

MID-LENT DIVERSIONS IN THE WORLD OF SOCIETY AND FASHION.



An Afternoon Musicale of the Four Hundred.

WHEN one goes to an up-to-date Lenten entertainment, whether it calls itself a sewing class, or is that more solemn function, a Lenten lunch, either a vaudeville or a musicale is sure to crop out somewhere during the performance. For example, there is Miss Gerry's class, which has contributed more life to the dull season than any of the other weekly gatherings. The proceedings begin with what is called sewing, and the first performers are entirely feminine, and there is a good opportunity afforded to talk of many things of clocks, and ewes, and pony carts, and sealing wax, and kings, and why the sea is boiling hot, and whether pigs have wings (parade, Mr. Carroll, if I am not letter perfect, and also incidentally to mention one's dearest enemy, if she happens to be absent).

If it is an evening affair, about 10:30 the men come in from club and dinner party, and the Waldorf, where they have been to dine, and to quote Mr. Bret Harte, are "half perfumed with lullaby and half with smoke and wine." Then the vaudeville or musicale materializes, followed by a jolly informal dance, and, of course, a supper, for in this part of the season you need much sustenance. The class met at Mrs. Heber Bishop's the other evening, where the music was by Miss. Clémentine de Vescepio and the Franko orchestra; also there was a clever Jap who juggled. At Mrs. William Douglas Sloane's, where the Gerry class assembled on Tuesday last, both Beeth and Chopin came on from their engagements in Buffalo to delight the ears of the folk. Truly a sewing class or a Lenten lunch, when properly conducted, is a most delightfully refreshing way of being charitable towards one's fellow creatures, and is especially conducive to one's own peace of mind and comfort of body, for the art of supper giving has come to a high degree of tasteful excellence in this town. Another good feature of this latter-day sewing class is that it encourages drawing room talent and puts money into the pockets of deserving young women. Among the talent in this way which the universality of the drawing room entertainment has called forth are two very able young lady conchologists, who have more engagements than they can fill. The conchologists in this class are also called upon to furnish amusement and talent for luncheon and supper, the young women banjoists and crooners, being especially favorites. The Neapolitan singers, with their bewitching love songs and native dreses, have also been in great demand on such occasions. The hostess saves one all unnecessary exertion, and all one has to do is to dress neat, properly, to eat and to look pleasant.

The Knickerbocker Sewing Class held a meeting on Wednesday at the home of Mrs. John G. Westervelt, of No. 7 West Fifth street.

Mrs. Van Rensselaer Cruger has been the guest of a Car. She has been presented at the English court; in short, all through the lady's life she has "lived with nabobs and dined with nabobs," and, knowing this, I was rather amused at a contemporary's statement to the effect that by an invitation to a luncheon given by the wife of a South American charge d'affaires, it struck me as funny verbiage. The facts were all right, however. Mrs. Cruger has been doing Washington and has been honored to her heart's content, and the luncheon just quoted was given by Mme. Domini-

quez, of the Argentine Republic, who invited a number of prominent people to meet "Julian Gordon." Among them were the Baroness Fioliana, Mrs. Carlotta, Mrs. McClellan and Mrs. Anderson. The Calvin Beiles have also entertained Mrs. Cruger with their usual unapproachable and I hear that arching brows will be the rule in the various chancelleries of the Legations at Washington when she turns her handsome head homeward.

If the wanderer and wayfarer over the sad roads of Lent finds the sewing class of propriety a little too cold for his blood, he can resort to a warmer sort of entertainment known as a studio party, which is very good fun, for artists are clever fellows in such things. The diversions, however, rather suggest Yvette Guilbert than they do the Rev. Morgan Dix. One of the studio parties given by Mr. Louis Van Gaertner, of the Carnegie Studios, last week, the piece de resistance was Miss Yvette Violette, who imitated and gowned Guilbert in her choicest songs to an audience composed of the Cooper Hewitts, the Cheevers, the Cowdins, Mr. Peter Marie and a number of other well known people, who thoroughly enjoyed the performance and surroundings.

Badminton is a most sportive word, for it suggests the Duke of Beaufort and his sports, the Badminton Library. The game itself is a sophisticated and grown-up battle, more and shuttlecock, and very good fun. It is almost as good as the tea served out at 5 o'clock on club afternoons. By the way, all of quite inner circles in town, the Badminton is quite the inmost, and its patronesses are such women as Mrs. John Jacob Astor, Mrs. F. de Bywater, Mrs. William Rhineland, Mrs. Nicholas Fish, Mrs. Newbold Morris and their like. The club is full in point of membership. It is a place to which many come, but few are chosen.

Endless were the well-known people who attended the private view of the Doll Show at Sherry's on Friday. A large number of invitations were sent out, and everybody responded with alacrity. Among the ladies who poured tea were Mrs. Arthur Turnure, Mrs. Orme Wilson, Mrs. Brockholst Cutting, Mrs. John Minnara, founder and originator of the hospital for whom benefit the show is given; Mrs. Arthur Dodge, Mrs. Oakley Rhineland and Mrs. Nicholas Fish. All of these ladies were extremely well dressed, and vied with the dolls in the grace and taste of their outfit. As the dolls are dressed by the leading makers in sartorial art of the day, they are of great interest to the feminine mind as exponents of the latest styles which will adorn the up-to-date female form during the coming season. Truly, "it takes a woman to catch a woman," for no other form of entertainment could possibly have been devised that would draw as enthusiastically an omnium gatherum as an exhibition of fashions by exclusive designers were for a mere entrance fee one can get one's eyes dazzled by the soul over new hats, bonnets, gowns, caps and coats, to say nothing of the man-beguiling tea given. The Doll Show is well worth a visit, for besides the handsome little beauties whom every one has come to see and discuss the living pictures are extremely effective.

Any doubts about the cause of the death of the late Adolf Ladenberg were recently

solved by the action of the insurance company which, without dispute or delay, paid to the widow the large sum of money which, after the custom of rich New York-ers, he carried on his life. Generally speaking, the extent to which this practice of life insurance by men of large means is carried is not known. In some families, such as the Lottlards, for instance, it is the custom to insure each one of the children in favor of the others, so that in case of death there may be some consolation. Then, too, when a man who is engaged in large affairs, although he may be passing rich, dies suddenly a general lack of tip of his affairs occurs, and it is convenient as well as comforting to the widow to have a round sum in cash paid promptly, so, as it were, to bind the wound and buy handsome mourning. The practice is therefore universal, and men like the late Jay Gould, for example, pile up as many risks as they can persuade the companies to take, going up even to the million lire.

The abnormal dulness of the moment and the utter lack of any interesting items of gossip has been the cause of many an old-time rumor being revived. The latest on dit, which is being whispered about in society with an air of conviction in its veracity quite convincing, is the engagement of ex-Secretary Whitney to the handsome widow Mrs. Randolph, nee May. I give it for what it is worth.

One of the oldest of modern phenomena is the restlessness of the over-rich. Your modern millionaire, for example, jumps about the world like the proverbial pebble on a hot plate. Here is Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt, a safe member of the billionaires. He sends a yacht, the *Valiant*, as large and as expensive as an ocean steamer, but a mere rock boat for him, down to Port Royal, Fla., and a member of the Racquet, Riding and Tennis clubs. He has himself steamed across to the Riviera as fast as boilers and engines and when can drive that hull. Arrived, the Riviera is evidently not to his taste and he goes post-haste, which means nowadays by limited train, to Paris. Thence immediately to London, where his yacht is waiting his orders. Up anchor and away for home, unless the fancy seizes him to go off to the nearest building is dashed, which it is not yet, by any means, the effect will be very happy. However, there is land in sight, and Messrs. Astor, Cary, Peters, Stanford White and the rest of the governors have conferred a boon on their set by opening the unfinished building as a new member in this more than arid period. When the building is finished it

will be a most valuable addition to our public amusements, for the club which opens it, with a wise liberality, only reserve two close days, Sunday and Monday, for itself, and for the rest of the week, at a small cost, any person can disport on the ice or take advantage of the other diversions of the rink, which the proverbial rich public have not hesitated to do promptly. Since its opening the rink on the East Side has been almost deserted by its patrons, and the West Side has profited by the desertion.

By the way, apropos of the rink, and notwithstanding the flight of the world and his wife to the back of the beyond, some still remain here, after the fashion of migrating ducks, a few of which always stay behind when the flight turns southward. So at the rink on the smoothest of artificial ice surfaces may be seen the Cooper Hewitts, the Trevors, Miss Barron, Hamilton Cary and many more well-known people, all appearing in a high state of enjoyment, and as oblivious of Florida, the Riviera and Egypt, as if those places did not exist.

Reflecting on the potentialities of these migrants, I couldn't help speculating on the possibility of a modern Fra Diavolo of the marine sort, who on a dark night should sweep down on the settlement and in a quick steamer bear away magnates for ransom. The plan would be feasible enough; at any rate, it would be an excitement and one might write a tale of adventures based on the idea. Among the Florida stand-bys at Palm Beach this winter is one, W. C. Prime, of fisherman fame, who writes about fishes as perfectly as he catches them, which is saying a good deal.

Even if it be Lent, society gets its picture painted, and that special painter of la haute volée, Mr. George C. Munzig, is, as usual, having a full share of the work. The latest picture on his easel is one of Mrs. McMillan, wife of Senator McMillan, of Michigan. Mr. Munzig is a man of difficult debutant—one might say a society man who paints or an artist who goes into society with equal truth. Certainly he lives the vicarious life of the exclusive set and steadily paints their portraits.

Another portrait painter who has on his back a long list of people of position in this world of ours is Mr. Chartran, of New York and Paris. He is now giving a portrait exhibition well worth seeing. He exhibits pictures of Andrew Carnegie, Mrs. Le Grand Cannon, Mrs. Ira Davenport, Carmen and a number of other notables, not least among them being a clever if rather idealized "divine Sarah" in her role of Gismonda.

Mr. William C. Sanford, who died last Tuesday after a long illness, will be remembered by many for the sensation which he produced at Newport a good many years ago by descending in company with his brother on that island and demonstrating to his fellow youth that they by no means had mastered the whole art and mystery of polo. In fact, the Amsterdammers, as the Sanford were called, rather wiped the green up with the Newport cracks of the day. After that time Mr. Sanford divided his time between the supervision of the large business interests of his house and athletic, being successful in both as well as very popular in a number of clubs, Country, Nassau Brook, New York and Racquet among them.

The "young person" in Paris is about to be provided with theatrical performances to which the Y. P. forehead can take the most innocent of mamma without fear of causing the blush of shame to mantle the cheek of prudery. This proper scheme is fostered by Mme. Stanny and the girls are to be entirely, as one might say, without gender. Seriously speaking, there may be good in this. Stanny's idea, following it may come a much to be desired reaction in French playwriting, which at the present time is conducted as if sexual immorality was the only interest in life. In past times this was not so, and eminent men like Scève, Héroly, Molière and others wrote charming plays which were perfectly clean, I wish success to the "Theatre Blanc."

The chances are, and I may say they are much regretted, that Judge Dillon, after his long and prominent career on the Bench and at the Bar, will pass the remainder of his days abroad. Miss Stanny Dillon is about to marry Mr. Gerrard Waldner, of England, and will make her home in that country. Her parents follow her abroad, and with them will go Mrs. O'Leary, who is desirous of cultivating still further her very charming vocal attainments. On Tuesday

last Miss Dillon gave a pretty lunch, with musical accompaniments, and white blossom and fern adornments, at which were present certain participants in the coming ceremony, which is set for April 13.

The members of the Michaux Club, with characteristic energy and dash, have trained themselves into "trick bikers." They play polo and a weird sort of football, and they go through what is known as the Michaux drill. This Michaux drill is as near being a dance as the machine comes to being a musical instrument, but it is the nearest approach that the machine allows, and a large drill, with Mrs. John Roosevelt as leader, is an exceedingly smart sight. The drill calls for the best possible wheel skill, and the club is full of members who are almost letter perfect in guiding their machines through the intricate mazes of a Virginia reel or the more sober movements of the ordinary quadrille. Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Chapin, Mrs. Rosemont, Mrs. Dowling and a number more are really quite up to professional form. Dr. Townbridge, Mr. F. A. Otis and Mr. Fargo are also wheelers of much merit.

With care and painstaking and a delightfully long purse, Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt has caused the Italian peninsula to be swept for vases of renown and merit as well as other bric-a-brac for the still further adornment of his Newport home. The other day several large crates reached Newport containing most beautiful vases which in due time will adorn the villa that last Summer seemed to contain everything in the way of ornaments and rare curios that human heart could covet.

I was struck the other day, while attending Mr. Elias Meile's talk on "Christian Architecture," which was devoted to the cathedral branch of ecclesiastical art, with two facts—one common to modern conditions, the other particular to the lecture, which was under the patronage of all the millionaires and assistant millionaires in town. To be sure, as was highly proper, Bishop Potter and the Rev. Morgan Dix were present for the occasion, and came Pierpont Morgan, the Messrs. Vanderbilts, Baldwin, Sherman, Harriman, Rhineland, Stewart and others of the gilded fold. The list of them would read like an application for a Government loan. The other feature of this and modern lectures is general, and it is which is given them. In old times we used to hear lectures in barndike halls, or barns, or ill ventilated and almost always shabby, and the lecturers talked from behind a small table decorated with a white stoneware pitcher and a tumbler of common glass. But we have changed all that, and nowadays we install our purveyors of ideas in the smartest room of the smartest hotel—Savoy, Windsor, Waldorf or the like—and there are flowers, and possibly music, and almost certainly when the mental strain has caused a stomachic collapse, there are good things in attendance, and one's heart is lifted. Each one is enabled speedily to forget the lecture. I like the new way best.

Lakewood in these latter days is becoming a very sporty place indeed. Fox hunting, golf and pigeon shooting are in vogue, and the modern intelligibility of country club, has arrived and the doors of its gambrel-roofed colonial house opened the other day, when Mr. George Gould, president of the Ocean County Hunt and Country Club House, received his fellow-members. The country around Lakewood is not a fast one, nor it is as stiff as Long

Island, but it has difficulties enough of its own, and if the sand is sometimes hard to plough through, it is not as hard as some places I know of to fall on, and if the pace is not as fast as elsewhere the distances are longer. Seventeen miles from start to finish is a long gallop, and yet the last run of the Ocean County pack covered that distance.

Bicycle-meets, with a paper chase and a "meet tea" sounds in the way it is warranted rather like the old friend of our nursery day, "high tea," yet it is a form of entertainment greatly in vogue by the bicycling fraternity in England and quite new, pronounced this year, the quickest and most intelligent set of men that he had ever commended, and their feats in sail handling were applauded in the sporting papers. This season the Niagara will have to face a new measurement, which will cost her something. She will also meet some new rivals, but Hershaw's gallop, John Barr's racing knowledge and an exceptional crew make a very strong combination, and Niagara is likely to be a leader again.

Mr. Lloyd Phoenix informs me that his cruise, which has just begun, will take him as far as the eastward as Venice, which he will reach some time in May, when the Queen of the Adriatic is at her very best. It is a great mistake to begin cruising in the Mediterranean much before the 1st of May, as the sea is treacherous at all times, and in winter is a cold and stormy one. Mr. Whitney Warren is Mr. Phoenix's guest, and Colonel Schuyler Crosby, who is an old hand at the board the Intrepid, may join before she leaves the coast.

People of a certain age will remember when Mrs. Ellis Bartlett, nee Ashmead, and of the bluest Quaker blood of Philadelphia, turned her face toward England, there to educate her two sons, and out of these thanks England yielded forth a distinguished English statesman and P. S. Mrs. Bartlett's will was strong and her purpose constant, and so, though by no means a rich woman, she got "in" herself and brought her sons with her. One of them has become Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, and has sat in a Cabinet, and the other is Ashmead-Bartlett-Cornt's husband of the wealthy, if venerable, Baroness of that name. And now the clever old lady is dead, at the good old age of eighty, and so, most probably, by the fact that point by point she had made her steady way through life and attained her object.

Invitations will soon appear for the wedding of Miss Fanny Taylor, youngest daughter of Mr. Alexander Taylor, Jr., to Mr. Joseph Choate Baldwin, Jr. The wedding will take place on Wednesday, April 13, at noon, at Mamaroneck, at the Constable Memorial Church. A small reception will be held at Mr. Taylor's home, Charlemagne, Mamaroneck.