

company of true criticism. Yeats has told us that the act of composition has always been painful to him—as the act of physical reproduction is painful to a mother. He can never write more than seven or eight lines a day. Are we to despise his seemingly spontaneous ballads and songs because of a knowledge of the way in which he works?

The truth is that any bit of art is seldom achieved in haste. "Easy writing makes hard reading" is an old, proved truth. There is no short cut to artistic fame. Even silver-tongued orators write and rewrite and then memorize their speeches. There can be no capture of perfection and beauty—except in moments of high inspiration—through processes of speed. Wordsworth has said that "Poetry is emotion remembered in tranquillity." The base purveyors of penny-dreadful fiction may have their little hour—and their big bank accounts; but they will have no place at all in the memories of future generations.



### HOW TO BEHAVE IN SOCIETY

BY FREDERICK L. ALLEN

**E**TIQUETTE is coming down. For several years now we have had books of etiquette available for students of correct behavior at three dollars or two dollars, but to-day I bought one for twenty-five cents. It is only a little one, and perhaps it doesn't cover all the subtler problems, but still the price is encouraging. Some Henry Ford of etiquette was bound to come along sooner or later and reduce the cost of good form. You and I have always been able to go into a restaurant and order a grapefruit, yet until now it has been a pretty expensive matter to find out whether to eat it with a spoon or a

fork, and those of us with growing families to provide for and mortgages to pay off on the little old home have been tempted, I am afraid, to hold fast to our dollars and use the first implement that came to hand. But now that the new era has come, the whole scale of values is different. Twenty-five cents for the grapefruit, twenty-five cents for an authoritative verdict in favor of the spoon. And yet some people talk about the good old days!

It is a wonderful little book. There is no time wasted in getting down to brass tacks. The very first sentence is full of meat. "In street, ferry, restaurant, or theater, a well-bred person will conduct himself so as to draw no attention to himself," it says. "Loud voices, noticeable gesticulation, conversation in which absent friends are called by name in tones easily overheard by bystanders, all these are marks of those who 'don't belong.'"

Here at the very start is food for profitable thought. "In street, ferry, restaurant, or theater"—notice those words. You and I perhaps are already aware that in the street, or in a restaurant or theater, we should conduct ourselves so as to draw no attention to ourselves. Only yesterday, as I was walking along Fifth Avenue, my mind turned, as it will, to the good times I had been having at the seashore over the week-end, and I recalled how I had turned handsprings on the beach; and just for a moment I thought, "I could turn just as good handsprings right here in Fifth Avenue," but the very next instant I said to myself, "No, that might draw attention to myself," and in a jiffy the temptation was past. I already knew how to behave on the street. *But suppose I had been on a ferry?* I should have turned the handsprings and thereby marked myself as one who doesn't belong.

Now, however, all is changed. For twenty-five cents I have learned that the same rules apply on a ferry as elsewhere. If it weren't for this book I

might go on for years behaving all wrong on ferries, calling absent friends by names in tones easily overheard by bystanders, gesticulating noticeably, and doing other terrible things. Now I shall know enough to look carefully about the ferry before calling my friends by name and if they are absent I shall lower my voice to a whisper, and people will know that I belong. Isn't that a valuable thing to have learned from the very first paragraph of a twenty-five-cent book?

And it continues just as usefully. Let me give you the second paragraph: "In a crowd, never hail a friend by calling his name, if he is some distance away, for it is not necessary that you should thus inform those who block the way of your friend's identity. Either you must contrive to pass and join him, or else catch his eye and bow."

There now! isn't that sensible? Naturally you would think offhand that it would be necessary to inform the crowd of your friend's identity, but when you stop to think the matter over, you can see that it isn't necessary at all. If your friend is anxious to have the crowd know his name, he can announce it himself in loud tones. There isn't the slightest obligation on you to assist him. In fact, in case he is wanted by the police, he may thank you not to.

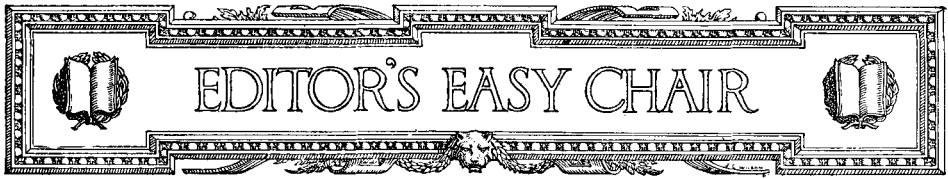
On the next page are some helpful hints about lifting the hat. This should be done, we learn, when a lady on the street drops some object—handkerchief, package, or the like—from her hands, and the gentleman restores it to her, and she says "Thank you." It should also be done when offering a seat to a lady on a crowded street car, when speaking to strangers, and when either a lady or a gentleman with whom you are walking bows to a friend. "Other occasions for removing the hat," concludes the paragraph, "are for the national flag, the national anthem; in an apartment- or hotel-elevator when ladies are present; and when waiting for a funeral to pass."

The value of this book, you will

notice, is not merely in what is said right out but also in what is suggested. That last phrase about the funeral is rich in suggestion. For suppose you fail to memorize accurately the list of occasions for hat-lifting, and find yourself removing your headgear without proper cause, and somebody says, "Why raise the hat now? No lady has dropped an object from her hands; you are not on a street car or in an elevator; and I fail to hear the national anthem. Have you no knowledge of etiquette at all? I fear you do not belong." Instantly you can reply, "I am waiting for a funeral to pass. It may not come by for hours, or even for days, but that's a perfectly good reason, isn't it, and who's a smarty?"

A little later, however, there comes a passage which perplexes me. Speaking of the formal call, the author says, "A gentleman leaves his hat and gloves, his stick and rubbers, in the hall, but only after having been told his hostess is at home." That is a bit of advice which I shall take to heart; when I go calling this winter, after handing over my card (a gentleman's card,  $2\frac{7}{8}$  to  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches long by  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $1\frac{5}{8}$  high) I shall remember to say to myself, "Keep your rubbers on till you're told she's at home." But what if I am wearing rubber boots? Or what if, as occasionally happens, there has been a prolonged stretch of fine weather and I have ventured out *without any rubbers at all*? Should I purchase a pair before calling, for the sake of form, so that any member of my hostess's family who chances to pass through the hall while I am in the house may see them with my hat, gloves, and stick, and know that I am of the rubbered elect? I wish the book would be more explicit on this point.

But after all, we cannot expect everything in the world for twenty-five cents. Perhaps the more expensive books of etiquette go more fully into the rubber problem, and some day you and I may be able to save up enough money to complete our social education.



## THE POPULATION PROBLEM

BY EDWARD S. MARTIN

**H**OWEVER the election goes, there will still be unsolved problems in contemporary life which at times we shall have to think about. Consider one of them—the problem of increase in population. In this country we are not yet losing much sleep over it. Still it is discussed. Professor Fairchild in an address the other day at Williamstown reminded us that in the last century or so the population of the world had increased from 700,000,000 to 1,700,000,000. That is really a considerable increase and brings Malthus out of retirement and provides for a rediscussion of his theories about the propensity of human life to outrun its means of support. When Admiral Rodgers said, also at Williamstown, that we must take care that when the population of the United States reaches 200,000,000 we shall have the means—that is, the armed strength—to go out and take away from some one as much more land as our increasing family requires, most readers were horrified at the suggestion; for since the late War the idea of extending territorial boundaries by force and arms has not been popular. But to illustrate how some people feel about the increasing numbers on earth, Admiral Rodgers' explosion serves well.

But, of course, we of the United States are not going to start a new season of land-grabbing merely because our population has outrun our acreage. Oh, no! We know better how to manage than that. When there are so many of us that the lines of motor cars on the roads make

going too tedious (as they do at present on Sundays near the cities) and factories have intruded more than is expedient on the countryside, what shall we do? Why, it is easy. We have only to do what we are in the habit of doing—amend the Constitution and either forbid altogether for a time the propagation of the species, or limit all families to two or three children, or frame a regulation by the rules of which newcomers may be born only by permission of the constituted authorities. Of course such an amendment would make some trouble. The Catholics, for example, might not like it and might refuse to obey the law, and we might have discussion about the duty of citizens to obey the Constitution no matter what, and of the duty of other citizens to see that they did obey it, just as we have now about rum. And, of course, if the Catholics objected to the limitation of families, that would be the opportunity of the Klan, and political conventions and candidates for office would have to turn more flip-flops than they do now. All that, however, would be just in the day's work. We can be confident that if the business interests once concluded that too many people were being born they would stop it.

As for other countries where the elimination of old habits has not been so systematically worked out, the old remedies of war, pestilence, and sudden death—made vastly more effective by modern improvements—might have to be used for a while. We can only guess about it.