

Waiting at table : a practical guide / by a member of the aristocracy, author of "Manners and rules of good society", "Society small talk", etc., etc.

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WAITING AT TABLE

By
The Author of
Manners & Rules
of
Good Society



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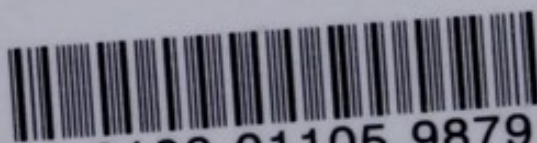


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Blanche L. Leigh



WAITING AT TABLE.



WAITING AT TABLE.

A Practical Guide.

BY

A MEMBER OF THE ARISTOCRACY,

AUTHOR OF "MANNERS AND RULES OF GOOD SOCIETY,"

"SOCIETY SMALL TALK," ETC., ETC.



LONDON:
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PREFACE.

IN writing the present work, "Waiting at Table," every detail relating to the subject has been carefully considered and explained. Proficiency and intelligence in waiting at table stamps a household as being a well-ordered and efficient one, and is an element of success in the working of domestic daily life, and more especially so with regard to dinner-parties, receptions, balls, dances, etc.

"The Duties of Servants" are detailed at length in a companion work under this title, and in presenting each work in a separate form a more clear and comprehensive idea will be conveyed of the actual work and

duties to be performed, and the method of carrying them out.

The routine of "waiting at table," herein described, may be fearlessly accepted as being the received mode followed in all high-class households.

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WAITING AT TABLE.



CHAPTER I.

HINTS ON WAITING AT TABLE.

PERHAPS it is almost unnecessary to say that a servant should hand everything at table at the *left hand* of a person seated, and not at the right hand.

A side dish or vegetable dish should not be held too high or too far away, but on a level with the raised hand of the person seated.

When a knife and fork are required in addition to the cover, a plate with a knife and fork upon it should be placed before each person.

Plates with the knives and forks upon them, or with forks only, should be removed from the left-hand side also. A carving knife and fork should not be removed in the dish, but a knife-tray for the purpose should be brought to the table.

An experienced servant, whether parlour-maid or man-servant, is expected to know the sauces, &c.,

requisite in each course, and to hand them without being asked for.

When handing the dishes in the various courses, a servant is not expected to make any remark as to the contents, unless an inquiry is made respecting any particular dish. A small serviette or thumb napkin should always be used by a parlour-maid or man-servant when handing dishes.

A table-spoon and large fork should be placed by a servant in the *entrée* dishes previous to handing them. The spoon and fork should be taken from the sideboard. A table-spoon only is required when handing vegetables, except in the case of asparagus, sea-kale, &c., when a fork also is necessary.

Vegetables should be handed by a servant a second time at a family dinner; but only once at a dinner-party, unless especially asked for.

A servant should not ask a guest to have a second help of any dish, but should bring it at once when asked for.

The order in which things should be handed is as follows:—

In the family circle: first to the mistress of the house, afterwards to the daughters of the house according to their ages; the governess, when present; the master of the house, the sons of the house according to their ages.

When a dinner-party is given, if a large one, the guests should be helped in the order in which they are seated, commencing with the lady seated at the right hand of the host, and continuing irrespective of sex. If a small dinner-party, everything should be first handed to the ladies, including the hostess, commencing with the lady seated at the host's right hand.

The size of helpings to be given should be as follows :—

Helping from a side-table, a servant should give, of soup, half a ladle, when the help is for a lady, and three-quarters of a ladle when the help is for a gentleman.

Of fish : one fillet of sole for a help for either lady or gentleman ; and of salmon, cod, or turbot, a small square piece neatly cut.

The joint, or *gros piece*, one small slice when the help is for a lady ; a large slice or two small slices when for a gentleman.

Of poultry or game : a slice from the breast, or a wing, when helping a lady ; a wing, or part of a leg, &c., when helping a gentleman. Half a plover, half a pigeon, or half a quail should be given to both ladies and gentlemen.

Wine should be handed at the right-hand side of a person seated. Sherry should be poured out from a decanter, and claret from a claret-jug ; hock

from a hock-bottle ; champagne usually from the bottle, also occasionally from a champagne-jug.

When handing champagne, a serviette should be either folded around the bottle or held in the hand, and placed beneath the mouth of the bottle when the wine has been poured out, to prevent drops of wine falling on the table-cloth, or upon the dress of a lady or coat of a gentleman. Care should be taken not to over-fill the champagne-glasses, nor to under-fill them, and the wine should be poured out slowly, and not hurriedly.

When handing champagne at a dinner-party, a servant should say "Champagne?" in the first instance, but when subsequently handing it throughout the different courses, the glasses should be filled up without repeating the question. When a guest declines having a glass refilled, champagne should not again be offered to that person during dinner, but the wine preferred, sherry or claret, should be handed after champagne has been taken round.

Opening champagne: champagne-nippers should be used to remove the wire, and the cork should then be *firmly* held in the hand and gently taken out, otherwise it is liable to fly out as soon as the wire is removed. Careless servants cause no little annoyance in this matter.

Champagne should be placed in an ice-pail for several hours previous to its being required.

When decanting wine in cold weather, a servant should warm the decanter for port and the claret-jug with warm water before decanting the wine. In decanting port and claret, the greatest care should be taken not to break the corks and thus spoil the flavour of the wine. To put the corkscrew in the centre of the cork, and not at the side, and to use a lever corkscrew, are useful precautions inexperienced servants should endeavour to remember.

An important point in waiting at a dinner-party is that the servants should not leave the dining-room during a dinner. The head servant, whether butler or parlour-maid, should ring the dining-room bell when the dishes in each course have been handed, to inform the cook that the next course should be sent up at once. In the family circle, when a parlour-maid is unavoidably absent from the dining-room, a member of the family rings the dining-room bell at the end of a course.

Dinner rolls are so generally given, it is needless to say that, should bread be given in place of rolls, the pieces should be cut several inches thick, and not in thin half-slices. The roll or bread should be placed in the folds of the serviette.

When bread is asked for at dinner or luncheon, it should be handed in a silver bread-basket or bread-tray; it should not be handed on a plate.

When a fork or spoon is asked for, it should not be

handed on a waiter, but placed on the right or left hand as required. When a tumbler or single cruet is asked for, it should be handed on a small waiter.

When clearing the dinner-table before dessert, the empty glasses should be removed on a waiter, also the salt-cellars.

When removing plates with knives and forks upon them, care should be taken not to drop the latter; a plate should be taken in each hand. A knife-tray should not be taken round the table for the purpose of carrying away knives and forks that have been used; they should be removed on the dinner-plates.

One good point in waiting is to have everything necessary for use in readiness on the sideboard, to avoid delay and long waits.

Quick waiting is of paramount importance at a dinner-party, at a family dinner, and also at luncheon, and both method and intelligence are required to attain this result. A servant should understand that *two* things should be handed at the same time, one in either hand—say a plate of fish in the right hand, and the fish-sauce in the left, or a plate of fish in either hand. The former should be done when the host helps the fish; the latter when a single-handed man-servant or a parlour-maid helps the fish from the side-table.

When two or more servants wait at table, the one should take two plates, say of fish, and the other

should follow with fish-sauce and cucumber, and so on.

A servant should make as little noise when waiting at table as possible, and avoid making a clatter with knives and forks and plates.

One of the most important points in a dinner is that the soup, *entrées*, joints, vegetables, &c., should be served thoroughly hot, and not semi-hot or lukewarm. A cook often is blamed for this, when in reality the fault rests with the parlour-maid or man-servant, who has not been in readiness at the exact hour named for dinner, and has consequently allowed the soup to "cool" in the dining-room while some of the details connected with waiting at dinner were hurriedly completed. Punctuality should be impressed upon men-servants and parlour-maids equally as upon cooks, to ensure each course being served hot. Again, hot plates, in place of half-cold ones, rest with a parlour-maid or man-servant rather than with the cook. Nothing gives more dissatisfaction to the master of a house than to have a lukewarm dinner served to him, and a parlour-maid or man-servant is too often answerable for this.

As regards arranging the table for dinner, a point that should not be overlooked by a parlour-maid or man-servant is the proper adjustment of the tablecloth. It should be carefully spread over a thick woollen table-cover, and free from creases and folds,

and should fall straight on either side, the cloth being in the centre of the table. A table-cloth does not set well unless supported by a thick table-cover.

These hints on waiting at table are given to supplement the waiting at table described at length in the chapters allotted to each meal.

CHAPTER II.

WAITING AT TABLE BY PARLOUR-MAIDS.

AN experienced parlour-maid is expected to be as efficient in waiting at table as is a man-servant, and to go through the same routine of work.

The Arrangements of the Dinner-Table.

A parlour-maid should lay the table for dinner according to the hour at which dinner is to be served. If dinner is at 8 p.m., she should do so between 6 and 7 p.m.; if at 6.30 p.m., she should do so between 5.30 and 6.30.

A white damask table-cloth should be carefully spread on the dining-table, over a baize or woollen table-cover. Centre-pieces of china or glass containing flowers are placed on the dinner-table, and flowers in specimen glasses are occasionally placed at the corner of the dinner-table. Particular care should be taken that faded flowers or foliage are not inadvertently left in the flower-vases.

Salt-cellars should be placed upon the table one
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to two persons; glass water-bottles or jugs, one to four persons.

Menu-cards are not in everyday use where a parlour-maid is kept.

The cover should consist of two large knives, a table-spoon, and fish-knife on the right-hand side, two large forks and fish-fork on the left-hand side; a glass for sherry and one for claret on the right-hand side, and one for champagne when given; a serviette folded mitre-shape, containing roll or thick piece of bread, in centre of cover.

Carving knife and fork, soup-ladle, fish-carvers, and gravy-spoon form part of the carver's cover when soup, fish, and joint are to be helped from the table.

A chair should be placed for each person for whom a cover is laid.

A white cloth should be spread on the sideboard, and on it are placed a row of large and small knives, a row of large forks, a row of small forks, dessert spoons, and table-spoons ready for use; a cruet-stand, a row of tumblers and wine-glasses, a decanter of sherry, and a jug of claret. A bread-basket, usually of silver, with bread or rolls, and cheese-dish should also be placed on the sideboard.

Silver salvers and small waiters are usually placed at the back of the sideboard, and, if a large one, the silver tea-urn, ferns, and foliage plants.

The dessert should be placed on the dinner-

waggon, in readiness for removal to the dinner-table. The dessert plates should be placed in a row, with a d'oyly, finger-glass, and dessert knife and fork on each plate; two wine-glasses to each plate, one for sherry, and one for claret. Two decanters of wine, of sherry and claret, also in readiness for removal to the dinner-table with the dessert.

Waiting at Dinner.

The soup-tureen should be placed on the dinner-table, either at the top or bottom of the table when helped by the master or mistress of the house, before dinner is announced. The parlour-maid should stand at his or her right hand, and should hand the soup-plates as he or she fills them; to the mistress of the house first, then to the daughters, and then to the sons.

When soup is helped from the side-table, the parlour-maid should put half a ladle of soup into each soup-plate, and should take a plate in each hand to those seated at table.

When fish is helped from the table, the fish should be placed before the master or the head of the house; the parlour-maid should hand the plates with the helpings in the same order as the soup, a pile of plates being placed before him.

When the fish is helped from the side-table by

the parlour-maid, she should put a small helping of fish on each plate, and take a plate in each hand to those at table; she should then hand the fish-sauce or sauce for fish in a cruet on a waiter.

She should hand the wine (sherry or claret) as soon as the soup has been handed, or a little later, after the fish.

She should remove the plates as they are used in each course, with spoon or knife and fork upon them, as the case may be.

She should hand the *entrée*, and place a hot plate before each person at the time of handing.

After the *entrée* she should place the joint and plates before the head of the house, and stand near him to take each plate with a helping of meat.

She should take a plate in one hand, and a vegetable dish with two compartments in the other, thus handing meat and vegetables at the same time. This she should do until all those seated at table have been helped. She should then hand the gravy and sauces, taking a sauce-boat in each hand, in the same manner as the vegetables were handed. She should also hand mustard and pepper when required, placing the cruets on a small waiter.

If poultry or game is given in the second course, it should be placed before the master of the house; and she should take a plate in one hand and a

gravy or sauce-boat in the other, and hand both at the same time, as in the previous course.

When two sweets are given, and one is a tart, the parlour-maid sometimes helps this from the side-table, and should take a plate in each hand to those seated at the table; she should then hand powdered sugar on a waiter. Or if the master or mistress helps it, she should hand the plates containing tart to those at table.

Smaller sweets, jelly, pastry, &c., should be handed by the parlour-maid, she having previously placed a plate with dessert spoon and fork upon it before each person, and those at table help themselves to the dish handed.

The savouries should also be handed by a parlour-maid in the same manner as the foregoing, she previously placing a plate before each person.

Cheese is either handed in a dish with compartments containing cheese, butter, water-cress, and biscuits, or a cheese on a cheese-dish is placed before the master of the house, who helps it itself, and the parlour-maid should then hand the plate round, with a dish containing butter and biscuits.

The table should then be cleared of knives and forks, plates and glasses, salt-cellars and water-bottles, and the crumbs brushed off the cloth with a crumb-brush.

Dessert should then be placed on the table, and

a dessert plate containing finger-glasses, dessert knife and fork, taken from the dinner-waggon, and placed in front of each person. Also two wine-glasses—one for sherry and one for claret—on the right-hand side of each dessert-plate.

A parlour-maid should hand the dishes of fruit, unless the family prefer to help themselves. She should hand the wine before leaving the room, unless the master of the house prefers to help those seated at table to wine.

When a dinner-party is given of from eight to ten people, the most experienced of parlour-maids expects help. One waiter is considered sufficient providing all the dishes in each course are brought to the dining-room or serving-room door, and neither the parlour-maid nor the waiter quitting the room except to bring in the dishes. In the case of a waiter being engaged, he should act as butler and take charge of the wine, and hand it round in each course. He should help the soup and fish, and carve the joint and poultry also, from the side-table when required to do so.

However numerous the members of a family party may be, a parlour-maid is expected to be able to wait upon them at dinner. The master or mistress of the house helps the soup, fish, and joints, sweets and savouries, from the dinner-table, and this considerably lightens the waiting at table.

In some houses the parlour-maid has charge of the wine, in so far that she decants the wine that is given out for dinner, and puts it away when dinner is over. On the other hand, the master of the house frequently does the latter himself before leaving the dining-room.

Coffee should be taken into the drawing-room by the parlour-maid after dinner, and then into the dining-room to the gentlemen. The number of cups of coffee required should be poured out and handed on a salver; or the coffee should be sent up in a coffee-pot, with coffee-cups. Hot milk and crystalized sugar should be placed on the salver in both cases.

Waiting at Luncheon.

A parlour-maid should lay the luncheon-table as follows. The luncheon-table should be covered with a white damask table-cloth, placed over a cloth or woollen table-cover. Flowers should be placed either in the centre or at the corners of the table.

Covers should be laid according to the number expected. A cover should consist of two large knives, two large forks, a glass for sherry and one for claret, and a tumbler. The glasses should be placed at the right-hand side of the cover, a roll or piece of bread at the left-hand side; salt-cellars should be placed to each two persons.

The carver's cover should include a carving knife

and fork and gravy-spoon. Two table-spoons should be placed at the corners of the table. Two glass jugs or bottles of water on either side of the table. Single cruets of silver should be placed at the corners of the table—mustard and pepper.

The wine should be placed on the table—a decanter of sherry and a jug of claret.

The sideboard should be covered with a white sideboard cloth, and a row of knives, forks, dessert-spoons, table-spoons, extra tumblers, wine-glasses, plates, and cruet-stand placed upon it; also a bread-basket, cheese-dish, &c.

The parlour-maid should carry in luncheon on a butler's tray, place it on the tray-stand, and then remove the dishes and plates to the luncheon-table, placing one dish at the top and one dish at the bottom, with hot plates in front of each dish, leaving the vegetable-dishes and sauce-boats on the tray to be subsequently handed.

The cold sweets should be previously placed on the table on either side.

The parlour-maid should either sound the gong when luncheon is ready, or announce to her mistress that "Luncheon is served," and then await her coming in the dining-room.

When all are seated, the parlour-maid should take off the covers from the dishes, or shift the revolving covers, and stand at the left-hand side of her master

or mistress, or who ever happens to carve at luncheon. She should take each plate as it is filled in one hand and a vegetable-dish in the other. She should repeat this when the second joint or dish is being helped or carved at the opposite end of the table.

The wine and ale should be handed by her; she should then replace the decanters on the table, and the bottle of ale on the sideboard. She should also hand water when asked for.

When ale or stout is poured out, a small waiter should be brought with the open bottle, that the tumbler may be placed upon it to be filled by the parlour-maid.

When the meat course is finished, the dishes should be removed, and the plates with the knives and forks upon them, by the parlour-maid. A knife-tray should be brought in which to place carving knife and fork before removing the dish, but all other knives and forks should be left on the plates when removed.

The sweets should be handed by the parlour-maid, or helped from the luncheon-table. In the first case, she should place a plate with a dessert fork and spoon upon it before each person previous to handing a dish, or the sweets should be placed at the top and bottom of the table, with a pile of plates in front of each dish to be helped by those at table. The

parlour-maid should hand the plates containing the helpings.

Cheese is seldom required at luncheon, but when asked for the parlour-maid should hand it, and place a plate with a small knife upon it before the person requiring it.

The parlour-maid should not leave the dining-room during luncheon, as everything required at luncheon is expected to be in readiness, to prevent her being absent when wanted.

Coffee.—Coffee should be brought by the parlour-maid either to the dining-room or drawing-room, as preferred, immediately after luncheon. Cups of coffee on a salver, with a basin of crystallized sugar and a jug of hot milk; she should hand the salver or tray to each person in the room in turn, commencing with any visitor present.

Parlour-maids waiting at Afternoon Tea.

Afternoon tea should be arranged thus. The parlour-maid should bring a small tea-table forward, and cover it with a fancy tea-cloth. She should then bring in a salver or tea-tray, with cups and saucers, teaspoons, small silver jug of milk, one of cream, and a basin of sugar with sugar-tongs, and place it on the tea-table. Plates of cake, thin bread and butter, and small sandwiches should next be brought in. The teapot of tea, and tea-kettle, or urn,

filled with boiling water—usually of silver—should then be brought in and placed on the salver or tea-tray.

When visitors are expected, the mistress of the house should tell the parlour-maid the number of cups and saucers that will be required, and she should bring them accordingly. If visitors call during the tea-hour, she should bring extra teacups, and, if necessary, make fresh tea; she is expected to do this without instructions from her mistress.

Parlour-maids waiting at Breakfast.

The waiting expected from a parlour-maid at breakfast is very little. She should lay the breakfast-table thus. The breakfast-table should be covered with a white damask cloth over a woollen cover, flowers or ferns being placed in the centre. The coffee-cups and saucers, teacups and saucers should be placed right and left at the top of the table, space being left in the centre for the coffee-pot, teapot, and urn filled with boiling water. The coffee-pot and teapot are sometimes placed on a china tray. A jug of hot milk, a jug of cold milk, a jug of cream, and sugar-basins containing two kinds of sugar should be placed on either side.

The breakfast cover consists of two knives, one large and one small, two forks, one large and one small, and a breakfast-plate in the centre. Salt-

cellars should be placed on either side of the table, and single cruets containing mustard and pepper on either side also. Table-spoons should be placed at either corner of the table. Glass dishes of preserves should be placed on either side of the table, and also glass dishes containing butter in pats or tiny balls.

Two hot breakfast-dishes of whatever is given should be placed at the bottom of the table, in front of the master of the house, and a pile of hot plates.

The dishes containing cold viands, ham, tongue, &c., should be placed on the side-table or on the table itself as preferred.

The sideboard should be covered with a side-board cloth, and extra knives, forks, and plates placed upon it, together with a wooden trencher and large knife, with a loaf of bread.

Hot rolls and fancy bread should be placed upon the table, on a dish covered with a serviette. Dry toast should be brought in in a toast-rack on a plate, and either handed by the parlour-maid or placed upon the table.

In a family party, a parlour-maid seldom hands the tea or coffee, but leaves the room when she has brought in the breakfast-dishes, &c.

The dining-room bell is rung by the mistress when breakfast is over, and the parlour-maid should come in and clear the breakfast-table (see "Servants' Duties").

CHAPTER III.

WAITING AT DINNER AND THE ARRANGEMENTS OF THE DINNER-TABLE.

THE arrangements of the dinner-table, and waiting at dinner, are among the most important of domestic duties, and are points which soonest betray want of experience or want of training on the part of a servant, whether butler, footman, or parlour-maid.

A servant who has lived in smart, fashionable houses, or in what is usually styled "good families," thoroughly understands how these things are done, and requires neither training nor teaching from his mistress; but these efficient servants generally aspire to enter families higher in rank and position, or keeping larger establishments, than those in which they last lived. The question of wages increases the difficulty in obtaining a really well-trained servant. One who knows his business is not ignorant of his value, and claims to be at the head of the tariff, asking wages for his services which many mistresses of households with moderate incomes are not justified in

giving, and who consequently have to engage servants who have not lived in such "good families," and who have not acquired the style or manner of doing things common in those houses; but a useful, intelligent servant, though he may not have lived in "great houses," or yet in little "smart houses," can easily be taught to drop or to discontinue any obsolete or vulgar fashion that he may have picked up on his way through the world, in reference to waiting at table, or in reference to any of his duties, either as butler, footman, or single-handed man-servant. A mistress of a house who can teach a servant the proper way of doing things, whether the knowledge is derived from this work, or whether from personal experience, can without much trouble train an ordinary or even an ignorant servant to become a most competent one. Again, ladies not unfrequently find that servants who have lived in large establishments contract a habit of disparaging the arrangements of those establishments conducted on a smaller scale. This often engenders a spirit of discontent in the servants of a household where dissatisfaction with things as they are has not hitherto appeared; besides which, servants who consider themselves to be very high-class domestics, have a way of taking the management of affairs into their own hands, not always palatable to their mistresses, such management being invariably attended by a considerable increase in the household expenditure. They

order things on their own responsibility ; they change the tradespeople on the same principle. When a butler holding these views is at the head of an establishment, the mistress of it stands greatly in awe of him, and hardly ventures to invite a guest to dinner without given him full notice of her intention. Thus a well-trained servant coming from a large establishment has his disadvantages as well as his advantages, the former too often outweighing the latter.

The dinner-table arrangements and waiting at table are the same whether the party consists of four or twenty, the difference consisting in the scale on which the arrangements are carried out, while the method of waiting is regulated according to the number and strength of the household.

Where a butler and two footmen are kept, it is the duty of the two footmen to lay the table, the butler bestowing an approving glance when the work is complete. Where a butler and one footman are kept it is the footman's duty to lay the table, and the butler's duty to see that all is correctly done. Where one man-servant only is kept the duties devolve upon him, or where a parlour-maid is kept, upon her ; but in this case the mistress of the house overlooks the arrangements to see that all is as it should be, and that her directions have been duly carried out.

Oval tables and round tables are much used in fashionable houses. For large dinner-parties, long

telescope tables are most in use, into which two, three, or four leaves can be inserted, according to the number of guests; too long a table has an unsociable appearance, and the length of the table is proportioned to the number of the guests. The dinner-table is always covered with a thick baize cloth, not to preserve the polish of its surface, but to improve the set of the table-cloth, which should be without wrinkle or crease. Fine white damask table-cloths are the correct style of cloth, and nothing has as yet superseded these, or is likely to do so; though fantastic and would-be artistic ladies of a certain class affect to describe oddities, or novelties, as they are pleased to term them, such as black velvet striped with crimson and yellow satin, or white muslin trimmed with pink bows, which they have an idea would look very picturesque as table-cloths, whereas the heart of man is wedded to the traditional snowy damask table-cloth.

A clean table-cloth is required for each evening, and it is the footman's or parlour-maid's duty to see that it is properly aired, as a damp limp cloth is a thing to be avoided; the same remark applies equally to the serviettes, which should also be carefully aired, and fresh ones provided for each meal.

The most fashionable dinner-hour in town, is from eight to half-past, in the country it varies from half-past seven to eight; there are people who cling to

the old-fashioned hour of seven, while, with professional people, the favourite hour is half-past six.

On occasion of a dinner-party, the cloth should be laid somewhat early in the afternoon, as the arranging the flowers frequently occupies considerable time; this is sometimes done by the florist who supplies the flowers, and sometimes by the mistress of the house or her daughters, or failing these, by the butler.

In the country the head-gardener usually assists his mistress in decorating the dinner-table.

In houses where family-plate is forthcoming in the shape of centre-pieces, epergnes, and silver-candelabra, they form the principal of the table decorations, interspersed and supported by flowers and fruit, the dessert being arranged by the housekeeper. When there are no silver centre-pieces, epergnes, cups, or silver-gilt vases, graceful and pretty centre-pieces of glass are used, filled with flowers, moss, and grasses; low specimen glasses for single roses or flowers placed on either side of the table, or flat glass troughs filled with flowers are also placed the length of the table, in addition to the floral arrangements down the centre of the table; but these latter should never be pyramids in height, the fashion being to have them as low as possible.

It is a pretty fashion to place trails of ivy, ferns, virginian creeper, or other kinds of foliage on the table-cloth, interspersed with single cut flowers.

A handsome show of fruit, consisting of grapes, strawberries, a pine, a melon, peaches, &c., is placed on the table as an attraction in itself amongst the flowers, to be admired previous to being eaten; but in many houses it is thought preferable to ornament the table with flowers only, and not to place the dessert upon it until after dinner, as in town, fruit that has been gathered for many hours, whether it comes direct from the hot-houses of the owner situated in some distant county, or whether it comes from the adjacent fruiterer, or from Covent Garden Market, cannot fail to exhale a very powerful odour, which does not add zest to the enjoyment of the epicure, or increase a delicate or a fastidious appetite; and as many London dinner-guests possess this class of appetite, if they are not actually epicures in the fullest sense of the word, it is possible that to them the combined odour of a variety of fruit is positively unpleasant; in the country freshly-gathered fruit has no such effect, and either plan of having the dessert on or off the table during dinner is equally fashionable, if not equally agreeable to the guests.

In the choice of flowers for table decorations great experience is required, as many flowers, brilliant and bright by daylight, have a contrary effect at night, and do not light up, but appear dull and heavy, and table decorations which are arranged by daylight

have a very disappointing and tame appearance at night, in spite of the labour, care, and expense bestowed upon them. People with any pretensions to fashion or style generally dine *à la Russe*, as it is a more luxurious and pleasant mode of dining; but this style cannot be carried out where only one servant waits at table, as it necessitates at least two servants being in attendance to wait upon the master and mistress of a house when dining alone. When the waiting at table is done by one servant, whether manservant or parlour-maid, a sort of compromise between the old-fashioned and the new is affected, the host helps the soup, the fish, the joint, and the birds, and the hostess helps the tart or pudding, or whatever it may be, but the side dishes and the vegetables are handed by the servant. In laying the table for a dinner-party, the usual cover for each person comprises two large dinner-knives and a small silver fish-knife, two large dinner-forks and a small silver fish-fork; these are placed on the right and left-hand side of the space to be occupied by the plate, a table-spoon for soup is also placed on the right-hand side, bowl upwards. The serviette, with the roll enfolded in it, is placed in this space, rather at the edge of the table than at the centre of the space. Fantastical ways of folding serviettes are not in the best taste, such as birds, rabbits, fans, twists, and true lovers'-knots, for instance, the most approved style being to fold them

either in the shape of a mitre or in the shape of a slipper, or simply folded in three.

Where two footmen are kept, it is their duty to fold the serviettes, but where a butler and one footman are kept it is then the butler's duty to do this.

It is always considered necessary to have small French rolls at a dinner-party. A glass for sherry, a glass for hock or claret (whichever is given), and a glass for champagne, are placed at the right-hand side; a tumbler is not used at a dinner-party unless a guest does not drink wine, when a tumbler would be asked for of a servant in attendance. Very thin wine-glasses are used for sherry or hock and claret; sometimes they are engraved, sometimes they have a monogram or crest, or they are quite plain; but in any case thick glass is never used. The glasses for hock are often very pretty, pale rose-coloured glass being the most fashionable. Champagne glasses, when engraved, correspond in pattern to the other glasses. As to the style of champagne glass in use, the cup-shaped, open glass is the one most in favour. Some people use champagne tumblers—short, thin, narrow glasses—but they are not generally preferred; the narrow, slender, vase-shaped champagne glasses are quite out of date, and are a thing of the past.

The claret-glass forms part of the dinner cover, and a clean claret-glass is again placed on the table after dinner at dessert, as many guests prefer drinking

light claret throughout dinner in lieu of any other wine. The speciality of a claret-glass is that it should be thin and large.

Small engraved carafes, or water-bottles, holding about half a pint of water, are placed on each side of the table, one carafe to each couple. The space occupied by the flowers and fruit and other decorations on some dinner-tables does not admit of this number of water-bottles, in which case one carafe is placed for the use of four persons.

The same arrangement is carried out with respect to the salt-cellars, which are either of silver or fine glass, one salt-cellar doing duty for each couple.

Quaint menu-holders, generally of china, are placed the length of the table, one to each couple. The menu-cards, which are slipped into these menu-holders, are always written out by the mistress of the house or by the *chef*. When menu-holders are not used, the menu-cards are more elaborate, and are placed against a vase of flowers facing each couple; or when the dinner-party is a small, unpretentious one, one or two menu-cards are sufficient.

The sideboard is the next thing to which attention should be directed, as it is the appendage to the dinner table. This also has a cloth placed upon it, a sideboard cloth made to fit the sideboard and not to fall over the front or ends. On the occasion of a dinner party the sideboard is adorned with family

plate, in the way of salvers, cups, or a handsome lamp; here are laid out in order and in rows, a row of large forks, a row of large knives, a row of small forks and small knives, a row of table-spoons, a row of ladles for the different sauce-boats, a row of dessert-spoons, rows of claret and sherry glasses; a few tumblers, in case of their being required, are also placed on the sideboard. It is from the side table that dinner *à la Russe* is served, therefore the soup ladles, the fish slice and fork, and the carving knives and forks, are placed in readiness for use. On the sideboard is placed the wine decanted for use, as decanters of sherry are never placed on the table during dinner, although they are placed opposite the host at dessert. From three to four decanters of sherry, the same of claret, and a jug of after-dinner claret. Sparkling wines, hock, and champagne, are not decanted, but are kept in ice pails and opened as required. When champagne cup or claret cup are drunk in the summer instead of champagne, they are mixed in large glass jugs and are also stood on the sideboard. Port is so little drunk that one decanter of this wine is almost sufficient. The dinner is served from a side table placed close to the sideboard; this also is covered with a sideboard cloth and not with a cloth falling around it as if it were a supplementary dinner table, but preserves the character of a smaller sideboard intended for serving purposes only. The

dinner waggon is an addition to the sideboard, the shelves are covered with serviettes; on one of these shelves the dessert is placed when it is not allowed on the table until the moment for serving it. On another shelf are arranged the dessert plates for immediate placing on the table when required. When ices form part of the dessert an opaque glass ice plate is placed on the dessert plate and the d'oyley and the finger-glass on the ice plate in addition to a gold ice spoon, and a silver dessert knife and fork, or gold, as the case may be. Finger glasses are only put on the table with the dessert, they are not used during dinner, as they are not required until the fruit is eaten. The best style of d'oyley in use is the white d'oyley with fringe—comic d'oyleys, pen and ink sketches, and lace d'oyleys are also used.

The dinner waggon also holds the salad bowl and salad plates, with salad fork and spoon, the silver bread basket, in which a small serviette is folded, and upon this are laid short thick pieces of bread or rolls, but lace or crewel worked bread-cloths are not used. A china dish with three compartments, holding cheese cut in large dice, and small pats of butter, is placed on the dinner waggon to be served in its proper turn.

The most approved mode of lighting a dining-room is by means of electric light. When this is not possible, candles should be used with paper or silk shades; there is no lighting which is so

pleasant as is this method, and about twenty wax candles would well light a dinner table arranged for a party of sixteen. Some people use a large handsome lamp, or two lamps, as the size of the table demands, also shaded with coloured shades. Others light their dining-rooms with gas sunlights or gasaliers, but lighting by gas is not considered to be the most fashionable mode of lighting dining-rooms.*

With respect to plate, the most fancied, because it is the more rare, is antique silver plate, notably of the Queen Anne period; but perfect sets of old silver are in some cases only formed by years of patient collecting. When modern plate is used the favourite style is, perhaps, the King's pattern.

Whether antique or modern plate is used, the handles of the dinner knives are usually of silver; when this cannot be indulged in, ivory handled knives take their place. The side dishes or *entrée* dishes which are handed round by the servants are of silver, and often of old silver, not old enough to be considered antique, but old enough not to be termed modern. The vegetable dishes are also of silver, the modern ones being much in favour which have two compartments. The sauceboats are also of silver, as are the small waiters, as is the cruet stand, which although never put on the dinner table, finds its proper place upon the sideboard.

As a well-furnished plate-chest is not a possession

* Electric lighting has now become very general for lighting dining-rooms and dinner-tables.

that every one can boast of, and as silver dishes and silver salvers run into money, very good plated articles are used in place of silver *faute de mieux*. When dinner is served *à la Russe*, and silver *entrée* and vegetable dishes are used, the only portion of the dinner service which is of china are the soup plates and dinner plates used in the different courses, and the dishes on which the joints, &c., are served; while in some great houses the dinner plates are of silver or gold—silver for ordinary use, and gold for larger entertainments; but many prefer eating off a china plate to one of precious metal, even if able to afford such a luxury. With regard to china dinner services, the fashion of to-day is old blue china, or modern blue and white Dresden china; a set of the former, however, cannot be purchased, but on very rare occasions when some collector parts with his treasures, otherwise, like sets of old silver, they are collected piece by piece.

In laying the dinner-table for a family dinner in a household of moderate means, where a footman and butler are kept, or where a man-servant or parlour-maid is kept, the cover would consist of two large knives, three large forks, a table-spoon for soup, a glass for sherry, a glass for claret, and a tumbler; tumblers for the gentlemen when they drink ale or light claret, or for ladies, who often drink claret and water or sherry and water, but tumblers should not be placed on the table unless they were generally used by

the family. Where silver fish-knives and forks are not in every-day use, the fish is eaten with a large silver fork. In some houses soup and fish are given on alternate nights, in others, fish every other night and soup every night; this arrangement being a matter of economy and inclination. (See "Party Giving.")

Thick square pieces of bread are placed in folds of the serviette instead of rolls. Salt cellars and carafes are placed on the table in the same proportion as when laying a table for a dinner-party, that is to say, one of each for the use of two or four persons. Some centre-pieces to hold flowers always occupy the centre of the table at every-day family dinners, but to place the dessert on the table where a butler and footman are kept is optional, but when only a man-servant or a parlour-maid is kept, then, as dinner cannot be served *à la Russe*, the dessert is not put on the table until dinner is over, as in this case the master of the house helps the soup and fish and carves the joints and birds, and as it would be impossible for one servant to carve and serve the dinner from the side-table, even if competent to do so, in addition to waiting at table, therefore the soup-ladle and the fish-slice and fork and the carving-knife and fork are placed at the bottom of the table for the use of the master of the house.

It is considered very bad style to use table-mats, and a parlour-maid should never be permitted to put

them on the table; the gravy-spoon is placed at the right hand side of the master of the house, beside the soup-ladle. A servant should not put table-spoons at each corner of the table, their place is on the sideboard until required for use, neither should the cruet-stand be placed in the centre of the table, nor single cruets in company with the table-spoons at each corner, but they should be handed by the servant when wanted.

Dessert-spoons and small forks are not placed upon the table until the moment for using them arrives; and a parlour-maid should not be permitted to place the dessert-spoon and small fork crossways on the table in front of each cover.

Decanters of wine are not placed on the table until dessert, when they are placed in front of the master of the house. The salt-cellars should be replenished every day with fine table-salt, and the cruets carefully attended to, fresh mustard being made every day, etc.

In laying the sideboard and dinner-waggon, the same method is carried out as when preparing for a dinner-party, the sideboard is covered with a cloth and the knives, forks, and spoons are laid out in rows ready for use, in addition to two decanters of sherry and a claret-jug of claret; the extra sauces, the sifted white sugar, the cruet-stand and other et-ceteras being also placed on the sideboard; the dinner-waggon contains the dessert and dessert-plates, and dessert-knives

and forks, the silver bread-basket and the butter and cheese ; when the cheese is not cut into small pieces and handed round, but is helped by the master of the house, it is served in a China cheese-dish, a serviette being folded and pinned around the cheese.

A lamp or transparent candles are used for lighting the dinner-table, or gas, as the case may be.

In houses where large establishments are kept and where economy is no object, and where there are two or three footmen and a butler, the method of laying the table and of waiting at dinner does not differ from the arrangements made for an ordinary dinner-party, the only difference being that the sideboard would not be laden with so much family plate and the gold service would not be used, but champagne would be drunk at dinner and the menu would be as *recherché* if not quite so comprehensive (see the work before alluded to) ; pines and grapes and peaches would be eaten for dessert, and finger-glasses would be used in consequence, but ices and liqueurs are seldom given on such occasions.

In waiting at table the average attendance required is one servant to three persons ; thus three servants are required to wait on nine people, and so on in proportion, an additional servant to every three additional guests ; when a butler and one footman only are kept, extra servants are hired according to the number of guests invited ; the traditional greengrocer from round

the corner or a waiter from a confectioner's, are not the best class of waiters to employ for the purpose, or from whom good waiting is to be expected; servants out of place, personally known to the butler, or persons who have formerly been gentlemen's servants, are most to be depended upon. In the country this need is supplied by each guest or married couple bringing a footman with them, who, as a rule, is expected to wait at dinner, so that in some country house dinner-parties the attendance averages, perhaps, one servant to two persons.

Previous to the announcement of dinner (see "Manners and Rules"), the footman places the soup tureens and soup-plates on the side-table; as soon as the guests are seated the footman closes the door, and the butler commences to help the soup, previous to which the footmen make the tour of the table—one footman on either side—to see that the chairs of the guests are sufficiently close to the table for comfort and convenience, the chairs being placed in readiness, but with sufficient space left for the guests to take their seats. Heavy dining-room chairs are sometimes difficult for a lady to move as near to the table as requisite, therefore a little assistance from the footman is required, which he renders by holding the back of the chair, and gently pushing it forward. By having the chairs evenly placed more space is gained, which expedites the waiting; and if any particular chair

stands a little further from the table for the convenience of its occupant, a careful servant notices the position of the chair, while a careless one does not, and probably blunders against it. When oysters are given, they precede the soup, in which case three to six would be placed in their shells on a plate before each guest in readiness, and not handed round as a course would be. To hand a large dish of oysters reposing on a serviette to each guest in succession is worse than bad style; it is awkward and inconvenient for the guests to help themselves from the dish. Slices of thin brown bread and butter are handed to each guest by one servant, while another hands lemon and pepper—a salver containing the pepper-cruet being held in one hand, and a plate containing lemons cut into half-quarters in the other hand.

The order of waiting at table is, in the case of there being two or more footmen or men-servants in attendance, to commence handing throughout the dinner simultaneously to the ladies seated on the right-hand and on the left-hand side of the host or master of the house, and from thence to each guest in succession in the order in which they are seated, ladies and gentlemen alternately. It is not the practice to serve ladies before gentlemen when there are a number of guests present; the doing so would occasion no little confusion and loss of time. When double *entrées* are not given, the *entrées* are handed in the first instance to

the lady seated at the right-hand side of the master of the house, and then to the lady at his left hand, and from thence to each guest in the order in which they are seated. The old-fashioned method of handing the dishes to ladies before handing them to the gentlemen at a dinner-party is now all but obsolete, as it occasions endless confusion and considerable delay.

When oysters commence the dinner, the soup is not brought into the dining-room until the guests are served with what is required to be eaten with oysters; and in the meantime the butler offers the wine usually drunk with the oysters, hock or chablis, which he brings to the right-hand side of each guest, saying "Hock?" or "Chablis?" according to the wine given.

When two soups are given, the butler puts about half a ladleful of soup into each plate, the footman or man-servant takes a plate in each hand, and offers it at the left hand of each guest, nothing being offered to the guests at their right-hand side during dinner, save the wine by the butler, whose office it is to pour out the wine, it never being offered by any other servant present. In serving two soups the servant should say, "Clear or white soup?" and "Mock-turtle or Palestine?" (See "Party Giving.")

When each guest is helped to soup, the butler hands round the sherry, commencing with the lady seated at the right-hand side of the master of the house.

It requires a certain amount of experience to pour out wine briskly and neatly, neither under-filling nor over-filling the glasses; a nervous servant is apt to let drops of wine fall upon the table-cloth after having filled a glass.

The soup-plates are removed before the fish is handed round, and placed in a plate-basket, to be carried out of the room.

When two sorts of fish are given, it is offered and handed to the guests in the same manner as is the soup, the butler serving it from the side-table. The sauce-ladles are taken from the sideboard, and put in the fish sauce-boats, before being handed to the guests; cucumber is handed when salmon is given. It is not considered fashionable to eat potatoes with fish or with *entrées*.

In some large houses a lift conveys the dishes from the kitchen to the dining-room, thus obviating the necessity of constantly opening and shutting the dining-room door. In other houses the kitchens are situated at some distance from the dining-room, which demands that everything should be additionally hot—the dinner, the dishes, and the plates. Cold fish or cold soup on a cold plate is very unpalatable, and the most *recherché* dinner is a dinner spoiled if not served hot.

It is the under-butler's, footman's, man-servant's, or parlour-maid's duty to put down the plates to warm before dinner, and to take the silver dishes to

the cook to be heated by her with hot water when dishing up the dinner. The different courses, and the accompanying sauces, vegetables, and plates, are carried into the dining-room by the footman on butler's trays, and then placed upon the tray stand.

When the guests are duly helped to soup, the butler rings the dining-room bell to intimate that fish is to be dished up; this he does also after each *entrée* and every course, that no time may be lost between the courses, long waits being considered to be very bad style, and a proof of incompetency on the part of the cook.

A hot dinner plate is placed before each guest when the fish plate is removed, before handing each *entrée*. When the *entrée* consists of cutlets or sweetbreads, &c., a table-spoon and large fork are placed in the dish; the dish should not be held too high or too low, but firmly and evenly, the servant standing at the guest's left hand; if the dish is loosely held, the guest finds a difficulty in helping himself from it. When the *entrée* consists of patties or *rissoles*, a table-spoon is placed in the dish only. In handing plates or side-dishes the servant has a thumb napkin in his hand, with which he hands the plate or holds the dish.

When the first *entrée* has been served, the butler opens the champagne at the sideboard in a noiseless manner, and wraps a serviette around the bottle, and offers it to the guests in the same order in which he

had previously handed round the hock and sherry or claret, saying, while doing so, "Sweet or dry?" if two sorts of champagne are given; if only one sort is given, he simply says, "Champagne?"

After the *entrées* the joint is served. The plates which have been used are removed and put in a plate basket, which has also a small compartment to hold the bones or pieces left on the plates, and which are, as it were, shot in before putting the plates in the basket. The joint is carved by the butler, the servants handing the plates to the guests in the order in which they are seated; the potatoes and vegetables are handed by another servant, while another hands the sauces — mint-sauce with lamb, currant jelly with venison and mutton, and horse-radish sauce with beef. Salad always accompanies the joint. It is the butler's duty to make the salad, which he does about half-an-hour before the dinner hour. It is prepared in a large salad bowl, and a wooden spoon and fork are placed in the bowl when it is about to be handed, which is done immediately after the vegetables have gone the round of the table. Salad plates are handed with the bowl of salad, and are placed at the left-hand side of the dinner plates; salad plates are not placed on the table until the salad is handed, and only before those who intend eating it. The servant who hands the salad hands a plate at the same time.

At small dinners two *entrées*, followed by one joint,

form the "first course." At large dinners three to four *entrées* are given, and probably two or three *relevés*, such as venison, mutton, and roast or boiled chickens. When a choice of viands is offered to the guests, thus, "Venison or mutton, sir?" would be said by the servant handing a plate of either.

An experienced carver regulates the helps when only one joint is given, so that the larger helps can be handed to the gentlemen; but when there is more than one joint in the *relevés* the helps are equal, and small helps, rather than large ones, are sent round.

In carving poultry and game, legs of birds are not considered fashionable helps, and are only resorted to as a last resource of the carver. In the second course, when such birds are given as quails, golden plovers, snipes, small pigeons, &c., the carver puts a whole bird upon each plate; but when larger birds are served, they are either cut in half, or the breast and wing, or slices from the breast only, are the style of help given. A choice of game is offered in the second course. After it has been handed round, the servants hand the requisite sauces and dressed vegetables (see "Party Giving"). The butler takes round the champagne after each course has been served, and replenishes the glasses unremittingly during dinner. He stands behind his master's chair

until his services are again required at the side-table, and does not leave the dining-room during the whole of the dinner.

Cheese-savouries, such as cheese-fondus, &c., are served after the sweets. The extra knives and forks that are required during dinner are taken from the side-board. When a knife and fork is required for an *entrée*, they are placed upon a clean hot plate and put before each guest. When required for anything carved from the side-table, whether joints, poultry, or game, they are laid upon the tablecloth in their proper place, the knife at the right hand and the fork at the left of each person.

When a fruit-tart is one of the sweets given, it is helped by the butler from the side-table. All other sweets are handed round in their turn; such as cabinet-pudding, ice-pudding, jellies, pastry, &c., previous to which each guest is supplied with a plate, on which is placed a dessert-spoon and fork.

After the sweets and savouries have been eaten, a plate with a small knife and fork is placed before each person: after which cheesestraws and cheese, and butter are handed.

The table is then cleared of plates, glasses, carafes, salt-cellars, knives and forks, and all appertaining to dinner, and the crumbs are carefully brushed off the table from the left-hand side of each person with a silver crumb-scoop or crumb-brush on to a silver waiter.

Where it is not the custom to have the dessert on the table during dinner for reasons previously referred to, it is placed on the table as soon as the cloth is cleared ; the cloth itself is never removed for dessert.

A dessert-plate with a finger-glass, arranged as already mentioned, is placed before each person, and the wine-glasses, one for sherry and one for claret, are placed at the right-hand side of the plate.

When ices are given, they are handed to the guests before dessert. Ices are always followed by liqueurs, which are handed by the butler in small liqueur-glasses on a silver waiter. The ice-plates are then removed and the dessert is taken off the table and handed to the guests, each dish in its turn. The dishes are then replaced on the table. The grape-scissors are placed on the dish containing grapes, for the use of the guests when helping themselves to grapes. A pine should be cut by the butler into thick slices, and placed upon a dessert-dish with a fork and spoon, and handed round. While dessert is being handed to the guests, the butler follows with the claret and sherry, of which he offers the choice. When he has made the round of the table, he places two full decanters of sherry and a claret jug of claret before the master of the house, and thus having completed the duty of waiting at table, he leaves the dining-room, followed by the other servants.

It is an understood thing that whilst waiting at

table no noise or clatter of any kind should be heard, and that everything should be taken up, put down, brought in and taken away in a perfectly noiseless manner. The movements of the servants themselves should be quiet and brisk, without undue haste or vulgar fussiness. If more wine is wanted by the gentlemen when the ladies have left the dining-room, the master of the house rings the bell, which is answered by the butler, when he is told which wine is required.

When the gentlemen are ready for coffee, the master of the house rings the dining-room bell as an intimation that coffee is to be brought in, which is done by the butler, who brings in the coffee on a silver salver, poured out in cups according to the number of gentlemen present; the salver also holds a basin of crystallized sugar and a jug of hot milk. In some houses the salver is handed round to each guest, in others it is placed upon the table, the guests helping themselves.

In households where a butler and footman are kept, the method of waiting at table, and the arrangements of the table, if less elaborate, are the same in every other respect, with this difference, that the master of the house invariably carves the joint and the birds from his place at the bottom of the table, and this practice is often followed even when a dinner-party is given; sometimes he helps the soup and fish, also,

at others, it is left for the butler to do this from the side-table. The side dishes, or *entrées*, vegetables, and sweets are handed in the manner and order already described, and the waiting at dinner is similar in every way, the butler offers the wine, sherry or claret, as hock and champagne are not usually drunk in the home circle.

Where only one man-servant or a parlour-maid is kept, the mistress of the house usually helps the soup from her place at the top of the table, and the fish is helped by the master of the house from his place at the bottom of the table; he not unfrequently helps the soup also. The servant stands at the left hand side of the master of the house, and takes the plates round, whether containing soup or fish, as they are served. When no guests are present, the mistress of the house is the first to be helped, and the daughters before the sons, but when guests *are* present they are served in the order in which they are seated, always commencing with the lady at the host's right hand.

It is not good style to place the fish upon a folded serviette when sending it up to table, it should be served upon a China fish-strainer placed in the dish. The *entrées* are handed round by the servant in attendance. The vegetables eaten with the joint are handed round as required; dishes of vegetables are never placed upon the table, but are placed upon the butler's tray and taken off and replaced in turn. An attentive

servant notices when any one at table requires a second help of vegetables or sauces, and hands them forthwith.

Before removing the joint, he brings a silver or plated knife-tray, in which he places the gravy-spoon and carving-knife and fork, it being awkward to remove a large dish from the table when the spoon, knife and fork are left upon it. Sherry is offered after soup, and light dinner claret after the first *entrée*, unless sherry is drunk throughout the dinner. When draught ale is drunk at dinner, the servant offers a waiter, the tumbler is then placed upon it, and the ale is poured out briskly and then slowly from a jug, giving it a fine head the while ; ale that is not thus poured out has a flat, unpalatable appearance. Bottled ale is opened at the side-board, and is poured out carefully and slowly at the edge of the glass, so that the glass may be full of ale and not of froth, and is then placed upon a waiter and handed. A careless servant allows the beer to run down the sides of the glass, filling it with froth instead of beer.

In the second course the master of the house carves the chicken or game which is placed before him on the table, and the plates containing the various helps are then handed.

When a sweet or savoury admits of it, it is handed round, or the mistress of the house helps it from her place at the top of the table in

the same manner. When handed as before mentioned, a clean plate, with dessert-spoon and fork, is placed before each person previous to doing so. The master of the house generally helps the cheese himself, butter, dry toast and celery being handed round. After cheese the table is cleared of everything appertaining to dinner, the table-cloth is then carefully brushed free from crumbs, as already mentioned, the servant making the round of the table with tray and brush for this purpose, and standing while doing so at the left hand of each person.

The dessert-plates and the dessert are then placed upon the table, with the decanters of wine (sherry and claret); and where only one servant is kept to wait at table the master of the house, oftener than not, helps his wife and daughters to wine, while the sons help themselves and the ladies to dessert.

In small households such as these, coffee is seldom taken to the gentlemen in the dining-room after dinner, save on the occasion of a dinner-party, and the gentlemen usually have coffee with the ladies in the drawing-room. (See Chapter entitled "Butler's Duties.")

When the master of the house leaves the dining-room, whether guests are dining with him or not, he rings the dining-room bell to intimate that the servants may "take away."

Where a butler and two footmen are kept, or a

butler and one footman, the servants enter the room together ; the butler locks up the wine in the cellaret, the dessert is taken to the still-room or to the housekeeper's room, and the glass and plate are taken into the pantry. (See Chapter, "Footmen's Duties.") The plate that has decorated the sideboard is carefully put away by the butler in the plate-closet. (See "Butler's Duties.")

Where only a man-servant or parlour-maid is kept, the master of the house usually puts away the wine before leaving the dining-room, or if there were no master of the house, the mistress would herself do so before leaving the dining-room. The dessert is taken into the housekeeper's room, there to be put away by the person officiating as housekeeper, whether it be the cook or the lady's-maid who acts in that capacity.

Where a butler and two footmen are kept, or a butler and one footman, it is the butler's duty to overlook the dinner-table arrangements, and to see that everything is in readiness that can possibly be required during dinner ; but where only what is termed a single-handed man-servant or a parlour-maid is kept, everything depends upon their thoughtfulness, and the method they bring to bear upon their duties.

Some few mistresses make a point of looking into the dining-room before dressing for dinner, to see that everything likely to be wanted is ready for use ; but the many have neither time nor inclination to over-

look things in this careful way, and even if they had the leisure, it is doubtful if their memories would be more reliable than those of their servants, and would fail to note the absence of any particular thing until the moment of its being required.

Inefficient servants, whether men or maids, have a habit of running in and out of the dining-room during the whole of dinner in search of something that should have been in readiness in the dining-room. There are, perhaps, not sufficient rolls in reserve, or thin, dry half-slices of bread are handed on a plate in place of short, thick pieces of bread in a basket. Things brought to table in a hurry often show signs of want of care. An insufficient number of knives, forks, spoons, or glasses for use during dinner necessitates their being procured from the pantry instead of being taken from the sideboard, which makes all the difference to the comfort of those at table. In the same way the sauces are forgotten, and not handed with the different courses. Biscuits and butter not handed with cheese, or dry toast has been forgotten; or cucumber should have been handed with the fish or the lamb, but it was "forgotten" at the proper time; or there is no soda-water or ice; and other *contretemps* of a like nature occur. Thus, much devolves upon the single-handed man-servant or parlour-maid; and not only is general activity and a

thorough knowledge of their duties required of them, but intelligence and forethought must be by no means lacking in the performance of these duties.

Noiseless movements on the part of those waiting at table, as has already been said, cannot be too much insisted upon, and nothing is so great an indication of the want of training in a servant as a bustling, loud, and over-hurried manner of rushing about the room.

In placing anything on or taking anything off a table, a servant should never reach across a person seated at table for that purpose, however hurried they may be or however near at hand the article may appear; but should quietly walk to the left side of each person when about to place or to remove anything from the table.

The butler should wear a black dress coat, black trousers, white waistcoat, and white tie, and in some smart houses he wears in addition black silk stockings, gilt buckles on shoes and gilt buttons on coat. The footmen should wear dress livery. The indoor manservant, the usual evening dress black suit, white waistcoat and tie.

CHAPTER IV

WAITING AT LUNCHEON AND THE ARRANGEMENTS OF THE LUNCHEON-TABLE.

LUNCHEON, as has been said in a former work,* is an inconsequent meal, yet, paradoxical as it may appear, it is an event of no little importance in the domestic arrangements of each day, although in some households it is served in a more ceremonious manner than in others. With some people luncheon is in reality the children's dinner, when dishes suitable for children only are provided and when the mistress of the house makes her luncheon on this wholesome fare, and where it is not the rule but the exception to invite friends to luncheon. In other houses the younger children dine with their nurse in the nursery, while only the elder children dine at luncheon with the heads of the family. But it is in houses where there are no young children, generally speaking, that luncheon is regarded in the light of an agreeable social repast, to

* "Manners and Rules of Good Society."

which friends are regularly invited or are expected to drop in without an especial invitation, it being an understood thing that their doing so would be agreeable.

Two o'clock is the fashionable luncheon hour, both in town and country; half-past one is not so fashionable an hour, but is sometimes found more convenient, and when luncheon is served at one o'clock, it may be taken to mean that it is the children's dinner hour. When the servants dine at one o'clock, the luncheon-table is generally laid by half-past twelve. It is the footmen's duty to do this, where a footman or footmen are kept; the butler decants the wine and overlooks the general arrangements. The luncheon-table is covered with a fine damask table-cloth, beneath which is a baize or cloth cover. It is needless to say that table-mats, or slips, as they are vulgarly termed, are as inadmissible at luncheon as at dinner or breakfast.

The cover for each person consists of two large knives and two large forks, a glass for sherry and one for claret. Soup is so seldom given, that the luncheon cover does not include a table-spoon for soup; the same remark applies to fish, although dressed fish and *mayonnaises* of fish are favourite luncheon dishes (see "Party Giving"). A fish-knife and fork are not required, a large dinner-fork being sufficient for the purpose.

Serviettes are not generally used at luncheon. They are a great convenience when provided, but yet not to use them does not argue a want of knowledge of how things are done, as many fashionable families think it unnecessary to use them at this meal. When they are used, they are folded as at dinner, and the bread placed within them, and are placed on the table between the knives and forks of each cover. When serviettes are not used, the thick square piece of bread is placed at the left hand of each cover. Salt-cellars and small water carafes are placed the length of the table. Menu-cards are not used at luncheon.

Luncheon is sometimes served *à la Russe* and sometimes not; both styles are equally fashionable, although, perhaps, luncheon *à la Russe* is ultra so. When luncheon is served *à la Russe*, no dishes are placed upon the table, save dishes of fruit and vases of flowers. The extent of this display is optional; some people content themselves with grasses or ferns, others with single flowers in low specimen glasses, roses, &c. A very general practice is to serve luncheon partially *à la Russe*, in which case the lighter viands are placed upon the table, while joints are served from the side-table. Again, when luncheon is served *à la Russe*, or partially *à la Russe*, the decanters of wine are not placed upon the table, but when luncheon is helped from the table by the master and mistress themselves, then sherry and claret are placed

upon the table ; but even in this case the wine is first handed by the butler to the guests.

When luncheon is not served *à la Russe* all confectionery or cold sweets in the way of jellies, creams, pastry, or fancy sweets, are placed down the centre of the table, with a lunch-cake and dishes of fruit. The hot *entrées*, or cold *entrées* (see the work before alluded to), are placed before the mistress at the top of the table and before the master of the house at the bottom of the table, which dishes are helped by them, after they themselves have ascertained which dish a guest is inclined to partake of.

Cold joints, cold chicken, cold game-pie, cold lamb and cold beef, and things of a substantial character, are usually served from the side-table by the butler, to avoid encroaching too much upon the attention of the master of the house, although he not unfrequently carves the hot or cold joint after having helped the *entrées* ; it is immaterial which plan is followed.

The vegetables are never placed upon the table at any time during luncheon, but are always handed by the footman to the guests, and are served in silver or plated dishes, with or without compartments ; as at dinner, a table-spoon, or a table-spoon and fork, as required, are placed in each dish or compartment of a dish before it is handed.

The side-board is covered with a white cloth, and contains rows of knives and forks, dessert-spoons and

table-spoons, for use when required, extra wine-glasses and tumblers are also placed on the side-board, also the cruet-stand, which is never placed on the luncheon table; decanters of wine and a claret-jug of claret occupy a place on the side-board. The dinner-waggon, which is covered with a white cloth, usually holds the silver bread-basket of bread, the Stilton cheese on a cheese-dish, the cheese having a serviette fastened around it, or a dish of cut cheese, pats of butter are placed in one compartment of the china dish for cheese or on a separate dish, and are in readiness on the dinner-waggon.

A good supply of cold plates are also placed on the dinner-waggon, plates for dessert when dessert is given, but a little fruit is more often given at luncheon than is ceremonious dessert. Powdered sugar is not placed upon the luncheon-table, but is handed to the guests on a waiter when required.

The butler announces luncheon to his mistress in the drawing-room, which he does in the manner described in a former work,* the correct formula being, "Luncheon is served," the butler does not vary this sentence for the sake of variety; having made the announcement, he returns to the hall, where himself and the footmen await the coming of the family. When the company are seated at table, if luncheon is served *à la Russe*, the first *entrée* is

* "Manners and Rules of Good Society."

handed by the footman, commencing with the lady seated at the right hand of the master of the house, from thence continuing round the table; an *entrée* is often followed by vegetables and by a salad. Before handing an *entrée* a footman should place a hot plate before each person; when salad is handed a salad-plate is offered at the same time; after the first *entrée* has been handed, the butler offers the wine—sherry or claret—and pours out the one selected, as at dinner. If there is not a second *entrée* he carves the hot joint, or chicken, or whatever may be provided; the footman takes away the plates that have been used before handing the chicken or joint. In doing so he gives each person his or her choice, and says “Chicken or lamb, sir?” wine is then again handed—sherry or claret. When champagne is given at luncheon it is handed immediately after the first dish has been served, and claret or sherry are not then offered, but are given if asked for, in place of champagne, which would not be handed more than twice during luncheon.

The sweets are handed round as at dinner in their turn, a fresh plate with a dessert-spoon and small fork upon it, is placed before every person previous to handing each sweet; cheese is sometimes handed after the sweets, and sometimes grapes or pears.

After everything has been duly handed, and everyone has been helped to what they require, the servants leave the dining-room.

When luncheon is not served *à la Russe*, and the master and mistress of the house help the viands on the table before them; if dressed fish or *mayonnaise* of salmon is given, it is naturally the first dish that is helped; it is either handed round as an *entrée*, or is helped by the master or mistress of the house; when handed round as an *entrée*, a dinner-plate is placed before each person previous to its being handed, but when helped by one of the heads of the house a small help is handed to each person in succession, who have said that they wish to partake of that particular dish. The servant takes the plates singly from the left hand of his master or mistress.

Again, when chicken, beef, or lamb, is helped by the master or mistress from either end of the table, they themselves inquire of those at table which they prefer, the mistress says, perhaps, "Will you have some chicken?" or the master of the house says, "May I give you some beef?" and a small help of either is handed by the servant or servants in attendance.

When luncheon is not served *à la Russe*, and the host and hostess carve the joints themselves, it is the rule to help the ladies before the gentlemen, and the master or mistress says distinctly to the servant at the moment of his taking the plate from the table, "For Mrs. A."

When a servant hands an *entrée* or sweet, he does

not hand it to ladies before gentlemen, but in the order in which the guests are seated, commencing with the lady seated at the right hand of the master of the house. When only the members of a family are present at luncheon, the mistress of the house is the first to be helped.

The mistress of the house helps the substantial sweets, such as fruit-tarts, puddings, sweet-omelette, &c. ; but the lighter sweets, jellies, creams, or pastry, are taken off the table by the servants or servant, and handed to those at table, and are then replaced.

When the servants are not engaged in waiting at table, the footman stands behind his mistress's chair and the butler behind that of his master, in readiness to remove the plates and to offer fresh dishes. The plates are removed as soon as a servant observes that they are done with.

When places are laid at table for children, the cover consists of a small knife and fork and dessert-spoon, a small tumbler or silver mug: it is not usual to put wine glasses or serviettes for their use. It is customary for the mistress of the house to help the children at luncheon from those dishes placed before her. Young children seldom dine at luncheon when it is served *à la Russe*, but when they do so they are helped by the butler, as are the other persons at table. When guests are present at luncheon, they are helped before the children.

Where a single-handed man-servant or parlour-maid is kept, luncheon cannot be served *à la Russe* as a matter of course, but the waiting at table is conducted on the same method as when two or three men-servants are kept, but a man-servant or parlour-maid would not say, when announcing luncheon, "Luncheon is served;" as in a small establishment, where only one servant is kept to wait at table, such an announcement would sound pretentious. The usual formula in these households is, "Luncheon is on the table, ma'am," or "Luncheon is ready, ma'am."

When luncheon is over, the master of the house rings the bell before leaving the dining-room, and upon the servants' return the butler's first duty is to put away the wine, and the footman's to clear the table. Where only one servant is kept, whether man-servant or parlour-maid, the master or mistress generally puts away the wine in the cellaret before leaving the dining-room.

CHAPTER V.

THE MANNER OF PREPARING AFTERNOON TEA.

AFTERNOON tea is not in fashionable circles regarded as a meal ; it is merely a light refreshment, to break what would otherwise be a six hours' abstinence between a two o'clock luncheon, and an eight o'clock dinner. Afternoon tea is popular as a social institution, independent of its nutritive qualities, and its reviving influence.

Tea is served, or brought into the drawing-room either at four, half-past four or five o'clock, but not later than five. Afternoon tea is not served in the dining-room, except at an "At Home," or large five o'clock tea

Where a butler, or two footmen are kept, it is the footmen's duty to carry the tea into the drawing-room ; but where a butler and one footman are kept, the butler assists the footman in so doing. One footman takes the silver salver or tea-tray into the housekeeper's room, with the silver tea-pot, and tea-kettle, sugar-basin, cream-jug, and tea-

spoons. The housekeeper, lady's-maid, or cook, or whoever may be acting as housekeeper, makes the tea, fills the hot-water-kettle with boiling water, fills the sugar-basin and cream-jug, and places the tea-cups on the tray, with tea-spoons, a plate of thin bread and butter, or cake, if not both. One of the footmen, before taking in the tea, places a low table in front of his mistress, or of the seat usually occupied by her when pouring out tea, or he sees that the table near to her chair is clear of articles, that he may at once place the tray upon it. The table is covered with what is known as an afternoon tea-cloth. The tables used for tea are chiefly small fancy tables, not tables covered in velvet, or embroidery, and trimmed with lace, but square wicker-work tables. Tea is not served on large tables, neither are chairs placed in order around the small tea-table, but remain in their usual position in the drawing-room. Very small plates are frequently used at afternoon tea, but d'oyleys and serviettes are not used.

Cups of tea are not handed, when the mistress of the house pours out the tea; but the servant places the tea-tray upon the table, and arranges the cups and saucers in order. If there is not sufficient room on the tea-tray or tea table, the plates of cake, &c., are placed upon a small table close at hand. If the hot-water-kettle is a large-sized one, it is brought in

by the under-butler as soon as the tea-tray has been placed on the table. The hot-water-kettles in use at afternoon tea are the hanging silver kettles on stands, or silver or china kettles, about the size of a tea-pot, which do not require a stand. Tea-pot stands, or tea-cosies, are not used, and are considered bad style.

The footman does not return to take away the tea-tray until the drawing-room bell is rung for him to do so, or until his mistress has left the drawing-room; but he enters the drawing-room for the purpose of placing a table in readiness for tea. He should not inform his mistress as to the reason of his entering the room, but should perform his duty in silence; neither should he knock at the drawing-room door before opening it. It would be in very bad style were a servant to do so. It is proper and correct that servants should knock at bed-room and dressing-room doors before entering the rooms; but at drawing-rooms, dining-rooms, boudoirs, and library-doors, it would not be so.

The tea-tray is carried from the drawing-room to the housekeeper's room, where the china is left, and the plate is then taken to the pantry.

Where the mistress of a house does not care to give herself the trouble of pouring out the tea for an indefinite number of callers, the tea-tray would be prepared in the manner before mentioned; but in

this case cups of tea, according to the number of persons in the drawing-room, are poured out by the housekeeper, and the tea-pot and hot-water-kettle are not taken into the drawing-room, the footman hands the tray first to his mistress, if no guests are present; but when guests are present, tea is first handed to the lady of highest rank present, and to the married ladies before the unmarried ladies. He then takes away the salver or tray, with its contents. He does not leave it in the drawing-room, or put it down while he is there. The tea is either brought in at the usual hour for having tea, or, if required earlier, the mistress of the house rings the bell, and orders it to be brought in. She does not mention how many cups of tea are required, as if she were giving an order at an hotel, but merely says, "Bring some tea, please;" or, "You may bring in the tea;" or, "Let us have tea at once, please;" or, "I rang for tea;" or, "We will have tea now."

It is the servant's duty to notice how many persons are in the drawing-room, and how many cups of tea are consequently required. It would be very remiss and careless were he to bring in cups short of the number, and it is always advisable to bring in an extra cup of tea in case another visitor should arrive in the meantime. At small five o'clock teas, when the number of the guests does not warrant tea being served in dining-rooms, and the size of the drawing-

rooms determine this matter, the tea is served in the back drawing-room. If the guests numbered from twenty to thirty, and the drawing-room were of an average size, it would be almost unsociable to divide the guests by having tea in the dining-room, but if guests much exceeded this number, it would then be served there. At these small drawing-room teas a good-sized square table is placed in a convenient corner of the back drawing-room.

A white damask table-cloth is spread on the table, and as many cups and saucers are placed upon the table as there are guests expected. The cups include tea-cups and coffee-cups, but more tea-cups than coffee-cups are usually required. The cups are placed in rows. The tea-cups are placed at one end or side of the table, and the coffee-cups at the opposite end or side. The urn occupies the centre of the table, two small tea-pots and two small coffee-pots are placed in the centre of the rows of cups. A silver jug of cream, and a basin to correspond of loaf sugar, a basin of crystallized sugar, and a jug of milk for the coffee. Slop-basins are not used on these occasions, neither are d'oyleys, serviettes, or small knives. Tiny tea-plates are frequently used. The eatables provided consist of thin brown and white bread and butter, often rolled. Small sandwiches of cucumber, water-cress, potted meat, &c., and every variety of fancy cakes. When tea is served in the drawing-room in this way, the

ladies of the house, or some intimate friend of its mistress, pour out the tea with the assistance of some of the gentlemen present. The servants do not remain in the drawing-room after they have brought in the tea, and when anything extra is required in the way of additional cups, fresh tea, more bread and butter, &c., the mistress of the house would ring and give the necessary orders. The tea-table should be prepared in the drawing-room half an hour before the hour at which the guests had been invited. The tea and coffee should not be brought in until the hour named in the invitation, say four or five, either hour being considered equally fashionable.

The tea-table is not cleared, or the things removed, until after the departure of the guests, when the footman, man-servant, or parlour-maid should perform that duty, and rearrange the drawing-rooms.

It is the footman's duty to prepare the table for tea, and to bring in the tea and coffee; the butler carries in the urn; he also announces the guests as they arrive. (See Chapter "Announcing Visitors.")

At afternoon "At Homes," or large Five o'clock Teas, tea is served in the dining-room; a buffet is formed of the dining-table, which is placed at the upper end or the side of the room, if the doing so affords greater space; thus the buffet extends the length of the room or the width of it; the buffet is covered with a white damask table-cloth; the centre

of it is occupied with high silver stands, on which are placed dishes of fruit and ornamental cakes. High vases containing flowers are between at intervals.

The urns for tea and coffee, or silver teapots and coffee-pots and hot-water urn, are placed on the off side of the tables.

The cups and saucers for coffee and tea are placed in rows close to the urns on either side, and an additional number on a small table close at hand. Jugs of cream and milk, usually of silver, and sugar-basins, also of silver, are placed at intervals on the near side.

When strawberries and cream are given, they are served from large china or silver bowls placed at both ends of the tables, or on a separate table. Rows of dessert-plates in piles of six or singly, according to the quantity of the fruit given, are placed the length of the tables. Dessert knives and forks and spoons are placed on either side of the plates, four deep, as a cover would be, in readiness for immediate use. Dishes of strawberries without cream are also placed on the tables, to be eaten with sugar only.

Jellies and creams are very generally given at afternoon teas, and macédoines of fruit placed in dishes the length of the tables at intervals, in dishes of silver, china, or glass. Dishes of every description of fancy confectionery are placed on the tables;

also of small sandwiches, of cucumber, small cress, water-cress, anchovy, and potted chicken, &c.

The ices are either served at one end of the long tables, or on a separate table, on either china or glass ice-plates; wafers or ice-biscuits are handed with the ices, an ice-spoon being placed on each ice-plate. A man-servant serves the ices, and offers a choice, saying, "Cream or water-ice?"

The wine given is usually placed on the sideboard, as being more convenient; jugs of claret-cup and of champagne-cup, either of glass or silver, are placed in front, and decanters of sherry behind these; thin tumblers for cups and glasses for sherry are placed in groups in readiness for use. A man-servant pours out the cup and hands it on a waiter as asked for, when the gentlemen do not help themselves.

In smart houses in town the tea and coffee is poured out by men-servants, in smaller households and in the country women-servants do this. The servants, either men or women, two in number, stand behind the tables and hand the cups of tea or coffee across as asked for.

A servant receives the request for tea or coffee in silence, offering no remark, handing the tea or coffee as quickly as possible. An experienced servant is on the alert to take empty cups from the guest, and remove them from the front of the tables when placed there.

When pouring out coffee or tea, a servant should be careful not to fill the tea or coffee cups to the brim, but to leave room for milk or cream to be added by a guest according to taste; otherwise an over-full cup causes inconvenience, and frequently the contents are spilt, when the cup is handed, in the saucer or on a dress, to the annoyance of the gentleman who hands the cup, and of the lady who receives it.

Guests help themselves to all they require in the way of cakes, &c., but when anything is out of reach, a servant hands at once the particular thing asked for.

To ensure quick waiting, an extra quantity of glass and china is always provided, so as to avoid a shadow of inconvenience from the want of either. The decanters of wine and the jugs of claret and other cups are replenished by the butler, who replaces empty decanters and jugs with full ones. When the dishes of cake, &c., show signs of their being exhausted, the footman replaces them with fresh dishes, which he procures from the housekeeper's room. Dessert dishes and glass dishes are used for this purpose.

Where only one man-servant is kept, and small "At Homes" are given, one of the women servants attends to this duty, as the man-servant would be engaged in opening the door to the visitors on their arrival, and for them on their departure, and in

announcing them in the drawing-room. See Chapter "Announcing Visitors."

Seats are not placed in the dining-room for the guests, and the room is cleared as far as possible of all movable furniture to allow all available space.

The women-servants on these occasions do not wear print dresses, but dresses of dark materials, white aprons, and white caps; the butler wears the usual black cloth coat; and the footmen wear indoor livery. The single-handed man-servant wears the regulation black coat. The tea-room arrangements at balls, dances, at-homes, amateur theatricals, are carried out precisely in the same manner as the foregoing, both as regards the waiting at table and the way in which the tables are arranged. At lawn-tennis parties and garden-parties, tea is served in a similar manner, although it is sometimes served in a marquee, or tent, or even on tables on the lawn under the shady trees. Fruit is also a great feature on these occasions, when pines, melons, peaches, or grapes are given; dessert-plates are then provided, and are taken from piles of plates at the end of the buffet, and handed with a dessert-knife and fork when pine or melon is eaten. A separate table is also placed near the tea-table with refreshments for the gentlemen in the way of soda-water, brandy, wine, and cups. Although the gentlemen help themselves to wine and cups, the attendance of the butler and footman is required at this table to

open the soda-water, and to replenish the decanters and jugs or cups, and remove the wine-glasses, tumblers, and soda-water-glasses that have been used, and keep the table well supplied with glasses.

CHAPTER VI.

WAITING AT TABLE AT WEDDING LUNCHEONS.

THE time-honoured "Wedding Breakfast" is now merged into what is known as the "Wedding Luncheon;" the hour is also changed from 12 a.m. to 2.30 or 3 p.m., according to the hour at which a marriage takes place.

Sitting-down luncheons and standing-up luncheons are both fashionable. The latter are by far the most numerous, on the ground that a larger number of guests can be accommodated, while the expense is considerably less.

When any member of the Royal Family is present at a wedding, it is usual to give a sitting-down luncheon. A table is set apart for the royal guest, a few of the principal people present, the host and hostess, the bride and bridegroom, and others.

The usual mode of arranging for a sitting-down luncheon is, when space permits, to have a number of small round tables to seat parties of six or eight, in addition to one or more long centre tables.

The number of servants required to wait at a wedding luncheon depends upon the number of guests. On an average, one servant could wait upon from ten to fifteen persons, or even twenty; but much depends upon the waiting required.

As regards the arrangement of the tables, white damask table-cloths, for both long centre table and small tables, are *de rigueur*.

Twenty inches should be allowed for each cover, which consists of two large forks, two large knives, and, when soup is given, a large table-spoon.

A roll should be placed in the centre of the cover, a glass for champagne and one for sherry at the right-hand side.

A profusion of flowers decorates the long centre table, in centre-pieces of silver, china, or glass, and specimen glasses of choice flowers are placed on the smaller tables. Small silver salt-cellars should be placed on all the tables, allowing one to two persons; glass water-jugs or quaint glass water-bottles, on an average, one to six persons. Menu cards in pretty menu-holders or menu-cards of quaint devices are also placed on the tables, say one to four persons.

Silver salvers and silver cups, &c., are arranged on the sideboard, which should be covered with a damask cloth. Rows of plates ready for use should

be laid out thereupon; silver forks, large and small, large table-knives, table-spoons, dessert-spoons, piles of cold plates, should be placed on a dinner-waggon close at hand. Decanters of sherry and jugs of claret should be placed upon the tables; but the champagne should be handed in every course.

When the guests are seated, soup should be handed in the order in which they sit.

Hot *entrées* follow in the same order. When hot *entrées* are not given, the cold *entrées* are placed upon the tables, and the gentlemen help the ladies. This facilitates waiting, but when the waiters are numerous, cold *entrées* should be handed in turn.

The *gros pieces* should be carved from the side-table as at luncheon, and handed by the servants and waiters.

The sweets are usually placed on the tables, and the guests either help themselves or the waiters hand them in turn.

Hothouse fruit is placed on the tables, and the guests help themselves, or the dishes are handed by the waiters.

The wedding-cake occupies the centre of the table, or is placed at one end. The bride nominally makes the first cut in it. It is then cut up in small pieces by the butler, and handed round on plates to the guests.

Champagne should be handed, on an average, four times during a wedding-luncheon—after the soup, after the *entrées*, after the meat course, and after the course of sweets. In some houses magnums are poured into large glass jugs; in others, the champagne is poured from the bottles, a serviette being neatly folded around each bottle. Ice should be handed either before or after the champagne, in small glass ice-pails.

Coffee should be handed at the conclusion of luncheon.

Standing-up wedding-luncheons.—This description of luncheon very much resembles a standing-up ball-supper, both in the menu and in the manner of waiting. Two or three long tables are arranged the length of the room, or a horseshoe table occupies both sides and end of the room.

In the centre of the tables flowers and centre-pieces should be placed, and the whole of the menu provided arranged the length of the tables.

The covers should be placed close together, and consist of a knife and fork, a plate and two glasses, one for champagne, one for sherry.

As the dishes are emptied, they should be replaced by full ones, and the chief point in waiting at table at this class of luncheon is to keep the tables thoroughly well supplied, and to remove empty dishes, plates, glasses, knives and forks, &c.

Soup, when given, should be handed in soup-cups, and cups of soup should be placed the length of the tables.

As a rule the gentlemen help the ladies and themselves to everything they require, although the men-servants and waiters should be at hand to help any dish and to bring anything asked for; their principal duty is to change plates, knives, forks, and glasses as quickly as possible.

The champagne is opened and poured out by the servants as required.

Wedding cake should be handed after the sweets.

Tea and coffee should be served at a separate table, or at the end of one of the long tables. The guests ask for either before leaving the dining-room.

CHAPTER VII.

WAITING AT TABLE AT WEDDING RECEPTIONS.

THE arrangements necessary for a Wedding Reception are on similar lines to those for a large afternoon at home, and consequently the waiting is comparatively light.

Occasionally, a wedding reception is preceded by a wedding luncheon, to which a limited number of guests are invited; but the more general rule is to invite all the guests to an afternoon reception only.

Tea and coffee and refreshments should not be offered to the guests when they arrive, and they should be ushered at once into the drawing-room, their names being announced by the butler or manservant. It is no longer the fashion to call out the names loudly for the benefit of the whole room, but to announce in a low, distinct voice to the mistress of the house.

Two servants are required for this purpose; one should be stationed in the hall, and the other at the top of the staircase.

At these receptions the tea-room is not thrown open until a little before four o'clock. Generally speaking, from half an hour to three-quarters of an hour is allowed to elapse between the arrival of the guests and the announcement of "'Tea," although the hour is decided more or less by the hour fixed for the wedding ceremony.

The butler should announce that "Tea is served" to the mistress of the house at the hour previously fixed by her. He should then wait in the hall with the other servants or waiters while the company descends to the tea-room, and should then enter with them to assist in the waiting.

The number of men-servants and waiters required to wait at a wedding reception of three hundred guests, varies according to the number of guests the tea-room can accommodate at one time.

A servant should remain in the hall to be in attendance on guests arriving or departing, and two or three servants should assist in the tea-room.

The tables should be arranged along the side and end of a dining-room, according to the number of guests expected, two tables if a large number, one if a small number. Occasionally, when a room is a long one, a table in the form of a T is placed down the centre and top of it.

In a double dining-room, the smaller one should be appropriated to refreshments, consisting of ices,

champagne-cup, claret-cup, and fruit; but oftener than not the whole of the refreshments are served in one large room.

The tables should be covered with white damask table-cloths. The floral decorations are usually of moderate dimensions. A small choice display of white flowers being the rule—a rule varied by exceptions, as in some houses the floral decorations are extensive and in great profusion, consisting of orange-blossoms, white roses, white lilac, cape jessamine, &c.

Everything provided for the reception in the way of confectionery and fruit should be placed upon the tables, the fruit in the centre, and the various dishes of dainties in front, if the tables are at the side of the room, or on both sides of the tables if in the middle of the room.

Dessert-plates should be placed the length of the table, frequently in piles of six, from large to small; the tea-urns and coffee-urns, with teacups and coffee-cups, placed on the further side of the tables; jugs of cream and hot milk, basins of sugar of silver or glass on the near side; also champagne-glasses and small tumblers.

The men-servants should pour out the tea and coffee, and hand it across the tables as asked for. They should also open the champagne as required, help the ices from the ice-table, and the strawberries

and cream when given, and hand various dishes of cakes and sandwiches, &c., to ladies not near enough to the tables to be helped by their friends to what they require; the crowd being great on these occasions, and ladies frequently unable to find any one they know to give them refreshments, thus servants are expected to be on the alert to render this service to the many guests.

The servants are also expected to remove all tea-cups and saucers, plates, glasses, &c., as soon as used, and to put fresh ones in their places, and to replenish the dishes of strawberries, peaches, &c.

A man-servant should take charge of the gentlemen's cloak-room, and a woman-servant of the ladies' cloak-room, and both should be in attendance the whole of the time a reception lasts, to hand the coats and hats to the gentlemen and the wraps to the ladies.

CHAPTER VIII.

WAITING AT TABLE AT GARDEN-PARTIES.

THE arrangements for a garden-party vary according to the space at command and the number of guests expected. In large and spacious rooms, small round tables, in addition to long tables, are in use. The long tables are generally placed at one side of the room, and also at the top; occasionally down the centre instead of at the side, but this is not considered the most convenient arrangement. The round tables should be placed wherever space permits, and chairs placed to seat the guests on an average of four to each table.

At large tables, seating is not possible, and only a few chairs should be placed here and there in the room where space permits.

The tables should be arranged in the dining-room immediately after luncheon, and should be covered with white damask table-cloths. The small tables with afternoon damask tea-cloths.

The flowers, fruit, and confectionery are placed

on the long tables, and a plate of fancy cakes on each small table.

Dessert-plates, frequently in piles of six plates from large to small for fruit, and dessert knives and forks, should be placed in front and down the length of the tables.

Jugs of cream and basins of sugar, of silver and glass also, should be placed the length of the tables. Tea and coffee cups should be arranged on the off side of the tables or at one end, as most convenient.

In some houses, during August, in the height of the fruit season, a long table is set apart entirely for fruit, in addition to the tables at the side of the room, for tea, coffee, and confectionery. This is only done in houses where hothouse fruit—grapes, peaches, nectarines, &c.—are to be had in abundance.

The tea and coffee urns and teapots and coffee-pots should be brought into the tea-rooms by the servants immediately before “tea” is announced, and placed in front of the cups and saucers. The jugs of hot milk should be brought in and placed in front on the tables.

A large supply of extra cups and saucers should be placed on a side table close at hand in readiness for use.

In the country, two upper women-servants should pour out the tea and coffee, and stand behind the tables to do this; frequently in town also. But in

many houses men-servants pour out the tea and coffee, and women-servants do not appear in the tea-room at all.

When strawberries and cream are given, they are helped by the men-servants from large bowls of china or silver. Frequently the gentlemen do this for their friends, and dispense with the service of men-servants. When helped by men-servants, a spoon and fork is handed on the plate containing the strawberries and cream. Sometimes strawberries and cream are served on a separate table, and only dishes of strawberries placed on the centre tables; but in either case, when fruit is given, the servants are required to be very quick in removing and collecting the plates, spoons, and forks that have been used, and replacing them with others.

At large parties it requires two or three servants to do this efficiently. At small parties one servant suffices.

Ices are frequently served at a separate table, and a man-servant is stationed at the table to help these as asked for. Ices should be served on glass or china ice-plates, and an ice-spoon placed on each plate. Ice-wafers or biscuits are also placed on this table.

At large parties a second servant is required to collect the ice plates and spoons. At small parties

the servant stationed at the ice-table is able to do this himself.

Champagne-cup and claret-cup are, in the country, served on a separate table, or in an adjoining room. Small tumblers and champagne-glasses should be placed upon the same table. In the neighbourhood of town and in town, where space is made the most of, these drinks are usually placed on the sideboard. A man-servant should be at hand to pour out the cup as required.

The butler should announce that "Tea is served" to his mistress, and then return to the tea-room to assist.

At the long tables the guests ask for tea and coffee, and help themselves to whatever they require. At the small tables they are waited upon by the servants, who bring coffee, tea, fruit, &c.

As the seats at these tables are vacated, the empty cups and saucers, plates, &c., should be quickly removed. The long tables should be cleared in the same manner.

The strong point of waiting at table at garden-parties is to keep a good supply of cups and saucers in readiness, hot coffee, and fresh tea, and to remove the china and glass used as quickly as possible.

The tea and coffee should be made by either the housekeeper or cook, and the urns refilled as soon as brought down.

At small garden-parties teapots and coffee-pots only are used, and an urn for hot water.

Very few servants are required to wait at garden-parties as compared with other entertainments, and the servants of the household usually suffice for this description of waiting, particularly in the country. In the suburbs and in town extra help is easily attainable.

CHAPTER IX.

WAITING AT TABLE AT EVENING PARTIES.

THE waiting required at Evening Parties entirely depends upon the description of evening party given; that is to say, a large reception and a sitting-down supper, and a large reception and a standing-up supper, or a small evening party with light refreshments in lieu of supper. At large receptions waiting at table is an important point, and a staff of servants and waiters imperative.

At a standing-up supper far less waiting is required, and in the case of light refreshments only being given, the waiting is even less.

As regards the tea-room arrangements, which have first to be considered, they are identical in each of the foregoing cases; the numbers to be provided for making the only difference. For instance, whether an evening party is a large or a small one, tea, coffee, and refreshments are served in what is called the tea-room. A room on the ground floor of a house, either library or morning-room, is usually made use of for this purpose.

The tables should be arranged on one side, and also at the top of a room when the numbers are considerable. The tables should be covered with white damask table-cloths as at afternoon at homes. Centre-pieces with flowers should be placed in the centre of the tables; and the confectionery, which consists of fancy cakes, &c., should be placed on dishes the length of the table.

Tea and coffee urns, with tea and coffee cups and saucers, should be placed on the off side of the table, sufficient space being left for the servants to pour out the tea and coffee. The tables should always be arranged on the side of the room which enables the servants to make the easiest exit with the cups and saucers, and to bring in fresh relays of tea, coffee, hot water, &c.

The ices should be served on the same table as the tea and coffee. The ice-plates are usually placed at one end of the table, and the ice-pails close at hand, as far out of sight as may be. Frequently a screen is made use of, behind which a table is placed where ice-plates and cups and saucers are put until they can be conveniently carried out of the room.

Jugs of iced claret-cup and decanters of sherry, with small tumblers and sherry-glasses, should be placed on the tables.

Two women-servants should pour out the tea and

coffee, and hand it across the tables as asked for, and the guests help themselves to cream, milk, and sugar. Jugs of hot milk, jugs of cream, and basins of sugar, either of silver or glass, should be arranged near the front of the tables, and a space left clear in the front of the tables on which to place the empty cups. The servants should remove them quickly to make room for others.

A man-servant or waiter should help the ices as asked for, and beyond this a man-servant has but little to do in the tea-room, with the exception of clearing away the china and glass that has been used.

Before going upstairs, after the guests have divested themselves of their wraps, the ladies of their cloaks, the gentlemen of their hats and coats, one of the men-servants should ask if they will have tea or coffee, merely saying "Tea or coffee?" and indicating the tea-room.

One servant should be stationed in the hall to open the door, and another to announce the guests to the mistress of the house at the drawing-room door, until the staircase becomes too crowded for this to be possible.

A Sitting-down Supper.

The waiting at a sitting-down supper is identical with that at a ball-supper. Space permitting, round

tables are used in addition to long tables, and as many as can be conveniently placed. Long tables are arranged in the centre and end of a room in the form of a T, or in the form of a horseshoe. They should be covered with white damask tablecloths. Twenty inches should be allowed for each cover, which consists of two large knives, two large forks, a serviette folded mitre-shape containing a roll, a china dinner-plate, a glass for champagne, a glass for sherry; one salt-cellar to two persons, a water-jug and bottle to four or six persons. Flowers and fruit decorate the centre of the tables arranged in silver or glass centre-pieces.

The small tables, laid for four, six, or eight, should be covered with small white damask cloths. A few flowers in a centre-vase or specimen glasses, or a centre dish of fruit, tiny salt-cellars, and the same covers as at the long tables. Two large forks, two large knives, a serviette folded mitre-shape containing a roll, a glass for champagne, and a glass for sherry are required. The whole of the dishes contained in the menu that are cold should be placed on the long tables, at convenient distances for helping and carving the same; no duplicates should be placed side by side.

When the guests are seated, soup should be handed in soup-cups placed on each dinner-plate.

When hot *entrées* are given, they should be handed, and a plate placed before each guest.

The guests consult the menu, and ask for what they select. Although gentlemen help the ladies they have taken into supper to any of the dishes placed before them, the servants are required to be at hand to take away plates, knives, and forks as used and to replace them with clean ones, or to bring helps of various dishes not within reach.

At the round tables, on the contrary, everything should be handed from the long tables when dishes are not placed on these tables for guests to help themselves.

Champagne is opened by the servants, and should be handed after soup, after the *entrées*, after the cold viands and salads, and after the sweets.

A Standing-up Supper.

For a standing-up supper the tables should be laid as for a sitting-down one. Frequently a sort of compromise is made, and the long tables arranged for a standing-up supper, while small tables are placed in convenient corners with seats for a certain number of guests. Failing space for this arrangement, no seats whatever are placed in the supper-room.

Covers should be laid the whole length of the tables, consisting in this case of one large knife and

two large forks, a dinner-plate, and a glass for champagne.

Flowers and fruit in centre-pieces and high dishes are placed in the centre of the table. The supper should be arranged in duplicate dishes on either side of the tables, with table-spoon and fork in the front of each dish, or knife and fork, according to the contents of the dish.

Decanters of sherry and jugs of claret-cup and champagne-cup, and glass jugs of water, should be placed at intervals on the tables.

The round tables contain from four to six covers, arranged as at the long tables; also vases of flowers and fruit, a small decanter of sherry, and a glass jug of water.

Brisk waiting is most important at standing-up suppers, as plates and knives and forks are in constant demand. Dexterous carving is required. A servant is generally stationed near a *gros piece*, to hand helpings to those who ask for them—gentlemen for ladies, and gentlemen for themselves.

Opening champagne, and opening it well, is another point in waiting, and requires to be done with celerity.

The number of servants required is on an average one to twenty-five, and even less, and this is computed, not with regard to the number of guests invited, but with regard to the actual number of

guests a supper-room can accommodate. A larger number of servants naturally makes waiting more expeditious, say one to fifteen; but at a stand-up supper, where the guests help themselves, too many servants are rather in the way than not.

A Light Refreshment Supper.

This kind of supper is served in a different manner from the foregoing. The cover merely consists of a fork and plate, a small tumbler for claret-cup, and a glass for sherry.

The tables should be prettily arranged with flowers and fruit, and various descriptions of confectionery, fancy sweets, and sandwiches.

Everything is eaten with a fork, and occasionally with a desert-spoon, as nothing is provided requiring the use of a knife.

The waiting required consists of supplying forks, plates, and glasses, and in pouring out claret or champagne cup for those who are not within reach of either. Guests help themselves to what they require, but occasionally a man-servant helps the sweets, jellies, creams, &c., when gentlemen are in the minority.

Cloak-rooms.

One man-servant should be in attendance in the gentlemen's cloak-room, to give them ticket numbers

for their hats and coats, and to fold the latter or hang them on pegs as space permits.

The inner hall of a large house is sometimes used for this purpose, when a second room for coats is not available. One or two women-servants are needed in the ladies' cloak-room, to take their cloaks and wraps, fold them, give ticket numbers, and hand cloaks and wraps on departure.

CHAPTER X.

WAITING AT BALL-SUPPERS, AND THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUPPER-TABLES.

THE character of ball-suppers is variable as regards the extent or comprehensiveness of the *menu*, but invariable as regards the method and style of the table arrangements, and the waiting at table.

Some few givers of entertainments are lavish in their expenditure, and make a ball-supper a thing to be talked about. The *nouveaux riches* are the class of entertainers who more particularly affect these Sardanapalus feasts. (See the work entitled "Party Giving.") The ordinary ball-supper is carried out in the same manner as is the "at home" supper. "Sitting-down" suppers are the order of things on both occasions, standing-up suppers being but little given unless space is of paramount importance. Supper is usually served in the dining-room unless there is a billiard-room of larger dimensions, or unless there is a temporary supper-room erected for the purpose. When the dining-room is used as a supper-room, tea

and light refreshments are served in the library or morning-room. A long table occupies the centre of the dining-room, and round tables are placed in the recesses formed by the windows, and in the most convenient corners of the room. The long table is covered with a white table-cloth reaching to the ground on either side. A short cloth has an unfinished appearance at supper as at every other meal. A space of twenty inches is allotted for each cover. The cover consists of three large forks, two large knives, and a table-spoon for soup, a pretty china dinner-plate, and a serviette folded as for dinner containing a roll, a glass for sherry, and a glass for champagne. (For the correct style of glass, see Chapter, "Waiting at Dinner," &c.). These covers occupy the table on both sides, and the top and bottom of the table. The centre-pieces of silver, candelabras, the flowers, the fruit, the cold viands, and the sweets occupy the centre of the table. (See the work before alluded to.) The small round tables accommodate either four or six persons; four is, however, the most fashionable number. Neither flowers, fruit, nor cold viands are placed on these small tables, which merely contain four or six covers, *carafes*, and salt-cellars, one for the use of two persons.

At the best arranged suppers, menu-cards are placed on the tables in menu-holders. One or two menu-

cards on each small table, and the same in proportion on the long table. At many ball-suppers menu-cards are dispensed with, either with the idea that it would be pretentious to use them, or with a view to saving expense; but if any variety exists in the delicacies provided, it is as well that the guests should have the benefit of the knowledge, as the intelligence of servants hired for the night only is not to be too much depended upon, while gentlemen themselves in a crowded supper-room, are not the most skilful discoverers of dainties, and are prone to return to their fair partners with a plate of anything, the first thing that they have been able to secure, with the remark, "I have brought you this—I don't know if you like chicken, but it was the first thing I saw;" and even when one of the servants in attendance is asked as to the menu of the supper, he seldom remembers anything but cold chicken, tongue, pheasant, and game pie, leaving the hot cutlets, the patties, the mayonnaises, &c., out of the question. The most fashionable dishes given at ball-suppers are minutely described in the work entitled "Party Giving." It would therefore be superfluous to give further details respecting them here.

The sideboard arrangements require to be of an extensive nature for the smooth working of a ball-supper.

For a given number of guests the amount of

glass, china, plate, &c., required, would be larger at a ball-supper, than at an "at home" supper, although the style of supper might be identical. All information on this head—as to the quantities required in every department, with statistics of expense ranging from the most lavish to the most economical manner of doing things, gleaned from a wide and practical experience of the subject—is to be found in the little work already so often referred to in these pages, "Party Giving."

The sideboard is covered with a proper sideboard-cloth, and is ornamented with as much plate as the plate-chest can furnish, or to the extent that the giver of an entertainment may think proper to hire of ornamental plate for the occasion. Dozens of large and small silver forks, large table-knives, table-spoons, and dessert-spoons, are placed upon it in readiness for use, dozens of cold plates, dozens of champagne-glasses, and small tumblers, &c., in addition to decanters of sherry. Dozens of champagne are set in pails of ice beneath the sideboard, and are opened as required. Dozens of serviettes are also provided for immediate use, and are folded by one of the servants in attendance as required for setting fresh covers.

The supper-tables are usually laid in the afternoon. The master of the house usually dines at his club, or

elsewhere, on the evening of a ball; and the mistress of the house either dines early in the day, or in some smaller room of the house, so as not to retard the operations in the supper-room, and in the tea-room.

Twelve o'clock is the general hour for serving supper in the country; but in London one o'clock is the more fashionable hour.

It is the butler's duty to announce supper. He does not make the announcement as when announcing dinner, but informs his master and mistress that supper is served: discovering the whereabouts of the master of the house, he says, "Supper is served, sir;" and makes a similar communication to the mistress of the house. He then returns to the supper-room.

The fashionable plan is to commence supper with soup: more frequently two soups are given. Before the announcement of supper is made, the soup-tureens are brought in by the footmen, and are served from a side-table. Small soup-cups are more used than are soup-plates. Soup is handed to the guests in the order in which they are seated, all the servants and waiters in attendance being employed in serving them with soup; the choice of soups is given them, as at dinner.

At some ball-suppers small covered cups of soup are placed in the centre of each cover; but this is

only occasionally done, when attendants are few in number and but one soup is given. As soon as each person has partaken of soup, the soup-cup or soup-plate is instantly removed. Hot *entrées* are now frequently given at ball-suppers; but they are not so generally given as is soup; but when they are included in the *menu*, they follow after the soup, and are handed, as the soup is handed, to each guest in succession; they are not placed upon the long table, as are the cold viands, but are taken from a side-table, served in silver *entrée* dishes. Vegetables are not given as a matter of course, unless they form part of the *entrées*, or are served as an *entrée*. The cold viands are not handed in this manner, but a help of any dish which guests may select is brought to them, if the dish in question is not within convenient reach of any couple.

In a crowded supper-room, a couple who have taken their places at a small table find a difficulty in ascertaining what there is to eat, unless they can consult a menu-card. When seated at the long table, a gentleman can help a lady and himself to any dish on the table that they may prefer; or he could desire a servant or waiter to bring him any especial dish, if a small one, or a help of any especial dish, if a large one; a small dish might mean lobster-salad, or cold cutlets, or plover's-eggs, with aspic-jelly, &c., from which a gentleman would help himself; and a

large dish would mean boned-turkey with truffles, cold salmon with cucumber, boar's-head with pistachio-nuts, &c., from which a help would be served.

Those seated at the small round tables, are served in the same manner, a small dish is brought to them from the long table, from which to help themselves, or a help from a large dish is handed to them.

Great intelligence and quickness is necessary on the part of servants waiting at a ball-supper, that they may observe which of the guests are in want of their services, whether as regards handing the viands, champagne, or sweets. Champagne is opened by the butler and those assisting him, and is handed to the guests in the order in which they are seated; and the glasses are replenished in the same order, the empty glasses, and those that are half-empty.

Those seated at the small tables are helped to champagne in the same order; but if a servant was desired by one of the guests seated at a small table to leave the bottle of champagne, that he might help himself and his friends at the same table, he would do as desired.

A serviette is always carried by a servant when handing wine or when waiting at table.

When seltzer water is required, it is asked for, but is not offered otherwise.

The number of guests which can be accommodated in a supper-room at one and the same time, naturally

depends upon the size of the room itself; from 80 to 120 are very average numbers. Immediately a place is vacated at either of the tables, a servant at once removes the glasses, plates, &c., and replaces them with clean ones; the dishes are also replaced by fresh ones in their turn, so that the supper-table may be constantly supplied, and that dishes may not present a dilapidated and half-empty appearance. Supper is served unremittingly for at least two hours and a half, and the supper-room remains open to the guests until the close of the ball or dance. After half-past three but a limited supply of provisions is expected to be found on the tables, although champagne is freely provided throughout the evening. The supper-room is not cleared until the last guest has left the house; the eatables are then taken into the kitchen, the fruit to the housekeeper's room, and the glass and plate to the pantry; the wine in the charge of the butler is put away by him.

At "At Homes" the supper is over much earlier, lasting little more than an hour; it is served at the same hour, and announced in the same manner as a ball-supper, but guests do not "go in to supper" at "At Homes" more than once during the evening, and seldom return to the drawing-rooms after supper, save for a few moments. The average number of servants required to wait at ball-suppers and "At Home" suppers, would be one servant to six or eight persons,

computed not with regard to the number of guests invited, but according to the number of guests that can be accommodated in the dining-room at the same time.

It is customary to provide a supper, consisting of cold meat and beer, for the band, and to supply them with a limited amount of wine or beer during the evening, especially if the band is a military one, and wind instruments are employed.

The men-servants and waiters are also supplied with supper, under the supervision of the butler.

CHAPTER XI.

WAITING AT BREAKFAST AND THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

IN large establishments breakfast is served in the breakfast-room, and in smaller establishments, whenever it is possible to set apart a room for this meal, it is an advantage in many ways ; in the first place, the room is free from the odours of dinner and wine of the previous evening, as the lateness of the dinner hour necessitates the closing the windows and doors during the whole of the night, and the exclusion of fresh air until between seven and eight the next morning. A dining-room with a close, dinnerish sort of smell about it is not so provocative of a good appetite as is the fresh air of a room that has not been used for eating purposes for some twenty-four hours or so. For further information respecting the arrangement of breakfast-room, see work entitled, "Party Giving."

Apart from the comfort which the heads of families derive from the possession of a breakfast-room, it

is no little convenience to servants themselves in enabling them to perform their duties in an orderly and methodical manner. When there are guests staying in the house, and where the family "go out a great deal," and consequently come down at different hours to breakfast, ranging from 9 to 10.30 a.m., where there is no breakfast-room these late and uncertain breakfast hours render the clearing away the breakfast-table and laying the table for luncheon rather a hurried performance.

Where a butler and two footmen are kept, it is the footmen's duty to set the breakfast-table and take in breakfast; where one footman is kept it is his duty to do this, but when the work is heavy the butler performs this duty, the butler in both cases overlooking the general arrangements. Where a single-handed man-servant or parlour-maid is kept, it is his or her duty to lay the breakfast-table.

The fashionable breakfast-tables are long tables; large round tables are sometimes used but not often; but in the case of a large party of guests being in the house two or three small round tables would be placed in the breakfast-room in addition to or instead of one long table.

In laying the table a fine damask table-cloth is laid over a baize or cloth cover; a plate, two small knives and two small forks are placed for each person, the serviette is folded mitre shape and stands on the

plate, small glass cream-jugs and sugar-basins for the use of two persons are placed the length of the table, and in some houses a glass plate containing a pat of butter is placed before each person above the breakfast plate at the left-hand side; in others open round glass dishes containing small pats of butter are placed down the centre of the table, two or three according to the number of persons at breakfast; another and more general mode is for the footman to hand round the butter dishes in their turn; salt-cellars are also placed down the table, and an occasional breakfast carlton. When tea and coffee are poured out by the mistress of the house, and it is the rule for her to do this, the cups and saucers are placed in rows on the table-cloth at the top of the table, with a slop-basin, silver cream-jug, sugar-basin, and teapot, a place being left for the coffee-pot and for the urn. The only eatables placed upon the breakfast-table are dishes of rolls and fancy bread, and plates of thin bread and butter, glass dishes of preserves, and honey in the comb, fruit, clotted cream, toast racks with dry toast, a stand of eggs, and muffin dishes containing muffins or buttered toast; these are the only dishes which have covers; the others are round open dishes and not small glass jars; urn or teapot stands worked in beads or Berlin wool are bad style on a breakfast-table, the stands are either of silver, electro-plate or china; a loaf of bread is placed upon a trencher on the side-

board. The sideboard is covered with a cloth and rows of knives, forks, and table-spoons, one or two dozen plates are placed upon it, also the cold viands, tongue, ham, game-pies, potted meat, and the like; the hot viands are placed upon a side table, such as eggs and bacon, dressed fish, kidneys, cutlets, broiled chicken, savoury omelette, roast partridges. These things are served in silver dishes with hot water, or spirit lamp, beneath.

The usual breakfast hour is either nine, half-past nine, or ten. Family prayers usually take place a quarter of an hour before the breakfast hour; the gong for prayers is sounded by the footman. After prayers the servants bring in breakfast; the butler carries the urn, and the footman the tray containing the hot dishes; the footman then sounds the gong for breakfast and the butler announces to his master that breakfast is served. The master and mistress of a house wait breakfast neither for guests nor for the members of the family, but take their places at once at table; the servants stand in the breakfast-room until the master and mistress are seated, when having seen that they are comfortably seated, they commence waiting at table. The butler stands beside his mistress at the top of the table, and hands the cups that she has filled, on a salver, to those seated at table. While the butler is inquiring of each person whether they will have tea or coffee saying, "Tea or coffee, sir?"

and handing them whichever they prefer, the footman hands, first the dry toast and rolls, which are taken off the table for this purpose; the silver toast-rack is placed upon a plate when handed, the butter is then taken off the table and handed round, as is the egg-stand, which is also handed on a plate. In some houses the eggs are enfolded in a serviette for the purpose of keeping them hot; when this is done an empty egg-cup is placed beside each breakfast-plate. It is usual for the butler to ask each person what they will have, naming the hot and cold things that are provided for breakfast, and it is the butler's province to serve the dish selected by placing a portion on a plate, which is then handed by the footman (as has been before said, everything is handed); and everything placed upon or taken from the table by the servants in attendance is placed and removed from the left side of each person. When each person at table has been served with what they require the servants withdraw from the room and the gentlemen help themselves to anything further they may need. A late arrival at the breakfast-table would do the same unless fresh toast or another hot dish were brought in for his or her benefit, when the servant bringing in the fresh relay would serve the late comer as he had done the other members of the party.

In some large houses, in the case of a large party of visitors being present, it is customary for the butler

to pour out the tea and coffee at a side-table, and it is then handed by the footman to the guests.

When guests are not present, and the family are breakfasting alone, the presence of the servants after the breakfast has been brought in is often dispensed with; indeed, oftener than not, it being a purely optional matter whether the servants remain in attendance during the whole of breakfast or not.

Where only one servant is kept—whether manservant or parlour-maid, he or she does not remain in the breakfast-room after breakfast has been brought in, the family waiting upon themselves. The mistress of the house pours out the tea and coffee and hands it to those at table, probably adding cream and sugar to it to save trouble, as in the family circle the small glass cream jugs and sugar basins are not in everyday use, but the table is laid in the same way in all other respects. Tea-trays are never used at breakfast, whether of silver or *papier-mâché*, the tea-cups and saucers, and *et ceteras* being placed upon the table-cloth. The morning letters are generally placed upon a table in the breakfast-room, from whence visitors select their own letters. In some houses the butler hands each person their letters on a salver. It is either the footmen's or the footman's duty to take away the breakfast and all appertaining to it; the viands are carried into the kitchen, the china into the housekeeper's room, or still-room, and the plate into the pantry, the

preserves and fruit are taken to the housekeeper's room.

With regard to the attire worn by servants at breakfast and during the day, the butler should wear a black coat and black or coloured trousers, waistcoat and tie, the footmen their indoor livery, the single-handed man-servant, where not in livery, also wears a black coat; the parlour-maid should wear a print dress, white apron, and white cap.

Hunt breakfasts are generally served in the large hall or dining-room, are not served in the manner above described, but rather in the style of a cold luncheon; with this difference, that ale, spirits, and liqueurs are provided, and tea and coffee served by the butler from the sideboard, instead of by the mistress of the house at the top of the table.

CHAPTER XII.

WAITING AT TABLE AT HUNT BREAKFASTS.

WHEN a hunt breakfast is given, a very substantial meal is provided, resembling a cold luncheon without *entrées*. Arrangements are made for those who wish to enjoy a sitting-down breakfast, and for those who prefer a standing-up one. Thus two separate tables are arranged on these lines. On the one, covers are laid as for luncheon—two knives, two forks, a plate, and two or three glasses.

The principal viands are placed on the table, with a reinforcement on a side-table. Ornamental sweets are not as a rule given at early hunt breakfasts.

The waiting at table is confined to removing plates and glasses, and replacing them with others as quickly as may be, the guests helping themselves to the things provided.

Champagne, sherry, and claret are given. The wine should be placed on the table, and also handed by the butler.

The table arranged for the standing-up breakfast

is supplied with lighter refreshments—sandwiches, sausage rolls, biscuits, &c. A knife and fork, a plate, and two glasses form the cover.

The guests help themselves to cherry-brandy, sherry, or anything they require. The butler should open the champagne, and pour it out when asked for. At this table the waiting principally consists in removing glasses and plates that have been used, and supplying others with the greatest celerity.

In the cold weather, cups of soup are either handed or placed the length of the tables.

Coffee is given on a separate table or at one end of a long table, and is supplied as asked for. It should be poured out and handed by a man-servant. The butler and footman should remain in the entrance-hall while the principal guests are arriving, some of whom are announced, and others not announced, but shown into the dining-room.

CHAPTER XIII.

SERVIETTES.

SERVIETTES should always form part of a dinner-cover, and are quite indispensable in every household.

At luncheon the use of serviettes is optional, but it is more general not to use them at this meal.

At breakfast they are seldom used.

At sitting-down ball-suppers serviettes are in general use, but not at standing-up suppers; at wedding-luncheons they are often dispensed with.

Folding Serviettes.

There is a decided objection in the smartest houses to serviettes being fantastically folded, or indeed folded at all, except in the simplest manner, the objection is to a serviette being passed and re-passed through the hands of a servant in order to accomplish elaborate folding, and also to having a serviette creased and tumbled and all freshness taken out of it. Thus the less handling given to a serviette

the better, and the simplest folding is considered the best style.

The following ways of folding serviettes are much in vogue.

The folds of a serviette should not be disturbed, with the exception of the last which forms the square; this should be opened, and the two top corners folded into the centre in shape of a cocked hat, and the serviette placed flat on the table with a roll within its folds.

Another simple form is, when the two top corners of a serviette have been folded into the centre as in the foregoing, it should then be folded over in the centre into a triangle, and then placed upright upon the table with a roll in the folds, or quite flat as preferred.

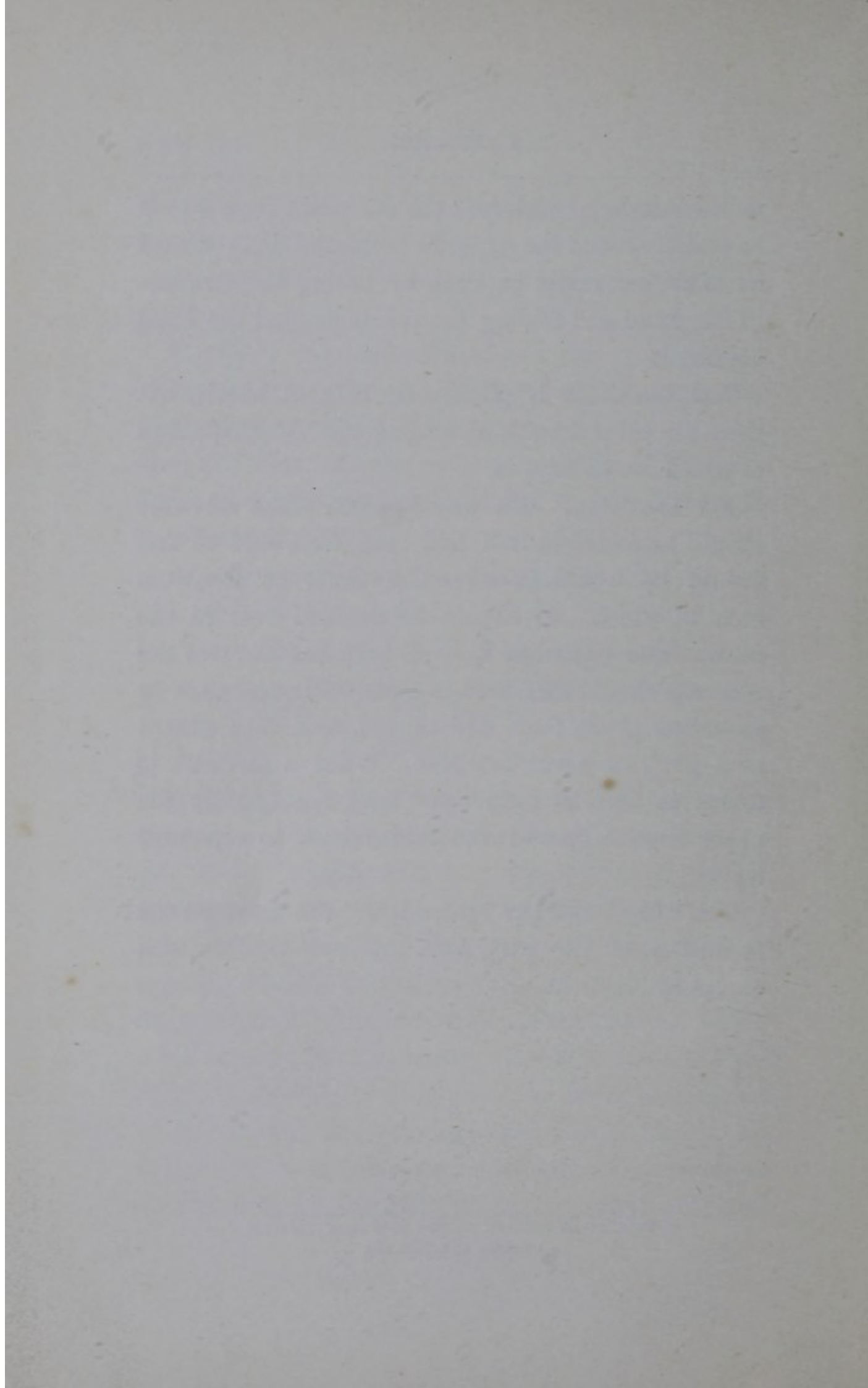
A favourite way of folding serviettes, and which rules in by far the larger number of households, is the "mitre" shape, as it does not crease and tumble a serviette to the extent that more intricate folding occasions. It is folded as follows. The serviette should be folded into three folds of equal size, both edges outside. The two ends should then be folded over to meet in the centre, the right-hand bottom corner should be folded down to cover one corner of the square, the top left-hand corner should be folded down in the same manner. The serviette should then be turned over to the other side and

folded in two lengthways ; the one point should then be folded around the opposite point and both turned in. This can easily be done by taking the serviette in one hand and folding the points around the hand holding it.

The fan-shape is principally seen at hotels, but there are several ways of folding the fan-shape, two of which are as follows.

For the "fan," one way is thus. The serviette should be folded in half, and then from end to end should be folded in accordion plaits of about an inch in width. It should be doubled over in the centre ; and placed in a small hock-tumbler ; or the serviette should be folded in three folds, and then in accordion pleats from end to end, and then placed in a glass or small tumbler. When a serviette is folded in half to form the "fan," occasionally the upper edge is opened and folded back to represent leaves.

The "lily" and the "palm leaf" are amongst the favourites of the past, and are now seldom seen except at hotels.



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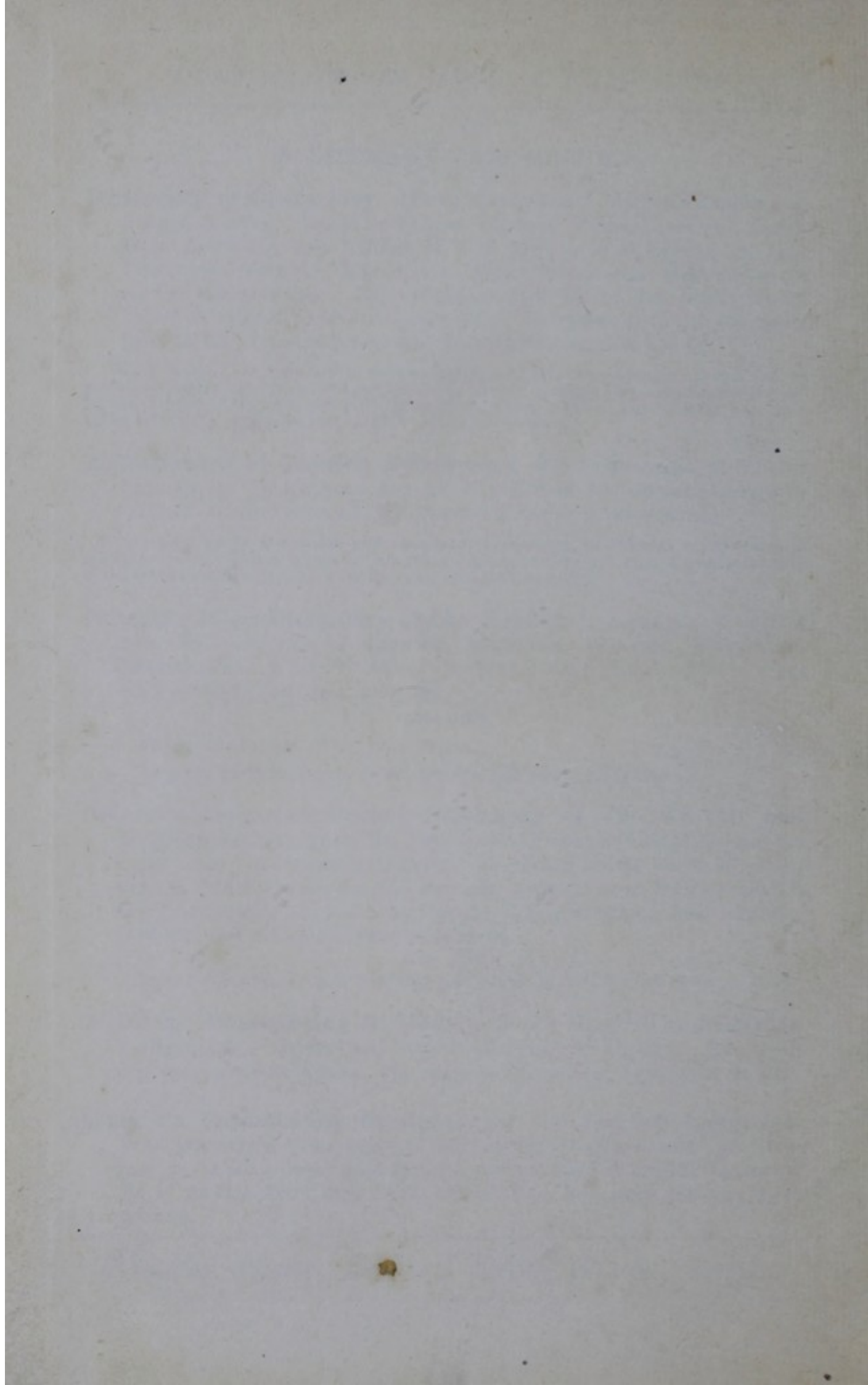
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