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"Speak That I May See Thee" . . .

By Marcia E. Turner

Associate Professor of Home Economics Education

CONVERSATION, we read, is coming back into fashion. Not that people haven't always talked—and some of them have talked always. But there is a difference between talk and conversation and Ben Jonson must have had it in mind when he wrote long ago: "Language most shows a man; speak that I may see thee." For talk, says the dictionary, is to "utter words" while conversation is "interchange of thought." So it might be a good plan to take inventory of one's conversational stock and if necessary, get some new.

Fortunately the equipment isn't too complicated. A normal interest in people and events is pretty nearly a guarantee of something to talk about. Fortunately, too, the "interchange of thought" isn't necessarily on a fifty-fifty basis. That is, it is perfectly good form to listen more than your half of the time. It might almost be said that the first rule in conversations is to be interested in what other persons have to say, and the habit of gracious attention will often more than make up for any lack of ideas one may have. That doesn't mean, of course, that wide-eyed, breathless attention alone—especially if it isn't genuine—can't be overdone, or that we can all be successful Calvin Coolidges. Most people would merely be considered "dumb" if they tried it. But on the other hand, you don't sit on the edge of your chair with ill-concealed inattention and impatience for the other fellow to finish so you can have your turn.

AN easy posture that expresses serenity and poise is actually one of the accompaniments of natural and pleasant conversational flow. And that means of course that one doesn't feel mentally tense—that he forgets himself as much as possible; that in general conversation he carefully avoids subjects about which he feels strongly, or subjects that might arouse controversy. Argument is no form of conversation, for in argument there is no interchange of ideas. On the contrary, each one hangs on tightly to his own. Real conversation may be sometimes soothing, sometimes stimulating; but it is always warm and kind—never biting.

There is an old rule which says it is not good form to speak of one's self, but perhaps the rule needs to be qualified somewhat. Usually reference to one's self should be impersonal—one writer says, quite as if you were speaking of someone else. But again exchange of personal experience, especially among inter-

ested friends, is wholly permissible provided that it is not accompanied by any suspicion of boastfulness.

Personalities of whatever sort should be indulged in sparingly, for fear of bordering on gossip which is of course taboo, not only because it violates the Golden Rule, but because it is a sure sign of restricted interests and hints of mental poverty. Ordinarily, too, you don't comment, at least adversely, on the personal appearance, nor on any handicap of the person to whom you are speaking. That is, you don't say, "My goodness, what a cold you have"—nor, quite in the same category, "I see you're wearing a new glass eye." However, probably no rule of conversational etiquette is more

happy experience of realizing after it was all over that they had said the untactful or the flippant, or the trite thing; or that they had four-flushed; or worse, that they had tried to be funny and that nobody laughed. Such an experience should be hailed as a friend and if you've been hating yourself for it, turn around and be grateful, for it is an indication that you have within yourself a certain kind of awareness or sensitiveness that warns you when you are out of step. Listen to it; don't excuse yourself—and presently you'll find yourself spared the ignominious title of conversational bore.

Most of us just aren't by nature very clever, but then we don't need to be, for strangely enough other people, unless



Table Conversation Should Be General

often violated than this one.

THE stale joke about persons who talk about operations isn't so stale after all, for the subject is unfortunately good for a lively half hour's discussion among certain people in almost any crowd into which you may tune. It might be a good thing to pause sometime and wonder why on earth the world discusses discord, disease and death so avidly, while the good that happens to human kind so often remains unsung. Try reversing it sometime and see how you behave. You may have to turn off the track and crash into the weather a few times before you can do it easily, but there are worse subjects than the weather, and it has saved the day a good many times.

Most people have sometime had the un-

they've paid fifty cents to hear Will Rogers, usually don't appreciate it. Just the same, it is a good idea to cultivate appreciation of other people's clever or even near-clever conversation, and learn to laugh if one doesn't know how. It is just a part of the kindness and warmth—and it may be added, humor, that are essential qualities of good conversation.

There are a few simple rules applicable to special situations. At the table, where the main purpose is eating, the conversation should be kept very general and, above all, should be kept to topics which help to put people at ease and give them a sense of well-being. Ordinarily, you don't discuss the food, though if the home-made rolls are good, you could tell

(Continued on page 15)

Modern Silver for Modern Homes . . .

By Barbara Apple

SILVER, like almost everything else these days, has gone modern.

The modern girl with modern ideas finds herself planning her home as a harmonious whole. She knows the importance of relating her decorative scheme to the architecture of her home, and she realizes that character is created in the room where furnishings and decorations express the feeling or reflect the period that inspired the builder. Whatever style her home, she chooses her sterling silver

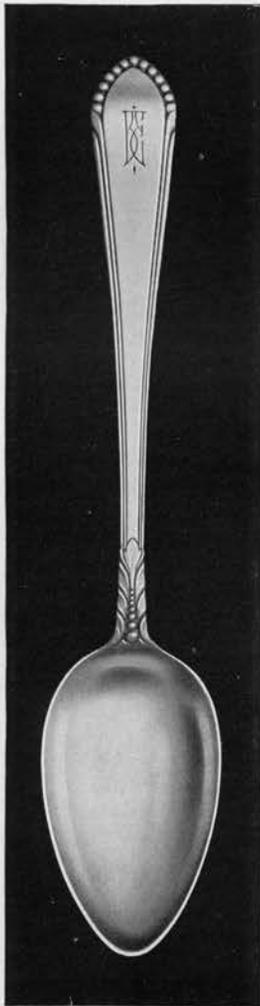
lines. The lines of decoration follow the shape of the handle, giving streamline and skyscraper effects.

Modernistic homes require modernistic silver, and as a result many new designs in silverware are being created for them. Coronet, a Treasure design fashioned on simple, graceful lines, interprets in fine sterling this latest trend in design. It harmonizes beautifully with the most favored decorative styles of present-day homes.

Especially favored among modern girls is the Lady Diana, designed by Towle. Its charm lies in its simplicity and refinement, its soft contours and smart lines. The Chased Diana, an enrichment of the Lady Diana, is an excellent example of finely wrought craftsmanship. The pattern is so different from the usually accepted designs that it may be said the Chased Diana has created a new style in table ensembles.

Rose Marie, the most recent creation of Gorham, is a charming youthful design of delicate contour and slender symmetry.

IN THE contemporary spirit of design, Reed and Barton have created Contemporaria, a pattern which fits harmoniously into the decorative treatment of modern tables. This pattern received the acclaim of art critics as well as the public when it was exhibited at the Metro-



Coronet

to add charm and beauty to the atmosphere of her dining room.

America is taking a new interest in the twentieth century style. Unlike the designs of yesterday—the elaborate, ornately decorated silver of our grandparents—modern silversmiths have caught the spirit of conforming to structural

City. It is new, dignified, fashionable.

The simplicity of Lotus, by Watson, the fashionable hand-wrought originality of each piece, beautifully designed and correctly balanced, arouse the admiration of all who see it.

The designs engraved on silverware were once considered of little importance. Silversmiths purchased their patterns from obscure artists and paid a very nominal price for the designs. Today conditions are quite changed. The buying public demands the best in design and as a result men trained in the art are constantly creating new and beautiful patterns.

Several patterns, though older than these very modern ones, have carried the lasting simplicity of Greek designs and for this reason are still considered modern in feeling.

the center of the stage, using for wires the particular interests or experiences of the guests. If they are very skillful they will do good teamwork, sharing equally in the responsibility for directing conversation.

Of course, while your host is carving, especially if he looks the least bit unhappy, as he may very likely do, you all become very much engrossed in each other and don't see him at all. If you overturn the jelly, it is just too bad, but if the awful thing does happen, you should follow Benjamin Franklin's advice: "In case of accident, simply express regret—be not too profuse," and your hostess will bless you forever. And lastly, there is the rule that if there are children at the table, you give them the same courteous attention that you give other guests—no more, no less.

THEN there is the telephone. Of course, you use the same gentle, expressive voice that you cultivate for all occasions—the voice that is *you*. As usual, too, you speak distinctly. It needs mentioning here only because without the help of gesture or facial expression your voice must do all the work of carrying your feeling; and any possible edginess that may be afflicting your disposition stands out greatly magnified. And for the very same reason, be natural—don't overdo sweetness to the stage of sirup.

When you answer a ring, you may say, "This is Mrs. Black speaking," or you may simply repeat your telephone number or the name of your business office. Some people preface the formula with the friendly "Good morning." The term "Hello" is not used as much as formerly because it is obviously less efficient

Speak

(Continued from page 3)

your hostess so when you have a chance to do it inconspicuously.

Here, above all places, you don't take on a solo part, and again of all places you don't eschew all conversation, and simply sit and eat. The trouble with a monologue is that one cannot talk and eat at the same time. So no matter if you're a personage such as the minister or the school superintendent, or if you have a long tale you just must tell, wait till you return to the living room.

People who devote themselves exclusively to eating are guilty of two mistakes. First, there is a discourtesy to your hostess, who has a right to expect that you will enter into the spirit of the occasion. Second, if you don't talk, you are very apt to present the unlovely picture of eating too fast and finishing before the others. It is a very good plan to watch your host and hostess and follow any lead they may give you. If they are skilled, you may notice that they will, if necessary, draw each guest briefly to

than one of the other methods. If someone other than one of the family answers the telephone, it is correct to say, "This is the George Black residence"—never "This is Black's." If you happen to be employed in the Black home, you could add, "The hired man speaking." That helps the person at the other end, for he can ask without preliminaries for Mr. Black.

When you have called a number and the person who answers does not place himself and you do not recognize the voice, the one thing to do is to ask for the person you are calling. Even if you suspect it is he speaking you never, never ask the impertinent question, "Who is this?" And though you haven't seen him lately and know that he is going to be most surprised to hear you calling, you never in this world would say, "Guess who this is," because he probably can't,

and besides, not being as thrilled as you think he will be, he may wonder why all the mystery.

Mary Black, in calling the grocery store, or someone she does not know, says, "Miss Black," but to her friends she is, of course, "Mary Black." To casual acquaintances, she will be, according to her preference, either one.

It is a mark of thoughtfulness in calling someone you know to be a busy person, to ask if it is convenient for him to speak with you just then. If it isn't, he will usually ask permission to call you back at a stated time. And, of course, in any case, long telephone conversations, especially on party lines—but in any case—are almost as "out" as listening on party lines or extension phones. They may even invite the last named practice.

The one who calls should always be the one to ring off and a simple "Goodbye" or "Goodnight" is sufficient farewell.

THERE are a few places where there should be no conversation. In any public gathering where people have come to see or hear, one obviously does not set up a rival attraction. But if something has to be said right then, it should be remembered that a whisper carries much farther than a low tone. So you don't whisper! And it might be better anyway to write it, for in so doing, only one person's attention will be distracted. But you make it a point when you go to church to leave all conversation outside, preceding or during the service, because many people go to church to worship and they might be disturbed by the sound of your voice. Neither does one converse at a funeral. Margery Wilson in her book, "Charm," tells us that more than that, one does not even nod to nor recognize others until he is back in his own car, driving away. The reasons are probably obvious as are those of another rule that one does not talk in an elevator.

And so, there are rules and rules for conversation, yet it all sums up in a few simple truths. Eager, sympathetic attention to the world and the people in it, and accurate information about at least a few things that especially interest you, will give you something to talk about. For the rest of it, the minute you begin to speak, whether you want to or not, you tell the story of the self you really are, from the subject to the very tone of your voice.

In-Between Season

(Continued from page 5)

SHIRTWAIST frocks are universally accepted as very sensible business and school dresses. An interesting arrangement of the stripes in a rayon jersey give individuality to one such frock. It buttons demurely under the chin, has a small turnover collar, and elbow sleeves, with set-in pockets in the skirt.

Aids to Beauty

(Continued from page 4)

The modern woman wants the real, the genuine. And because she has been able to draw a fine distinction between the artificial and the real, she has learned the secret, "Beauty is truth, and truth is beauty."

ACOED of Iowa State College, even though she may not be in the Division of Home Economics, has special advantages in her quest of truth in beauty. With her knowledge of dietary facts she is able to group roughly her foods into four classes—tissue-building, health-giving, regulating and heat-producing. As her knowledge of food increases, she begins to realize that the invisible vitamins do more for her hair than special rinses.

Although menus in the dorms and houses maintain Iowa State's dietetic standards, the coed may find her palate tempting her to overindulgence in potatoes rather than including the crisp greenness of a salad in her meal. Therein lies a problem—to be able to follow the course after it has been found.

It has been said of the women of a band of Eurasia gypsies that, although their skirts and blouses were of the coarsest fabric, the clothing worn next to their bodies was exquisitely fine; they would blush to wear shabby clothing beneath a showy exterior. One cannot but admire the principle and appreciate the one parallel to it in hygiene, the principle of not covering uncleanness.

With internal cleanliness as a starting point, wonders can be done with the complexion. Modern science has given aids to—not substitutes for—nature's gifts in the form of exquisite powders, creams and soaps. Experimentation is the most reliable method of discriminating among the many brands of toilet articles on the market. Since all women no longer feel the urge to have identically-tinted, pink-and-white skins, the manufacturer has made an unlimited variety of shades in powders.

Child-like, many of us are tempted to buy rashly because of gay containers. It should always be remembered that information given by the manufacturer is apt to be sprinkled with propaganda and that pure soap and common H₂O are still the best of cleansers. Some skins, however, need additional care. It must always be borne in mind, however, that the skin is not a digestive organ and that all of its nourishment comes from the food we eat, not from creams spread over its surface.

At Iowa State College, where the water is highly alkaline and where winters are winters (and both are hard on the skin) many coeds have found it economical to make their skin lotions.

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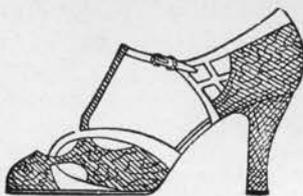
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