

# HOW TO BE A Social Success

BY OUIDA BERGERE RATHBONE



Universal's "Paris Calling" boasts of smooth actor Rathbone; Basil boasts of charming wife Ouida

You'll be asked to every party going and you'll have men begging to come to yours if you lend a sociable ear to one of Hollywood's cleverest hostesses

Party that will go down in Hollywood social history is the one Ouida Rathbone gave for pianist Arthur Rubinstein. Below: Mr. and Mrs. Rubinstein, Ouida, Grand Duchess Marie of Russia, Basil, Marlene Dietrich and violinist Heifetz

**T**HIS is no time to think of entertaining on the grand scale. Who has the heart to concentrate time and energy on a big formal party when the world is torn with fear and hatred? I know Basil and I—and we get a great deal of fun out of giving a party—can't do it. Every minute we have been able to spare from the business of earning a living has gone into work for war relief. And I am sure most of you everywhere in this country share our feeling that life these days is an earnest matter.

It doesn't follow, however, that just because women are no longer directing their energy to formal entertaining that they must stop being good hostesses. Entertaining six or eight friends informally can prove just as enjoyable an occasion as giving a large party. Only the approach must be different.

One of the most delightful informal parties I ever attended in Hollywood was a small supper given by Marlene Dietrich. When we were seated, Marlene—who had added to the informality of the occasion by choosing to wear hostess pajamas—marched into the kitchen, returning a few minutes later to set the bowls of soup before the guests herself.

Then she went around the table, buttering (Continued on page 77)



## How to Be a Social Success

(Continued from page 47) great slices of French bread for each of the guests. For the sweet, our hostess again went into the kitchen—this time to make pancakes—which she does very well—and again served. Nothing could have been more casual—or more charming. It was a supper that any hostess would be smart to mitigate.

When I suggest that a party be informal I don't mean haphazard. Because here are rules for informality, too, and tumbling blocks of which to be wary. No. 1 problem is the guest list.

Getting the right guests together is always the prime requisite of a good hostess, but nowhere is incompatibility so fatal as at a small party. The wise hostess will beware of the temptation to invite people to a party just because she owes them a dinner." Either your eight guests are all friends who enjoy each other's company, who are stimulating to each other, or your evening is a failure.

Basil and I both count as one of our pleasantest evenings a small dinner party at which all of our guests—among whom were Sir Hugh Walpole, James Hilton, Constance Collier and the Robert Edmund Joneses—were tremendously interested in literature and in the theater. All of them were vital personalities with much to say. We finished our dinner—finally—at five in the morning around the fireside with coffee. Even then we were reluctant to break up the party—there was still so much more we wanted to talk about.

Another hurdle for the informal party is that entrance chill. Introductions are made and acknowledged, the weather is disposed of and then dead silence until

somebody stumbles on a lively topic of conversation. Nothing will dispel that frostiness so quickly as giving your guests something to do.

Have a big bowl of caviar, if that's on your list, or peanut butter and sardines with a platter of small toast squares and let them make their own hors d'oeuvres. They'll be so busy that before they know it they'll be at ease and ready for a pleasant evening.

**T**HERE are so many novel ways of serving an informal supper. A good idea is to have the food brought onto a buffet, where the hostess herself fills the plates, giving them to the maid to serve—or, if the budget doesn't permit a maid, she serves them herself. If the host is particularly good at making coffee, let him make it at the table. Or he can make the salad dressing—or the hostess can mix the salad at the table.

If you live in a locality where the climate permits outdoor grills, try charcoal-broiling steaks or roasting hamburgers while the guests look on. Let them cluster around the grill. A fire is warm and hospitable-looking, so use it to best advantage.

Be sure you seat your guests. Even if there are but six in your party, seat them. Nothing is so annoying as a mad scramble for chairs and a place at the table. I suppose that's why I have such an aversion to buffet suppers.

First of all, I find myself loaded down with plates and cups and a water tumbler. Then I sit down at a rickety card table (never use card tables if you can possibly avoid them, they're so unstable and not the right height for eating any-

way), get nicely comfortable, discover I've forgotten the sugar for my coffee. I make the trip back to the buffet. My water glass needs filling—so back again. And by the time I've finally gone back for my dessert, I'm so weary I almost wish I hadn't come.

There is one place where buffet is exactly right, however, and that's in your garden or around your badminton or tennis court. Then make it really an outdoor affair. Have the host don a high white starched cap and let him serve the guests. Make the buffet table interesting. Have a tall frosted pitcher with a fruit punch stuck with cool green mint. Freeze flowers or fruit into an ice mold. Have big bowls of salt into which your guests can dab crisp carrots, spring onions and radishes.

One time we transformed our swimming pool into a woodland pond for an outdoor party. The garden hose was the basis for a fountain and old, worn-out automobile tires became floating islands of ferns and water lilies.

**D**ECORATIONS for your party needn't be expensive, whether for an indoor or outdoor affair, but they should be interesting and—in the modern trend—functional. For instance, I never use tall centerpieces of flowers on my tables for the practical reason that you can't see over them. Either use flat troughs with flat flowers, like water lilies, or arrange for the flowers to be tall enough that they are above the heads of your seated guests. The same rule goes for candles. I have some candle holders which I made by mounting glass inkwells upon each other. I arrange them in small groups

### Adds good taste to any scene

Lon Chaney, Jr., Evelyn Ankers and Brod Crawford between scenes of Universal's "North of the Klondike."

**P**EPSI-COLA is the rage in Hollywood for three big reasons . . . taste, size and quality. Between scenes on every lot, the stars enjoy its finer flavor . . . they welcome those extra sips . . . and they know that every drop is quality at its best. Swap a nickel today for a frosty Pepsi-Cola. 12 full ounces of long, long sips.

**Purity . . . in the big, big bottle**  
—that's Pepsi-Cola!

**BETTER TASTE . . .**  
**PEPSI-COLA**  
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.  
**... BIGGER DRINK**

★ Pepsi-Cola is made only by Pepsi-Cola Company, Long Island City, N. Y. Bottled locally by Authorized Bottlers from coast to coast. ★



## At last! security for you in the critical Close-Up

*Don't be fooled by face powder that looks smooth at a distance. It's the close-up that counts! That's when Cashmere Bouquet Face Powder flatters you most... lovingly veils your skin in filmy beauty.*

**T**HIS is a bold challenge! Lightly pat on Cashmere Bouquet Face Powder. Now bring your hand mirror close to your face. You'll see what a man sees in a Cashmere Bouquet close-up. No coarse powder particles, but an all-over misty bloom, delicate as the finish on a butterfly's wing.

You'll see *naturalness; supreme smoothness; flattering life-like color.* And in the close-up, your skin will breathe the costly perfume of Cashmere Bouquet Face Powder—the "fragrance men love."

6 ravishing shades. In generous 10c and larger sizes at all drug and toilet counters.

## Cashmere Bouquet Face Powder

Another member of  
Cashmere Bouquet—  
the Royal Family of  
Beauty Preparations



to form a Z and then use the tallest candles I can buy. Consequently the table is well lighted, but the flicker of the candle is well above the heads of my guests.

Use glass for table decorations. It's inexpensive and very decorative.

**R**EMEMBER that "It is not the quantity of the meat, but the cheerfulness of the guests which makes the feast."

As far as gathering together those "cheerful" guests in Hollywood, it's an easy matter, for there are several distinct social groups in the film colony and in small, intimate parties Hollywood people stick to their own group.

You will find, for instance, Mrs. Jack Warner, Marlene Dietrich, Lili Damita and Dolores del Rio always together. They form a glamorous picture, each as beautiful as the other, and each a different type. They are sophisticated, soignée, extremely chic. Another group includes the Darryl Zanucks, William Goetz, Mervyn LeRoys, David Selznicks, Norma Shearer, Merle Oberon, Joseph Schenck, Samuel Goldwyns, Sid Grauman, Claudette Colbert, Countess di Frasso, Joan and Connie Bennett. Then we have the Eddie Robinson, Melvyn Douglas, Harry Lachman, Jesse Lasky set.

At the Ernst Lubitsches you will find the foreign, cosmopolitan element. The Lubitsches always serve European food. Vivian Lubitsch, who is half English, half Russian, is one of the most intelligent and sophisticated women in Hollywood. At the Arthur Hornblows', Director Rouben Mamoulian, Margaret Sullavan and husband Leland Hayward, Ginger Rogers, Joan Crawford and writers who are tennis enthusiasts gather for small, informal parties. I have never seen Myrna Loy have more than eight people for dinner. Incidentally, Myrna is one of the most natural and unspoiled stars in the film colony.

Then, of course, there is the Ronald Colman group which includes the Charles Boyers, the William Powells, the Dick Barthelmesses, the Brian Ahernes, Cary Grant, the Nigel Bruces, Reginald Gardiner, Hedy Lamarr, the Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. when Doug's in Hollywood.

Of course, I have by no means made a complete list. I have merely jotted down a few names offhand. As for the Rathbones, we don't belong to any particular set and go with all of them.

Many stars keep themselves completely out of the social whirl. From the moment Carole Lombard and Clark

Gable met, they stopped giving or going to parties. We never see them. Nor do we see Barbara Stanwyck and Robert Taylor, or Frances Dee and Joel McCrea. This group enjoys the outdoor life.

**B**UT how can a young man and woman who are not in the Hollywood profession and cannot claim to be distinguished artists get into society in Hollywood—or in any other town?

Charm, wit, discretion, the ability to inspire and keep confidences, emotional maturity, that feeling of kinship with our fellowmen which distinguishes the truly superior and civilized person and is the basis of friendship and of personal and social morality—these make for social success in Hollywood as they do in your own particular circle.

If any young man is attractive, a good dancer, something of an expert at bridge or tennis, he will probably be asked to parties in Hollywood or any other town.

My favorite young man, when he's in Hollywood, is Douglas Fairbanks Jr. I'm very partial to him. He knows what's going on in the world, has a keen, well-informed mind and I don't know of anybody in Hollywood who can talk more absorbingly about the issues and personalities involved in the present tragic war. Doug Jr. would be a social success anywhere. He never fails in those little courtesies which make a young man popular with a hostess and with women in general.

If I am entertaining a celebrated writer or musician with a small intimate dinner party I always invite Greer Garson, because she not only personifies the glamour of Hollywood, but she can talk intelligently on almost any subject. This accomplishment, combined with her beauty and glamour, makes her a very desirable guest.

The modern American girl can't afford to be ignorant. She must know something about everything and be able to carry on an intelligent conversation. If a girl is strikingly beautiful, gay, a good dancer, she will invariably, at a Jones Corners party, find an admiring swain. In Hollywood, she will probably attract the attention of producers or directors, who are always on the lookout for new faces, at parties. If, plus physical attractiveness, dancing ability and charm, she has a serious side and is vitally interested in the political and intellectual problems of the day, Hollywood—and Jones Corners—will like her.

THE END

How to set a table that will set a party pace, per Mrs. Basil Rathbone's plan: Use glass for table decorations; it's inexpensive. Make your centerpiece of glass inkwells piled one on the other, top them off with candles



PHOTOPLAY combined with MOVIE MIRRORS