

Have you Nice Table Manners?

THE PEOPLE WHO ARE MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE HAVE NOT

Actions are visible, though motives are secret. When you dine out, either at a friend's or at a public restaurant, you are almost sure to spy some man or woman sitting perhaps at the same table with you, or not very far away, whose actions are painted, as it were, in the most glowing colours, sufficiently brilliant and vigorous and striking to attract your attention; but the motive for these strange mannerisms is not always clear to you.

Some men are dreadfully afraid of being natural, from the dread of be-

One type of this person may be represented in the individual who is usually styled, for the want of a better term, a society 'Muggard,' he who assumes a brand new, stolid air of indifference to the things which are going on around him, who affects a leaden air of languor, dons an eyeglass, the assumption of which fitly measures his mental vision, is too heavy usually to join in the conversation, who listens to the talk on small things with a cynical smile that seems to originate at the base of the nose and to travel in a downward direction till it reaches the ends of the long, well-trained, drooping moustache, then it passes off.

the talk at the table, he abstractedly takes up a knife or a spoon and drums it on the table. It grates on the nerves of his near neighbours, and sends cold shivers down your back, but he is a preferable man to the 'Popinjay.'

There is a type of man abroad who is called the 'Starcher,' a man whose

city came to me this morning and offered me 20 per cent. straight off the reel if I could introduce 410,000 to him for the production of ten grand operas; but it wouldn't go down with me. If you want to make money now-a-days keep off theatres; the risk isn't good enough, or there's too much risk about it. Motors—that's the coming



They call him a "Muggard."



The "Gilly-Flower" amuses himself with knife and fork.



This lady is over thirty.



The plate twisting fiend.

linen is immaculate, but whose manners at table ought to be taxed by the Government. He will persist in telling you tales; he will persist in recounting his recollections of an adventure which exactly tallies with that just told by every other member of the company; he is irresistible. But the danger you experience in his company does not lie in his dry, inhumorous, uninteresting yarns, which often send you off yawning, but it lies in his habit of unconsciously picking up first a knife, with which he emphasises his stories, and then a fork, with both of which implements he saws the air.

The talkative author is humorously

deal, and it'll make things hum; in fact, motors are humming now just like bees,' in the saying of which he taps the table with his finger and tickles your ribs with his projecting elbow.

Another type of man with a full set of bad manners at table is he who hardly deigns to speak a word, but who has contracted the habit in his thoughtful or thoughtless moments of making pellets with small pieces of bread, the sight of which does not add to your own gastronomical comforts. You, yourself, are pretty talkative, and

ing taken for ordinary. The tendency of the age is to appear on the outside what we are not on the inside. It is our failing to be thought better than we are all round, and it is probably this which makes the majority of diners-out, arrayed in all the glory of their evening dress, feel and act as if they were for the nonce in the skins of other and superior mortals.

Now, despite the advance we have made within the area of intelligence, it is a curious fact that simplicity of

Now the 'Monad' is of a different species entirely. He is the rough element of the human race; he's the diamond in the rough; he's been asked out to dinner, and whether the effect pleases or displeases his dining companions, he does not care a snap of his finger, so he just puts his elbow on the table and rests his head in his hand, while as a kind of balancing compensation he cools the other disengaged hand by placing it on the table.

You know the table 'Popinjay'; you have met him scores of times. He is the young man who chatters like a



The "Puff-Bird" has manners all his own.



Makes holes in the table cloth.

dubbed 'The Sweet Potato.' I pity the people who are obliged to sit on either side of him; they cannot possibly enjoy their dinner a little bit.

His manners are, of course, not rude, but they are so intensely polished that you can nearly see your reflection in his hands, which now and again are flourished in your face. When he has anything to say—and it is generally interesting from him—he won't turn round to you in a sane manner and say it, but he usually puts down his knife and fork and declaims his talk, talking mostly with his hands, all of which is put down to eccentricity because the man's a genius.



Comfort before elegance.



The "Starcher" tells a tale.

manner is an attainment that few men and women have yet reached, for in a dinner-party of, say, twelve persons, you will find, if you take particular notice, that at least three-fourths of that number are people who are inclined to affect an air of pomposity quite out of keeping with the degree and quality of the persons themselves.

It takes various forms, but all would bespeak a significant importance, an effort which, however, fails when it is face to face with a critical eye, fails because the disguise used is so very thin that you can see through it; you can plainly see that the desire of the 'performer' is to be taken—or mis-

maggie and babbles like a wood-pecker; the snapper-up of unconsidered trifles.

Another type of this young man is he who sticks his silk hat at the back of his head and licenses himself to chaff Hebe, who has to wait upon him. This type of individual with bad table manners is possessed of characteristics diametrically opposed to those manners assumed at table by our worthy friend dubbed by the 'Popinjay' the 'Gillyflower.'

This gentleman is not assertive; he assumes the modesty of the wall-



The bread pellet-maker doesn't talk.

Now, for downright enjoyment, always sit down at table, if you can manage it, with a lady on the other side of thirty. Her manners are the quintessence of everything that's nice. While the fingers of the right hand are resting on the edge of the table, usually she emphasises her small talk with the left hand, which she gracefully waves up and down, the diamonds glittering meanwhile, which, of course, is part of the performance. At the most she can only throw her memory back ten years, and it's a good throw even then. But her general manners are delightful, barring the bracelet performance.

The 'Puff-Bird' is the financier. Your guests may be discussing the latest novel, the latest opera, the latest anything, when suddenly a deep bass voice at the far end of the table will break in with 'What a tremendous lot of money the staging of that opera must have cost! Now, a man in the

you try to engage this strange creature in conversation, but at last you give it up; you feel that he prefers to go on making his bread pellets and shuffling his feet under the table. He sits on the edge of his chair and sticks his elbows out on the table, compromising your table space.

The man who plays see-saw with his plate while he is telling a story, or talking to the man opposite, may be a well-mannered man at table and kind and obliging, but if you have nerves, the playing with that plate does worry you, and you are glad when he stops it to play with his napkin ring, or perhaps yours.

It is not the height of good manners to make holes in the tablecloth with your fork, and what amusement anybody can find in this practice is puzzling to me.

But, horrors of horrors, under what category of bad manners shall we place that habit some people have contracted of picking their teeth at the table? This is revolting against good taste, and is shocking to a degree, besides being offensive.



Chaffs the girls.



The talkative author knows as "The Sweet Potato."



She only sips and sabbles.

taken—for a superior person, a somebody quite out of the ordinary put altogether, a very superior person indeed.

flower, hence his soubriquet. But he is a dreadful slogger. While waiting and thinking, or patiently listening to

Ladies are not, as a rule, great sinners against table decorum. They have their little foibles, their own