

ETIQUETTE.

Valuable Advice on the Subject by Mrs. Sherwood—Women and Ladies.

The Proper Heading in Reply to an Unknown Lady's Letter—Wedding Invitations—Napoleon's Manner.

Mrs. Sherwood will each week answer ten or twelve questions concerning points of etiquette and manners.

Questions should be addressed to the editor of THE GAZETTE.

It will be impossible to answer all questions, owing to the limited space that can be given to this department.

These questions having reached the editor, we would answer them to the best of our ability, promising that as all etiquette in America is in a chaotic state...

There are always questions which puzzle those entering society, and no doubt some of the readers of THE GAZETTE have thought over those which are answered in this column to-day.

"Will you be kind enough to inform me the proper heading to use in reply to an unknown lady's letter, referring to a business matter. Should I say 'My Dear Mrs. S.' or 'Madam?'"

Always "madam." It is of no importance to you whether she is married or single. "Madam" is proper.

H. A. C.—It is hardly expected of a caller that he would call later than 9 o'clock.

INVITATIONS TO WEDDINGS.

Florence Fitzgerald—It is always proper to send a card in answer to an invitation to a wedding. It is no longer the custom to turn down the edge of visiting cards.

M. O. U.—It is best always to be forgiving and to meet kindness half way. Accept the gifts with thanks.

MARRIED LADIES AND YOUNG MEN.

Critic—It is, of course, proper for a married lady who is entertaining to send a card to a young man. It is not proper, however, for a young unmarried woman to do so.

A QUESTION FOR HOSTESSES.

"Etiquette" asks: "A widow lady whose family consists of a maiden sister and two daughters entertains two gentlemen of distinction. In what order should they be seated?"

The lady of the house takes in the gentleman whom she wishes to distinguish and seats him at her right hand.

BONNETS IN THEATERS.

"Business" asks: "If thoughtfulness of others is a distinguishing and essential mark of good breeding, how do you class women who remain covered at the theater?"

This is a severe criticism on American ladies, and must have been made by some gentleman who sat behind a very high hat the evening before.

TO MAKE GOOD SERVANTS. "Housekeeper" asks: "How can I persuade my maid to do her duty of the door?"

A servant cannot be too carefully taught her duty to visitors. Having first ascertained whether her mistress is at home or not, she should also learn if that lady wishes to receive, thus saving the bother of alighting from her carriage.

All servants like to be commanded by a strong, honest, fair, judicious leader. They seek the praise, the reward of their service, in a few well chosen thanks; as a part of their honest wages.

THAT YOU MAY BE AGREEABLE. "Edgar Faunteroy" asks: "How can I make myself agreeable in society, and how much small talk must I learn?"

This is a hard question to answer, because the business of being agreeable is one which has daunted the greatest geniuses. It is at once a talent born in one. He must be a dull fellow, however, who, born to the splendid birthright of being an American, with every chance of an education, with the knowledge that he is, if he has good manners, the equal of any thing—if such a man, with the hereditary brightness of a free born citizen, and with the enervating climate to back him, cannot be agreeable, who can?

Yes! it is a hard, up-hill business, no doubt to start a conversation. What a wit calls the "staircase conversation," which takes place between couples going down to dinner, can scarcely soar above the weather, or the trivialities of the day. Facts are very valuable adjuncts, but one does not wish to say: "Eight times eight are sixty-four, my worthy friend."

What are going to do, then? If the young girl next to Edgar has tact and intelligence, she will keep him out of his difficulty, as she may say: "Did you see Coquelin?" or "Have you

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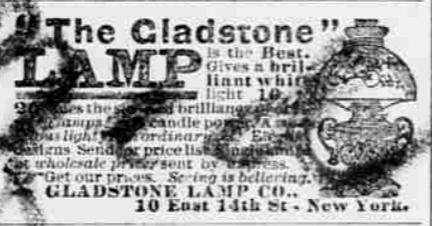
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seen Mary Anderson in Calcutta? His answer will give her a little knowledge of his taste. Her question will move the lumbering springs of his eloquence, perhaps.

In London they have a shop where one can buy after-dinner stories and jokes for a guinea a piece. One of these was lately sold: "Why is Mr. Gladstone like a certain fashionable piano? Because he is neither square nor upright, but only grand."

Now if we are reduced to this kind of purchase in America, it is quite unlucky that we have no "Grand Old Man" who is such a fountain of jokes as is the great Liberal leader; but it is hardly probable that we shall be reduced to such straits.

People being casually introduced to each other often experience a certain amount of difficulty in starting a conversation—or, in other words, making "small talk."

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