

# Serving Dinner for a Multitude of People

**T**WO HUNDRED quarts of soup, 7,200 oysters, 500 chickens, 450 pounds of fish, 2,000 pounds of beef, 600 ducks, besides innumerable gallons of coffee and scores of freezers of ice cream, were needed to serve the guests at Saturday night's dinner to Prince Henry. The banquet was the largest ever prepared in the Waldorf-Astoria, relates the New York Times. Twelve hundred guests were accommodated in the grand ballroom and adjoining apartments, 120 singers in the Astor gallery adjoining and more than 400 women in the two tiers of boxes.

How Oscar manages to serve such an enormous dinner and yet have every portion of food as hot as though it were specially prepared for a particular guest is a question that has puzzled many a patron of the hotel. Oscar explains that it is a very simple problem. He is the chef of the hotel and his last name is Tschirky, but he says he does not care for anybody to use it in addressing him, as the front name has been of so much more service to him professionally. If you ask him how he manipulates the thousands of dishes at such a great dinner, how he keeps his waiters in line, how he signals from carving table to kitchen and how, in short, he effects a rigid following of a prearranged schedule, he will tell you that it is "military training."

## Just Like an Army.

"Just like the army," he says. "Waiters all trained. New recruits handled by experienced men. Signals for every move. Orders obeyed on the double quick—or there's trouble. Every dish hot—or there's more trouble. Easy enough!"

The dinner given to the prince the week before last by the New Yorker Staats-Zeitung was the second largest banquet Oscar ever superintended, and the way he went about arranging for that was similar to his methods of last Saturday night, when the hosts were the members of the German Society of New York. For this last banquet, for instance, he had 470 extra waiters, including those at the carving tables, which were placed in the long hallway leading

back toward Fifth Avenue from the grand ballroom. None of the regular waiters of the hotel participated. The "extras" were men on Oscar's special list.

"I have their names in a book," he explains. "Most of them work down town in the daytime, and at night they are ready for special dinners here, or at Sherry's, or at Delmonico's. But in this case, and in all cases where there are more than 500 guests to be served, I have to go beyond my selected list. I have to pick up men that I don't want particularly. There are not enough A1 waiters among the extras to fill the bill for as big a dinner as this one, yet the additional hundred or so are fairly good, and they have been pressed into service often enough to know how to behave themselves."

## Arranging for the Feast.

Preparations for such an affair as this begin forty-eight hours ahead of time. On the previous day the hotel marketers go out and get all the necessary provisions. A brigade of decorators begins to festoon the balconies and gilded columns of the ballroom with whatever decorations the hosts have arranged to display. Scrubwomen and scrubmen start to polish up the brass railings. Sweepers and dusters clean the chairs in the boxes and on the main floor, and make the carpets and canopies and curtains look spick and span.

Early in the morning of the day set for the dinner the tables are carried to the ball room and two score of waiters are busy all day setting them, polishing up the silver and redusting the chairs. In the afternoon, about three hours before the hour of the dinner, the rest of the extra waiters make their appearance. They are assigned to their places, one "table man" to every eight guests, and one "wine man" to every twelve. Some are stationed at the carving tables, each with his particular duty. Oscar and his head assistants scurry about this way and that, seeing to it that there is no place uncovered, no detail unprepared, no dish or piece of silverware lacking.

Just before 5 o'clock the flower men come. They have had to wait until late for their share in the arrangements, because the

roses must look fresh and the leaves vividly green. The tracing of delicate blossoms and evergreens along the cloth of the guests' table must not have time to wither, and the specially decorative bouquet in front of the guest of honor, whether he be the prince or some other distinguished man, must seem to have come straight from the greenhouse.

Meanwhile the kitchen has been a scene of great activity. There are no extra cooks, but those regularly on duty have to move around much more rapidly than on other days. They get the food ready "between rushes" in the morning and afternoon, leaving the most delicate viands to the last. By the time 6 o'clock has come everything is ready, and a squad of men—cooks or waiters—are in their places near the ovens, all on the alert for the signal that means they are to transfer the food to a special elevator and send it upstairs to Oscar. The grand ballroom is on the second floor, the kitchens in the basement.

## Signals to Waiters.

It is announced to the chef that the guests are ready to sit down. Through a tube he transfers the information down stairs. Then he rings a bell, and in two minutes the oysters are on the tables, having been prepared at the carving tables. The waiters stand like statues, each at his post. The guests file into the imitation fairyland, perhaps cheer the honored visitor, stand until he is seated, and then proceed to make way with the first course. Meanwhile the "wine men" have placed on each table the beverage prescribed for this stage of the feast, and the diners find their glasses filled before they have had time to unfold their napkins.

The bell that Oscar rings is just outside the door between the hall of carving tables and the ballroom. He himself never goes into the dining room. He walks up and down the long, canvas-covered halls and every time he gets to the end nearest the ballroom he pokes his head about two inches inside the door to see how far the eating of the course has advanced. At the right moment, when all or a majority of

the diners seem to have finished their oysters, he touches an electric button. The bell rings—so loudly that everybody on the floor can hear it. On the instant the waiters begin to take away the oyster plates, with which they file out, and the "wine men" replace the first wine with the second.

In less than four minutes after the ringing of the bell the same waiters who carried out the oyster plates return with the soup. The oyster dishes have been deposited in "ships" and hustled down to the kitchen on the elevator. At this point the guests begin to wonder, if they have never had the question answered for them, why the soup is hot, how more than 1,200 plates can possibly be brought to the tables steaming as though they were transferred from a stove a dozen feet away.

"Of course it's hot," says Oscar. "Just before they finish their oysters I call down to the kitchen. Up comes the soup. Into the heaters on the carving tables it goes. It stays there until it is very hot. Then the oysters come out. While they are coming the soup is being poured into plates and just as soon as it's in the waiters are ready to take it to the guests."

In this way the dinner proceeds. Each course is brought from the kitchen just in time, then heated until the diners are ready to consume it. There is no colliding of waiters—except very rarely. They march in regular lines. Each one knows where his place is and who is the one he must follow in and out of the ball room.

For 1,720 diners—the number served last Saturday night—the quantity of champagne used is approximately 860 quarts. Of sauternes and clarets and other side wines about 573 quarts of each is needed.

## Serving on the Side.

While the diners on the main floor are being supplied the women in the boxes are served with what the chef designates as a "collation." This consists of bouillon, chicken salad, ices, claret punch and wines. Everybody gets coffee and the men on the main floor can have cigarettes or cigars at any time during the dinner. Hundreds of packages of the former are consumed and

many boxes of the latter, all of the best quality.

For the dinner to the prince the week before last the special feature was the "procession of ices," each waiter marching with a fancy preparation raised high over his head. Oscar lined them up in the hallway first. Then he poked his head inside the door and nodded to the orchestra in the top balcony. The music—a march—began, and the waiters started forward. They circled in and out among the tables and finally placed each ice in its proper place. This feature, though more elaborate than those arranged for previous dinners, was yet similar to many seen in the hotel before, and the way it was managed was the same as in former cases.

The hotel makes it a rule never to take contracts for menus. Generally there are from four to twelve men on the committee that is to arrange for the decorative cards or printed silken ribbons, the latter having been the form of the menus at the first dinner to the prince. Once Oscar undertook to arrange for the printing, but there was dissatisfaction on the part of the committee, and since then he and Proprietor Boldt have decided that they will have nothing to do with this feature of the dinner. The committee must fight it out, and the menus are turned over to the chef just before the banquet begins, and later distributed to the tables according to instruction.

Throughout these dinners in the grand ball room there is plenty of music, generally furnished by one of the best orchestras of the city. The room is a blaze of light, hundreds of fancy electric bulbs sending their rays from column, ceiling and walls. For ordinary occasions, such as banquets of state societies or other patriotic organizations, it is not considered necessary to prepare much extra decorations in the way of draperies or festoons of evergreens, but the affairs in honor of the prince were distinguished by so many additional embellishments that the fixed gorgeousness of the room was well nigh hidden under them. The room, as it is every day, is decorative enough for most people, and one would think that ordinarily there was enough of gold paint and enough mural paintings to satisfy the most extravagant taste.

## Practical Value of Little Economies in Modern Business

**F**EW persons who are not themselves actively engaged in trade and manufacture realize how important a role the practice of small economies plays in the workings of the big industrial enterprises of the present day. To the giant United States Steel corporation, for instance, with its profits, as recently announced, of \$300,000 a day, it might appear that such trifling matters as the saving of stray screws and waste iron dust would hardly appear worth while. As a matter of fact, however, such savings are very well worth while, and it is largely to the care with which provision is made against possible waste that the large profits are due.

A few years ago sawdust used to be thrown away. It was dumped from the big lumber mills of Maine and Michigan into the river streams and allowed to settle in great banks, which not only obstructed navigation, but proved detrimental to fish life. Explosions caused by the generation of gas in the wet sawdust were frequent and caused many accidents.

So great a nuisance did the sawdust in the rivers finally become that city and town corporations were obliged to take ac-

tion against the owners of the mills. Laws were passed making it compulsory to dispose of the sawdust in some other way, and for a time the mill owners resorted to the expedient of burning the waste product.

## Utilizing Sawdust.

Now sawdust is made into a great many articles of considerable commercial value. Compressed woodenware, panels and pavement blocks are among the more familiar of these products, and the industry is steadily increasing. By a process of dry distillation, too, gas, alcohol, acetic acid, tar and oils are obtained from the sawdust. These in turn are made into still other products. From the tar there is obtained benzole, paraffin, naphthalene and hydrocarbons, which are used in the manufacture of aniline dyes. Carbolic acid and creosote are also obtained.

From the artificial wood a number of valuable articles besides the palls, panels and blocks mentioned are likewise obtained. From the plastic mass which results from sifting out the coarser particles and mixing the remainder with various fillers and agglutinants, there are manufactured slabs for parquet floors, bas-reliefs, art castings and dinner plates.

The newest use to which sawdust has been put is as feed for cattle. For this purpose it is declared to be far superior to straw, and it is probable that in a few years sawdust will be almost as valuable as the sound lumber. The mills which were the first to realize the value of what had for so many years been thrown away have reaped a golden harvest, while those which have failed to look after the sawdust and allowed it to continue going to waste have either barely escaped bankruptcy or have sold out to their more successful rivals.

## Economies in Watch-Making.

Then years ago the watch trade of the United States was not only in its infancy, but was practically monopolized by two firms. Swiss and German watches were largely sold in this country in competition with the American-made article and in spite of a heavy protective duty. At the present day American watches are sold all around the world and have contributed so prominently to the "American invasion" of Europe that it was announced only a short time ago that a single firm in this city had contracted to deliver 2,000,000 watches in London within a year.

The secret of American success in watch-

making lies in the small economies effected by American machinery. A rival to the two concerns which monopolized the manufacture ten years ago had at its head a young man whose early days had been passed in considerable privation. It may have been the training in economy which his early experiences had thus given him that led him to examine with special care all the little details of the establishment and to be continually watchful for means and methods that would prevent wastefulness.

The following story is told: One day, soon after taking over the management of the concern, he noticed that a workgirl stopped during working hours to curl her "bangs." He promptly issued an order taboing bangs. On another occasion he noticed a workman discarding a screw. He made inquiries and discovered that in allotting materials to the hands in the factory fourteen screws were counted as a dozen, in order to allow for variations in size. Each screw cost approximately about the 100th part of a cent. But the new manager set about elaborating a machine that should make every screw to one standard gauge. The result of these and other similar small economies was not long in producing its results. Other managers found themselves obliged to be economical, too, and American watch-making machinery and American methods scored their triumph in competition with the cheaper labor and costlier output of the rest of the world.

## Time-Saving Devices.

The way in which "little economies" have contributed to the success of one of the greatest tea blending and importing houses of the world was described in a recent publication. "I saw," said the writer, "scales that would weigh by electricity to within the 100th part of an ounce; girls wearing brown Holland overalls, enveloping them from head to foot, that not the smallest bit of tea dust even might adhere to their dresses and be carried away and wasted; a marvellous time-keeping machine that recorded automatically the loss of even a single second of time by any one of the hundreds of employes and dozens of other similar money-saving and time-economizing contrivances, and I ceased to wonder that such a business as I saw before me had been built up by two comparatively young men in less than five years."

One of the greatest industrial centers of the world has sprung up within the short space of half a dozen years at the hitherto little known town of Sault Ste. Marie, where the waters of Lake Superior empty into Lake Huron. The success of this vast enterprise, where the enormous sum of \$117,000,000 is being spent in a plant for the manufacture of an almost unlimited variety of articles of iron, steel, nickel and wood, with various chemical products as well, is due solely to the inventive genius and new economies of one man.

The first striking innovation which was effected at the "Soo" had to do with the manufacture of wood pulp. By the methods previously employed the pulp as turned out

for export contained a large proportion of water. This water added to the weight, and consequently to the cost of transportation, without in the least increasing the value of the article. After much study and experiment a new process was devised, and now pulp is produced in a much drier state and the waste of money in freight charges is saved.

## Visitors Excluded.

A few years ago it was a very common practice for the managers of mills and factories to show visitors over their premises. Very often an employe was detailed to take the strangers about and point out the different features of interest. It was thought good advertising and well worth the incidental trouble. Now that is all changed. Hardly a factory of importance in the country permits visitors to gain entrance to its works, and signs to that effect are displayed conspicuously on the gates outside.

The reason is not that it is desired to maintain secrecy regarding the machinery and the plant, but simply that it is a waste of time. It wastes the time of the manager or superintendent and it causes a waste of time among the men. The entrance of a party of strangers to a factory is the signal for the employes to turn about and look at them. The lost time may amount to only a minute or two for each employe, or even a great deal less than that, but repeated two or three times a day, and in every department, the loss mounts up to a very definite quantity. And lost time means diminished output.



NEBRASKA UNDERTAKERS WHO CAME TO OMAHA TO STUDY EMBALMING METHODS—Photo by Marsh.

Rain and sweat have no effect on harness treated with Eureka Harness Oil. It resists the damp, keeps the leather soft and pliable. Stitches do not break. No rough surface to chafe and cut. The harness not only keeps looking like new, but wears twice as long by the use of Eureka Harness Oil.

**EUREKA HARNESS OIL**



Sold everywhere in cans—all sizes. Made by Standard Oil Company

**F. M. RUSSELL**

has and Electric Filters

RESISTANT

CHINA

ECCLESIASTICAL

Phone 503, Omaha

