dance. She danced badly. No one "cut in" and they danced and danced, sat down and danced again. Mary arrived. Jim walked Miss Blank near the "stag" line and introduced several men, who bowed and slid out of sight with the dexterity of eels who recognized a hook. From half-past ten until supper at half-past one, Jim was "planted." He was then forced to tell her he had a partner for supper, and left her at the door of the dressing-room. There was no other place to "leave her." He felt like a brute and a cad, even though he had waited nearly three hours before being able to speak to the girl he had come purposely to see.

There really is something to be said on the man's side; especially on that of one who has to get up early in the morning and who, only intending to see one or two particular friends and then go home, is forced because of an impulse of courtesy not only to spend an endless and exhausting evening, but to be utterly unfit for his work next day.

One is equally sorry for the girl! But in the example above her stupid handling of the situation not only spoiled one well-intentioned man's evening, but completely "finished" herself so far as her future chances for success were concerned. Not alone her partner but every brother-stag who stood in the doorway mentally placarded her "Keep off." It is suicidal for a girl to make any man spend an entire evening with her. If at the end of two dances, there is no intimate friend she can signal to, or an older lady she can insist on being left with, she should go home; and if the same thing happens several times, she should not go to balls.

For the reasons given above, there is little that a hostess or host can do, unless a promise of "release" is held out, and that in itself is a deplorable situation; a humiliation that no young girl's name should be submitted to. And yet there it is! It is only necessary for a hostess to say "I want to introduce you to a charming——" And she is already speaking to the air.

Boston hostesses solve the problem of a young girl's success in a ballroom in a way unknown in New York, by having ushers.

USHERS

Each hostess chooses from among the best known young men in society, who have perfect address and tact, a number to act as ushers. They are distinguished by white boutonnières, like those worn by ushers at a wedding, and they are deputy hosts. It is their duty to see that wall-flowers are not left decorating the seats in the ballroom and it is also their duty to relieve a partner who has

too long been planted beside the same “rosebud.”

The ushers themselves have little chance to follow their own inclinations, and unless the “honor” of being chosen by a prominent hostess has some measure of compensation, the appointment—since it may not be refused—is a doubtful pleasure. An usher has the right to introduce anyone to anyone without knowing either principal personally and without asking any lady’s permission. He may also ask a lady (if he has a moment to himself) to dance with him, whether he has ever met her or not, and he can also leave her promptly, because any “stag” called upon by an usher must dance. The usher in turn must release every “stag” he calls upon by substituting another; and the second by a third and so on. In order to make a ball “go,” meaning to keep everyone dancing, the ushers have on occasions to spend the entire evening in relief work.

At a ball where there are ushers, a girl standing or sitting alone would at once be rescued by one of them, and a rotation of partners presented to her. If she is “hopeless”—meaning neither pretty nor attractive nor a good dancer—even the ushers are in time forced to relieve her partners and take her to a dowager friend of the hostess, beside whom she will be obliged to sit until she learns that she must seek her popularity otherwhere than at balls.

On the other hand, on an occasion when none of her friends happen to be present, the greatest belle of the year can spend an equally deadly evening.

THE DANCE PROGRAM

The program or dance-card of public balls and college class dances, has undeniable advantages. A girl can give as many dances as she chooses to whomever she chooses; and a man can be sure of having not only many but uninterrupted dances with the one he most wants to be with—provided “she” is willing. Why the dance-card is unheard of at private balls in New York is hard to determine, except that fashionable society does not care to take its pleasure on schedule! The gilded youth likes to dance when the impulse moves him; he also likes to be able to stay or leave when he pleases. In New York there are often two or three dances given on the same evening, and he likes to drift from one to the other just as he likes to drift from one partner to another, or not dance at all if he does not want to. A man who writes himself down for the tenth jazz must be eagerly appearing on the stroke of the first bar. Or if he does not engage his partners busily at the opening of the evening, he can not dance at all—he may not want to, but he hates not being able to.

So again we come back to the present situation and the problem of the average young girl whose right it is, because of her youth and sweetness, to be happy and young—and not to be terrified, wretched and neglected. The one and only solution seems to be for her to join a group.

THE FLOCK-SYSTEM OF THE WISE FLEDGLINGS

If a number of young girls and young men come together—better yet, if they go everywhere together, always sit in a flock, always go to supper together, always dance with one another—they not only have a good time but they are sure to be popular with drifting odd men also. If a man knows that having asked a girl to dance, one of her group will inevitably “cut in,” he is eager to dance with her. Or if he can take her “to the others” when they have danced long enough, he is not only delighted to be with her for a while but to sit with her “and the others” off and on throughout that and every other evening, because since there are always “some of them together” he can go again the moment he chooses.

Certain groups of clever girls sit in precisely the same place in a ballroom, to the right of the door, or the left, or in a corner. One might almost say they form a little club; they dance as much as they like, but come back “home” between whiles. They all go to supper together, and whether individuals have partners or not is scarcely noticeable, nor even known by themselves.

No young girl, unless she is a marked favorite, should ever go to a ball alone. If her especial “flock” has not as yet been systematized, she must go to a dinner before every dance, so as to go, and stay, with a group. If she is not asked to dinner, her mother must give one for her; or she must have at least one dependable beau—or better, two—who will wait for her and look out for her.

MAID GOES WITH HER

A young girl who goes to a ball without a chaperon (meaning of course a private ball), takes a maid with her who sits in the dressing-room the entire evening. Not only is it thought proper to have a maid waiting, but nothing can add more to the panic of a partnerless girl than to feel she has not even a means of escape by going home; she can always call a taxi as long as her maid is with her,

and go. Otherwise she either has to stay in the ballroom or sit forlorn among the visiting maids in the dressing-room.

Maid waiting outside the dressing room

WHAT MAKES A YOUNG GIRL A BALLROOM SUCCESS

Much of the above is so pessimistic one might suppose that a ballroom is always a chamber of torture and the young girl taken as an example above, a very drab and distorted caricature of what “a real young girl” should be and is. But remember, the young girl who is a “belle of the ballroom” needs no advice on how to manage a happy situation; no thought spent on how to make a perfect time better. The ballroom is the most wonderful stage-setting there is for the girl who is a ballroom success. And for this, especial talents are needed just as they are for art or sport or any other accomplishment.

The great ballroom success, first and foremost, dances well. Almost always she is pretty. Beauty counts enormously at a ball. The girl who is beautiful and dances well is, of course, the ideal ballroom belle. But—this for encouragement—these qualities can in a measure at least be acquired. All things being more or less equal, the girl who dances best has the most partners. Let a daughter of Venus or the heiress of Midas dance badly, and she might better stay at home.

To dance divinely is an immortal gift, but to dance well can (except in obstinate cases, as the advertisements say) be taught. Let us suppose therefore, that she dances well, that she has a certain degree of looks, that she is fairly intelligent. The next most important thing, after dancing well, is to be unafraid, and to look as though she were having a good time. Conversational cleverness is of no account in a ballroom; some of the greatest belles ever known have been as stupid as sheep, but they have had happy dispositions and charming and un-self-conscious manners. There is one thing every girl who would really be popular should learn, in fact, she must learn—self-unconsciousness! The best advice might be to follow somewhat the precepts of mental science and make herself believe that a good time exists in her own mind. If she can become possessed with the idea that she is having a good time and look as though she were, the psychological effect is astonishing.

“CUTTING IN”

When one of the “stags” standing in the doorway sees a girl dance past whom he wants to dance with, he darts forward, lays his hand on the shoulder of her partner, who relinquishes his place in favor of the newcomer, and a third in turn does the same to him. Or, the one who was first dancing with her, may “cut in on” the partner who took her from him, after she has danced once around the ballroom. This seemingly far from polite maneuver, is considered correct behavior in best society in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Chicago, San Francisco, and therefore most likely in all parts of America. (Not in London, nor on the Continent.)

At dances organized during the War in the canteens for soldiers and sailors on furlough, the men refused to “cut in” because they thought it was rude and undoubtedly it is, except that custom has made it acceptable. If, however, it still seems “rude” to the young men of Othertown to “cut in,” then they should not do so.

SITTING OUT DANCES

On the other hand, if a girl is sitting in another room, or on the stairs with a man alone, a second one should not interrupt, or ask her to dance. If she is sitting in a group, he can go up and ask her, “Don’t you want to dance some of this?” She then either smiles and says, “Not just now—I am very tired,” or if she likes him, she may add, “Come and sit with us!”

To refuse to dance with one man and then immediately dance with another is an open affront to the first one—excusable only if he was intoxicated or otherwise actually offensive so that the affront was both intentional and justifiable. But under ordinary circumstances, if she is “dancing,” she must dance with everyone who asks her; if she is “not dancing,” she must not make exceptions.

An older lady can very properly refuse to dance and then perhaps dance briefly with her son or husband, without hurting her guest’s proper pride, but having refused to dance with one gentleman she must not change her mind and dance later with another.

A young girl who is dancing may not refuse to change partners when another “cuts in.” This is the worst phase of the “cutting in” custom; those who particularly want to dance together are often unable to take more than a dozen steps before being interrupted. Once in a while a girl will shake her head “No” to a “stag” who darts toward her. But that is considered rude. A few others have devised dancing with their eyes shut as a signal that they do not want to be “cut in on.” But this is neither customary nor even a generally known practise.

It is always the privilege of the girl to stop dancing; a man is supposed to dance on and on, until she—or the music—stops.

ASKING FOR A DANCE

When a gentleman is introduced to a lady he says, “May I have some of this?” or “Would you care to dance?”

A lady never asks a gentleman to dance, or to go to supper with her, though she may if she is older, or if she is a young girl who is one of a “flock,” she may say “Come and sit at our table!” This however would not imply that in sitting at “their” table he is supposed to sit next to her.

In asking a lady to go to supper, a gentleman should say “Will you go to supper with me?” Or “May I take you to supper?” He should never say, “Have you a partner?” as she is put in an awkward position in having to admit that she has none.

A BALL IS NOT A DANCING SCHOOL

Since a girl may not without rudeness refuse to dance with a man who “cuts in,” a man who does not know how to dance is inexcusably inconsiderate if he “cuts in” on a good dancer and compels a young girl to become instructress for his own pleasure with utter disregard of hers. If at home, or elsewhere, a young girl volunteers to “teach” him, that is another matter, but even so, the ballroom is

no place to practise—unless he is very sure that his dancing is not so bad as to be an imposition on his teacher.

NOVELTIES AND INNOVATIONS

Formal occasions demand strict conventions. At an important wedding, at a dinner of ceremony, at a ball, it is not only bad form but shocking to deviate from accepted standards of formality. “Surprize” is an element that must be avoided on all dignified occasions. Those therefore, who think it would be original and pleasing to spring surprizes on their guests at an otherwise conventional and formal entertainment, should save their ideas for a children’s party where surprizes not only belong, but are delightedly appreciated. To be sure, one might perhaps consider that scenic effects or unusual diversions, such as one sees at a costume ball or a “period” dinner, belong under the head of “surprize.” But in the first place such entertainments are not conventional; and in the second, details that are in accordance with the period or design of the ball or dinner are “conventions” after all.

On the other hand, in the country especially, nothing can be more fun or more appropriate than a barn dance, or an impromptu play, or a calico masquerade, with properties and clothes made of any old thing and in a few hours—even in a few minutes.

Music need not be an orchestra but it must be *good,* and the floor must be adequate and smooth. The supper is of secondary importance. As for manners, even though they may be “unrestrained,” they can be meticulously perfect for all that! There is no more excuse for rude or careless or selfish behavior at a picnic than at a ball.

PUBLIC BALLS

A public ball is a ball given for a benefit or charity. A committee makes the arrangements and tickets are sold to the public, either by being put on sale at hotels or at the house of the secretary of the committee. A young girl of social position does not go to a public ball without a chaperon. To go in the company of one or more gentlemen would be an unheard-of breach of propriety.

SUBSCRIPTION DANCES AND BALLS

These are often of greater importance in a community than any number of its private balls. In Boston and Philadelphia for instance, a person’s social standing is dependent upon whether or not she or he is “invited to the Assemblies.” The same was once true in New York when the Patriarch and Assembly Balls were the dominating entertainments. In Baltimore too, a man’s social standing is non-existent if he does not belong to the “Monday Germans,” and in many other cities membership in the subscription dances or dancing classes or sewing circles distinctly draws the line between the inside somebodies and the outside nobodies.

Subscription dances such as these are managed and all invitations are issued by patronesses who are always ladies of unquestioned social prominence. Usually these patronesses are elected for life, or at least for a long period of years. When for one reason or another a vacancy occurs, a new member is elected by the others to fill her place. No outsider may ever ask to become a member. Usually a number of names are suggested and voted on at a meeting, and whoever wins the highest number of votes is elected.

The expenses of balls such as Assemblies, are borne by the patronesses collectively, but other

types of dances are paid for by subscribers who are invited to “take tickets”—as will be explained.

How Subscription Dances Are Organized

Whether in city, town or village, the organization is the same: A small group of important ladies decide that it would be agreeable to have two or three balls—or maybe only one—a season. This original group then suggests additional names until they have all agreed upon a list sufficient in size to form a nucleus. These then are invited to join, and all of them at another meeting decide on the final size of the list and whom it is to include. The list may be a hundred, or it may stay at the original group of a half dozen or so. Let us for example say the complete list is fifty. Fifty ladies, therefore, the most prominent possible, are the patronesses or managers, or whatever they choose to call themselves. They also elect a chairman, a vice-chairman, a secretary, and a treasurer. They then elect seven or eight others who are to constitute the managing committee. The other thirty-eight or forty are merely “members” who will pay their dues and have the right to a certain number of tickets for each of the balls. These tickets, by the way, are never actually sent by the members themselves, who merely submit the names of the guests they have chosen to the committee on invitations. This is the only practical way to avoid duplication. Otherwise, let us say that Mrs. Oldname, Mrs. Worldly, Mrs. Norman and Mrs. Gilding each send their two tickets to the young Smartlingtons, which would mean that the Smartlingtons would have to return three, and those three invitations would start off on a second journey perhaps to be returned again.

On the other hand, if each patroness sends in a list, the top names which have not yet been entered in the “invitation book” are automatically selected, and the committee notify her to whom her invitations went.

There is also another very important reason for the sending in of every name to the committee: exclusiveness. Otherwise the balls would all too easily deteriorate into the character of public ones. Every name must be approved by the committee on invitations, who always hold a special meeting for the purpose, so that no matter how willing a certain careless member would be to include Mr. and Mrs. Unsuitable, she is powerless to send them tickets if they are not approved of.

As a matter of fact there is rarely any question of witholding invitations, since a serious objection would have to be sustained against one to warrant such an action on the part of the committee.

Number of Invitations Issued

With fifty members, each might perhaps be allowed, besides her own ticket, two ladies’ invitations and four gentlemen’s. That would make three hundred and fifty invitations available altogether. The founders can of course decide on whatever number they choose. Patronesses can also exchange tickets. One who might want to ask a double number of guests to the “First Assembly” can arrange with another to exchange her “Second Assembly” invitations for “First” ones. Also it often happens that the entire list sent in by a member has already been included, and not wanting to use her tickets, she gives them to another member who may have a débutante daughter and therefore be in need of extra ones.

Bachelor Balls (like the “Monday Germans” of Baltimore) are run by the gentlemen instead of the ladies. Otherwise they are the same as the Assemblies.

Other Forms of Subscription Dances

Other forms are somewhat different in that instead of dividing the expenses between members who jointly issue invitations to few or many guests, the committee of ten, we will say, invites either all the men who are supposed to be eligible or all the young girls, to subscribe to a certain number of tickets.

For instance, dances known usually as Junior Assemblies or the Holiday Dances are organized by a group of ladies—the mothers, usually, of débutantes. The members of the organization are elected just as the others are, for life. But they are apt after a few years, when their daughters are “too old,” to resign in favor of others whose daughters are beginning to be grown. The débutantes of highest

social position are invited to become members. Each one pays “dues” and has the privilege of asking two men to each dance. Mothers are not expected to go to these dances unless they are themselves patronesses. Sometimes young women go to these dances until they marry; often they are for débutantes, but most often they are for girls the year before they “come out,” and for boys who are in college.

Patronesses Receive

At a subscription dance where patronesses take the place of a hostess, about four of these ladies are especially selected by the ball committee to receive. They always stand in line and bow to each person who is announced, but do not shake hands. The guest arriving also bows to the hostesses collectively (not four times). A lady, for instance, is announced: she takes a few steps toward the “receiving line” and makes a slight courtesy; the ladies receiving make a courtesy in unison, and the guest passes on. A gentleman bows ceremoniously, the way he was taught in dancing school, and the ladies receiving incline their heads.

Chapter XVIII.
The Débutante

HOW A YOUNG GIRL IS PRESENTED TO SOCIETY

ANY one of various entertainments may be given to present a young girl to society. The favorite and most elaborate of these, but possible only to parents of considerable wealth and wide social acquaintance, is a ball. Much less elaborate, but equal in size, and second in favor to-day, is an afternoon tea with dancing. Third, and gaining in popularity, is a small dance, which presents the débutante to the younger set and a few of her mother's intimate friends. Fourth, is a small tea without music. Fifth, the mere sending out of the mother's visiting card with the daughter's name engraved below her own, announces to the world that the daughter is eligible for invitations.

A BALL FOR A DÉBUTANTE

A ball for a débutante differs in nothing from all other balls excepting that the débutante "receives" standing beside the hostess, and furthest from the entrance, whether that happens to be on the latter's right or left. The guests as they mount the stairs or enter the ballroom and are "announced," approach the hostess first, who, as she shakes hands with each, turns to the débutante and says "Mrs. Worldly, my daughter." Or "Cynthia, I want to present you to Mrs. Worldly." ("Want to" is used on this occasion because "may I" is too formal for a mother to say to her child.) A friend would probably know the daughter; in any event the mother's introduction would be, "You remember Cynthia, don't you?"

Each arriving guest always shakes hands with the débutante as well as with the hostess, and if there is a queue of people coming at the same time, there is no need of saying anything beyond “How do you do?” and passing on as quickly as possible. If there are no others entering at the moment, each guest makes a few pleasant remarks. A stranger, for instance, would perhaps comment on how lovely, and many, the débutante’s bouquets are, or express a hope that she will enjoy her winter, or talk for a moment or two about the “gaiety of the season” or “the lack of balls,” or anything that shows polite interest in the young girl’s first glimpse of society. A friend of her mother might perhaps say “You look too lovely, Cynthia dear, and your dress is enchanting!”

Personal compliments, however, are proper only from a close friend. No acquaintance, unless she is quite old, should ever make personal remarks. An old lady or gentleman might very forgivably say “You don’t mind, my dear, if I tell you how sweet I think you look,” or “What a pretty frock you have on.” But it is bad taste for a young woman to say to another “What a handsome dress you have on!” and worst of all to add “Where did you get it?” The young girl’s particular friends are, of course, apt to tell her that her dress is wonderful, or more likely, “simply divine.”

It is customary in most cities to send a débutante a bouquet at her “coming out” party. They may be “bouquets” really, or baskets, or other decorative flowers, and are sent by relatives, friends of the family, her father’s business associates, as well as by young men admirers. These “bouquets” are always banked near and if possible, around the place the débutante stands to receive. If she has great quantities, they are placed about the room wherever they look most effective. The débutante usually holds one of the bouquets while receiving, but she should remember that her choice of this particular one among the many sent her is somewhat pointed to the giver, so that unless she is willing to acknowledge one particular beau as “best” it is wiser to carry one sent by her father, or brother, especially if either send her one of the tiny 1830 bouquets that have been for a year or two in fashion, and are no weight to hold.

These bouquets are about as big around as an ordinary saucer, and just as flat on top as a saucer placed upside down. The flowers chosen are rosebuds or other compact flowers, massed tightly together, and arranged in a precise pattern; for instance, three or four pink rosebuds are put in the center, around them a row of white violets, around these a single row of the pink roses, surrounded again by violets, and so on for four or five rows. The bouquet is then set in stiff white lace paper,

manufactured for the purpose, the stems wrapped in white satin ribbon, with streamers of white and pink ribbons about a quarter of an inch wide and tied to hang twenty inches or so long. The colors and patterns in which these little bouquets may be made are unlimited.

THE DÉBUTANTE RECEIVES

At a ball, where the guests begin coming about half past ten, the débutante must stand beside the hostess and "receive" until at least twelve o'clock—later if guests still continue to arrive.

At all coming-out parties, the débutante invites a few of her best girl friends to receive with her. Whether the party is in the afternoon or evening, these young girls wear evening dresses and come early and stay late. Their being asked to "receive" is a form of expression merely, as they never stand in line, and other than wearing pretty clothes and thus adding to the picture, they have no "duties" whatsoever.

AT SUPPER

The débutante goes to supper with a partner who has surely spoken for the privilege weeks or even months beforehand. But the rest of her own table is always made up by herself; that is, it includes the young girls who are her most intimate friends, and their supper partners. Her table is usually in the center of the dining-room, but there is no especial decoration to distinguish it, except that it is often somewhat larger than the other tables surrounding it, and a footman or waiter is detailed to tell any who may attempt to take it, that it is "reserved."

After supper the débutante has no duties and is free to enjoy herself.

The afternoon tea with dancing is described in the chapter on Teas and needs no further comment, since its etiquette is precisely the same as that for a ball. The débutante's bouquets are arranged as effectively as possible, and she receives with her mother, or whoever the hostess may be, until the queue of arriving guests thins out, after which she need be occupied with nothing but her own good time, and that of her friends.

Those of smaller means, or those who object to hotel rooms, ask only younger people, and give the tea in their own house. Where there are two rooms on a floor—drawing-room in front, dining-room back, and a library on the floor above, the guests are received in the drawing-room, but whether they dance in the dining-room or up in the library, depends upon which room is the larger. In either case the furniture is moved out. If possible the smallest room should be used to receive in, the largest to dance in, and the tea-table should be set in the medium one.

HOW MANY GUESTS MAY ONE ASK?

A hostess should never try to pack her house beyond the limits of its capacity. This question of how many invitations may safely be sent out is one which each hostess must answer for herself, since beyond a few obvious generalities no one can very well advise her.

Taking a hostess of "average" social position, who is bringing out a daughter of "average" attractiveness and popularity, it would be safe to say that every débutante and younger man asked to a party of any kind where there is dancing, will accept, but that not more than from half to one-third of the older people asked will put in an appearance.

LAVISH PARTIES GIVING WAY TO SIMPLE ONES

A ball, by the way, is always a general entertainment, meaning that invitations are sent to the entire dinner list—not only actual but potential—of the host and hostess, as well as to the younger people who are either themselves friends of the débutante, or daughters and sons of the friends and acquaintances of the hostess.

A dance differs from a ball in that it is smaller, less elaborate and its invitations are limited to the contemporaries of the débutante, or at most the youngest married set.

Invitations to a tea are even more general and should include a hostess' entire visiting list,

irrespective of age or even personal acquaintance. The old-fashioned visiting list of the young hostess included the entire list of her mother, plus that of her mother-in-law, to which was added all the names acquired in her own social life. It can easily be seen that this list became a formidable volume by the time her daughter was old enough to “come out,” and yet this entire list was supposed to be included in all “general” invitations!

In the present day, however, at least in New York, there is a growing tendency to eliminate these general or “impersonal” invitations. In smartest society, it is not even considered necessary that a “general” entertainment be given to introduce a daughter. In New York last winter there were scarcely a dozen private balls all told. Many of the most fashionable (and richest) hostesses gave dances limited to young girls of their daughters’ ages and young dancing men. Even at many of the teas-with-dancing none but young people were asked.

Anyone who likes to sit on the bank and watch the tides of fashion rise and fall, cannot fail to notice that big and lavish entertainments are dwindling, and small and informal ones increasing. It is equally apparent, contrary to popular opinion, that extravagance of expenditure is growing less and less. It is years since any one has given such a ball, for instance, as the Venetian fête the Gildings gave to bring out their eldest daughter, when the entire first floor of the Fitz-Cherry was turned into a replica of Venice—canals, gondolas, and all. Or the Persian ball of the Vanstyles where the whole house was hung, as a background for Oriental costumes, with copper-gold draperies, against which stood at intervals Maxfield Parrish cypress trees. Or the moonlight dance of the Worldlys which was not a fancy dress one, but for which the ballroom was turned into a garden scene, lighted by simulated moonlight that would have added to the renown of Belasco.

Such entertainments as these seem almost “out of key” with the attitude of to-day. For although fancy-dress and elaborate parties are occasionally given, they are not usually given for débutantes, nor on the scale of those mentioned above.

THE DÉBUTANTE’S DRESS

At a ball, the débutante wears her very prettiest ball dress. Old-fashioned sentiment prefers that it be white, and of some diaphanous material, such as net or gauze or lace. It ought not to look overelaborate, even though it is spangled with silver or crystal or is made of sheer lace. It should suggest something light and airy and gay and, above all, young. For a young girl to whom white is unbecoming, a color is perfectly suitable as long as it is a pale shade. She should not wear strong colors such as red, or Yale blue, and on no account black! Her mother, of course, wears as handsome a ball dress as possible, and “all her jewels.”

At an afternoon tea the débutante wears an evening dress—a very simple evening dress, but an evening dress all the same. Usually a very pale color, and quite untrimmed, such as she might wear at home for dinner. Her mother wears an afternoon dress, not an evening one. Both mother and daughter wear long gloves, and neither they, nor the young girls receiving, wear hats.

To describe the details of clothes is futile. Almost before this page comes from the printer, the trend may quite likely change. But the tendency of the moment is toward greater simplicity—in effect at all events.

IN CONFIDENCE TO A DÉBUTANTE

Let us pretend a worldly old godmother is speaking, and let us suppose that you are a young girl on

the evening of your coming-out ball. You are excited, of course you are! It is your evening, and you are a sort of little princess! There is music, and there are lights, and there are flowers everywhere—a great ballroom massed with them, tables heaped with bouquets—all for you! You have on an especially beautiful dress—one that was selected from among many others, just because it seemed to you the prettiest. Even your mother and married sister who, *"en grande tenue,"* have always seemed to you dazzling figures, have for the moment become, for all their brocades and jewels, merely background; and you alone are the center of the picture. Up the wide staircase come throngs of fashionables—who mean "the world." They are coming on purpose to bow to you! You can't help feeling that the glittering dresses, the tiaras, the ropes of pearls and chains of diamonds of the "dowagers," the stiff white shirt-fronts and boutonnières and perfectly fitting coats of the older gentlemen, as well as the best clothes of all the younger people, were all put on for you.

You shake hands and smile sweetly to a number of older ladies and shake hands with an equal number of gentlemen, all very politely and properly. Then suddenly, half way up the stairs you see Betty and Anne and Fred and Ollie. Of course your attention is drawn to them. You are vaguely conscious that the butler is shouting some stupid name you never heard of—that you don't care in the least about. Your mother's voice is saying "Mrs. zzzzzz——,"

Impatiently you give your hand to someone—you haven't the slightest idea who it is. So far as your interest is concerned, you might as well be brushing away annoying flies. Your smiles are directed to Betty and Anne. As they reach the top of the stairs you dart forward and enter into an excited conversation, deliberately overlooking a lady and gentleman who, without trying further to attract your attention, pass on. Later in the winter you will perhaps wonder why you alone among your friends are never asked to Great Estates. The lady and gentleman of whom you are so rudely unaware, happen to be Mr. and Mrs. Worldly, and you have entirely forgotten that you are a hostess, and furthermore that you have the whole evening, beginning at supper, when you can talk to these friends of yours! You can dance with Fred and Ollie and Jimmy all the rest of the evening; you can spend most of your time with them for the rest of your life if you and they choose. But when you are out in public, above all at a party which is for *you,* your duty in commonest civility is to overcome your impulses, and behave as a grown-up person—and a well-bred grown-up person at that!

It takes scarcely more than ten seconds to listen to the name that is said to you, to look directly and attentively at the one to whom the name belongs, to put out your hand firmly as you would take hold of something you like, (not something that you feel an aversion to), and with a smile say "How do you do." At your ball your mother says "Mrs. Worldly, my daughter." You look directly at Mrs. Worldly, put out your hand, say "How do you do, Mrs. Worldly." And she passes on. It takes no longer to be cordial and attentive than to be distrait and casual and rude, yet the impression made in a few seconds of actual time may easily gain or lose a friend for life. When no other guests are arriving, you can chatter to your own friends as much as you like, but as you turn to greet another stranger, you must show pleasure, not annoyance, in giving him your attention.

A happy attitude to cultivate is to think in your own mind that new people are all packages in a grab-bag, and that you can never tell what any of them may prove to be until you know what is inside the outer wrappings of casual appearances. To be sure, the old woman of the fairy tale, who turns out to be a fairy in disguise, is not often met with in real life, but neither is her approximate counterpart an impossibility.

As those who have sent you flowers approach, you must thank them; you must also write later an additional note of thanks to older people. But to your family or your own intimate friends, the verbal thanks—if not too casually made—are sufficient.

A FEW DON'TS FOR DÉBUTANTES

Don't think that because you have a pretty face, you need neither brains nor manners. Don't think that you can be rude to anyone and escape being disliked for it.

Whispering is always rude. Whispering and giggling at the same time have no place in good society. Everything that shows lack of courtesy toward others is rude.

If you would be thought a person of refinement, don't nudge or pat or finger people. Don't hold hands or walk arm-about-waist in public. Never put your hand on a man, except in dancing and in taking his arm if he is usher at a wedding or your partner for dinner or supper. Don't allow anyone to

paw you. Don't hang on anyone for support, and don't stand or walk with your chest held in, and your hips forward, in imitation of a reversed letter S.

Don't walk across a ballroom floor swinging your arms. Don't talk or laugh loud enough to attract attention, and on no account force yourself to laugh. Nothing is flatter than laughter that is lacking in mirth. If you only laugh because something is irresistibly funny, the chances are your laugh will be irresistible too. In the same way a smile should be spontaneous, because you *feel* happy and pleasant; nothing has less allure than a mechanical grimace, as though you were trying to imitate a tooth-paste advertisement.

WHERE ARE THE "BELLES" OF YESTERDAY?

In olden days and until a comparatively short while ago, a young girl's social success was invariably measured by her popularity in a ballroom. It was the girl who had the most partners, who least frequently sat "against the wall," who carried home the greatest quantity of the baubles known as "favors," who was that evening's and usually the season's belle.

But to-day although ballroom popularity is still important as a test by which a young girl's success is measured, it is by no means the beginning and end that it used to be.

As repeated several times in this book, the day of the belle is past; beaux belong to the past too. To-day is the day of woman's equality with man, and if in proving her equality she has come down from a pedestal, her pedestal was perhaps a theatrical "property" at best and not to be compared for solid satisfaction with the level ground of the entirely real position she now occupies.

A girl's popularity in a ballroom is of importance to be sure, but not greatly more so than the dancing popularity of a youth.

There was a time when "wall-flowers" went to balls night after night where they either sat beside a chaperon or spent the evening in the dressing-room in tears. To-day a young girl who finds she is not a ballroom success avoids ballrooms and seeks her success otherwhere. She does not sit in a corner and hope against hope that her "luck will turn" and that Prince Charming will surely some evening discover her. She sizes up the situation exactly as a boy might size up his own chances to "make" the crew or the football team.

TO-DAY'S SPECIALISTS IN SUCCESS

The girl of to-day soon discovers, if she does not know it already, that to be a ballroom belle it is necessary first of all to dance really well. A girl may be as beautiful as a young Diana or as fascinating as Circe, but if she is heavy or steps on her first partner's toes, never again will he ask her to dance. And the news spreads in an instant.

The girl of to-day therefore knows she must learn to dance well, which is difficult, since dancers are born, not made; or she must go to balls for supper only, or not go to balls at all, *unless*—she plays a really good game of bridge! In which case, her chances for popularity at the bridge tables, which are at all balls to-day, are quite as good as though she were a young Pavlowa in the ballroom. Or perhaps she skates, or hunts, or plays a wonderful game of tennis or golf, each one of which opens a vista leading to popularity, and the possibilities for a "good time" which was after all the mainspring of old-fashioned ballroom success.

And since the day of femininity that is purely ornamental and utterly useless is gone by, it is the girl who does things well who finds life full of interests and of friends and of happiness. The old idea also has passed that measures a girl's popular success by the number of trousered figures around her. It is quality, not quantity, that counts; and the girl who surrounds herself with indiscriminate and possibly "cheap" youths does not excite the envy but the derision of beholders. To the highest type of young girl to-day it makes very little difference whether, in the inevitable "group" in which she is perpetually to be found, there are more men than girls or the opposite.

This does not mean that human nature has changed—scarcely! There always are and doubtless always will be any number of women to whom admiration and flirtation is the very breath of their nostrils, who love to parade a beau just as they love to parade a new dress. But the tendencies of the time do not encourage the flirtatious attitude. It is not considered a triumph to have many love

affairs, but rather an evidence of stupidity and bad taste.

FRANKNESS OF TO-DAY

A young man playing tennis with a young girl a generation ago would have been forced patiently to toss her gentle balls and keep his boredom to himself, or he would have held her chin in his hand, while he himself stood shivering for hours in three feet of water, and tried his best to disguise his opinion as to the hopelessness of her ever learning to swim.

To-day he would frankly tell her she had better play tennis for a year or two with a “marker” or struggle at swimming by herself, and any sensible girl would take that advice!

FOR WHAT SHE REALLY IS

Instead of depending upon beauty, upon sex-appeal, the young girl who is “the success of to-day” depends chiefly upon her actual character and disposition. It is not even so necessary to do something well as to refrain from doing things badly. If she is not good at sports, or games, or dancing, then she must find out what she *is* good at and do that! If she is good for nothing but to look in the glass and put rouge on her lips and powder her nose and pat her hair, life is going to be a pretty dreary affair. In other days beauty was worshiped for itself alone, and it has votaries of sorts to-day. But the best type of modern youth does not care for beauty, as his father did; in fact, he doesn’t care a bit for it, if it has nothing to “go with it,” any more than he cares for butter with no bread to spread it on. Beauty *and* wit, *and* heart, *and* other qualifications or attributes is another matter altogether.

A gift of more value than beauty, is charm, which in a measure is another word for sympathy, or the power to put yourself in the place of others; to be interested in whatever interests them, so as to be pleasing to them, if possible, but not to occupy your thoughts in futilely wondering what they think about you.

Would you know the secret of popularity? It is unconsciousness of self, altruistic interest, and inward kindliness, outwardly expressed in good manners.

Chapter XIX.

The Chaperon and Other Conventions

A GLOOMY WORD

OF course there are chaperons and chaperons! But it must be said that the very word has a repellent school-teacherish sound. One pictures instinctively a humorless tyrant whose “correct” manner plainly reveals her true purpose, which is to take the joy out of life. That she can be—and often is—a perfectly human and sympathetic person, whose unselfish desire is merely to smooth the path of one who is the darling of her heart, in nothing alters the feeling of gloom that settles upon the spirit of youth at the mention of the very word “chaperon.”

FREEDOM OF THE CHAPERONED

As a matter of fact the only young girl who is really “free,” is she whose chaperon is never very far away. She need give conventionality very little thought, and not bother about her P’s and Q’s at all, because her chaperon is always a strong and protective defense; but a young girl who is unprotected by a chaperon is in the position precisely of an unarmed traveler walking alone among wolves—his only defense is in not attracting their notice.

To be sure the time has gone by when the presence of an elderly lady is indispensable to every gathering of young people. Young girls for whose sole benefit and protection the chaperon exists (she does not exist for her own pleasure, youthful opinion to the contrary notwithstanding), have infinitely greater freedom from her surveillance than had those of other days, and the typical chaperon is seldom seen with any but very young girls, too young to have married friends. Otherwise a young married woman, a bride perhaps scarcely out of her teens, is, on all ordinary occasions, a perfectly suitable chaperon, especially if her husband is present. A very young married woman gadding about without her husband is not a proper chaperon.

There are also many occasions when a chaperon is unnecessary! It is considered perfectly correct for a young girl to drive a motor by herself, or take a young man with her, if her family know and approve of him, for any short distance in the country. She may play golf, tennis, go to the Country Club, or Golf Club (if near by), sit on the beach, go canoeing, ride horseback, and take part in the normal sports and occupations of country life. Young girls always go to private parties of every sort without their own chaperon, but the fact that a lady issues an invitation means that either she or another suitable chaperon will be present.

THE BEST CHAPERON HERSELF

Ethically the only chaperon is the young girl’s own sense of dignity and pride; she who has the right attributes of character needs no chaperon—ever. If she is wanting in decency and proper pride, not even Argus could watch over her! But apart from ethics, there are the conventions to think of, and the conventions of propriety demand that every young woman must be protected by a chaperon, because otherwise she will be misjudged.

THE RESIDENT CHAPERON

No young girl may live alone. Even though she has a father, unless he devotes his entire time to her, she must also have a resident chaperon who protects her reputation until she is married or old enough to protect it herself—which is not until she has reached a fairly advanced age, of perhaps thirty years or over if she is alone, or twenty-six or so if she lives in her father’s house and behaves with such irreproachable circumspection that Mrs. Grundy is given no chance to set tongues wagging.

It goes without saying that a chaperon is always a lady, often one whose social position is better than that of her charge; occasionally she is a social sponsor as well as a moral one. Her position, if she is not a relative, is very like that of a companion. Above all, a chaperon must have dignity, and if

she is to be of any actual service, she must be kind of heart and have intelligent sympathy and tact. To have her charge not only care for her, but be happy with her, is the only possible way such a relationship can endure.

Needless to say a chaperon's own conduct must be irreproachable and her knowledge of the world such as can only be gained by personal experience; but she need not be an old lady! She can perfectly well be reasonably young, and a spinster.

Very often the chaperon "keeps the house," but she is never called a "housekeeper." Nor is she a "secretary" though she probably draws the checks and audits the bills.

It is by no means unusual for mothers who are either very gay or otherwise busy, and cannot give most of their time to their grown and growing daughters, to put them in charge of a resident chaperon. Often their governess—if she is a woman of the world—gives up her autocracy of the schoolroom and becomes social guardian instead.

THE DUTIES OF A CHAPERON

It is unnecessary to say that a chaperon has no right to be inquisitive or interfering unless for a very good reason. If an objectionable person—meaning one who can not be considered a gentleman—is inclined to show the young girl attentions, it is of course her duty to cut the acquaintance short at the beginning before the young girl's interest has become aroused. For just such a contingency as this it is of vital importance that confidence and sympathy exist between the chaperon and her charge. No modern young girl is likely to obey blindly unless she values the opinions of one in whose judgment and affection she has learned to believe.

WHEN INVITATIONS ARE SENT OUT BY A CHAPERON

Usually if a young girl is an orphan, living with a chaperon, a ball or formal party would be given in the name of an aunt or other near relative. If her father is alive, the invitations go out in his name of course, and he receives with her. But if it should happen that she has no near family at all, or if her chaperon is her social sponsor, the chaperon's name can be put on invitations. For example:

Miss Abigail Titherington

Miss Rosalie Gray

will be at home

on Saturday the fifth of December

from four until six o'clock

The Fitz-Cherry

Rosalie has no very near relatives and Miss Titherington has brought her up.

In sending out the invitations for a dinner (a young girl would not be giving a formal dinner) Rosalie telephones her friends "Will you dine with me (or us) next Monday?" or, "On the sixteenth?" It is not necessary to mention Miss Titherington because it is taken for granted that she will be present.

It is also not considered proper for a young girl ever to be alone as hostess. When she invites young girls and men to her house, Miss Titherington either "receives" them or comes into the room while they are there. If the time is afternoon, very likely she pours tea and when everyone has been helped, she goes into another room. She does not stay with them ever, but she is never very far away.

The chaperon (or a parent) should never go to bed until the last young man has left the house. It is an unforgivable breach of decorum to allow a young girl to sit up late at night with a young man—or a number of them. On returning home from a party, she must not invite or allow a man to "come in for a while." Even her fiancé must bid her good night at the door if the hour is late, and some one ought always to sit up, or get up, to let her in. No young girl ought to let herself in with a latch-key.

In old-fashioned days no lady had a latch-key. And it is still fitting and proper for a servant to open the door for her.

A young girl may not, even with her fiancé, lunch in a road house without a chaperon, or go on a journey that can by any possibility last over night. To go out with him in a small sail-boat sounds harmless enough, but might result in a questionable situation if they are becalmed, or if they are left helpless in a sudden fog. The Maine coast, for example, is particularly subject to fogs that often shut down without warning and no one going out on the water can tell whether he will be able to get back within a reasonable time or not. A man and a girl went out from Bar Harbor and did not get back until next day. Everyone knew the fog had come in as thick as pea-soup and that it was impossible to get home; but to the end of time her reputation will suffer for the experience.

A FEW PRECEPTS OF CONVENTION

At a dinner party given for young people in a private house, a somewhat older sister would be a sufficient chaperon. Or the young hostess' mother after receiving the guests may, if she chooses, dine with her husband elsewhere than in the dining-room, the parents' roof being supposedly chaperonage enough.

In going to tea in a college man's room, or in a bachelor's apartment, the proper chaperon should be a lady of fairly mature years. To see two or three apparently young people going into a bachelor's quarters would be open to criticism. There are many places which are unsuitable, for young girls to go to whether they are chaperoned or not. No well brought up young girl should be allowed to go to supper at a cabaret until she is married, or has passed the age when "very young" can be applied to her.

CONVENTIONS THAT CHANGE WITH LOCALITY

In New York, for instance, no young girl of social standing may, without being criticized, go alone with a man to the theater. Absolutely no lady (unless middle-aged—and even then she would be defying convention) can go to dinner or supper in a restaurant alone with a gentleman. A lady, not young, who is staying in a very dignified hotel, can have a gentleman dine with her. But any married woman, if her husband does not object, may dine alone in her own home with any man she pleases or have a different one come in to tea every day in the week without being criticized.

A very young girl may motor around the country alone with a man, with her father's consent, or sit with him on the rocks by the sea or on a log in the woods; but she must not sit with him in a restaurant. All of which is about as upside down as it can very well be. In a restaurant they are not only under the surveillance of many eyes, but they can scarcely speak without being overheard, whereas short-distance motoring, driving, riding, walking or sitting on the seashore has no element of protection certainly. Again, though she may not lunch with him in a restaurant, she is sometimes (not always) allowed to go to a moving picture matinée with him! Why sitting in the dark in a moving picture theater is allowed, and the restaurant is tabu is very mysterious.

Older girls and young married women are beginning to lunch with men they know well in some of the New York restaurants, but not in others. In many cities it would be scandalous for a young married woman to lunch with a man not her husband, but quite all right for a young girl and man to lunch at a country club. This last is reasonable because the room is undoubtedly filled with people they know—who act as potential chaperons. Nearly everywhere it is thought proper for them to go to a dancing club for tea, if the "club" is managed by a chaperon.

As said above, interpretation of what is proper shifts according to locality. Even in Victorian days it was proper in Baltimore for a young girl to go to the theater alone with a man, and to have him see her home from a ball was not only permitted but absolutely correct.

"MRS. GRUNDY"

Of course every one has his own portrait of Mrs. Grundy, and some idea of the personality she shows to him; but has any one ever tried to ferret out that disagreeable old woman's own position; to

find out where she lives and why she has nothing to do but meddle in affairs which do not concern her. Is she a lady? One would imagine she is not. One would also imagine that she lives in a solid well-repaired square brown stone house with a cupola used as a conning tower and equipped with periscope and telescope and wireless. Furthermore, her house is situated on a bleak hill so that nothing impedes her view and that of her two pets, a magpie and a jackal. And the business in life of all three of them is to track down and destroy the good name of every woman who comes within range, especially if she is young and pretty—and unchaperoned!

The pretty young woman living alone, must literally follow Cinderella's habits. To be out of the house late at night or sitting up, except to study, are imprudences she can not allow herself. If she is a widow her conduct must be above criticism, but if she is young and pretty and divorced, she must literally live the life of a Puritan spinster of Salem. The magpie never leaves her window sill and the jackal sits on the doormat, and the news of her every going out and coming in, of every one whom she receives, when they come, how long they stay and at what hour they go, is spread broadcast.

No unprotected woman can do the least thing that is unconventional without having Mrs. Grundy shouting to everyone the worst possible things about her.

THE BACHELOR GIRL

The bachelor girl is usually a worker; she is generally either earning her living or studying to acquire the means of earning her living. Her days are therefore sure to be occupied, and the fact that she has little time for the gaiety of life, and that she is a worker, puts her in a somewhat less assailable position. She can on occasion go out alone with a man (not a married one), but the theater she goes to must be of conventional character, and if she dines in a restaurant it is imperative that a chaperon be in the party; and the same is true in going to supper at night. No one could very well criticize her for going to the opera or a concert with a man when neither her nor his behavior hints a lack of reserve.

But a girl whose personal dignity is unassailable is not apt to bring censure upon herself, even though the world judges by etiquette, which may often be a false measure. The young woman who wants really to be free from Mrs. Grundy's hold on her, must either live her own life, caring nothing for the world's opinion or the position it offers, or else be chaperoned.

THE BACHELOR HOST AND THE CHAPERON

Barring the one fact that a chaperon must be on hand before young or "single" women guests arrive, and that she may not leave until after those whom she has chaperoned have left, there is no difference whatsover in an entertainment given at the house of a bachelor and one given by a hostess. A bachelor can give dinners or theater parties or yachting parties or house parties or any parties that a hostess can give.

It is unnecessary to say no lady may dine alone in a gentleman's rooms, or house; nor may she dine with a number of gentlemen (unless one of them is her husband, in which case she is scarcely "alone"). But it is perfectly correct for two or more ladies to dine at a gentleman's rooms if one of the ladies is elderly or the husband of one is present.

A bachelor entertaining in bachelor's quarters, meaning that he has only a man servant, must be much more punctilious, and must arrange to have the chaperon bring any young woman guests with her, since no young girls could be seen entering bachelor's quarters alone, and have their "good name" survive. If he has a large establishment, including women servants, and if furthermore he is a man whose own reputation is unblemished, the chaperon may be met at his house. But since it is more prudent for young women to arrive under her care, why run the unnecessary risk of meeting Mrs. Grundy's jackal on the doorstep?

At the house of a bachelor such as described above, the chaperon could be a husbandless young married woman, or in other words, the most careless chaperon possible, without ever giving Mrs. Grundy's magpie cause for ruffling a feather. But no young woman could dine or have tea, no matter how well chaperoned, in the "rooms" of a man of morally bad reputation without running a very unpleasant risk of censure.

A BACHELOR'S HOUSE PARTIES

Bachelors frequently have house parties at their country places. A married lady whose husband is with her is always the chaperon unless the host's mother or sister may be staying—or living—in his house.

There is always something unusually alluring about a bachelor's entertaining. Especially his house parties. Where do all bachelors get those nice and so very respectable elderly maid servants? They can't all have been their nurses! And a bachelor's house has a something about it that is very comfortable but entirely different from a lady's house, though it would be difficult to define wherein the difference lies. He is perhaps more attentive than a hostess, at least he meets his guests at the station if they come by train, or, if they motor to his house, he goes out on the front steps to greet them as they drive up.

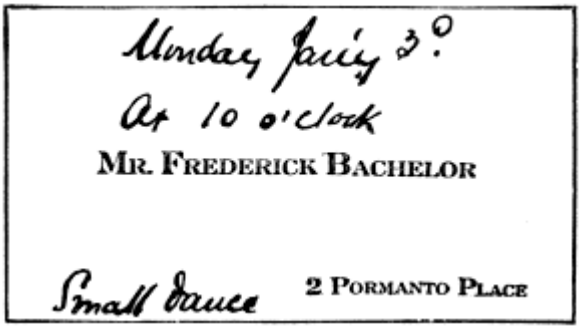
A possible reason why bachelors seem to make such good hosts is that only those who have a talent for it make the attempt. There is never any obligation on a gentleman's part to invite ladies to stay with him, whereas it is part of every lady's duty at least occasionally to be a hostess, whether she has talent, or even inclination, for the position or not.

A gentleman can return the courtesies of hostesses to him by occasionally sending flowers, or books, or candy, and by showing them polite attention when he meets them out.

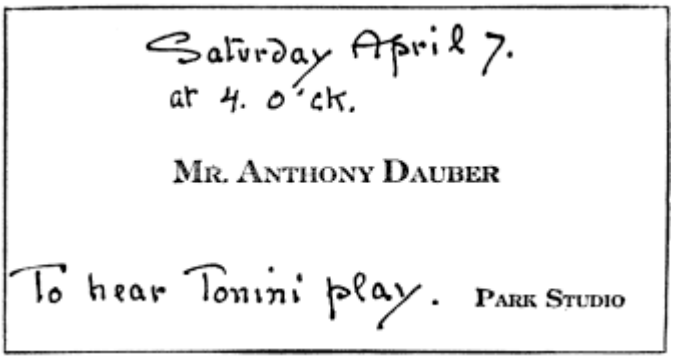
If a bachelor lives in a house of his own, especially in a country community, he is under the same obligations as any other householder to return the hospitality shown by his neighbors to him.

INVITATIONS

The bachelor's invitations are the same as those sent out by a hostess. There is absolutely no difference. His butler or waitress telephones "Will Mr. and Mrs. Norman dine with Mr. Bachelor on Wednesday?" Or he writes a note or uses the engraved dinner card. In giving an informal dance it is quite correct, according to New York fashion, for him to write on his visiting card:



Or an artist sends his card with his studio address and



No invitation of a gentleman mentions that there will be a chaperon because that is taken for granted. No gentleman invites ladies of position to a party unless one or many chaperons are to be present.

A very young girl never goes even to an unmarried doctor's or a clergyman's (unless the latter is very elderly) without a chaperon, who in this instance may be a semi-elderly maid.

A lady having her portrait painted always takes a woman friend, or her maid, who sits in the studio, or at least within sight or hearing.