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ToC

"THE RADIANCE OF A TRULY HAPPY BRIDE IS SO BEAUTIFYING THAT EVEN A PLAIN GIRL IS MADE PRETTY, AND A PRETTY ONE, DIVINE." [PAGE 373.]

ETIQUETTE

IN SOCIETY, IN BUSINESS, IN POLITICS

AND AT HOME

BY EMILY POST

(MRS. PRICE POST)

Author of "Purple and Fine Linen," "The Title Market," "Woven in the Tapestry," "The Flight of a Moth," "Letters of a Worldly Godmother," etc., etc.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PRIVATE PHOTOGRAPHS AND FACSIMILES OF SOCIAL FORMS

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To You My Friends
Whose Identity In These Pages
Is Veiled In Fictional Disguise
It Is But Fitting That
I Dedicate This Book.

CONTENTS

PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

MANNERS AND MORALS

By

Richard Duffy

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 postwar 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."

ETIQUETTE

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*low*!" 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 THEATER, 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 page 118) 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 above are written by 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 outdoor 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 to-morrow, 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 chapter-houses 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 s