

THE UNSOCIAL CHARACTER OF ENGLISH CLUBS.—The English club is a place to live in. In one of these clubs a member lives for £500 a year about as well as he could live for £5,000 a year in his own house. He, of course, wishes to make the club his own house, as far as may be. This fact explains the solitariness of these institutions. The member wishes to find in them the independence, the privacy, and, in a sense, the solitude of his own house.

The great clubs are, therefore, designedly unsocial. Many of the features of the clubs accord with this intention. This is perhaps the reason of the plain decoration and the absence of pictures from the walls. It is thought that a club should be prevented from looking like a drawing room; the notion is, that rather than look like a drawing room it should look like a hotel, the suggestion being, perhaps, that the members are strangers to one another, as people who meet in a hotel are. But, of course, it should look like neither. There is no treating, the feeling of the member, perhaps, being that his liberty would be interfered with by being expected to drink, or even by being asked to drink. Those pleasant weekly or monthly suppers usual in American clubs are unknown.

Comfortable solitude rather than society being the object of these great London clubs, it is obvious that society is not to be sought for in them. Social enjoyment and social position are to be sought elsewhere. Men do not acquire position by belonging to clubs. The intention, of course, is that only men of a certain position shall be let into these clubs. If, as sometimes happens, a man of a different position gets in, the advantage he receives is slight.

It is also true that the fact of belonging to a good club is of little advantage in general society. Membership of a good club—whatever may have been formerly the case—nowadays confers no social position.—*Scribner.*