

THE MORALS OF CLUB LIFE.

IS OR IS NOT THE CLUB A FOE TO THE DOMESTIC CIRCLE?

The relations of club life to domestic life often form the subject of animated discussion. The married members are pleased to consider the club an annex of the home, while the bachelors declare it is a preparatory school, as it were, for the comforts and joys of the married state. On the other hand, the uninitiated often assert that clubs are a foe to domestic life, while excellent institutions for bachelors and such. It is said that the comforts and conveniences of clubs often keep members from the marriage state and prove more attractive to the married than those of home. The facts, however, show that only a small percentage of the married members are frequenters of the club, and that the habitués are bachelors, widowers, or members whose wives are absent, and the club cannot therefore, be a foe to domestic life. It is a noticeable fact that as soon as a member becomes engaged or married he is seldom seen about the club. The married men generally resort to the club on their "night off," usually Saturday night. In the regular attendance at a club the bachelor element overwhelmingly predominates. It is the fact that so many find their homes so much more attractive that the average attendance at clubs is such a small percentage of the membership, the largest being about 20 per centum. The club affords the privacy and attention of home. Any one who has run the gantlet of the fee-exacting waiters in the public restaurants can appreciate the escape from them in the clubs, where *douceurs* are not permitted and all fare alike. The sociability of the domestic table is secured in the club, which, after all, is but a large household. Generally the household of the club is very well regulated, and the discipline prevents the riotous dissipation that is popularly supposed to prevail in these exclusive retreats. If men will drink and will play cards, it is better they should do so in a respectable private resort like a club than in the public places open to them, where they would not be subjected to rules that would prevent them from going to extremes. The *esprit de corps* that prevails among club men is as effectual a check upon them while in the club as the rigidly enforced rules, and all the stories of riotous dissipation in clubs are exaggerated accounts of infrequent lapses resulting in the punishment of the offender. How are the offenders punished? First by a notice from the Governing Committee not to repeat the offense, and suspension for 30 days or more in consequence of repetition. While the gathering in a club is not as quiet and dignified as that of a church vestry, there is all the sociability and decorum of home, with a freedom and conviviality that would not be incompatible. The ladies' receptions given by some of the more progressive clubs have made many champions in the domestic circle, and it is said there are more married men in these clubs than in the others that refuse to open their doors to the fair sex on special occasions. The bachelor members avail themselves of these ladies' receptions to return the courtesies of the domestic circle. It is a little singular that none of the New-York clubs have adopted the custom prevalent in other cities of admitting ladies as guests of the members, inviting them during certain hours of the day. There are clubs in Brooklyn, Philadelphia, and several Western cities that admit ladies to the privileges of the reading room and restaurant, from, say 10 A. M. to 4 P. M., on presentation of a special card from a member. It must be borne in mind, however, that the original Metropolitan Club adopted the fundamental theory and idea of the exclusive, private London Club. The modern progressive clubs are aiming to be something more than mere social resorts; by their art exhibitions and ladies receptions they seek to fill a more important mission.

The Mohican Club has secured a mansion on West Twenty-eighth-street, a few doors from Fifth-avenue, and will move in by the first of May. While the membership will be enlarged, an effort will be made to maintain the professional supremacy. As a professional resort the club will always be attractive, and there is no reason why it should not become the professional club of its kind par excellence. A third "high jinks" dinner will soon be given. The new house will be opened with a ladies' reception, and during next season receptions will be given to the prominent actors visiting the city.

A ladies' reception every month has been decided on by the Ohio Society. The annual dinner will be given after the Lenten season.

The art receptions at the Union League will be resumed on the 10th inst. The annual water color exhibition will be given April 14.

At the New-York Athletic Club the sons of the members under 16 years of age are admitted to the gymnasium between 9 A. M. and 1 P. M.

The Manhattan Athletic Club has doubled its social membership since occupying its mansion on Fifth-avenue. There are two grades of membership, "active" and "social." A series of attractive entertainments will close the Spring season.

The Eotos is preparing for a water color exhibition. Quite a number of artists have been enrolled this season.

The Southern Society will publish a pamphlet report of their recent first annual banquet, and will affix a list of members.

The main attraction of the various down-town or business men's clubs is the restaurant, and there is a crowded attendance in each during the noontime meal hours. The cuisine is fine and many whose families dine at midday also take their dinner at the club before going home.

Since the "stuffed dudes" vacated the windows there is no visible signs of occupancy about the Knickerbocker Club.

The Union Club is preparing for its annual election.