

Some Puzzling Problems that Confront the Hostess as to the Correct Way of Serving a Dinner to Her Guests.

By ANNE RITTENHOUSE.

HOSTESSES are sometimes puzzled as to the correct way of serving at table. Custom varies somewhat at different times and in different localities, but the accepted way at present is to have a bare table for breakfast and luncheon and a cloth for dinner only.

Table mats for the family meal are usually of heavy linen finished in a scallop or monogram, or of heavy crochet. For formal entertaining lace mats are preferred or an entire set done in colors to match either the china or the floral decoration.

Most housekeepers prefer service "à la Russe"; that is, to have everything passed from a side table. Sometimes the meat is placed before the host, but more often it is carved in the pantry and the platter passed.

Small side dishes, once so numerous, are now used for nothing save, perhaps, a thin apple or rhubarb sauce. Rarely more than two vegetables are served with the meat course.

Serving is done to the left side of each guest, and a tray is rarely used. The serving dish is held flat on the palm of the hand over a folded napkin. Occasionally a dish is passed in each hand of the waitress.

The table is not allowed to be bare at any time, except when the board is cleared for dessert. The service plate is lifted as the filled one is put down.

Bread and Butter Plates.

When all the plates and small dishes are removed for dessert the cloth is brushed with a clean napkin and a tray.

The silver is placed with the forks to the left of each plate and the knife and soup spoon to the right; use from the outside in.

Bread and butter plates are no longer used on formal occasions, but are too convenient to be dispensed with at family meals. They go to the left of each plate above the plates, and the glass of water to the right.

The napkin, folded in squares with the monogram on top, lies to the right of each plate beyond the knives. If there is noth-

ing on the service plate for the first course the napkin sometimes goes in the centre of the plate, with the square of bread for the soup folded in.

Finger bowls are passed on the dessert plates and removed with the dolly before the dessert is passed; or, more formally, they are passed on their own plate as the dessert plate is removed.

Coffee for dinner or formal luncheons is served in the drawing room. For breakfast and luncheon the tray for coffee and tea is put before the hostess. She brews the tea herself, and frequently makes coffee as well when a begone or French coffee pot is used.

Candy, fruit, and nuts are used on the table as decoration and passed at the close of the meal. Nuts are passed during the meal, and olives with the soup. Cheese and crackers for salad are served from a side table.

Dishes are usually passed first to the guest at the right of the host, but the English custom of serving the hostess first is rapidly gaining headway. It often relieves embarrassment when new and complicated dishes are served.

Avoid Display.

The well-bred hostess avoids great display at her table. She does not make a lunch or dinner the occasion to show off every piece of silver, cut glass, or china she owns.

While novelty is permissible, a freakish menu is rarely pleasing. The service should be as simple and noiseless as possible. The best way to achieve easy service for formal occasions is to keep the family meals up to the mark.

Where no waitress is kept this is impossible, but where there is one she should not be allowed to fall into slipshod ways or feel anything will do for the family.

It is impossible to have a well-served table where the host or hostess is impatient or shows her anxiety by open reproach. Not only is the waitress embarrassed, but so are the guests.

Meals of inordinate length are no longer considered good form even for elaborate occasions. A few courses deliciously cooked and properly served are all that are necessary even in dinner giving.

Learning to Keep the Face in Repose

DO you realize how rare it is to see a strong, quiet face? The next time you go down the street in the cars look for one.

If there were an epidemic of St. Vitus's dance there might be some excuse for the distorted countenances you see. The girl who does not bite her lips and draw in her eyes toward her nose, arches her eyebrows, (thinking it coquettish,) or

away from that frown"; "Don't be coy, Violet." But endure it as you would a bad medicine.

There is no remedy too severe in the interest of a restful face in this day of distortions. Plain features that are quiet as nature planned them have more real beauty than a Greek nose, a perfect mouth, and inspiring eyes that are always in motion.