



## SILENCE VS. CHATTER.

**I** THINK that I have discovered the solution of a great mystery—why men do not like to go out to social functions when women like it so much. The solution is simplicity itself. Social functions are managed by the ladies and are run on the system they prefer. If men managed them and ran them as they would like, the ladies not only would not enjoy attending them but as a rule they would utterly refuse to be seen at them. The difference between a woman's idea of how human beings should behave when brought together, and a man's, is illustrated every time one attends an "afternoon tea" and then goes on to his club. From the moment he enters the reception rooms of his fair hostess until he escapes to get his hat, he is expected to talk. Rapid-fire conversation is the universal rule. He must make an effort to get to every person he knows in the room who sees him, and to immediately tear off a few feet of "pom-pom" chatter. Everybody else is doing the same thing, so he is happily conscious that his inanities are not overheard. He is not even certain that they are heard by the party at whom they are shot. But this does not matter. The main thing is to appear communicative and affable.

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**I**F a brute man were to enter such a reception room, ignore everybody in the room except for a curt nod to any one whom he happened to stumble over, make for the fireplace and settle down in an arm-chair to a half-hour of musing silence, he would be universally voted a boor. Indeed, such conduct would so far throw the average lady-like function off its balance as to break it up and justify the calling in of the police. Yet that is precisely what this much harried man will do when he escapes from the "afternoon tea" and gets to his club. And no one will feel that he has done other than behaved himself with due decorum and a perfect recognition of the conventionalities. He hasn't felt any thought arising in his mind that called for utterance, and so he has not been conscious of any obligation to speak. In fact, if he talked for politeness' sake—as he had just been doing at his lady hostess's—the boys would vote him a "bore"—which, after all, is infinitely worse than a boor—and they would not hesitate to let him feel their displeasure. He would have offended the conventionalities of club life, and they would do something much more effective than sending for the police.

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**B**UT how would the ladies like that sort of behaviour? Not at all. For what do human beings come together at all if not to exchange thought, they would ask. If a man intends to encase himself in silence, why should he not stay at home? But watch your resting club man by his sleepily flickering grate fire. Presently a fragment of talk from two or three other members awakes his ear. They may be discussing Shakespearean acting or they may be telling the inner facts about the latest political "deal"; but the subject, whatever it is, awakens in him a desire to put his opinion or knowledge into the common stock. So without preamble or apology—either would be regarded as affectation—he joins in with a crisp remark; and the first thing he knows, he is launched on the bosom of a brisk discussion. But he is enjoying it. He is talking because he wants to talk and because he thinks that he has something to say. Presently the conversation may take a shift or some of the talkers may abruptly go away; and he again relapses into silence. But it is a contented silence. He has talked when he wanted to and he has stopped when he wanted to; and no one will ever criticise him for talking too little or stopping too soon.

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**I**T is possible that the "salon" may have brought the sexes together in a fashion agreeable to both. This could only be done if the ladies were willing to be treated much as men treat each other, and if most of the persons concerned were good talkers and enjoyed the exercise. Both of these requirements appear to have existed pretty

fairly in the French "salons" of a couple of centuries ago; and they certainly seem to have struck the top note of social intercourse so far as history has recorded it. But to say that all people should meet in "salon" fashion is like saying that all people should sing. Many of us lack the capacity. So long as the world shall last, people will come together who bore each other; and the best we can hope is that they will mitigate as far as possible their sufferings by relaxing the regulations which do not permit either the borers or the bored to rest for a moment. Not all club men are brilliant; but the customs of a club do not require the man with a tin whistle to keep going as industriously as the man with a bass viol. Male convention allows a fellow-being to keep silence when he has nothing to say and knows it; and it actively encourages him to keep silence when he has nothing to say and doesn't know it.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

## Uncle Sam's Sport

**U**NCLE SAM is undergoing his annual sporting spasm and the whole of his glorious republic seems to have suspended business while the more serious question of final baseball supremacy is being settled. The American is not a sport lover of the same type as the Briton. The latter likes to do things on the field, the former to see them done. "We have eaten; let us go out and kill something," has been given as the Englishman's idea of pleasure. "Before we eat let us go out and see something" more fittingly describes the American. He likes to take his sport sitting down and in small doses between his office and his dinner. But once a year he forgets himself and that is at the annual struggle for the baseball championship. Then his business, his comfort and some of his meals are forgotten in his over-weening desire to see something big. He travels from afar and stands in line for long hours to get an opportunity to let loose his lungs at some chap whose name in print has become a part of his daily reading. He glories in the fact that he has been there and next morning reads with great gusto the newspaper reports that show the gate receipts to be greater than has been.

For sport, like everything else in the United States, is largely measured in dollars and cents. The ball player draws a salary that speaks his ability and sets the standard of his popularity. The noise at a ball game is largely in proportion to that salary, and the space he occupies in the newspapers is in keeping.

Baseball in its finished state is a performance rather than a sport. It is the theatre with the added interest of competition. It gives one city a chance to speak its rivalry of another. It furnishes a topic of conversation in which all grades of intellect may meet on an equal footing. It is as uncertain as horse racing and the ignorant are just as apt to be right as the well-informed. It is thus suited to all the requirements of a cosmopolitan nation and admirably fitted for furnishing a business community with a lapse from routine.

Whether baseball is the American national sport, or whether the real sporting spirit of the children of Washington is represented by Wall Street, must always remain more or less an open question. But at present baseball is the one phase of finance that is occupying the attention of the entire American people.

J. K. M.

## Men of To-Day—Concluded

sion is its mixture of practical experience and theoretical knowledge. Mr. Davison is one of those who represents the former most, but the latter also. He should be an influence of considerable power.

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## Big Man With Famous Name

**F**ITTING it is that Mr. Edmund Boyd Osler, M.P., should be a member of a natural resources commission. There is no single individual in Canada, perhaps, who has made greater wealth out of his confidence in the growing value of Canadian lands. Of course, he has done other things. Primarily he is a broker, but having been labelled such since 1867 he has so arranged his business that most of the real work is done by partners and employees. To-day his interests are divided between assisting Mr. Borden to manage the Conservative party, and looking after his large railway, steamboat and land investments.

Mr. Osler is one of that famous Simcoe County family which gave Oxford its first Canadian professor; nor is he the least of that group of brilliant men. When a man is a member of parliament, a director of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and president of numerous important financial organisations, he need not depend upon famous brothers for a reputation. The story of his defeat when a candidate for the mayoralty of Toronto is one of the most interesting in his career. The cry was raised that a millionaire and a director of the C. P. R. could not be trusted. He was defeated—and Toronto has been ashamed ever since. A more honourable man never lived, and he will be both an ornament and an influential member of this important commission.