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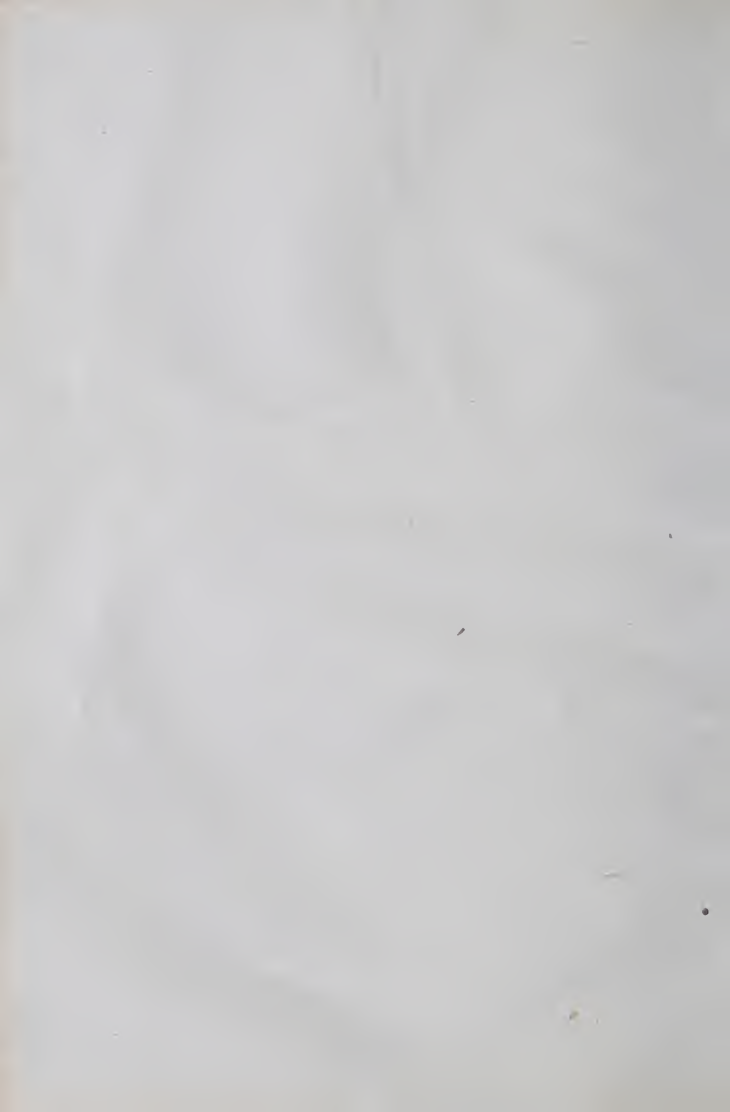
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Etiquette of

Visiting Cards.



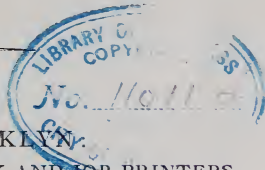


# ETIQUETTE

OF

# Visiting Cards.

BY MRS. L. N. HOWARD.



BROOKLYN.

COLLINS & CO., BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS,  
200 JORALEMON, COR. COURT STREET

1880.

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# ETIQUETTE OF VISITING CARDS.

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## INTRODUCTION.

*“In everything that is done, no matter how trivial, there is a right and a wrong way of doing it.”*

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A BIT of pasteboard, bearing the name of a person, is, in itself, of course, a very trivial affair. But all the formalities and social observances of well-bred people have a special significance, among such people, and no means of the interchange of civilities holds a superior place to the visiting card.

Its language is as deeply significant as that of any other sign-language, and there is a right

way to use it as well as a wrong way—a grammatical as well as an ungrammatical way.

This to some minds may seem insignificant and immaterial. But we can ill-afford to call points immaterial which convey to any minds an idea of carelessness, ignorance or inferiority.

To those therefore who desire to make the right, and hence the best use of the card, we offer this brief but complete compilation of rules from highly reliable authorities.

It would be impossible to enumerate all the works to which we have had recourse, but we acknowledge our special indebtedness to Mrs. Ward's SENSIBLE ETIQUETTE, and to SOCIAL ETIQUETTE OF NEW YORK, two of the best authorities, which we commend to those of our readers who wish to acquaint themselves with all the customs or social formalities of good society.

## I.

## THE CARD.

The card should be perfectly simple, scrupulously neat, of a fine texture and unglazed.

Avoid the use of anything like "pearl cards," "snow-flake," pictorial and other innovations designed to attract attention to the card itself.

In size the visiting card should be unpretending. Neither ostentatiously large nor meaninglessly small.

The lady's card is usually a trifle smaller than that of the gentleman, never larger. They are both cut in the form of a rectangle, somewhat greater in length than in breadth. Three and three-fourths inches long by two inches broad is a good proportion for a gentleman's card. The lady's card may well be

from an eighth to a quarter of an inch less in either dimension.

Attractive cutting of the card, as with inclined sides or ends, is not admissible, neither is the use of a decided color, though a delicate tint is regarded superior to a pearl white.

Gilt-edged cards are quite *passé*.

## II.

## THE INSCRIPTION.

The name should be engraved or written in a neat, plain hand (Italian hand) without any attempt at embellishment by flourishes or otherwise.

Gothic and Roman letters are excluded. Printing with types as upon ordinary printing presses is in bad taste.

The name should be engraved in full, except the middle name (if any) for which abbreviations are permitted.

It should occupy about the central line of the card and should not appear as a signature or any imitation of such.

While signatures of distinguished persons are highly prized by many it would be an unpardonable affectation in any one to assume that

his or her autograph would contribute to the value of the card.

The continental custom of dropping the Mr. and Miss is much in vogue. This omission is not advisable except the card be *written*, when it is preferable.

The prefix Mrs. should never be omitted from the card of a married lady or widow.

Professional, honorary and official titles are engraved upon cards but used only for visits of a purely business or official nature.

A lady should under no circumstances assume her husband's title, and none but a professional lady uses a title upon her card, and then only for professional visits.

If the name of a gentleman's club be engraved upon his card it is made to occupy the lower right-hand corner. in which case his address is placed in the opposite or left-hand corner.



It is imperative that every gentleman's card shall bear his full address which is engraved or written in the lower right-hand corner.

The same rule applies to the lady's card in all large cities, with the following exceptions:

If it is to be left with that of her husband the place of residence appears only upon the husband's card. After the first season in society the eldest daughter may use a separate card without place of residence indicated.

The number of the house may be engraved in numerals. Numerals for other purposes may be used if *written*, but they are not engraved.

During her first season the daughter's name is engraved upon the mother's card, thus:

MRS. PERCY RAYMOND,

MISS RAYMOND,

151 *Maple Avenue.*

If more than one daughter is in society the card is engraved :

MRS. PERCY RAYMOND,  
MISSSES RAYMOND,  
*151 Maple Avenue.*

Following are approved forms for a gentleman.

MR. MAURICE H. GREY,  
*1076 First Street.*

MAURICE H. GREY, JR.,  
*1076 First Street.*

MR. ROBERT MILBURN,  
*Bloomingtondale.*

For a married lady :

MRS. MAURICE H. GREY,  
*1076 First Street.*

For a widow :

MRS. ISABELLA V. GREY,  
1076 *First Street.*

For a young lady :

MISS EDITH L. VINCENT.

Ladies who have a fixed day for receiving callers indicate the same upon their visiting cards as given below :

MRS. JUSTIN Q. HAMMERTON,  
64 *Linden Avenue.*

At home Tuesdays from three to five o'clock.

Farewell or leave-taking cards bear upon one corner of the face the letters P. P. C. (*Pour prendre congé*, to take leave) or P. D. A. (*Pour dire adieu*, to say adieu) written in capitals, the same as any other abbreviation and *not*, as frequently seen, in small letters, as p. p. c., p. d. a., P. p. c., P. d. a.

Informal invitations to breakfasts, luncheons, etc., may be properly and conveniently written upon the visiting card, thus :

MRS. VIVIAN R. GRANVILLE,

Tea Thursday at 5 o'clock.

May 15.

*632 Elm Street.*

Suppers are exclusively gentlemen's affairs and the invitations are frequently issued in the same manner.

MR. JOHN D. FARGO,

Supper at ten o'clock.

June 20.

*16 Centre Street.*

Ladies wishing to receive informal New Year's calls sometimes write January 1, upon their cards and mail them to their gentlemen friends.

## III.

## TURNING OR FOLDING

In Europe great stress is placed upon the turning or folding of cards. The custom is rapidly gaining favor in America.

The custom is founded upon the fact that the appearance of the card when presented affords the only means of judging as to its manner of delivery, whether in person or by post or messenger; and by employment of this simple sign-language a multiplicity of cards is avoided.

Generally speaking, a flat card indicates to the recipient that it was sent in an envelope, as by post or by servant.

*A card however folded or turned* indicates that it was left in person and not sent by a servant.

Cards are folded up and down across the middle to indicate that the call is intended for all the ladies of the family, and lengthwise through the middle when the lady guests and all the members of the family are included.

One corner turned down upon the face indicates that the call is for one person ; two corners for two persons.

The lower left hand corner, or the left end of the card being turned, signifies a call of condolence—the corner for a single person and the end for more than one.

The right end or right hand upper corner turned indicates felicitation.

In bending or turning the card care should be taken not to break the surface, and for this reason, if no other, the texture or quality should be fine.

No card turned to indicate condolence should

bear an "At Home" day, or day for receiving.

A card handed in merely to ascertain whether or not the person called upon will receive, or merely to communicate the name of the caller to him or her called upon, is never turned. In such case, there being no intention of making a call which demands a call in return, the card is not within the category of "visiting cards."

A lady leaving a separate card for her husband turns only her own card.

## IV.

## THE USES OF CARDS.

When cards are required they should be promptly left or sent, to avoid even an appearance of carelessness or negligence.

The husband's card should accompany that of his wife upon all strictly ceremonious occasions.

It is not respectful to leave cards upon the younger members of a family without including the parents

A gentleman always sends his card to the hostess of the young lady guest upon whom he is calling.

For the first call of the season the gentleman should leave one card for the married lady, one for her husband, and one folded to include the remainder of the family.



A son's card, left with that of the mother and father, signifies that it is desired that he be included in the hospitalities of the season.

Flat cards are always left in the hall on entering a reception—and generally, all calls made by special appointment, or upon invitation, are announced by use of flat cards only.

Ladies do not leave cards upon gentlemen.

Gentlemen leave separate cards for the ladies of the family,

A card of introduction is simply a visiting card with the word "introducing," and the name of the person introduced legibly written in the upper left hand corner, for example :

Introducing

MRS. JOSEPH MOORE.

MRS. ABEL MARTIN,

*632 River Street.*

The introduced person should inclose his or her visiting card in an envelope with the introducing card. These are sent by post or messenger. Should the person introduced reside in another city it is incumbent upon him or her to leave a P. P. C. card on departing.

After a personal introduction the oldest resident may leave a card, which should be acknowledged by a return card within a week, unless the first caller receives only upon certain days of the week, in which case her card will bear the customary "At Home," and a return call or explanatory note is imperative on that day.

Cards should be removed from their envelopes before being placed in the card receiver.

When calling upon a friend who has a guest stopping with her, courtesy requires that a card be sent in for the guest, or left, if the ladies are not at home.

On reception days the card for the guest is omitted.

Lady guests sending out cards for receiving New Year's calls should not fail to inclose the visiting card of their hostess.

It is considered good form for gentlemen who cannot make New Year's calls to inclose their visiting cards in envelopes and send them by special messenger on New Year's morning. This custom is preferable to that of rapidly driving from house to house and leaving cards at the door, with the right hand upper corner folded over.

Many ladies, when unable to receive New Year's calls, place a tasteful basket at the door as a receptacle for the cards of those who desire to call.

A card enclosed in an envelope, and sent by post, in return for a *personal call*, indicates a termination of friendly intercourse.

A card with the lower left hand corner or the left end turned over is left in person at the door of a bereaved friend for whom you wish to express your sympathy.

It is quite *en règle* for a bridegroom to inclose his bachelor visiting cards in envelopes and send them by post to the acquaintances whom he wishes to retain.

A lady about to marry leaves her card, with that of her mother, nearly three weeks before the event, signifying that she wishes to continue social relations with the recipients after her marriage.

THE END.



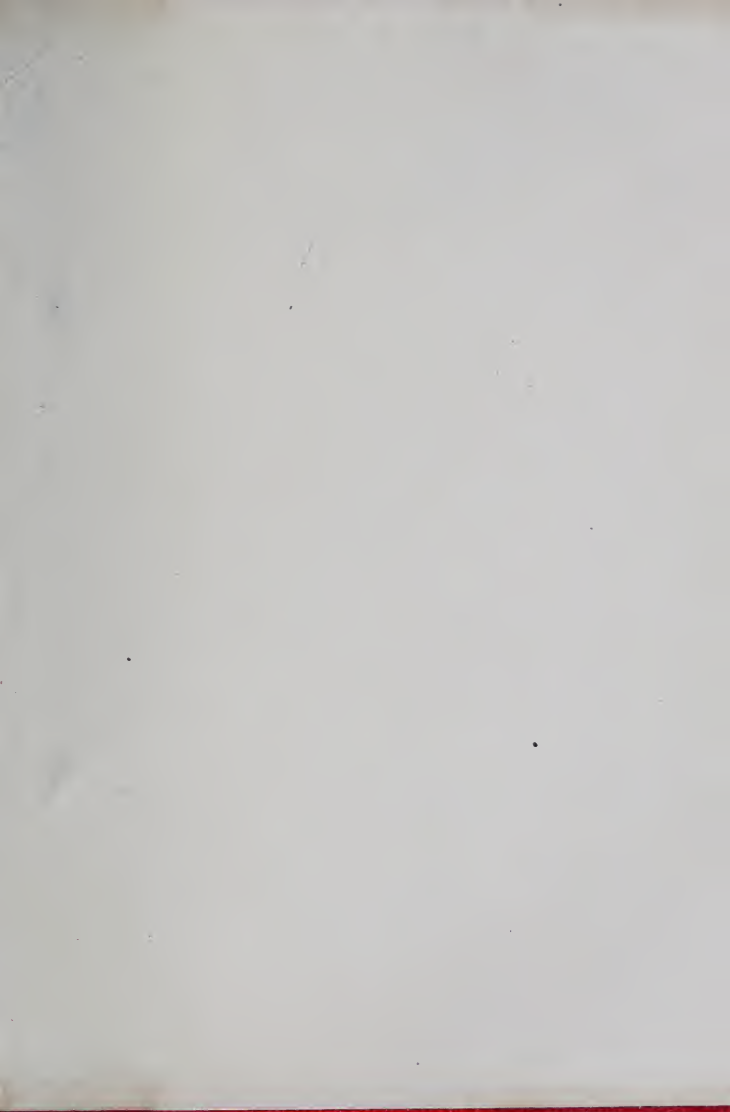












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