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CLUB LIFE.

For a long time clubs both political and social, have formed a remarkable feature in English life; and as this feature is now being introduced into our own country to a considerable extent, we desire to say a few words respecting it.

The club system of the present day is very different from that of half a century ago. In the latter it was fashionable and commendable to be as extravagant and dissipated as possible; but in the present system these vices are strongly condemned, and the whole weight of the system is thrown in favor of temperance and economy. The old clubs encouraged drinking, the modern clubs, on the contrary, have done much to discourage habits of free indulgence as being low and ungentlemanly. Inebriety, or the symptoms of it, in a club-house of the present day, would bring disgrace upon him who should be guilty of such an indiscretion. For the benefit of those who seek information on the subject, we give a description of the workings and internal arrangements of the English club.

Let us take the "Athenaeum" as an example. It consists of 1200 members, who are persons of eminence and distinction in the intellectual world. Many of them are to be met with every day, living with the same freedom as in their own houses. For six guineas a year every member has the use of an excellent library, with maps, and daily and weekly newspapers and journals, both English and foreign, and every material for writing, with attendance for whatever is wanted. The building is a sort of palace, with the same exactness and comfort as a private dwelling. There are appropriate rooms for everything. Besides the library, there is a news-room, a coffee-room, evening or drawing-room, card-room, billiard-room, baths and dressing-rooms, "house dining-room," and committee-room, all fitted up according to their respective purposes, and supplied with almost every imaginable convenience.

Every member is a master without any of the trouble of a master. He can come when he pleases, stay away as long as he pleases, without anything going wrong. He has the command of a regular staff of servants, without having to pay or to manage them. He can have whatever meal or refreshment he wants, at all hours, and served up with the cleanliness and comfort of his own house. He orders just what he pleases, having no interest to think of but his own; and it is impossible to imagine a greater degree of liberty in living.

Next, as to the economy of club life. Members are supplied with everything they consume at cost price, or nearly so. The vulgar habit of associating the notion of gentility with expense is invariably discountenanced at these establishments. The very principle on which the club is founded is economy; its temptations are not those of extravagance. While by its arrangements a young man is enabled to save half his income, he meets there little that could allure him to spend the other half. The more attached he becomes to the quiet and orderly habits of a club life, the less he will feel inclined towards the expenses of that dissipation to which the routine of club life is so opposed.

It is related of the Duke of Wellington that dining "off a joint" one day at his club, he was charged fifteen pence instead of a shilling. The duke protested against the overcharge, and bestirred himself until the extra threepence was struck off. This was an act of parsimony or meanness of the duke; his motive was obvious—he took the trouble of objecting to give his sanction to the principle.

Clubs are also favorable to the economy of time.

There is a fixed place to go to, where members are always sure of mixing only with respectable persons; for the greatest care is taken that only those whose character is truly gentlemanly are admitted to membership. To be a member of a club, therefore, is a patent of respectability. Clubs are favorable to temperance and sobriety; it is not customary to remain long at table. Upon an examination being entered into on one occasion, it was found that the average cost of 17,323 dinners was 2s. 9 3/4d. each, while the wine consumed is but little over half a pint a day for each person. It seems that when people can freely please themselves, and when they have the opportunity of living in a plain and simple manner, they seldom run into excess.

The moral influence of club life may, upon the whole be considered a favorable one. There is more polish of gentlemanly manners and decorum. The tone of society in a club, although perfectly free and unrestrained, is quiet, proving that "nothing more contributes to maintain our common sense than living in a universal way with multitudes of men."

The management of a club-household is on a complete and economical system. Everything is managed without bustle and confusion; every one has his proper post and definite duties; and, as no more attendants are engaged than is required, no one has any time to be idle.

The business of a club is carried on by a committee of management, a secretary, librarian, steward, housekeeper, hall-porter, butler, under-butler, groom of the chambers, clerk of the kitchen, head cook or chef, cooks, kitchen-maids, female servants, and attendants or footmen. The economy of the club system is here strikingly shown. Some forty or fifty persons suffice to supply the wants of 1000 to 1200 members, each of whom would require from five to six persons to perform the same services for him in his private residence, and the probability is he would not be nearly so well served.

In the principal clubs in London, the members consist of persons occupied in kindred pursuits, which are evident from the designation of the club. Thus, there is the "Army and Navy Club," for officers in the service, the "Oxford and Cambridge University," the "Guards," the "United Service," the "Travellers," the "Reform," the "Conservative," the "Oriental," etc. Members pay an entrance fee varying with the club, from £15 15s., to £31 10s., while the annual subscription also varies from £6 6s. to £10 10s. The number of members in the several clubs ranges from six hundred to fifteen hundred. The number being limited, it is sometimes extremely difficult for a candidate for membership to obtain admission, vacancies rarely occurring except through the death of a member.

Such is a brief summary of the English club system. It has been conducted with the greatest success in that country, but will no doubt of necessity require some modification in America, owing to the difference in the people.

PARIS FASHIONS.

A Paris fashion correspondent, writing on the 21 inst., speaks of the imperial patronage about to be extended to rich brocade figured silk damasks, and brocatels in preference to plain silks, which are to be adopted at court. The cut of these materials is to follow the styles of our grandmothers, who learned to be very graceful in narrow skirts. Some of the new patterns are very artistic. Trails of colored chrysanthemums, on light brown, white and violet periwinkles on light emerald green, snow-drops on porcelain blue, clusters of lilac on dark green, showers of miniature spurs over black corded silk, and the lily of the valley pattern on a long green leaf. The prosaic jockey attire is to be abandoned. The most approved style of hair-dressing is "a marteaux," which means rolls of curls pinned up at the ends and placed in tapering rows with gold cord or velvet rouleaux between.

Paris winter bonnets are a wee little bit more reasonable in shape; there is even an approach to a crown, and the style is a mixture of the Marie Stuart and the Catalan shapes. Felt will be much worn. When gray, it is edged and decorated with any color which the taste of the wearer may choose, but violet and dark blue are the favorite hues. From the tiny crown there fall over the hair bows and ends of black lace; while tags with bobs and balls dangle from the velvet knots which ornament the top of the bonnet.

The most popular form for black velvet outdoor covering is the loose sac paletot with large points both at the back and front. They are newer than those which are cut straight all round the edge, and are trimmed with narrow bands of fur precisely as last winter. Fur is to be very generally worn on silk dresses when the cold weather sets in in earnest. A very ladylike winter toilet consists of either a mauve or blue gros grain dress, with a high bodice and no basques; a waistband with two long sash ends, which are bordered with chinchilla; Venetian sleeves lined with white satin and open, so as to show the dress sleeves underneath.

The Daguar sash is a novelty which is so pretty that it is likely to be exceedingly popular. It is made of velvet, and is only worn with ball dresses. This waistband forms a basque round the bodice, and it is cut out round the edge in large, wide scallops; it forms at the back a sort of fan, the leaves of which are indicated with rows of either gold or silver buttons. A pretty toilet is described, consisting of an empress-blue velvet Daguar sash worn with a white tulle dress; the scallops were trimmed with gold lace, and the back with radiating lines of gold buttons; pockets were indicated at the sides with gold lace.

DRAWING-ROOM MAGIC.

We had an extra performance on Thanksgiving night, a large number of children being present to witness my performances. I asked them what I should do to amuse them, and they answered that a few sleight-of-hand tricks with cards would be acceptable.

I explained that I would never be the means of disseminating any gambling tricks, or introduce feats that could be used for the purpose of cheating. Some of the most popular card tricks, on the contrary, were dependent on the science of numbers and the doctrine of probabilities, while others were merely deceptive tricks, which deluded the eye of the spectators either by the dexterity of the performer, or by the use of some simple contrivance "which made the fool of the other senses."

I then proceeded to show some of the following card tricks, which depend for success on the "long card," "making the pass," or a few changeable cards, which amateurs will find no difficulty in making. A pack of white-backed "club-cards" will facilitate many of their arrangements. The first of the following tricks have been especially chosen for the ease with which they may be performed. In some cases variations of the same tricks are given, which will suggest many others equally startling to the spectators.

DETECTION OF CARDS CHOSEN.

I detect a card chosen by another without seeing the pack. I arrange the cards all one way, and then ask a stranger to take one. While he is looking at it I turn the pack round, so that when the card is returned to the pack the corner projects. I then permit him, or any one else, to shuffle the cards, and place the pack behind my back. The projecting corner of the card is easily felt, drawn out, and shown. This trick is simple, but it seldom fails to astonish the spectators.

I arrange an ordinary pack of cards so that the heads of the cards are all one way. Placing the common cards of diamonds at the bottom, I allow any of the spectators to choose a card, always taking care that they do not choose any of the diamonds, and to avoid this I generally place the pack on the table and present only the upper cards. When the card is chosen I reverse the pack, so that the card chosen alone has its head different from the others, and this enables me to pick it out. The fashion of making double heads to the court cards prevents this trick being successful.

It may, however, be performed if the pattern on the backs of the cards be a bunch of flowers or fruit, so that the cards may be arranged one way in the same manner. If the pattern of the cards admit of this being done, you may show the card by shuffling them with their faces towards the audience until the reversed card presents itself. I have sometimes colored a flower, or added some distinct mark to the back of all the cards to perform this trick.

OBEDIENT CARDS.

If the spectators can be arranged in front, and at some distance from me, I take up the pack of cards as it usually lies, and when passing them behind me, or under the table, or even knocking them level, I take the opportunity of looking at the bottom card exposed. I then pretend to shuffle the cards, but manage to bring the card I have seen back to back on the other side of the pack. I then hold the cards by the edges between the company and myself and call out what it is. This gives me an opportunity of observing the bottom card a second time, for its face is towards me. I repeat the same process, so that in time I could tell every card in the pack apparently without looking at the face of any of the cards.

An excellent method of performing this feat of calling cards from the pack, is the following: You ask the persons present if they can recollect any card mentioned, and they of course reply that they can. You have previously, in shuffling the cards, ascertained what card is at the top of the pack. This may be accomplished by glancing at the bottom card and gradually shuffling them until it becomes the top one, or you may bring a long card to the top, or "make the pass." You may then divide the pack into as many portions as there are persons present, say four. I then proceed as follows: I appear in deep thought as to the card. I must call. I asked Jack if he could recollect the eight of spades, which was the card at the top of the pack. Jack said he could. I said that I would call it for him. I did so, and took a card from the top of heap No. 1. I did not show the card, but I first glanced at it as I placed it in my hand. I asked Master Troublesome to recollect the king of hearts and I would call for it; I then took a card from No. 2. This was the four of diamonds. Miss Simpkins was asked to remember that card. I then took a card from No. 3 for her ostensibly. This was the knave of clubs. I pondered awhile, apparently in doubt as to what card I should call for my niece, though I knew that the "eight of spades" was on the top of the remaining heap. At last I suggested to call the knave of clubs. I then took the "eight of spades" and slipped it into the first place, and then I asked Jack, Master Troublesome, Miss Simpkins and my niece to remember the cards I had called for them, and I produced the cards as they were named.

A third method is a more striking mode of doing this feat, but it requires some skill in palming to do it neatly and successfully without fear of discovery. A card, say the king of clubs, is secured in the palm of the hand. The pack is then spread out on the table with the faces of the cards downwards. The mystic wand is handed to one of the audience, and you tell him that when you name a card he is to

touch one with the wand, which you will take up. After some little mystification, you of course name the king of clubs, and as you take up the card touched by the wand you just glance at it, as if to see that it was the one you called for. Whatever card it is you call for it. In the meantime, place the first card on the top of the king of clubs so that they appear to be one card only. The same process is repeated until six or more cards are drawn. In this trick the last card is useless, and it must be hidden in the palm of the hand until an opportunity arises of disposing of it. This generally happens during the time the spectators are examining the cards you have called. I generally ask for some one to write the names down, in order that there should not be an error, or a dispute.

Another method of performing this trick is to note the bottom card, or the bottom card but one, and spread the pack, with their faces downwards, on the table. Tell one of the persons present that though neither he nor yourself has seen the faces and positions of the cards, yet you will ask him to give you certain cards, and he will do so, and in the end you will show him that they are correct. Assume a confident air, and call for the card noted, say ace of diamonds. Suppose he gives you the six of clubs, you boldly call out for that card, and in the same manner proceed to the end of any number of cards fixed upon. On arriving at that card say that you will be able to distinguish that card yourself by your nice sense of smell. This you pretend to do, moving the cards to and fro until you come to the one fixed on, which you then lift, place it in the first place, and you can then display the whole of the cards in the order they have been called for.

New Publications.

THE KETTLE CLUB: Christmas Tales for Children. By Cousin Virginia. Illustrated. 159 pp. Published by Nichols & Noyes. Boston.

Decidedly one of the most charming books for the little folks we have seen. The stories of the Cricket's adventures, and Ole, the discontented, are excellent.

For sale by the publishers.

A SUMMER IN LESLIE GOLDTHWAIT'S LIFE. By Mrs. A. D. P. Whittemore. Illustrated. 239 pp. Published by Ticknor & Fields. Boston.

Messrs. Ticknor & Fields have issued in handsome style this excellent story for young people. It has already achieved a decided popularity in the pages of "Our Young Folks," and its appearance in its present form will be hailed with pleasure by our juvenile public. The illustrations are in Hoppin's best style.

For sale by the publishers.

A TELEGRAPHIC ANECDOTE.

An English paper tells a story of a singular application of the telegraph, which may well go into the permanent annals of the electric wire. The special correspondent in London of a Glasgow paper, was accustomed every evening at a late hour to bring his despatch to a telegraph office in the upper story of a high building, the street door of which was closed at a certain hour, and attended after that by a porter. This functionary, on the occasion in question, went sound asleep, and the most energetic poundings of the correspondent on the door were unsuccessful in awakening him to his duty. After half an hour or so of increasing impatience, the correspondent hit upon a novel idea. He went to an adjoining telegraph station, and sent a message to Glasgow, requesting the clerk there to telegraph to the clerk in the inaccessible upper story in London to go down stairs and awaken the porter. This was done with entire success in about twenty minutes, the message traversing a distance of over four hundred miles to arouse a man only separated from the visitor by a door.

PRIZE MONEY.—The prize money paid our sailors for captures made during the rebellion was very handsome in many cases. The largest amount paid to one individual for the capture of a single prize was \$38,318 55, paid to William Budd, commander of the U. S. steamer Magnolia, for the capture of the Memphis. After paying all expenses of adjudication, this prize netted the handsome sum of \$500,914, so that even each ordinary seaman realized \$1734 53 for his share.

A CUTE MISER.—A gentleman called on a rich miser, and found him at the table endeavoring to catch a fly. Presently he succeeded in entrapping one, which he immediately put into the sugar-bowl and shut down the cover. The gentleman asked for an explanation of this singular sport. "I'll tell you," replied the miser, a triumphant grin overspreading his countenance as he spoke, "I want to ascertain if the servants steal the sugar."

SAD.—The wife of a wealthy and respectable merchant of St. Louis was recently arrested for drunkenness, and spent the night in a private boudoir at the station house.

SELF-BINDING PORTFOLIO.—We have had manufactured for our paper a PORTFOLIO which will be found a great convenience by those who see fit to use it. It will hold a year's papers, and is very durable, keeping the FLAG always as good and clean as new. Simply cutting the leaves, after each number is put in, one has a handy book, all ready to open to any page desired. We will furnish them at this office, or send them by mail, post paid upon the receipt of \$1.50.