

is obligatory. If you are too early you are in the way ; if too late you annoy the hostess, cause impatience among the assembled guests, and perhaps spoil the dinner. Fifteen minutes is the longest time required to wait for a tardy guest.

THE SUCCESS OF A DINNER.

A host and hostess generally judge the success of a dinner by the manner in which conversation has been sustained. If it has flagged often, it is considered proof that the guests have not been congenial ; but if a steady stream of talk has been kept up, it shows that they have smoothly amalgamated, as a whole. No one should monopolize conversation, unless he wishes to win for himself the appellation of a bore, and be avoided as such.

THE TABLE APPOINTMENTS.

A snow-white cloth of the finest damask, beautiful china, glistening or finely engraved glass, and polished plate are considered essential to a grand dinner. Choice flowers, ferns and mosses tastefully arranged, add much to the beauty of the table. A salt-cellar should be within the reach of every guest. Napkins should be folded square and placed with a roll of bread upon each plate. The dessert is placed upon the table amidst the flowers. An *epergne*, or a low dish of flowers, graces the centre ; stands of bon-bons and confectionery are ranged on both sides of the table, which complete the decoration of the table. The name of each guest, written upon a card and placed one on each plate, marks the seat assigned.

ASSIGNING PARTNERS FOR DINNER.

The number at a dinner should not be less than six, nor more than twelve or fourteen. Then the host will be able to designate to each gentleman the lady whom he is to conduct to the table ; but when the number exceeds this limit it is a good plan to have the name of each couple written upon a card and enclosed in an addressed envelope, ready to be handed to the