

# SOME EASTER DINNER CARDS

By Laura Douglass

DESIGNS REPRODUCED FROM "THE MOTIVENSCHATZ," PUBLISHED BY THIEL AND SCHKERL, VIENNA

ONE of the important features of a dinner party is the dinner card. Upon it the hostess, if she be of an artistic sense, may lavish the decoration of her brush; be she of a literary frame of mind she may apply the wit and wisdom stored in her brain and her books to bid her guests welcome, and to make of each guest a personal factor in her scheme of entertainment.

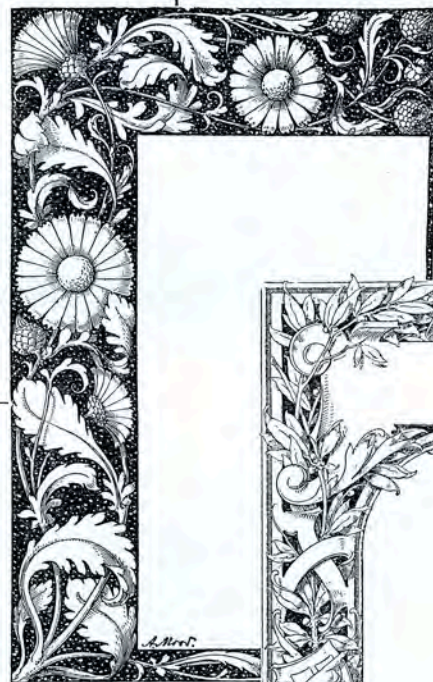
Dinner cards, whatever their shape, size or variety, are always of two classes or kinds—those for the purpose of marking the guests' places at table, and those which announce the dishes to be served at the feast. The former are known as guest or place cards, and the latter as menu cards, or menus, as the plural is often made. The first class, the place cards, are in the more constant use, as their function responds to a necessity of every dinner or luncheon, breakfast or supper party. They are most elegant when small enough to be slipped into the vest pockets of the men, and carried readily by the women, although they are frequently large ovals, circles or hearts in shape, and too large for comfortable transportation. They are placed variously at the left of the cover, at the point of the fork or upon the folded napkin, but must always be conspicuous in position, that the guests may easily and quickly find the positions allotted to them. They become the property of the person whose name they bear, and are supposed to be carried home by the guests as a trifling evident remembrance of the feast and its giver.

Menu cards serve another purpose, but are annually in lesser use at private dinners. At very large affairs, men's dinners or suppers, and public or subscription banquets the menu card is in evidence for discussion in two senses, a physical and mental. They are usually oblong in shape and of heavy cardboard, on which the various courses of the meal are printed or engraved. Often at public banquets they are in booklet form, and contain the list of toasts and speakers in addition to the menu.

At any large family dinner, where personalities are allowable, and hobbies are well known, great amusement may be had from well-chosen devices for the cards. One set, voted the best of a long series all more or less unique, was made with, perhaps, the least trouble of all, the idea throughout being to make each card as personal as possible. Cards varying in

The principal guest chanced to be a mighty hunter and fine shot, and on the corner of his card appeared a miniature target with properly-graduated rings of black and white. Precisely through the centre of the "bullseye" was a hole as though made by a bullet. The musical guest had a tiny music-book, about two inches by three, the several pages dotted and scored into a semblance of notes. Outside was the name of a favorite arrangement. This was stitched firmly through the under

page to the card, leaving the pages fluttering open. The motto, "I am never merry when I hear sweet music," and the name of the guest were put on in oddly decorative letters of dull gold paint, and added much to the decorative effect. On a musical card such as this the appropriate



than he knew." For an officer in the navy a small wooden boat, an inch or two long, of the ark pattern, audaciously labeled the "Minneapolis." An art student might be given a card in the shape of a palette, the brushes thrust through it with arrow-pointed tips, and the punning legend, "She is wedded to her art."

For dinners where personalities are out of place an extremely easy, and yet very effective, device is to cut from stiff paper the form of a triangle. "Parchment" paper is best for these. After cutting out fold the points up from the base, then fold them out, forming a shallow box about one-quarter of an inch deep. Punch holes as shown in the illustration and tie with baby-ribbon. Around the points paint with gold paint irregularly; on one point leave room for the name, on another the day of the month, on the third the year.



These, if tied with yellow ribbon and filled with salted almonds, make a really charming addition to the table. For a dinner or luncheon to college boys college colors may always be used to advantage.

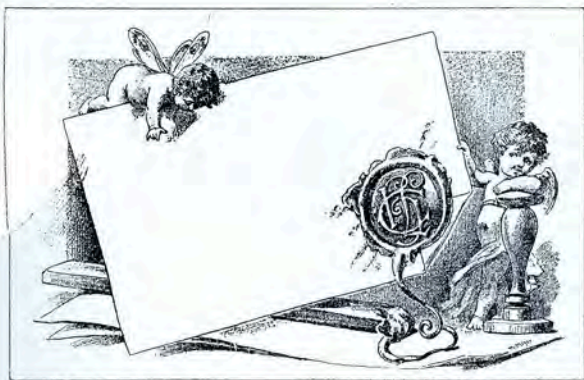
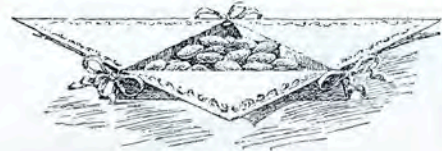
Small leaf-shaped cards, to simulate either petals or leaves, are to be found in various colors. In pink, the effect is of a rose petal being used for a name card; in purple, of an orchid petal serving the purpose; in green, the natural leaf is typified. Where the floral decorations are of one color or flower the effect of the table is greatly enhanced by the use of these cards.

Frequently enigmatic menu cards are used, and these are found to be important factors to the enjoyment of the guests. On such cards blue points may masquerade as "Cerulean dots" or "Colored angles." The shaddock, which is so often used for

the first course, has been hidden under the phrase, "Fish and fowl" (shaddock). Soup is described according to its kind, as "Make-believeterrapin" (mock-turtle), "Love-apple broth" (tomato), or a dozen other names which will occur after a few moments' thought. For fish the antique joke of "Poison" (poisson), or else it is described by its kind. Shad is known as "Bones," smelts as "Refines," salmon as "A scriptural character," cod as "A fashionable wrap" (Cape Cod), and trout as "Giraffes" (speckled beauties). "A character in Ivanhoe" can hide "F. de Bœuf," the initial representing

both "Fillet" and the gigantic "Front." "Our National bird" will disguise not the eagle but the turkey. "So domestic" will describe ducks, and "Sail-back" the canvas-backed variety. Salad appears as "Nothing but leaves," or in case a mayonnaise of celery is used as "Below stairs-y" (cellar-y). Cheese is called "Slang," from "Cheese it," or is ignored with crackers, which are otherwise called "Favors," from the children's fancy crackers. Dessert is hailed as "An arid plain," with ice cream as "An oasis," "Frozen milk-tops" or "A mockery king of snow." Pastry is described as "Printers' confusion" (pie-pi), and coffee as "A severe cold."

These enigmatic menu cards may be very easily gotten up by any person who is at all familiar with Shakespeare, as so many of his similes suggest good things to eat.



size from three by five inches to two and one-half by seven were chosen, the size being suggested by the decoration.

note might be used in the name, instead of the corresponding letter. A literary man's card had a wooden pen-handle fastened obliquely across the card—the golden letters of the name half obscured by realistic ink-blots. The dainty woman whose pins are never equal to the demand, found fastened on her card a box of "best assorted," and others in gold paint scattered in cheering profusion. The girl just back from visiting an army post had a row of tin soldiers an inch high doing duty across the top of a long card. For this the obvious motto was "I love the military." The young doctor had a solemn "bull pup" gazing at a row of medicine bottles, and pondering Shakespeare's advice to "Throw physic to the dogs." These were a few of the most successful, and though it may be objected to that here the guests were unusually suggestive, it will be found that in every family gathering or set of friends are a few whose pronounced traits readily suggest an appropriate device, and once started others follow almost without effort. For instance, an architect's card might be adorned with a charming pen-and-ink sketch of house tops and spires, with the motto, "He builded better