

unless the guest is a woman. The host, however, rises, goes forward, assists in seating the delinquent, and endeavors, by making general conversation, to distract attention from the incident. If the arrival is very late, no break is made in serving, the guest being expected to take up the dinner at the point it has reached when he appears, otherwise great confusion arises. At the conclusion of the fruit course, the hostess looks significantly at the lady at the right of her husband, and meeting her glance, nods, smiles and rises. At this movement the gentlemen rise as well, standing aside to permit the ladies to pass out toward the drawing-room. The doors or portieres of the door communicating between drawing and dining-room are then closed, and the butler or waitress carries in the coffee tray to the ladies, following it with a tray holding tiny glasses and decanters of various liqueurs.

In the drawing-room, the ladies resume their gloves at their leisure, accepting or refusing the coffee and liqueurs as their preferences prompt.

In the dining-room, the men sit at ease to smoke and sip their coffee and wine, drawing down near that end of the table at which the host is established. At a sign from that gentleman, cigars are put aside, and a general exodus from the dining-room takes place.

Such would be the etiquette for the ceremonious and fashionable dinner party; and with a very few changes, a small and less fashionable dining would be conducted on precisely the same lines. There might be fewer servants and fewer courses, simple flowers, and but a quartet of intimate friends; but this change of conditions necessitates but slight alteration in the method of arranging the table, of offering the food, and of arranging the guests.

A hostess who possesses pretty but simple table furniture, and commands the services of but one maid and a cook of ordinary capabilities, should select a list of dishes which will not be difficult to prepare; oysters, soup, fish, a roast with vegetables, salad, dessert and coffee, if well cooked and temptingly presented, form a feast fit to set before a king. The fish course is completed by potatoes or cucumbers, or both; the salad is possibly preceded by frozen punch and accompanied with game, and for a truly simple dinner the hostess should serve the soup, salad, and dessert, and the host