

# Etiquette,



AND THE

## Usages of Society.

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ETIQUETTE,  
AND  
THE USAGES OF SOCIETY:  
CONTAINING THE MOST  
APPROVED RULES  
FOR  
CORRECT DEPORTMENT IN FASHIONABLE LIFE,  
TOGETHER WITH  
HINTS TO GENTLEMEN AND LADIES  
ON  
IRREGULAR AND VULGAR HABITS.  
ALSO, THE  
ETIQUETTE OF LOVE AND COURTSHIP,  
MARRIAGE-ETIQUETTE, &c.

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BY HENRY P. WILLIS.

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*Edith*

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ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS in the year 1860  
by BENJAMIN H. DAY, in the Clerk's Office of the United States  
District Court for the Southern District of New York.

## P R E F A C E.

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MANY books have been written on Etiquette and the Usages of Society which proved to be useful and valuable, especially to those young people whose positions did not enable them to inform themselves from personal observation of the standard proprieties of social life. In view of this fact, I do not expect to present anything novel in prescribing rules for correct behaviour; but shall endeavor to give, in a brief and plain manner, all the practical information that is necessary for a novice in general society to know, omitting all crude advice, and remarks on people who do not conform to the code of politeness. In a word, it is my aim to simplify the rules of Etiquette so they can be easily understood and acted upon.

The works hitherto published on this subject, though mostly large and expensive, do not go sufficiently into minor details to enable the uninitiated reader to comprehend the various phases of polite society without a good deal of close study and attention. I have endeavored to remedy this defect, and to set forth, with the strictest economy of words, all that is necessary to know of the usages of social intercourse among well-bred people.

The utility of good manners is conceded even by those whose station or pursuits in life do not enable them practically to cultivate a polite and genuine courtesy. To such people a study of the subject is necessary. Some of them, it is true, may have an instinctive courtesy, and will only require to know a few of the leading rules to make themselves equal to any occasion. But the largest class will



have to examine carefully the whole routine to make even a tolerable appearance in society.

Good manners and good morals are founded on the same eternal principles of right, and are only different expressions of the same great truths. If, therefore, you would excel in politeness, you must first be satisfied that your morals are unexceptionable. Manners have their origin in the mind and the heart. They do not make the man, as sometimes asserted; but the man makes the manners. It is true, however, that the manners react upon mind and heart, continually developing and improving the qualities out of which they spring.

Young people, who just begin to be recognized as companions in the social circle rather than children, may study this book with much advantage. By becoming familiar with the regulations here laid down, they will avoid many errors and consequent mortifications.

It is to these classes I dedicate my little treatise. I do not design to preach to them a homily on immorality and ill-manners, but to tell them briefly what constitutes good manners.

Books of Etiquette are sometimes useful, even to its most fastidious votaries, for reference on many occasions; and the more plain and simple the rules are laid down in them the better they are for that purpose. Considering all these facts, I hope and think that my book will meet a favorable reception with the public.

## ETIQUETTE

### AND THE USAGES OF SOCIETY.

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THE true principles of Etiquette are to regulate your conduct towards others so as never to give offence, or cause a disagreeable feeling—never to show your temper or make a remark that you think will create an unpleasant sensation to the listener, and on all occasions to religiously refrain from gratuitous intrusions, of whatever nature. You should always show a genuine kindness of heart, cultivate a correct taste, and possess such self-control as never to be rude or discourteous to any one, however far he may transgress conventional usages. Lacking these qualities, the most perfect knowledge of the rules of etiquette, and the strictest observance of them, will not suffice to make you a perfect gentleman or lady.

Politeness seems to be a certain care, by the manner of our words and actions, to make others pleased with us and themselves: and the grand secret of never-failing propriety of deportment is to have an *intention* of always doing right. To some people these peculiarities come natural; but most of mankind must acquire them, together with the art of behaviour, by study and practice.

True politeness is perfect freedom and ease—treating others just as you like to be treated. Nature is always graceful; affectation, with all her art, can never produce anything half so pleasing. The very perfection of elegance is to imitate Nature; how much better to have the reality than the imitation! Anxiety about the opinions of others fetters the freedom of Nature and tends to awkwardness.



All your actions should therefore be so unexceptionable as to give you a frankness of character that will inspire confidence in yourself in the presence of the most exalted or venerated of your friends.

#### INTRODUCTIONS.

It is the common custom among a certain class in the United States, particularly in New England, to introduce friends or acquaintances to everybody they may meet, whether at home, abroad, or even while walking or riding out. This is not necessary or desirable, for promiscuous introductions are not always agreeable, and very seldom serve any purpose whatever. It is generally conceded that an introduction is a sort of social endorsement of the person introduced; and how wrong would it be, under such circumstances, to introduce a casual acquaintance of whom you know nothing, and who should afterwards prove to be anything but a desirable one. These remarks apply more particularly to family introductions. Young men about town are not so particular about whom they introduce to each other, though a habit of universal introductions is a bad one, and as a general rule a young man should be as careful of whom he introduces to his friends as he is of whose note he would endorse.

No gentleman should be presented to a lady under any circumstances, unless her permission has been previously obtained, and no one should ever be introduced into the house of a friend except by permission first had. Such introductions we know are frequent and usual, but they are improper, as any one can imagine who will reflect for a moment. For how can you know that introductions of this kind will be agreeable? If a person asks you to introduce him to certain people, you may decline on the ground that you are not sufficiently intimate to take that liberty.

There are many other reasons why people ought never to be introduced to the acquaintance of each other, with-

out the consent of each party previously obtained. A man may suit the taste, and be agreeable enough to *one*, without being equally so to the *rest* of his friends—nay, as it often happens, he may be decidedly unpleasant. A stupid person may be delighted with the society of a man of learning or talent, to whom in return such an acquaintance may prove an annoyance and a clog, as one incapable of offering an interchange of thought, or an idea worth listening to.

Should you find an agreeable person in private society, who seems desirous of making your acquaintance, there cannot be any objection to your meeting his advances half way, although the ceremony of an introduction may not have taken place; his presence in your friend's house being a sufficient guaranty for his respectability, as, of course, if he were an improper person he would not be there.

If you meet a male acquaintance in the street, accompanied by a lady, either raise or take off your hat to him, instead of nodding—as this last familiar mode of recognition looks disrespectful towards her.

Never make promiscuous acquaintances in coffee-houses or other public places. As no person who respects himself does so, you may reasonably suspect any advances made to you in such a place.

An adherence to etiquette is a mark of respect; if a man be worth knowing, he is surely worth the trouble to approach properly. It will likewise relieve you from the awkwardness of being acquainted with people of whom you might at times be ashamed, or be obliged under many circumstances to "cut."

The act of "cutting" can only be justified by some strong instance of bad conduct in the person to be cut. A cold bow, which discourages familiarity without offering insult, is the best mode to adopt towards those with whom an acquaintance is not deemed desirable. An increased observance of ceremony is, however, the most delicate way of withdrawing from an acquaintance; and the person so



treated must be obtuse, indeed, who does not take the hint. And when you observe that any of your own acquaintances appear distant and more than usually ceremonious towards you, you may suspect that they desire to withdraw their intimacy, if not their friendship.

In making introductions, the person of highest consideration should be the one first named—or if a lady, she should be first addressed, as, "Miss Phillips, permit me to introduce Mr. Day." A lady may, however, be introduced to a gentleman much her superior in age or station. Gentlemen and ladies who are presumed to be equals in age and position are mutually introduced; as, "Mr. Lincoln, allow me to make you acquainted with Mr. Jones; Mr. Jones, Mr. Lincoln."

It is the common custom in this country to shake hands on being introduced. This, however, should be optional with the person to whom you are presented, or with you, if you stood in the position of the superior. If a lady, or a superior in age or social position, offers the hand, you of course accept it cordially. You will have too much self-respect to be the first to extend the hand in such a case. In merely formal introductions a bow is enough. Feeling should govern in this matter.

In introducing members of your own family you should always mention the name. Say, "My father, Mr. Kipp," "My daughter, Miss Kipp," or "Miss Mary Kipp." Your wife is simply "Mrs. Kipp;" and if there happens to be another Mrs. Kipp in the family, she may be "Mrs. Kipp, my sister-in-law," &c. To speak of your wife as "my lady," or enter yourselves on a hotel register as "Mr. Kipp and lady," is not the correct way, though many worthy people do it.

An introduction is not always necessary to enable you to form a temporary acquaintance. There is no reason in the world why two persons who may occupy the same seat in a railway car or a stage coach should remain silent

during the whole journey because they have not been introduced, when conversation might be agreeable to both. The same remark will apply to many other occasions. You are not obliged, however, to know these *extempore* acquaintances afterwards.

If you are a gentleman, do not, we beg you, permit the lack of an introduction to prevent you from promptly offering your services to any unattended lady who may need them. Take off your hat and politely beg the honor of protecting, escorting, or assisting her, and when the service has been accomplished, bow and retire.

#### LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION.

THESE are of two kinds. First, as to business. Second, those of friendship. For example: If you have a friend going to a distant place to transact certain business, it may be necessary for him to form some acquaintances there for business purposes only. You have, perhaps, a correspondent there; yet you are not sufficiently intimate to ask him to entertain your friend; but as a matter of common courtesy he cannot refuse to accept him as a business acquaintance, for which purpose you write a letter similar to the following:

NEW YORK, 20th September, 1860.

MR. A. J. HOOPER:

Dear Sir—The bearer of this is my friend, George Jones, who goes to New Orleans to effect a settlement with the assignees of the late firm of Corning & Co. As he will be a stranger in your city, I have taken the liberty to introduce him to your notice, and any attention or advice you may give him will be duly appreciated by

Your faithful serv't,

GEORGE LAW.

Mr. Jones presents this letter to Mr. Hooper, and if the latter chooses to consider it strictly a business letter, there is no breach of etiquette. He can invite Mr. Jones to his house, or not, as he pleases.

Ordinary letters of introduction, however, are considered as certificates of good social position, and proofs that the writer knows the bearer to be a proper person to be admitted into the family circle of the person to whom the letter is addressed. But yet it is not often the case that such a letter will do more than give the recipient an invitation to dinner, unless he should prove to be an uncommon agreeable acquaintance. Letters of introduction are therefore sometimes facetiously termed "tickets for soup," and many people will not make use of them at all, for that reason. The following is a form of such a letter, though in special cases it may be written in more urgent terms:

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10th, 1860.

Dear Sir—

The bearer of this, Mr. Edward Everett, an esteemed friend of mine, is about to visit London for the first time, and will consequently be a stranger in your metropolis. Any attentions which you may extend to him will be gratefully appreciated by

Your friend, and humble servant,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. JOHN RUSSELL.

It is not customary to deliver a friendly letter of introduction personally. You should send it to the person to whom it is directed, on your arrival, accompanied by your card of address. If he desires to respond to the request of your friend, he will either call on you personally or give you a written invitation to visit him. A neglect to call would be considered by some people a mark of ill-breeding, though it really is not, as the person addressed may consult his own convenience or feelings in the matter. Nor is he compelled to invite you to his house unless he is so disposed. A simple return of his own card is all that is required, and then you can call on him at your leisure.

A Letter of Introduction should never be sealed by the person giving it; but the recipient should seal it when he sends it to the party to whom it is addressed.

In Europe it is always customary for any one with a letter of introduction to make the first call; but here we are more considerate, for we think that a stranger should never be made to feel that he is begging for our attentions—that he possesses a certain delicacy that would induce him not to intrude until he is positive that his company would be agreeable. Hence if you desire to welcome any one recommended to you by letter from your friend, call upon him with all possible dispatch after you receive his letter of introduction.

#### SALUTATIONS.

If you meet a friend in the street, or in any public place, do not call him by name loudly, as, "Ah, Brown, how d'ye do?" It is not even necessary to speak his name at all so that strangers may hear, as modest people do not desire to attract notice from any one. Accost your friend quietly, and in a low tone of voice.

Should you meet a lady of your acquaintance in the street, or in a public place, it is not necessary that you should speak, or even notice her, unless she first recognizes you. You should, however, give her ample opportunity to see that you are aware of her presence. If she bows, you should take off your hat, or rather lift it from your head. A mere touch of the hat will not answer. There are no doubt many diffident young ladies who do not appreciate the necessity of making the first demonstration when they meet their male acquaintances; but such should remember that their sex is always paramount. They are at liberty to bow, or not, as they please, while a gentleman would **make an almost unpardonable breach** of good manners should he neglect to respond to the least possible nod of a lady.

Salutations should vary in style with persons, times, places and circumstances. You will meet a friend with a shake of the hand and an inquiry after his health, and that



of his family, if you have been introduced there. To a slight acquaintance you will respectfully bow without speaking, or faintly recognise him in any other way. But in no case should you refuse to return recognitions of this kind made by any person whatever. Even to your enemy it is in bad taste to decline a recognition should he salute you. In sparsely settled places it is customary to salute everybody you meet with a bow, and the custom is an excellent one, as it shows kindly feeling and a good heart.

#### VISITING.

In fashionable life visits and calls are made systematically, as we will enumerate: First as to visits of ceremony. Every lady thinks she must call on all her female acquaintances at stated times; it becomes habitual with her to do so, and she considers it a duty. These calls are usually short, and by means of them all the little gossip which is afloat may be as thoroughly and extensively circulated as though it were printed in the newspapers. The usual time for a morning call in New York is from eleven until three or four o'clock. Formerly they ceased at two. These calls should be timed so as to end a full hour before dinner, therefore in country towns, where people rise at six, and dine at twelve and one o'clock, they should be made earlier in the day—say from nine till eleven or twelve o'clock. They are denominated morning calls, because "morning" in fashionable parlance means any time before dinner.

In making a morning call, the lady does not take off her bonnet and shawl, and she usually stays from ten to twenty minutes. Sometimes (though seldom) a lady may make her calls attended by a gentleman. In such a case he assists her up the steps, rings the bell, and follows her into the reception room. He should never suggest that it is time to go, but wait until the lady gives the signal. He must take his hat and cane into the room with him, and

keep them in his hand, as it is not proper to leave them in the hall on such an occasion.

Do not handle any of the articles of *bijouterie* in the houses where you may call or visit. They may be admired, but not touched.

In making a call, if the lady called upon is not at home, leave your card, if you have one; and if there are several ladies there who you wish to see, desire the servant to present your compliments to them severally. Should you not have a card, leave your name with the servant, of course.

When a call or visit is terminated, it is customary among fashionable people to ring the bell for a servant to open the front door; and this is necessary unless you attend your visitor to the door and open it yourself, which is sometimes done by people who do not stand upon ceremony. Some persons would feel that they were shamefully neglected if allowed to go alone to the front door and let themselves out.

In calling upon a person living at a hotel, it is customary to stop in the parlor and send your card to their rooms. Among intimate acquaintances such formality may not be necessary.

Ladies should make their morning calls in a simple *neglige*—not in their richest dresses. Gentlemen may dress with either a frock or sack coat.

Visits of congratulation are made on the occurrence of any happy or auspicious event which may have occurred in the family visited—such as a birth, a marriage, or any piece of good fortune. Such visits are similar to the morning call, unless made by special invitation in the evening.

When a person is going abroad to be absent for a considerable period, if he has not time or inclination to take leave of all his friends he will enclose each of them his card. Upon the envelope he will write the letters T. T. L., or else the words "to take leave" in full. On his returning home it is customary that his friends should

first call upon him. If they neglect to do so he may drop their acquaintance if he chooses.

Visits of condolence should never be delayed beyond the next week after a death occurs in a family, and such visits among friends are usually considered in the light of absolute duties.

Visits of friendship are conducted by no particular rules of etiquette, as it is to be presumed that intimate friends, or relatives, understand each other's tastes and peculiarities, and will conduct themselves in a manner mutually agreeable. Such visits may occasionally be made under misapprehension, because there are many people in the world who are extremely fond of change, and will often persuade themselves that their society is coveted, when in fact they are not particularly welcome. Persons of any degree of sagacity can easily discriminate in their reception the free and hearty welcome from the polite and easy grace which duty makes imperative. With intimate friends all strict ceremony can be dispensed with, but yet there are certain liberties which you may enjoy at home, that are not exactly proper to take in the house of a friend or relative. Criticising the conduct of servants, or children, or the acts of any member of the household, or the domestic management generally, is in very bad taste, though it may be done with the utmost good nature. No well bred person will ever make remarks of any kind upon the habits, faults or foibles of a family where they are paying a visit of friendship; and to drop these remarks after they have left only shows that they were not deserving the confidence and attentions they received. In such visits you should strictly apply the rule to do nothing by act, word or deed that may cause a disagreeable feeling on the part of your entertainer; which rule, as we have before explained, is the fundamental principle of gentility.

Never make a visit of friendship unless you have either a special or general invitation. Many people take it for

granted that their friends desire to see them on any and all occasions, and in this way frequently become bores. Neither should you ever beg an invitation, or intimate by word or action that you desire to make a friendly visit, and only wait to be asked, as in such a case you would run the risk of disgusting your friend.

Evening visits, or parties, are sometimes formal, but more frequently mere social gatherings. In the latter case, when a lady is invited alone, she may bring a gentleman with her if she pleases. She presents him first to the lady of the house, who is presumed to receive all her visitors as they arrive.

If you should happen to pay an evening visit at a house where a small party had assembled unknown to you, do not retire with an apology, but present yourself precisely as you would have done had you been invited; and then if you desire to leave shortly afterwards, you can plead as an excuse that you had only intended to make a short call, and had an engagement elsewhere. In this way you will not in the least disturb the harmony of the assemblage or cause an unpleasant feeling to any one.

#### RECEIVING COMPANY.

THE mistress of the house usually receives the visitors, though at evening parties the master will often officiate with her. The receptions should be performed in an easy, quiet, and self-possessed manner, and without unnecessary ceremony. If the persons arriving are strangers to any of the company present, the names are announced on their entering the room, and they are afterwards introduced personally to such of the company as may desire an introduction, or with whom they may wish to enter into conversation, or play, or to dance.

When any one enters, whether announced or not, the master or mistress should rise immediately, advance towards him, and request him to take a seat. If it is a young



man, offer him an arm-chair, or a stuffed one; if an ~~elderly~~ man, insist upon his accepting the arm-chair; if a lady, beg her to be seated upon the sofa. If the master of the house receives the visitors, he will take a chair and place himself at a little distance from them; if, on the contrary, it is the mistress, and if she is intimate with the lady who visits her, she will place herself near her. If several ladies come at once, we give the most honorable place to the one who, from age or other considerations, is most entitled to respect. In winter, the most honorable places are those at the corners of the fire-place, if you have a fire in it. If the visitor is a stranger, when the master or mistress of the house rises, any person who may be already in the room should do the same, unless the company is a large one. When any of the company withdraw, the master or mistress of the house should conduct them as far as the door. But whoever the person may be who departs, if we have other company, we may dispense with conducting them farther than the door of the room.

On his first arrival, the visitor should salute the lady before he takes notice of any one else. If she receives him, this duty will be performed as a matter of course, but in case she should not happen to do so, he must still make his bow to her before speaking to any other person.

#### TATTLING.

In all social intercourse, conversations will take place in which opinions are given and motives scrutinized which it would be extremely improper to repeat. Yet we find a great many people who delight in repeating remarks made by one party upon another, thus stirring up discord and strengthening hatred wheresoever they appear. Such characters are the bane of country society. What is more absurd, for instance, than if one lady should say to another—"Well, Jane, what do you think Lucretia Smith says of you? She says you have the thickest ankles and the

thinnest arms of any girl in town—that your shape is like an alligator's, and your head resembles that of a bison!"

Another class of tattlers are those who visit their friends and take note of all the habits and customs of the family, the conversations at table, the government of children, treatment of servants, family expenditures, employments and dress of the mistress, and even the late hours of the male members, should there be any who stay out late. These are told in detail at the next visiting place. It is almost unnecessary to say that such people are contemptible. If you wish to preserve any claim to respectability or social position, you will refrain from criticising, even by a single unfavorable remark, anything you may have observed in the house of a friend where you were stopping as a guest.

#### FORMAL EVENING PARTIES.

THESE are of various kinds, and more or less ceremonious, according to the taste of the persons giving them. Some people who desire to be extremely fashionable overdo the thing and make their friends uncomfortable. The best plan is not to stand much upon ceremony, but exert yourself to make all your visitors at ease.

Invitations to large evening parties are usually written ones, though it is by no means necessary to send such to your intimate friends. A verbal message to them is quite sufficient. An answer to an invitation should always be promptly given. A written invitation to an evening party runs as follows:

Mrs. EDGERTON presents her compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Day, and requests the pleasure of their company on **Friday evening, the 19th inst.**

311 Fifth avenue, Tuesday.

Please oblige by an answer.

Should your party be given to celebrate any particular event, such as a daughter's birth-day, the anniversary of your

marriage, &c., you can add to the note the words, "it being our daughter Susan's fifteenth birth-day," or "it being the twentieth anniversary of our marriage," &c.

If the persons invited by note desire to accept the invitation, they will write a reply similar to the following :

MR. and MRS. DAY present their compliments to Mrs. Edgerton, and accept with pleasure her kind invitation for Friday evening.

Wednesday.

If, on the contrary, they wish to decline, it is not necessary to give any reason for it, but simply write a note as follows :

MR. and MRS. DAY present their compliments to Mrs. Edgerton, and regret that circumstances will prevent their acceptance of her kind invitation for Friday evening.

Wednesday.

Having accepted an invitation to a party, never fail to keep your promise, even if the weather should prove unfavorable. But in case of a severe storm, you will be excusable. A married man should never accept an invitation of this kind unless his wife is included in it.

#### CONVERSATION.

MANY men of talent forget that the object of conversation is to entertain and amuse, and that society, to be agreeable, must never be made the arena of dispute. Some persons spoil every party they join by making it their only object to prove that every one present is in *wife* wrong but themselves. It requires so much tact and good breeding to sustain an argument, however logical and correct the arguer may be, that an avoidance of it will gain him more popularity than a triumph over his adversary could accomplish. Even slight inaccuracy in statement of facts or opinions should rarely be remarked on in conversation.

A man should never permit himself to lose his temper in society—nor show that he has taken offence at any sup-

posed slight. It places him in a disadvantageous position—betraying an absence of self-respect, or at the least of self-possession.

If any one should assume a disagreeable tone of voice, or offensive manner towards you, never resent it in company—and above all, do not adopt the same style in your conversation with him; appear not to notice it, and generally it will be discontinued, as it will be seen that it has failed in its object: besides which you save your temper, which is an important consideration.

Be careful in company how you defend your friends, unless the conversation be addressed to yourself. Remember that nobody is perfect, and people may sometimes speak the truth; and that, if contradicted, they may be desirous of justifying themselves, and will *prove* what might otherwise have been a matter of doubt.

Never talk *at* people—it is in the worst possible taste, as it is taking an unfair advantage of them. If there be anything said that you dislike, speak your mind boldly, and give the parties saying it an opportunity of explaining, or of defending themselves. If you do not choose to do this, be silent.

Do not repeat the name of the person to whom you are speaking—as, "Indeed, Mr. Jones, you don't say so, sir?" or, "Really, Mrs. Brown, I quite agree with you, Mrs. Brown." It is a very bad habit.

In talking of your own children, never speak of them as "Master William," or "Miss Jane," "Mr. Henry," or "Miss Louisa:" it is a silly attempt to elevate both them and yourself, and is practiced only by vulgar and self-conceited people.

When giving or attending parties, do not mistake stiffness for dignity. The very spirit of good breeding consists in being easy and natural yourself, and in the endeavor to make others the same. Etiquette is only the *armor* of society; and when your position is fairly established, it



may be thrown aside, at least so far as is consistent with good feeling and decorum.

Avoid a loud tone of voice in conversation, or a "horse laugh;" both are exceedingly vulgar; and if practiced, strangers may think that you are a retired politician, who had acquired the practice in bar-room harangues. You should speak in a slightly subdued tone of voice, which we fear can only be acquired in good society. Be cautious also how you take the lead in conversation, unless it be forced upon you, lest people may reiterate the remark made by Dr. Johnson on a certain distinguished personage famous for his self-assurance, viz.: that he was like a *great toe* in society; the most ignoble part of the body, yet ever thrust foremost.

Be very careful how you "show off" in strange company, unless you be thoroughly conversant with your subject, as you are never sure of the person next to whom you may be seated. It is a common occurrence for young gentlemen of very shallow pretensions to endeavor to astonish country society, never dreaming that other persons may be present equally posted, and perhaps far more intelligent than themselves. Indeed, as the consciousness of ignorance is apt to make people peculiarly sensitive, it would be as well to avoid all subjects with which you suspect the generality of persons present cannot be acquainted; for, as the mere introduction of such topics will be considered and resented as an assumption on your part, should you happen to be vanquished on your own ground, your defeat will be the more humiliating.

In a room full of company, you should never take a person aside to whisper. It is extremely vulgar and offensive. If you have anything to say in private, retire to another room.

Lounging on sofas or easy chairs, tipping back your chair on two legs, throwing your leg over your knee, or sitting in any unnatural position—these habits are always

considered indecorous, and when ladies are present are deemed extremely vulgar. Do not cross a room in an anxious manner, and force your way up to a lady merely to receive a bow, as by so doing you attract the eyes of the company towards her. If you are desirous of being noticed by any one in particular, put yourself in their way as if by accident, and do not let them *see* that you have sought them out; unless, indeed, there be something very important to communicate.

Never introduce professional topics in general conversation at a party. Very few persons can be interested in your private business matters, and you must remember that the object is to entertain others, not yourself. You should be careful, also, not to introduce topics that have only a local interest, and you should never speak slightly of those who are the friends of any one present.

Mothers should be on their guard not to repeat nursery anecdotes or *bon-mots*, as, however interesting to themselves, they are seldom so to others. Long stories should always be avoided, as, however well told, they interrupt general conversation, and leave the impression that the narrator thought the company dull, and consequently endeavored to amuse it.

Never use the term "genteel" in conversation. To convey your idea, substitute "well-bred person," with "the manners of a gentleman," or "a gentleman." In speaking of any one do not say Mr. A., Mrs. B., or Miss C. Pronounce the whole name. Nothing sounds more abominable than to hear a woman speak of her husband as Mr. B.

#### GAMES AND SPORTS.

In some of the evening social gatherings, a variety of sports, or plays, are frequently introduced. Entering into the spirit of them we throw off the restraints of more formal intercourse, but they furnish no excuse for rudeness. You should never forget your politeness, or allow yourself

to take liberties, or lose your sense of delicacy and propriety, while engaged in these amusements.

The selection of games or sports belongs to the ladies, though gentlemen may modestly propose them, and ask the opinion of the ladies on the subject. The promiscuous kissing which frequently forms a part of the performances in some of these games, is now considered in bad taste. It has been brought into disfavor by the too fervent salutes which gentlemen, or rather male visitors, have substituted for the mere passive ones intended. A lady will offer her lips to be kissed only to her lover or husband, and not to them in company. Any breach of this rule in plays or games is wrong. The French code of kissing is the proper one, viz.: "Give your hand to a gentleman to kiss, your cheek to a friend, but keep your lips for your lover."

Never prescribe any forfeiture, in a game, which can wound the feelings of any of the company; and you should pay those which may be adjudged to you with cheerful promptness.

#### DANCING.

As an evening party is often only another name for a dancing party, we will here give the rules observed in fashionable dancing parties, or sociables, in New York City. If not applicable everywhere, they contain hints which will be useful to every one who dances:

1. Draw on your gloves (white or yellow) in the dressing-room, and do not be for one moment with them off in the dancing-rooms. At supper take them off; nothing is more preposterous than to eat in gloves.

2. When you are sure of a place in the dance, you go up to a lady and ask her if she will *do you the honor* to dance with you. If she answers that she is engaged, merely request her to name the earliest dance for which she is *not* engaged, and when she will do you the honor of dancing with you.

3 If a gentleman offers to dance with a lady, she should not refuse, unless for some *particular* and *valid* reason, in which case she can accept the next offer. But if she has no further objection than a temporary dislike or a piece of coquetry, it is a direct insult to him to refuse him and accept the next offer; besides, it shows too marked a preference for the latter.

4. When a lady is standing in a quadrille, though not engaged in dancing, a gentleman not acquainted with her partner should not converse with her.

5. When an unpracticed dancer makes a mistake, we may apprise him of his error; but it would be very impolite to have the air of giving him a lesson.

6. Unless a man has a very graceful figure, and can use it with great elegance, it is better for him to *walk* through the quadrilles, or invent some gliding movement for the occasion.

7. At the end of the dance, the gentleman re-conducts the lady to her place, bows and thanks her for the honor which she has conferred. She also bows in silence.

8. The master of the house should see that all the ladies dance. He should take notice particularly of those who seem to serve as *drapery* to the walls of the ball-room (or *wall flowers*, as the familiar expression is,) and should see that they are invited to dance.

9. Ladies who dance much should be very careful not to boast before those who dance but little or not at all, of the great number of dances for which they are engaged in advance. They should also, without being perceived, recommend these less fortunate ladies to gentlemen of *their acquaintance*.

10. For any of the members, either sons or daughters, of the family at whose house the ball is given, to dance frequently or constantly, denotes decided ill-breeding. The ladies of the house should not occupy those places in a quadrille which others may wish to fill, and they should,



moreover, be at leisure to attend to the rest of the company; and the gentlemen should be entertaining the married women and those who do not dance.

11. Never hazard taking part in a quadrille unless you know how to dance tolerably; for if you are a novice, or but little skilled, you would bring disorder into the midst of pleasure.

12. If a lady waltz with you, beware not to press her waist; you must only lightly touch it with the open palm of your hand, lest you leave a disagreeable impression not only on her *ceinture*, but on her mind.

13. If you accompany your wife to a dancing party, be careful not to dance with her, except perhaps the first set.

14. When that long and anxiously desiderated hour, the hour of supper, has arrived, you hand the lady you attend up or down to the supper-table. You remain with her while she is at the table, seeing that she has all that she desires, and then conduct her back to the dancing-rooms.

15. A gentleman attending a lady should invariably dance the first set with her, and may afterwards introduce her to a friend for the purpose of dancing.

16. Ball-room introductions cease with the dancing; and the gentleman should never again approach the lady by salutation, or any other mode, without a re-introduction of a formal character.

This code must be understood as applying in full only to fashionable dancing parties in the city; though most of the rules should be adhered to in any place. The good sense of the reader will enable him to modify them to suit any particular occasion.

#### FRENCH LEAVE.

If you desire to withdraw before the party breaks up, take "French leave"—that is, go quietly out without disturbing any one, and without saluting even the mistress

of the house, unless you can do so without attracting attention. The contrary course would interrupt the rest of the company, and call for otherwise unnecessary explanations and ceremony. If you are an intimate friend of the family, perhaps it would be more proper to take leave of the lady of the house in private.

#### DINNER PARTIES AND DINNERS.

UNTIL quite recently, dinners were given in the most agonizing ceremonious manner. But we are happy to inform all mankind that a little common sense is now used in dispensing the principal meal to hungry mortals. What was thought to be the height of good taste and superlative refinement a few years ago, is now declared vulgar, and the dinners of this day are not such tiresome affairs as those inflicted on our parents. A dinner party in the year 1860 is almost as difficult to describe as the gyrations of a picnic, so different are the customs of different people, and so few ceremonies are really necessary. It used to be said that many a man would pass muster in society as a gentleman until he accepted an invitation to dinner. But unless he was perfectly *au fait*, dinner would surely betray him. All this is changed now.

An invitation to dinner is generally given several days beforehand. It may be written or verbal. If you send out notes, they should be brief and unpretending, something like the following:

TUESDAY, Sept. 10th, 1860.

MR. GEORGE JONES requests the pleasure of your company at Dinner, on Friday, the 19th inst., at six o'clock.

W. B. ASTOR, Esq.

If it is a family dinner party, the note should begin, "Mr. and Mrs. George Jones would be happy," &c., and should be addressed to Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Astor, or to W. B. Astor, Esq., and Mrs. Astor, according as your taste may dictate.

Persons who receive an invitation to dinner should give a prompt answer, either verbally, or by note. The note must be brief, as follows :

WEDNESDAY, Sept. 17th.

MR. ASTOR accepts with much pleasure Mr. Jones's invitation to dine with him on Friday.

Or, in case you decline—

MR. ASTOR returns thanks for your kind invitation for Friday, but regrets that circumstances will prevent his joining you on that occasion.

GEORGE JONES, Esq.

Invitations to a family dinner should always be answered to the lady instead of her husband.

Persons who so choose, may at all times decline invitations to dinner without any breach of etiquette. But if they accept, they should be punctual at the hour appointed. The gentleman should be neatly dressed, and wear either a frock or dress coat. The lady should always appear in full dress.

When dinner is announced, the host rises and requests all to walk into the dining room. He offers his left arm to the lady present who from age or any consideration is entitled to precedence. The hostess will then see that each lady is conducted by a gentleman, and they should enter the dining room under her direction, the married people preceding the single ones. Should you have to go down stairs to the dining-room, always give the lady the wall, and when you arrive at the table seat yourself on her right side.

The lady hostess seats herself at the head of the table, and the host himself at the foot. The two most distinguished gentlemen of the party are seated next to the hostess, and the two ladies of greatest consideration sit next the host. If the dinner is given in honor of any gentleman, he sits at the right of the hostess. In placing the party at table, always separate husband and wife, and

members of the same family, as they are supposed to enjoy enough of each other's society at home. Mix up the gentlemen and ladies as much as possible.

Help ladies with a due appreciation of their delicacy, moderation, and fastidiousness of their appetites; and do not overload the plate of any person you serve. Never pour gravy on a plate without permission. It spoils the meat for some persons.

Do not insist upon your guests partaking of particular dishes; never ask persons more than once, and never put anything by force upon their plates. It is extremely ill-bred, though extremely common, to press one to eat of anything.

Soup is always served first, and then fish; and it is considered vulgar to take either of them twice. The reason for not being helped a second time at a large dinner party is, because by doing so you keep three parts of the company staring at you while waiting for the second course, much to the annoyance of the mistress of the house. At a family dinner it is of less importance, and may be done now-a-days without a breach of good manners. Fish is always helped with a silver or plated fish-slice, and when you have it on your plate you should use your fork only in eating it. The application of a knife to fish is likely to destroy the delicacy of its flavor; besides which, fish sauces are often acidulated; acids corrode steel, and draw from it a disagreeable taste. In the North, where lemon or vinegar is very generally used for salmon and many other kinds of fish, the objection becomes more apparent.

Do not ask any lady to take wine, until you see that she has finished her fish or soup. This exceedingly absurd and troublesome custom is very properly giving way at the best tables to the more reasonable one of the gentleman helping the lady to wine next to whom he may be seated, or a servant will hand it round. But if either a lady or a gentleman be invited to take wine at table, they should not



refuse; it is very *gauche* so to do. They need not drink half a glass with each person, but merely taste it, or touch their lips to the glass.

The host or hostess should never eulogize any particular dish, but should leave every one to their own choice and enjoyment, the main object being to have your guests realize an ever-present sense of being entertained. You may casually mention that a certain dish is considered excellent, but never press it upon any one, nor should you ever try to persuade your guest to eat more than he takes freely, for very young or modest people may be thereby induced to accept what they really do not want, which would be unpleasant to them.

Silver or plated forks are now universally used at table—steel forks being only fit for carving. Never use a knife to convey food to your mouth under any circumstances. It is unnecessary, and glaringly vulgar. Feed yourself with a fork or spoon. A knife is only used for cutting. Peas, tomatoes, tarts, puddings, &c. should always be eaten with a spoon. As a general rule, when helping any one at table, never use a knife when you can use a spoon.

If at dinner you are requested to help any one to sauce or gravy, do not pour it over the meat or vegetables, but on one side of them. Never load down a person's plate with anything—it is vulgar.

At a dinner party the host usually serves his left hand neighbor first, then his right hand, and so on. One ladleful of soup to a plate is sufficient. Take whatever is given to you, and do not offer it to your neighbor. Begin at once to eat, and do not suck the soup into your mouth or blow it. If it be too hot, stir it until it is cool enough to eat. Many people make an unpleasant noise with their lips by inhaling their breath while taking soup. This habit should be carefully avoided. Making a noise in chewing, by smacking the lips, or breathing hard, are both unseemly habits. Use your knife, fork and teeth as quietly as possible.

Do not pick your teeth at table, except in an emergency; as, however satisfactory a practice it may be to yourself, to witness it is not at all pleasant.

Ladies should never dine with their gloves on, unless their hands are not fit to be seen, though the habit is not positively ungenteel.

Servants occasionally wait at table in clean white gloves, as there are few things more disagreeable than the thumb of a clumsy waiter in your plate; but the custom of their waiting in gloves has never been adopted in the mansions of people of distinction. A white damask napkin, in which his thumb is enveloped, is given to each servant, and this effectually precludes its contact with your plate.

Most writers on Dinner Table Etiquette prescribe that in sending your plate for anything you should leave your knife and fork upon it. There seems also to be a reason for the custom in the fact that to hold them in your hand would be awkward, and to lay them on the table-cloth might soil it; but the author of the "American Gentleman's Guide," whose acquaintance with the best usage is not to be questioned, says that they should be retained, and either kept together in the hand or rested upon your bread, to avoid soiling the cloth.

Finger glasses, when used, come on with the dessert, and are filled with warm water. Wet a corner of your napkin, and wipe your mouth, then rinse your fingers; but do not practice the filthy custom of gargling your mouth at table, albeit the usage prevails among a few, who think that because it is a foreign habit it cannot be disgusting.

The French fashion of having the principal dishes carved on a side-table, and served by attendants, is now very generally adopted at ceremonious dinners in this country; nevertheless, those who go into company cannot safely count upon never being called upon to carve, and the art is well worth acquiring. Ignorance of it sometimes places one in an awkward position. You will find



directions on this subject in almost any cook-book; you will learn more, however, by watching an accomplished carver than in any other way.

Never pare an apple or a pear for a lady, unless she desires you to do so, and then be careful to use your fork to hold it. You may sometimes offer to divide a very large apple or pear with a person.

Coffee is sometimes served in the dining-room and sometimes in the drawing-room after dinner. If served at table, do not be in a hurry to have it brought, but wait until every one has done with his wine for fear you should seem chary of the wine.

Should your servants break anything while you are at table, never turn round, or inquire into the particulars, however annoyed you may feel. If your servants betray stupidity or awkwardness in waiting on your guests, avoid reprimanding them publicly, as it only draws attention to their errors, and adds to their embarrassment.

It is customary, when you have been out dining, to leave a card upon the lady the next day, or as soon after as may be convenient; but attentions of this sort are not always expected from professional or business men, their time being too valuable to sacrifice in making visits of mere ceremony; therefore, do not attribute such omission to any want of respect, but to its proper cause—time more usefully occupied.

When a man is about to be married, he usually gives a dinner to his bachelor friends; which is understood to be their *conge*, unless he chooses to renew their acquaintance.

#### THE BALL-ROOM.

As it is necessary for every young person who goes into society to learn to dance, in acquiring that art they will of course become familiar with the etiquette of the ball-room. If you are a stranger at a ball, you apply to the managers for a partner and are presented to a lady, with whom you

dance. This does not entitle you to claim her acquaintance afterwards, and you should not even recognize her again unless she makes the first advances with a bow or a smile. In Europe it is customary for a gentleman to take off his hat to any lady in whose society he had ever been. But here we are more particular. We wait for the lady to first recognize us. Few ladies who go to public balls would object to being noticed by their ball-room acquaintances, or fail to bow on meeting, when you can respond by lifting your hat. Never invite a strange lady to dance with you unless you have been presented to her for that purpose.

White or yellow tinted gloves are indispensable either at a ball or a dancing party. Lead the lady through the quadrille; do not drag her nor clasp her hand too tight. Never stand up to dance unless you are acquainted with the figures and know some of the steps. Dance quietly. Do not kick and caper about nor sway your body, but let your motion be from the hips downward. Do not pride yourself too much on the neatness of your steps, lest you be taken for a dancing master. When you are waltzing with a lady, do not press her waist, but touch it lightly with the open palm of your hand.

If a lady should civilly decline to dance with you, making an excuse, and you chance to see her dancing afterwards, do not take any notice of it, nor be offended with her. It might not be that she despised you, but that she preferred another. We cannot always fathom the hidden springs which influence a woman's actions, and there are many bursting hearts within white satin dresses; therefore do not insist upon the fulfilment of established regulations "de rigueur." Besides, it is a hard case that women should be compelled to dance with everybody offered them, at the alternative of not being allowed to enjoy themselves at all.

If a lady friend be engaged when you request her to dance, and she promises to be your partner for the next or

any of the following dances, do not neglect her when the time comes, but be in readiness to fulfil your office as her cavalier, or she may think that you have studiously slighted her, besides preventing her obliging some one else. Even inattention and forgetfulness, by showing how little you care for a lady, form in themselves a tacit insult.

Never quarrel in a ball-room, or show the least resentment. All misunderstandings must be settled outside. It is in bad taste to be over officious in noticing derelictions from strict propriety, for well-bred women will not thank you for defending them under such circumstances, as they do not like to become conspicuous; and in small matters they are generally able and willing to take care of themselves, and overwhelm the offender in some quiet way. It is only serious and glaring violations of decorum that should be publicly noticed.

In meeting your friends at a ball or promenade, it is only necessary to salute them once for the whole evening. Some people are constantly nodding and bowing, which is quite disagreeable.

#### THE STREET.

While walking the street no one should be so absent-minded as to neglect to recognize his friends. If you do not stop, you should always bow, touch your hat, or bid your friend good day. If you stop, you can offer your hand without removing your glove. If you stop to talk, retire on one side of the walk. If your friend has a stranger with him and you have anything to say, you should apologize to the stranger. Never leave your friend abruptly to see another person without asking him to excuse your departure. If you meet a gentleman of your acquaintance walking with a lady whom you do not know, lift your hat as you salute them. If you know the lady, you should salute her first.

If you meet a lady of your acquaintance in the street,

if she is an intimate friend you can confidently salute her by lifting your hat—if only a casual acquaintance, wait for her to recognize you first. Never offer to shake hands with a lady in the street if you have on dark gloves, as you may soil her white ones. If you meet a lady friend with whom you wish to converse, you must not stop, but turn and walk along with her; and should she be walking with a gentleman, first assure yourself that you are not intruding before you attempt to join the two in their walk.

In walking with ladies in the street, gentlemen should treat them with the most scrupulous politeness. It is customary to give them the inside of the walk, but there may be places where the outside would be safer, and you should then change sides.

You should offer your arm to a lady with whom you are walking whenever her safety, comfort, or convenience may seem to require such attention on your part. At night your arm should always be tendered, and also when ascending the steps of a public building. In walking with any person you should keep step with military precision, and with ladies and elderly people you should always accommodate your speed to theirs.

If a lady with whom you are walking receives the salute of a person who is a stranger to you, you should return it, not for yourself, but for her.

When a lady whom you accompany wishes to enter a store, you should hold the door open and allow her to enter first, if practicable; for you must never pass before a lady anywhere, if you can avoid it, or without an apology.

If a lady addresses an inquiry to a gentleman on the street, he will lift his hat, or at least touch it respectfully, as he replies. If he cannot give the information required, he will express his regrets.

When tripping over the pavement, a lady should gracefully raise her dress a little above her ankle. With her



right hand she should hold together the folds of her gown and draw them towards the right side. To raise the dress on both sides, and with both hands, is vulgar. This ungraceful practice can be tolerated only for a moment when the mud is very deep.

Most American ladies in our cities wear too rich and expensive dresses in the street. Some, indeed, will sweep the side-walks with costly stuffs only fit for a drawing-room or a carriage. This is in bad taste, and is what ill-natured people would term snobbish.

The out-door costume of ladies is not complete without a shawl or a mantle. Shawls are difficult to wear gracefully, and few ladies wear them well. You should not drag a shawl tight to your shoulders and stick out your elbows, but fold it loosely and gracefully, so that it may fully envelop the figure.

#### SHOPPING.

IN inquiring for goods at a shop or store, do not say, I want so and so, but say to the shopman—Show me such or such an article, if you please—or use some other polite form of address. If you are obliged to examine a number of articles before you are suited, apologize to the shopkeeper for the trouble you give him. If, after all, you cannot suit yourself, renew your apologies when you go away. If you make only small purchases, say to him—I am sorry for having troubled you for so trifling a thing.

#### PLACES OF AMUSEMENT.

GENTLEMEN who attend ladies to the opera, to concerts, to lectures, &c., should take off their hats on entering the room, and while showing them their seats. Having taken your seats remain quietly in them, and avoid, unless absolute necessity requires it, incommoding others by crowding out and in before them. If obliged to do this, politely

apologize for the trouble you cause them. To talk during the performance is an act of rudeness and injustice. You thus proclaim your own ill-breeding and invade the rights of others, who have paid for the privilege of hearing the performers, and not for listening to you.

If you are in attendance upon a lady at any opera, concert, or lecture, you should retain your seat at her side; but if you have no lady with you, and have taken a desirable seat, you should, if need be, cheerfully relinquish it in favor of a lady, for one less eligible.

To the opera, or theatre, ladies should wear opera hoods, which are to be taken off on entering. In this country, custom permits the wearing of bonnets; but as they are neither convenient nor comfortable, ladies should dispense with their use whenever they can.

Gloves should be worn by ladies in church, and in places of public amusement. Do not take them off to shake hands. Great care should be taken that they are well made and fit neatly.

#### TRAVELING.

As a general rule, travelers are selfish. They pay little attention either to the comforts or distresses of their fellow-travelers; and the commonest observances of politeness are often sadly neglected by them. In the scramble for tickets, for seats, for state-rooms, or for places at a public table, the courtesies of life seem to be trampled under foot. Even the ladies are sometimes rudely treated and shamefully neglected in the headlong rush for desirable seats in the railway cars. To see the behaviour of American people on their travels, one would suppose that we were anything but a refined nation; and I have often wondered whether a majority of our travelers could really make a decent appearance in social society.

When you are traveling, it is no excuse that because others outrage decency and propriety you should follow



their example, and fight them with their own weapons. A rush and scramble at the railway ticket office is always unnecessary. The cars will not leave until every passenger is aboard, and if you have ladies with you, you can easily secure your seats and afterwards procure the tickets at leisure. But suppose you do lose a favorite seat by your moderation! Is it not better to suffer a little inconvenience than to show yourself decidedly vulgar? Go to the cars half an hour before they start, and you will avoid all trouble of this kind.

When seated, or about to seat yourself in the cars, never allow considerations of personal comfort or convenience to cause you to disregard the rights of fellow-travelers, or forget the respectful courtesy due to woman. The pleasantest or most comfortable seats belong to the ladies, and you should never refuse to resign such seats to them with a cheerful politeness. Sometimes a gentleman will go through a car and choose his seat, and afterwards vacate it to procure his ticket, leaving his overcoat or carpet bag to show that the seat is taken. Always respect this token, and never seize upon a seat thus secured, without leave, even though you may want it for a lady. It is not always necessary for a gentleman to rise after he has seated himself and offer his seat to a lady, particularly if the lady is accompanied by another gentleman; for there may still be eligible vacant seats in the cars. But should you see a lady come alone, and if the seats in the car ~~all~~ appear to be filled, do not hesitate to offer her yours, if you have no ladies in your company. And should a lady motion to seat herself beside you, rise at once and offer her the choice of the two seats. These are but common courtesies that every well-bred man will at all times cheerfully offer to the other sex.

Making acquaintances in the cars, although correct enough, is a measure of which travelers generally appear to be very shy. There is no reason for this, as acquaintances thus picked up need never be recognized again

unless you please. If a stranger speaks to you, always answer him politely, and if his conversation proves disagreeable, you have no alternative but to change your seat.

In steamers do not make a rush for the supper table, or make a glutton of yourself when you get there. Never fail to offer your seat on deck to a lady, if the seats all appear to be occupied, and always meet half way any fellow-passenger who wishes to enter into conversation with you. Some travelers are so exclusive that they consider it a presumption on the part of a stranger to address them; but such people are generally foolish, and of no account. Sociable intercourse while traveling is one of its main attractions. Who would care about sitting and moping for a dozen hours on board a steamer without exchanging a word with anybody? and this must be the fate of the exclusives when they travel alone. Even ladies, who run greater risks in forming steamboat acquaintances than the men, are allowed the greatest privileges in that respect. It might not be exactly correct for a lady to make a speaking acquaintance of a gentleman; but she may address or question him for the time being without impropriety.

Fellow-passengers, whether on a steamboat or in the cars, should at all times be sociable and obliging to one another. Those who are the reverse of this may be set down either as selfish, foolish, or conceited.

In the cars you have no right to keep a window open for your accommodation, if the current of air thus produced annoys or endangers the health of another. There are a sufficient number of discomforts in traveling, at best, and it should be the aim of each passenger to lessen them as much as possible, and to cheerfully bear his own part. Life is a journey, and we are all fellow-travelers.

If in riding in an omnibus, or crossing a ferry with a friend, he wishes to pay for you, never insist upon paying for yourself or for both. If he is before you, let the matter pass without remark.



## MISCELLANEOUS HINTS.

If you wish to pass for a well-bred person, keep clean. It is far better to dress coarsely and out of fashion and be strictly clean, than to cover a dirty skin with the finest and richest clothing. A coarse shirt or a calico dress is not necessarily vulgar, but dirt is essentially so. A clean skin is as essential to health, beauty and personal comfort, as it is to decency; and without health and that perfect freedom from physical disquiet which come only from the normal action of all the functions of the bodily organs, your behaviour can never be satisfactory to yourself or agreeable to others.

When you go into a house anywhere, never fail to scrape your shoes, and wipe them on the mat, if the weather be muddy. Neglect of this duty is a pretty strong proof of slovenliness and vulgarity at home.

Clean and white teeth are an absolute necessity to any one who expects to pass muster in good society. Some people can keep their teeth white without the aid of washes or powder, while for others it is necessary to use some cleansing substance daily. To keep the mouth sweet and the teeth clean, it is generally necessary to brush them always after eating, and to scour them once a day. Powdered myrrh one part, to two or three parts of orris-root, is all that is necessary for a tooth-powder. Scent it with anything you may fancy, and you then have the same tooth-powder that is sold under different names by the apothecaries.

A bad breath is frequently caused by a dirty mouth and decayed teeth. Where it proceeds from the stomach, it can only be rectified by dieting and taking seidlitz-powders or some other gentle cathartic.

You will not, of course, go into company, or sit down to the table, with soiled hands, but unless you habituate yourself to a special care of them, more or less dirt will

be found lodged under the nails. Clean them carefully every time you wash your hands, and keep them smoothly and evenly cut. Never pare or scrape your nails, pick your teeth, comb your hair, or perform any of the necessary operations of the toilet in company. All these things should be carefully attended to in the privacy of your own room. To pick the nose, dig the ears, or scratch the head or any part of the person in company, is frightfully vulgar.

A gentleman should always wear a clean shirt. It is better to wear a threadbare coat than to have your shirt disreputable. Your hat and boots must also be well brushed if you expect to pass for a person of good breeding.

Bashfulness or diffidence is one of the greatest obstacles with which young people have to contend, and it can only be overcome by resolute effort and practice. Never give way to it. Go where you desire to go and overcome your diffidence by self-respect, self-reliance and self-control. Persevere in this and you will conquer it in due time.

Pulling out your watch in company unasked is a mark of ill-breeding. It looks as though you were tired of the company, and that time dragged heavily. If you desire to know the time, retire to some corner, or into another room, and look at your watch unnoticed.

Never offer a lady a costly gift unless you are engaged to marry her. It is in the highest degree indelicate, and looks as though you were desirous of purchasing her good will. When you make a present to a lady, use no ceremony, but give it in an indirect and indifferent way, as though it was of very little consequence. Gifts given by ladies to gentlemen should not be purchased, but should be the offspring of their gentle skill, such as needlework, drawings or paintings.

Keep yourself free from strange tricks or habits, such as thrusting out your tongue, continually snapping your fingers, rubbing your hands, sighing aloud, gaping with a



noise like a country fellow that has been sleeping in a hay-loft, or indeed with any noise. These are imitations of the manners of the mob, and are degrading to a gentleman. It is rude and vulgar to lean your head back against fine papered walls, and thus soil them.

Never censure any one in conversation whose religious belief, or politics, or opinions of any kind, are different from your own. If he intrudes his ideas upon you offensively, be silent. Because he shows his own ill-breeding, is no reason why you should commit an impropriety.

The right of privacy is sacred, and should always be respected. It is exceedingly improper to enter a private room anywhere without knocking. No relation, however intimate, will justify an abrupt intrusion upon a private apartment. So the trunks, boxes, packets, papers, and letters of every individual, locked or unlocked, sealed or unsealed, are sacred. It is ill manners even to open a book-case, or to read a written paper lying open, without permission expressed or implied. Books in an open case or on a center-table, cards in a card-case, and newspapers, are presumed to be open for examination. Be careful where you go, what you read, and what you handle, particularly in private apartments.

Always conform your conduct, as near as possible, to the company with whom you are associated. If you should be thrown among people who are vulgar, it is better to humor them than to set yourself up, then and there, for a model of politeness. It is related of a certain king that on a particular occasion he turned his tea into his saucer, contrary to the etiquette of society, because two country ladies, whose hospitalities he was enjoying, did so. That king was a gentleman; and this anecdote serves to illustrate an important principle; namely, that true politeness and genuine good manners often not only permit, but absolutely demand, a violation of some of the arbitrary rules of etiquette. Bear this fact in mind.

Some people of both sexes affect odd, out-of-the-way dresses, or wear their hair in a queer manner, and defend themselves by saying that their mode of dress is more convenient or becoming, or less expensive. I have no doubt that a few of them do this in good faith; but with a majority it is simply a case of vanity and self-conceit, craving notoriety. Such pranks, either in men or women, should discard them from all good society. If they choose to affect eccentricity, let them enjoy it alone by themselves. Quakers may be an exception to this rule; though even that strictly moral people have recently introduced a little common sense into their creed as far as it relates to dress. The young Quakers and Quakeresses of the present day conform to the usages of society in this respect except in the matter of "finery." Their dresses, and even their hats and bonnets, approach very near to the fashionable styles.

A well-bred gentleman or lady will sustain their characters as such at all times, and in all places—at home as well as abroad. If you see a man behave in a rude and uncivil manner to his father or mother, his brothers or sisters, his wife or children; or fail to exercise the common courtesies of life at his own table and around his own fireside, you may at once set him down as a boor, whatever pretensions he may make to gentility. Good manners should always begin at home.

If you would have your children grow up beloved and respected by their elders as well as their cotemporaries, teach them good manners in their childhood. The young sovereign should first learn to obey, that he may be the better fitted to command in his turn.

Show, but do not show off, your children to strangers. Recollect, in the matter of children, how many are born every hour, each one almost as remarkable as yours in the eyes of its papa and mamma.

Never recline backwards, while seated, so as to push your chair upon two legs. This appears to be almost ex-

clusively an American habit, and is decidedly a breach of good-breeding. Parlor chairs are usually made without braces across the legs, and should you enter a gentleman's parlor and tip back in a chair like this, you would run the risk of breaking it down.

In shaking hands it is more respectful to offer an ungloved hand; but if two gentlemen are both gloved, it is very foolish to keep each other waiting to take them off. You should not, however, offer a gloved hand to a lady or a superior who is ungloved. Foreigners are sometimes very sensitive in this matter, and might deem the glove an insult. It is well for a gentleman to carry his right-hand glove in his hand if he is likely to have occasion to shake hands. At a ball or party the gloves need not be taken off.

Be exact and prompt in all your money transactions. No man who has the least pretensions to good-breeding will take advantage of the liberality of his friend under any circumstances. It is no breach of politeness to refuse a loan, to even your best friend, because no one is supposed to know of your ability to make the loan at that particular time.

The first mark of a gentleman is a sensitive regard for the feelings of others; therefore, smoke where it is never likely to prove offensive by making your clothes smell. After smoking, always wash your mouth and brush your teeth. What man of delicacy could presume to address a lady with his breath smelling of onions? Yet tobacco is equally odious to some people.

Be cautious how you indulge in *badinage* in the presence of dull people; they will either get out of temper in consequence of taking what you say literally, or else will stare and wonder at you for being such a "strange man." "Poor Susan!" said a gentleman to a pretty girl. "Poor, indeed!" replied the lady, with an indignant toss of the head; "not so poor as *that* comes to. Papa can give us something, I think!"

## HINTS TO LADIES.

YOUNG LADIES should always be on their guard against excessive timidity, for it not only paralyzes their powers, renders them awkward, and gives them an almost silly air, but it may even cause them to be suspected of pride among those who do not understand the real cause of their diffidence. There are many intelligent and worthy young ladies who make a very indifferent appearance in society from this cause. We can only advise them that a firmness of purpose to break themselves of their timid feelings will accomplish it by a little practice.

Good temper and good nature are the real essentials to true politeness, and the most artful polish can never impart the "*je ne sais quoi*" of elegance, where these two requisites are wanting.

Propriety in the carriage of the body is especially indispensable to ladies. It is by this that, in a walk, or any assembly, people, who cannot converse with them, judge of their merit and their good education. How many dancers move off; and how many persons sigh with pity, at the sight of a beautiful woman who has a mincing way, affects grace, inclines her head affectedly, and who seems to admire herself incessantly, and to invite others to admire her also. Very few people like to enter into conversation with an immovable lady, and one who is formal and precise, stretching out the body, pressing the lips, and carrying back the elbows, as if they were fastened to her side.

Some ladies walk so as to turn up their dresses behind, and I have seen a well-dressed woman made to look very awkward by elevating her shoulders slightly and pushing her elbows too far behind her. Some hold their hands up to the waist, and press their arms against themselves as tightly as if they were glued there; others swing them backward and forward, as a business man walks along the street. *Too short* steps detract from dignity very much,



forming a mincing pace; too long steps are masculine. All these manœuvres are in bad taste. The easiest or most natural gait and disposition of the limbs is the most graceful.

The gait of a lady ought neither to be too quick nor too slow; the most easy and convenient step is that which fatigues the least, and pleases most. The body and the head should be erect, without affectation, and without haughtiness; the movements, especially those of the arms, easy and natural. The countenance should be pleasing and modest.

It is not polite for a lady to speak too quick or too loud. When seated, she ought neither to cross her legs, nor take a vulgar attitude. She should occupy her chair entirely, and appear neither too restless, nor yet too immovable.

On rising from bed in the morning, a lady should put on a morning gown and a small muslin cap. The hair-papers, if they cannot be removed on rising, should be concealed under a bandeau of lace, or of the hair. They should be removed as soon as may be. In this dress she should receive only intimate friends, or persons who call upon urgent or indispensable business. Dispense with this dress as soon as possible, and dress for the forenoon. Some will go about in their morning dress half the day, which is a decidedly low and vulgar habit.

In selecting your dresses, have a correct eye to suitable colors for your complexion. If you do not possess a good eye for color, you ought never to rely upon your own judgment in the selection of your patterns, or in their arrangement upon your person. If you do, you may be nothing more than a walking violation of all the harmony of light and shade; and however expensively dressed, you will never appear either genteel or fashionable.

It is altogether out of place for a lady to spread out her dress for display, or to throw her drapery around her in

sitting down, and what is especially to be avoided is, an unquiet, bold, and imperious air, for it is unnatural, and not allowable in any case.

In receiving guests, your first object should be to make them feel at home. Begging them to make themselves at home is not sufficient. You should display a genuine, unaffected friendliness. Allow their presence to interfere as little as possible with your domestic arrangements; thus letting them see that their visit does not disturb you, but they fall, as it were, naturally into a vacant place in your household. Observe your own feelings when you happen to be the guest of a person who, though he may be very much your friend, and really glad to see you, seems not to know what to do either with you or himself; and again, when in the house of another, you feel as much at ease as in your own. Mark the difference, more easily felt than described, between the manners of the two, and deduce therefrom a lesson for your own improvement.

Always avoid the foolish practice of deprecating your own rooms, furniture, or viands, and expressing regrets that you have nothing better to offer. Neither should you go to the other extreme of extolling any particular thing or article of food. The best way is to say nothing about these matters. Neither is it proper to urge guests to eat, or to load their plates against their inclinations.

When visitors propose to leave you, do not be over urgent to have them remain, even if you feel that their visit has been too short. You can express your regrets, of course; but good manners do not require you to endeavor to retain them against their wishes or sense of duty.

Don't make your rooms or stair-case gloomy. Furnish them for light, and let them have it. Daylight is cheap. If your rooms are dark, all the effects of furniture, pictures, walls, and carpets is lost. If you have beautiful things, make them useful. The fashion of having a nice parlor, and then shutting it up all but three or four days in the

year, when you have company; spending your own life in a small room, shabbily furnished, or an unhealthy basement, to save your things, is the meanest possible economy.

Don't put your cards around the looking-glass, unless in your private boudoir. If you wish to display them, keep them in a suitable basket or vase on the mantle or center-table.

If you are a guest in any family, you should accommodate yourself to their customs and habits. Ascertain their hours for meals, for retiring, &c. and regulate your own movements accordingly. Your own good sense and delicacy will teach you the desirability of keeping your room tidy, and your articles of dress and toilet as much in order as possible. If there is a deficiency of servants, a lady will certainly not hesitate to make her own bed, and to do for herself as much as possible, and for the family all that is in her power.

Treat your servants always with kindness, but at the same time with firm respect for yourself; on no account be familiar with them, neither hear their tattle, nor tattle with them. Do not scold them, or they will lose their respect for you. When they need reproof, give it them in a calm, dignified, and firm manner; but on no account, if you can possibly avoid it, find fault with them in the presence of strangers, even though they should let fall the tray with your best set of china upon it.

The reputation for good-breeding of the mistress of the house is often measured by the conduct of her servants. You should take care, therefore, to make them civil and polite, teach them to assist your visitors in putting off and on their overcoats, cloaks, &c., and let them always be ready to open the door when your guests arrive or depart.

Accustom your servants never to appear before you too slatternly or too richly dressed; never allow them to enter into conversation with each other in your presence, nor to answer you by signs or coarse terms. If you have only

one servant, talk of her by her Christian name; if you have more, talk of them by the names of their offices, such as nurse, cook, housemaid, butler, footman, &c., but always address them by their Christian names.

Never entertain your visitors with any narrative of your servants' improprieties.

A lady in company should never exhibit any anxiety to sing or play; but if she intends to do so, she should not affect to refuse when asked, but obligingly accede at once. If you cannot sing, or do not choose to, say so with seriousness and gravity, and put an end to the expectation promptly. After singing once or twice, cease and give place to others. There is an old saying, that a singer can with the greatest difficulty be set agoing, and when agoing, cannot be stopped.

A lady will not say, "My husband," except among intimates; in every other case she should address or speak of him by his name, as Mr. —.

If a lady who receives a half-ceremonious visit, is sewing, she ought to leave it off immediately, and not resume it, except at the request of the visitor. If they are on quite intimate terms, she may request permission to continue. If a person visits in an entirely ceremonious way, it would be very impolite to work even an instant. Moreover, with friends a lady should hardly be occupied with her work, but seem to forget it on their account.

To carry children or dogs with you on a visit of ceremony, is altogether vulgar. Even in half-ceremonious visits, it is necessary to leave one's dog in the ante-room; the nurse who holds the infant must also be left without the drawing-room.

When ladies are introduced to one another, or to gentlemen, it is not customary for them to shake hands, but merely to bow slowly and gracefully. Courtesying is now obsolete. When old friends meet they shake hands or salute each other with a kiss on the cheek.



Ladies of literary tastes should never attempt to show off much, for fear some jealous rival of the other sex should sneer and call them *blues*.

A lady should never prolong a friendly call into the evening, or make one at the close of the day, without having first arranged for an escort home. She should either have one of the domestics accompany her, or else a male member of her family, or have an understanding that they come for her. Should she have loitered until evening without being thus provided, she must accept an escort from the family visited, at the same time expressing her regrets.

If, in traveling, any one introduces himself to you, and does it in a proper and respectful manner, conduct yourself towards him with politeness, ease, and dignity: if he is a gentleman, he will appreciate your behaviour—and if not a gentleman, will be deterred from annoying you; but acquaintanceships thus formed must cease where they began, and your entering into conversation with a lady or gentleman in a boat or a coach does not give any of you a right to after-recognition.

#### NEW YEARS CALLS.

THE American custom of gentlemen making calls on all their friends on New Years day is very ancient, having originated among the Dutch settlers of New York. In 1840 it was at its height, almost every family with any social pretensions setting a New Years table, and making a display according to their means. It is still continued, though with much less parade and entertainment. Under the old arrangement, Young America was apt to take too much wine and an excess of hot whisky punches, hence big treats on New Years fell into disfavor. At the present time most families in New York City, and to some extent in large towns, receive New Years calls. The ladies are at home to all their gentlemen acquaintances from eleven

or twelve o'clock in the day up to ten at night. It is not customary, however, to set a table or make a display as formerly, but to receive the gentlemen, who pass the compliments of the season, and after a few moments' chat retire. In some houses, if they protract their visit beyond a few moments, they are asked to take a glass of wine with the ladies. That is all.

In making New Years calls, gentlemen frequently go in couples, and by threes and fours. They call on the female friends of the whole party, and if one or more of them should not be acquainted with the ladies where the call is made, they are introduced. It is not usual, however, to make promiscuous introductions in the best society. Most people are not very particular, because these casual introductions do not really amount to anything.

New Years day is the gala day for match-makers among the ladies. All the country cousins, and young ladies in the matrimonial market, are marshalled and drilled to make the best possible appearance—in short, to put on their most bewitching and fascinating smiles—and we are happy to add that casual acquaintances thus made often end in new friendships, and not unfrequently in closer ties.

If a gentleman is introduced to ladies while making a New Years call, it does not warrant him to claim the privilege of a friend of the family. He should never call a second time except he be specially invited, or unless he has permission to do so through an acknowledged friend of the family. If he is desirous of a further acquaintance with the young ladies, he will request the friend who introduced him to ask such permission.

In receiving their company on New Years day, ladies have the largest liberty and freedom. They can chat with any one who comes properly introduced, with the same frankness and lack of reserve that they would with their most intimate friends. All ceremony is dispensed with for the moment; but as the visits are necessarily short, if

there should happen to be any cases of "love at first sight," the smitten youth must manage to get an invitation for future further acquaintance.

New Years is a jubilee for bashful girls. On that occasion they show themselves in a frank, hearty and free-and-easy manner, in singular contrast to the stiff etiquette of their common every-day life. They are not then afraid of making a mistake, and they act natural. I have always admired the characters of bashful girls, and whenever opportunity offers I make their acquaintance. Their reserve seldom or ever comes from stupidity. They are usually amiable, intelligent and clever, if not so quick-witted as their more favored sisters. If I was pressed to choose me a wife at random, I would select a bashful young lady.

The two or three days succeeding New Years are the ladies' days for calling, to pass the compliments of the season. This custom has now become quite as popular as the New Years calls of the gentlemen. The ladies discuss with each other the number of their gentlemen visitors on New Years, the new faces they have seen, and the matrimonial prospects for the year. It is customary on these occasions to offer wine and other refreshments, and to drink to each other's health and prosperity.

#### LOVE AND COURTSHIP.

YOUNG PEOPLE of both sexes are too apt to wax romantic, and think of love and courtship before they are out of their teens. Some girls may marry thus early and do well enough, but we earnestly protest against boyish courtships. They should be frowned down in every social circle. Young men under twenty years old who think of marrying are generally those who have not seen much of good society. A boy candidate for matrimony is usually a bashful fellow, who yearns for a social companion of some kind, and picks up the first silly girl he meets. If circumstances had so favored him that he could have gone

more into female society, the probability is he would never have committed a folly that may prove the bane of his future social existence. It is almost unnecessary to say that boys who marry, and girls who marry them, are by that act out of the pale of good society. No one would recognize a pair of children in the matrimonial state. They must tarry at home, and live upon love, until the husband's beard is grown. There are a few silly women, of not much account anywhere, who might patronise married boys for the sake of being praised and lionized by somebody. That is all.

A young man should make up his mind not to marry until he is twenty-five. If he enters society with that determination, and possessing any degree of firmness of purpose, there is little danger to him of the shafts of Cupid. At that age he will have acquired such a knowledge of himself, both physically and mentally, as will enable him to set up a proper standard of female excellence, and to determine what qualities, physical and mental, should characterize the woman who is to be his companion for life.

Do not make up your mind to wait till you have acquired a fortune before you marry. You should not, however, assume the responsibilities of a family without a reasonable prospect of being able to maintain one. If you are established in business, or have an adequate income for the immediate requirements of the new relation, you may safely trust to your own energy and self-reliance for the rest.

Girls of good sense will not be ambitious to marry until after their twentieth year. They should then seek partners among gentlemen who are from five to ten years older than themselves. If a girl is of a romantic turn, and in danger of falling in love, we would respectfully suggest that she should form no intimate acquaintances with the other sex except among those who are of suitable age for her. She will thus avoid the Scylla of a green husband,



even if she gets wrecked upon the Charybdis of a shiftless or unprincipled one.

I have generally noticed that where a marriageable young man looked too anxiously round among his female acquaintances for a wife, he almost invariably got cheated. There is a certain class of girls who are brought up for the matrimonial market in the same way that an organ grinder trains his monkeys. A girl of this kind is directed by her mother, who keeps hold of the string to which she is fastened, directs all her movements, and shows her off until her market is made. These are the ones usually taken by greenhorns, and over-anxious Benedicks.

It is seldom that a young man who goes much into female society arrives at the age of twenty-five without having formed agreeable acquaintances among the other sex. He will therefore have little difficulty in selecting a girl suitable for his wife, and the question is, how shall he proceed to win her according to the rules or etiquette of good society?

Girls have keen perceptions, and if the object of his choice reciprocates his partiality for her company, he will have no difficulty whatever, for she will meet him half way in all those little attentions which naturally suggest themselves to a lover. If, on the contrary, the lady is shy and undetermined, let him not seem too anxious to secure her favor, but treat her with a polite deference, and endeavor by assiduous attention to her wishes, tastes and humors, to gain her heart. Some young ladies will surrender under such treatment even after they had solemnly made up their minds never to encourage the man who was thus seeking their favor.

Do not visit your sweetheart too often, lest by making yourself common with her, she will not feel that respect so necessary to foster genuine affection. Some young fellows, after they are tacitly accepted as lovers, will so overwhelm their sweethearts with their company as to become

positive bores. If a girl is sensible she will dislike so much billing and cooing.

In paying your attentions to a young lady with a view of marriage, you should not be so selfish as to omit your duties towards other ladies in whose society you may be thrown. Be careful about this. You had better run the risk of displeasing your sweetheart than to lose caste by a neglect of the rules of good-breeding.

Never make costly presents to a young lady thinking thereby to obtain her favor. You can offer her neat trifles in a casual way, and procure any books that she may express a desire to read. After the matter is arranged, by an engagement, you may show your generosity in proportion to your means. Even then it is in bad taste to be too lavish, or she may set you down for an improvident person. Young men who are excessively liberal and attentive as lovers, do not always make the best husbands. Girls know this, and one of good sense will discourage her lover from making needless expenditure in ministering to her gratification, or in proof of his devotion.

Lovers usually feel a certain need of confidants in their affairs of the heart. In general, they should be of the opposite sex. A young man may with profit open his heart to his mother, an elder sister, or a female friend considerably older than himself. The young lady may with equal advantage make a brother, an uncle, or some good middle-aged married man the repository of her love secrets, her hopes, and her fears.

Asking the consent of parents or guardians is a duty on the part of the lady. She should consult her natural protectors before giving much encouragement to any one who aspires to her hand. It is often unnecessary for her to broach the subject to them at all, because the attentions paid to her speak for themselves. A father, mother, or guardian, would naturally oppose any close intimacy offered by an unworthy person. Where the lady lives apart

from her parents or guardian, she would commit a great impropriety in neglecting to apprise them of any serious attentions paid to her. In such a case her lover might apply for permission to pay her his addresses.

Young men are presumed to have arrived at the age of discretion before they marry, hence they usually act independently of everybody. There may be cases, however, where it would be but just and proper that a young man should ask his parents' consent. If he proposes to marry before attaining an independent position, or seeks an alliance with a lady either beneath or much above him in the social circle, it is but fair that he should first consult his parents. Never enter into an engagement of this kind with a prospect of future isolation from your own family and friends.

Never trifle with the feelings of a lady, by paying her marked attentions that you do not intend for something. A female coquette is bad enough. A male coquette ought to be banished from society. Let there be a clearly perceived, if not an easily defined, distinction between the attentions of common courtesy or of friendship and those of love. All misunderstanding on this point can and must be avoided.

Quarrels between lovers should be reconciled by a first proposition on the part of the lady. She will thus show a magnanimity that cannot but command the admiration of her lover if he has the least spark of manhood about him. If she has been at fault, let her confess it. If he was unjust or ungenerous, overlook his fault, and offer him a hearty forgiveness.

When a gentleman has treated his sweetheart badly in a moment of petulance, it is but just that he should make an apology and ask forgiveness; but do not urge a reconciliation—let that come voluntarily from the lady.

Many young men are anxious to procure a code of proposals, so that they can conduct their courtships, even

down to "popping the question," strictly according to etiquette. This is all nonsense. If your acquaintance and intimacy with a lady does not suggest the proper mode to ask her hand in marriage, we are afraid there is no hope for you, unless she loves you well enough to arrange the little matter herself. "Popping the question" by rule is absurd. You had much better write her a note, revealing your wishes, than to do that.

A formal agreement to marry is not always necessary. In your little intimacies the grand result may be *taken* for granted where mutual confidence is strong. It may be proper to clinch the matter by asking the lady if she is almost ready to name the happy day—that being her special privilege. If she declines on the ground of no real engagement, it opens the door for you to make one then and there.

After an engagement to marry is entered into in good faith, and it is so understood by the lady's family, no motives of delicacy or false shame should prevent her enjoying the society of her lover alone, and under circumstances that would otherwise seem imprudent. But neither of them should ever show their fondness in company by any acts of endearment. It is not always necessary that engaged lovers should be left alone. They are supposed to be able to enjoy themselves in company as well as other people, and it is therefore not correct to leave the room because the young lady's beau has arrived. If you wish to leave on that account, wait awhile until a good excuse offers, but in no case leave without an apparent reason.

An engaged young lady should not encourage her lover to be too loving during courtship. "There is many a slip," &c. Hugging and kissing is perhaps all very well when not too often or too fervently indulged in. The lady should never be lavish of her caresses nor too forward to receive those of her lover. Let her govern her feelings without prudishness, and keep up a certain self-respect that will as-



sure him that though her affection may be strong and sincere, her sense of propriety governs her actions.

A gentleman of any degree of refinement will never offer an indignity to the lady of his choice. It would be brutal in him to do so, and some very sensible people contend that such conduct is a proof of the absence of any sincere regard. This is perhaps a mistake, as the passions of some people are stronger than their sense of propriety. A lady should firmly resist any improper liberties with her person on the part of her lover, but it is not necessary that she should quarrel with him on that account. She can easily forgive her intended husband for what would be an unpardonable insult in any other man. No well-bred person will offer to take offensive liberties with the girl he purposes to marry. He will have too profound a respect for her to do that.

Young girls should be careful to avoid all indelicate expressions in presence of their lovers, or in fact anywhere else. Some ladies not only relish *double entendres*, but actually use them. Yet, however much it may create a feeling of cleverness at the moment, cool reflection is afterwards sure to condemn it both on the part of the speaker and listener. Such discourse, wanton glances, and lightness of carriage, are considered by men as gauntlets to dare them to speak and act in a more free and unguarded manner than they otherwise would have the boldness to do.

At a dancing party, a lover should not expect to monopolize his sweetheart as a partner. Let him lead off with her and then give some one else a chance. It is a piece of magnanimity that every lady present will appreciate. These parties are rightly named sociables, and in attending them you should leave all your selfishness at home.

Although it is highly improper for an unmarried lady to travel alone with a gentleman, yet after an engagement between them has taken place, the impropriety *per se*

ceases. The outside world are not supposed to know of this engagement, hence it is not exactly correct that they should travel alone, even then. She should have a female companion with her.

Engagements made with due deliberation, and between parties who have been sufficiently long acquainted to thoroughly understand each other, will seldom be broken off. If such a painful necessity occurs let it be met with firmness, but with delicacy. If you have made a mistake, it is infinitely better to correct it at the last moment than not at all. Recollect that a *marriage* is not easily dissolved. On breaking off an engagement, all letters, presents, &c., should be returned, and both parties should consider themselves pledged to the most honorable secrecy and delicate conduct in reference to the whole matter.

#### LOVE LETTERS.

In writing their letters, lovers should avoid a repetition of endearing terms. A girl of good common sense does not require to be assured over and over again that she is the most angelic of her sex—the darling of her lover's heart—the sweet solace of his existence, and all that sort of thing. I know that most girls are fond of adulation, and if one has a real affection for her lover, she will be apt to relish a good deal of soft nonsense put into his letters; nevertheless it is not the correct way to write a love epistle. Always compose your love-letters in a style that you would not be ashamed to have them fall into the hands of a third party. You can easily do this and “pile on the agony” some, notwithstanding. You need not be formal and stiff in your style, but avoid silliness. Some lovers are naturally silly, and I do not expect to learn them anything. I address myself to those who are supposed to be full-witted. Never fill your love letters with religious talk, or family gossip, for fear your friend might suspect you of frivolity. Express your sentiments with candor and fer-



vency, and in a humorous rather than a serious tone. Many lovers find it difficult to begin a letter satisfactorily. They desire some original mode of opening; but when once started, they get along very well. For the benefit of such people I shall give a few skeletons of love letters, to be used by ardent youths and maidens, who can fill up between the bones to suit themselves.

**SKELETON 1.** An ardent lover, who lives away from his mistress, wants to write his first letter after having paid her a visit. He begins as follows:

My Dearest Amelia—I cannot refrain from writing you a few lines to-day, though we parted so recently. My thoughts are constantly with you, and your pleasant face and sweet smile seem even now to be before my mind's eye. I do not know that it is much satisfaction to you to be so often reminded of my love and devotion, but it is a pleasure to me to speak my thoughts on the subject, and perhaps I am selfish in this respect. Be that as it may, I am sure my whole soul is with you, and the only anxiety I have is the fear that I may not be enabled to prove myself worthy of your generous confidence. I shall do my best, however, to merit your constant love, waiting and hoping for the happy day when we part no more.

[Here you can put in your own talk and gossip, and conclude the letter as follows:]

With further assurances of my entire devotion, and that you have my whole heart, I remain as ever, my dear girl, your affectionate friend and lover,

ABRAM LINCOLN.

**SKELETON 2.** A matter-of-fact philosopher soars into the regions of the romantic, and "piles on the agony" a little, in writing to his lady-love:

My Bonnie Kate—Some philosopher has remarked that when a man is once thoroughly in love it changes the whole scope of his thoughts, feelings and ideas—that he, in short, is not the same individual in point of intellect that he was before he experienced the delightful sensations of a sincere personal attachment. This seems to me a rational theory, if I can judge by my own experience.

When I reflect upon my position as your favored friend, my happiness knows no bounds. The sun of heaven shines bright and glorious. Every one around me looks pleasant and contented, and I feel as though the Creator of the Universe had made this beautiful world specially to confer bliss upon us poor mortals. I never felt so before. There was always something wanting. Success in business matters may have been cheering and comfortable, but yet my happiness was incomplete. I lacked a loving heart to beat in unison with my own. In your affection, my dearest Kate, I have found consolation; and I hope and trust that our future career will be one of happiness unalloyed. Indeed, I feel that it will be so, for my feelings and affections are much too strong ever to wander from one who is so good and generous, and I hope always to merit your unaffected regard.

[Here put in your gossip, and the information you desire to communicate, and conclude as follows:]

Hoping that our mutual sympathy may continue while life lasts, I remain, Katy darling,

Your faithful friend and affectionate lover,  
HANNIBAL HAMLIN.

**SKELETON 3.** Here is a letter of more moderation. The young fellow puts in only a few "scientific licks" of love. It is an answer to a very loving epistle from his sweetheart:

My Sweet and Pure Eliza—Your kind letter reached me safely by mail this morning, and I read it with great eagerness and pleasure—indeed I may say I have read it over at least a dozen times, so grateful and happy do I feel to enjoy the affection and confidence of one who I sincerely love. I rejoice to hear that you are well, and hope that nothing may occur to mar your happiness.

[Here put in your gossip, and conclude as follows:]

But I must bid you adieu! and as I do so, let me remind you that your loving letters are to me a source of much pleasure. As I read them, I imagine I am sitting by your side and hearing the sound of your voice. Let me entreat you, then, to write to me constantly. I promise to answer you promptly, even should my ideas run out so that I can merely bandy compliments. Let me again assure you that you have my whole heart, and that I remain, as ever,

Your affectionate  
JAMES.



**SKELETON 4.** Here is the head and tail of a pleasant little epistle that will answer in case you do not want to be very sentimental, but yet desire to tickle the fancy of your sweetheart a little:

Dearest Julia—I take great pleasure in again writing to you, first to thank you for your generous and affectionate confidence, and then to assure you of my entire and continued devotion. I am, thank God, well and cheerful, and I am constantly thinking of “the good time coming” when we shall never again be separated. It is said that when one is really in love, if things go smoothly, he or she is the happiest of mortals. I can believe in that doctrine implicitly, and I trust it is the same with you. Tell me, is it so? Are you one of those favored by the merry little fellow with bow and arrows? Does our mutual attachment to contribute to your present happiness? As Touchstone says—Doth my simple features content you? I think I feel your soft embrace, and your warm lips upon my own in generous response!

[Here put in your gossip, and then wind up the letter as follows:]

And now, Julia, let me ask you another question, and I will then close. Don't you think that when lovers part for a while they experience a deeper and more profound feeling of devotion and attachment than when they are almost constantly meeting and enjoying each other's society? It seems so to me. I really believe that I love you more tenderly than ever now that I can only express myself by letter. What is the state of your feelings? Write word and let us compare notes.

I remain, truly and devotedly,  
Your faithful and loving friend,  
JAMES THOMPSON.

**SKELETON 5.** This may fit in somewhere, and so we print it. It is a good plan to take out some particular strong sentences when the whole skeleton will not suit your case. Girls generally like to be loved pretty strong, and it will do no harm to put in anywhere a few such expressions as may be found here:

Mon cher Ami—What on earth is the reason you do not write to me? I am absolutely pining away and dying

by inches in consequence of your neglect. If I did not know that your little heart was exactly in the right place, and that some time or other I should have a plausible excuse, if not a good and valid one, for this neglect, I assure you I should begin to think of getting vexed. But let us not talk about anything disagreeable. Love is my theme! and it is to my soul's idol that these lines will speed their way. Let me now picture to my mind's eye my dear little Carrie as she reads this letter. First she puts on a look of sadness as she peruses my gentle reproaches. A sweet little blush now tinges her cheek as she is assured of my forgiveness, and as the reading continues she unconsciously raises the letter to her lips. Dear good girl! I will kiss this sheet all over, and thus have the satisfaction of sending you the shadow while we cannot enjoy the substance of our mutual caresses.

[Here write your private gossip, and conclude the letter as follows:]

And now, Carrie dear, don't fail to let me hear from you “right sudden.” If you have not time or inclination to write two lines, give me one, and say in it, “I am well, and I love you, John,” and I will be satisfied. Fancy your own feelings if I should neglect to write to you for nearly three weeks! Adieu, my darling, and believe me that my greatest present happiness is in reading your letters.

From your always loving and devoted JOHN.

Ladies generally know exactly how to address their lovers. To them love letters come natural. It is unnecessary to place before them even a “skeleton” to set them agoing, for a live handsome young fellow will do it alone. Nevertheless, some of the above skeletons, or parts of them, could be adapted by ladies into letters to their lovers, if they were hard up for ideas. I will wind up this essay on letters by giving a genuine one from a young lady to her lover. It is a gem in its way:

NEWPORT, Aug. 23d, 1857.

Dear John—I have come here, as you so disinterestedly recommended, but my heart, I fear, is left behind. I am sad to-night. Papa says that in two or three days I shall be as bright as a lark, but I fear not. We go to the White

Mountains on Monday, and I want you to come and go with us, so I can hear you talk about "earth's thousand voices," "Nature's bright teachings," and all those romantic things which are for ever at your tongue's end. They come natural to you, but it is a great effort for me to get them off. I promise to make the proper responses to all your enthusiastic exclamations, and to say "Yes!" every time you exclaim "Beautiful!" which will keep me incessantly busy, I'm sure, for the scenery in the mountains is said to be grand. Do come, dear John, and you will make me happy. I am troubled some with a cough, which the doctor calls the asthma. Papa says I inherit from Grandmother Jones. I told him it was an awful piece of injustice in her to leave him all her money and poor me only her infirmities. I shall post this by to-night's mail, and will look for your answer to-morrow. You must come on Saturday, as we start bright and early on Monday morning. I think you are sure to come, as you never refuse any request of your pet

ELIZA.

#### MARRIAGE.

WHEN a man marries it is presumed that all his bachelor acquaintanceship ends. He can renew his friendships by sending cards or invitations, but where he neglects to do so, the party neglected may be sure that no further intercourse is desired. There are various reasons for this. In the first place, a bachelor need not be so particular in his choice of companions as a man of family who has a social reputation to achieve. For amusement, while unmarried, he may associate freely with those whose morals and habits would not exactly accord with the proprieties of domestic life. After marriage his reputation must be unexceptionable if he expects to be recognized among persons of refinement. There is still another reason why he may discard bachelor acquaintances. A newly married pair may wish to limit the circle of their friends, from praiseworthy motives of economy. When a man first "sets up" in the world, the burden of an extensive and indiscriminate acquaintance may be felt in various ways.

Many have had cause to regret the weakness of mind which allowed them to plunge into a vortex of gayety and expense they could ill afford, from which they have found it difficult to extricate themselves, and the effects of which have proved a serious evil to them in after-life.

Ladies, after an engagement to marry, should be cautious of receiving any attentions whatever from gentlemen. Lovers are naturally jealous of any such attentions, however innocent or frivolous.

If, after engagement, a lady should wish to go to a place of public amusement, or to a concert, or even to an evening meeting, she should not accept an invitation to go with a gentleman other than her lover, except it be a near relative, such as her brother or an elderly uncle. To go with any other gentleman, except by permission of her intended husband, would be exceedingly improper.

It is the lady's privilege to name the day for marriage, and the lover should leave the arrangement exclusively to her. He ought never to urge her to hasten the event contrary to her wishes, as the lady may have reasons that he cannot appreciate for a more remote day for the nuptials than he desires.

The bridal outfit, which is furnished by the relatives of the bride, usually consists of clothing and necessary family linen. Some opulent fathers will add to these a house and furniture. Jewels are not usually comprised in an outfit. They are presented by the bridegroom. Bridal presents consist of any useful or ornamental article for the use of the bride, whether to adorn her person, for the toilet, or for house-keeping. Sometimes dress-patterns are given, but they are not appropriate, as the colors may not please her.

Some ladies put on a traveling dress, get married in a hurry, and start at once for the cars or steamboat. This is not the correct way. A bride should be dressed in white, with white veil and a wreath of orange flowers on



her head. After the ceremony is over, and she has received the congratulations of friends, she can put on her traveling dress and hasten away as fast as she pleases. If, from motives of economy, you conclude to go through the ceremony in your traveling dress, you should only invite a few intimate friends to be present.

The bridegroom should wear a black dress coat and trowsers, white vest, and black cravat. Let us entreat him not to commit the solecism against good taste of wearing a white cravat, which gives an inexpressibly silly look to the most intellectual countenance in the world.

The bride may have one or half-a-dozen bridesmaids at her choice. No particular number being fixed, it is often determined by the number of sisters or of intimate friends she may have. The bridesmaids should be dressed in white, all alike, and wear orange flower bouquets.

If there is a bridal breakfast, or collation, the bride should retain her bridal dress until that is over. She can then put on her traveling dress.

After the departure of the newly married couple, cards are issued, and wedding cake forwarded to their numerous friends. The cards usually contain an appointment of a certain day (or two or three days if necessary) when they will be "at home" to receive visits of congratulation. Cards and cake are also sent to distant friends—those residing even hundreds of miles away. The cake is often omitted, and the cards sent by mail.

When a bride attends the first party after marriage, she usually trims her hair with orange flowers.

A new married couple is not expected to give parties at their house for the first year; but after that time they must no longer play the part of exceptional beings, but blend with the herd, and give and take as others do.