

PARALLELING the rage for cross-word puzzles, there recently swept across the country a severe epidemic of standardized etiquette. Large editions of imitation leather bound, de luxe books told how to set the table, when to raise the hat to a lady and a thousand and one other items that every new apartment dweller should know. Even today thousands of hopeful diners-out are worried to the point of indigestion because they cannot speak to the Italian or Greek waiter in perfect French.

It may be that this desire for social polish is a hopeful sign of the human model's desire to be as well finished as this year's pyroxylin lacquered automobile. But there may be a warning in the willingness of many people to accept the dogma of hypothetical "high society" as the gospel for human behavior.

Good manners, like good speech and character, are formulated to a large degree by the training and education that the individual obtains in the home

and school. Culture is not acquired naturally like one's second set of teeth. The idea that teachers are born ready-made and need only a grammar school education has long since been abandoned; even parents now attend child study clubs or read books in order to learn how to raise their Johns and Marys.

Such investigations as that of Professor Cason, described on page 131, provide a basis for a new scientific etiquette. He has applied the technique of scientific method to everyday manners. His researches may demonstrate some common mannerisms as social offenses; the use of the wrong fork may peeve no one. Professor Cason will probably never write a book on etiquette. Nevertheless, the sociologist and the psychologist, tackling problems more important and vital than the social laws of the drawing room, will make life more pleasant and worthwhile.

Editorial

Science News-Letter, March 3, 1928

Navy's Largest Ship

Naval Engineering

THE U. S. Navy's largest ship, and the biggest aircraft carrier in the world, the *Saratoga*, appears on the cover this week. It is reproduced from a painting by Walter L. Greene for the General Electric Company, makers of the ship's 180,000 horsepower engines. One of the 83 airplanes that the ship can carry is shown taking off from the bow. The peculiar construction, in putting the turrets and superstructure to one side, in order that the planes may take off with full advantage of its 888 foot over-all length, is also evident.

The displacement of the vessel is 33,000 tons, its maximum depth 30 feet, while the greatest width is 106 feet. Besides the planes, however, it has quite a formidable armament of the usual variety, with eight 8-inch guns in turrets, and twelve 5-inch anti-aircraft guns. The latter battery should be able to repel effectually an entire squadron of enemy planes.

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THE new cover design of the SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER is based on decorations in the building in Washington of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council, in which Science Service has its home. Lee Lawrie was the sculptor. The figures at the top represent Light and Darkness, while the borders on the side, taken from the bronze doors at the entrance to the lobby of the building, represent the Spring and Summer signs of the zodiac.

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