

THE month of June is graciously littered with the paraphernalia of weddings—lovely flowers, misty veils, wedding bells and congratulations. The tune of the Bridal March echoes from one church to another, as brides of all sizes and ages nervously trace the first slow steps towards a new, strange life. The very atmosphere of June is romantic and sentimental, and the beauty of blooming things penetrate to the very bones.

Weddings, however, are not all music and flowers. They have a practical side which is not revealed during the final tableau which presents the bride and groom all set to say "I do." There are the problems of expenditure, of organization and correctness which only one who has pecked behind the scenes of a wedding can know.

Simplicity is a safe rule to observe when planning a wedding. In these days, simplicity is not only attractive but correct. Elaborateness is passing out, and well too. Simple wedding ensembles, simple decorations and simple fare should be aimed for by those who intend to marry—or to marry off—this June.

Take the matter of dress, for instance. In the Philippines, this is easily settled for us. We do not have to bother very much about the ultra-fashion trends, for we have gone fashion a little better by preserving a style that is our own. The native wedding dress is as beautiful as any that other countries can boast of, and there should be no hesitation about preferring it. The full-length European gown is lovely also, but as much as possible, local brides should use the mestiza dress in this most important day of their lives. The most nervous

Gracious Manners:

The Etiquette of Weddings

bride cannot help looking breath-takingly elegant in the incomparable flared sleeves, sheathlike skirt and long veil of our native land.

The bridesmaids, of course, should follow the style set by the bride. Hence, a bride clad in the mestiza dress should be attended by bridesmaids wearing the mestiza dress in pastel colors. They wear short veils and hold bouquets that agree or contrast softly with their ensembles.

We are apt to forget about bridegrooms when discussing weddings. Whether this is due to the fact that very few (if any) notice the bridegroom on this most important occasion is not very clear, but this might explain the neglect. We shall not commit the same error (for error

it is). We know that bridegrooms are as harrassed as the brides when getting up their own clothes. Fashions abroad incline towards the cut-away and the grey striped trousers for bridegrooms, but this need not be the costume here. Usually, plain white *de hilo*, wing collar, stiff shirt front, white tie and white shoes serve the correct bridegroom in a morning wedding. The tuxedo is definitely out for informal weddings, whether they be held in the morning or the evening. For formal evening weddings, the "tails" are correct.

The wedding fare, of course, depends upon the time of the wedding. A simple breakfast for morning weddings or a supper in the evening will satisfy the inner man.

Luckily, we are doing away with the habit of staying on and on and on—for breakfast, dinner and supper—when attending morning weddings. More and more we are getting to realize that one meal is all that the average wedding guest should rate. The matter of the wedding fare can now be safely placed in the hands of a good caterer. If taken care of in the bride's (or sometimes the bridegroom's) home, the cook or the one who makes the menu would do well to remember that simple fare if well done is more welcome than an elaborate, indigestible assortment of irrelevant courses.

The decorations should feature flowers and ribbons arranged so tastefully that they provide an appropriate, rather than a competitive, setting for the bride. Garish decorations are out of place, for, as I repeat, simplicity should be the rule in weddings.

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