

SOCIETY TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The past week may be likened to the bad quarter of an hour before dinner, the morning before the race, or the evening before the ball. It has been a time of preparation and planning, of scheming and arranging, rather than of action. On Wednesday night the curtain of the Metropolitan Opera House will rise, not only upon the musical but the social season as well. There promises to be a very large attendance in the boxes, and every one is looking forward to the event. Notwithstanding the attractions of the country on Thanksgiving Day, many people will undergo the necessity of arising early on Thursday morning to journey to Tuxedo, Hempstead, and other favorite suburbs rather than to go out the evening before, and thus miss the first night of the opera season. While the Yale-Princeton football game on Thanksgiving afternoon will keep most of the younger element in town, the older set, who have exhausted the pleasures of a ride in crowded elevated trains or on top of a coach shivering with cold, of standing or sitting in a dense throng of excited and yelling collegians, chiefly undergraduates and their friends, and of returning home worn out, cold and weary, again in overcrowded trains or on coach tops long after dark, will go as far as possible to avoid the experience. Upon this older set the pleasure of the day at Tuxedo, Pelham, Hempstead, and Orange will chiefly depend.

If the weather permits there will be meets of the hounds at Cedarhurst, Meadowbrook, and Orange. At the Country Club there will be a pigeon shoot beginning at 11:30, and there will also be shoots at Staten Island and Tuxedo. The evening will be devoted to that charming form of entertainment known as the family reunion, and the national bird will receive its annual meed of worship.

The season of dinners has begun somewhat earlier than usual, due to the presence of several prominent Europeans whom it was desired to honor. Last week the Prince and Princess Brancaccio, who were at Lenox during the season, were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Farish at an exceedingly handsome yellow dinner on Thursday night, and last night at a dinner given by Mr. Peter Marié, over whose popular head the years have passed most lightly. The tendency in dinners during the past few years has been to make them more and more Lucullian banquets, and that most delightful of entertainments, a small dinner, where excellence of appointment and of material is more sought after than lavish display or extravagant dishes, is fast passing away. The standard set by New-York dinner-giving millionaires during the past two winters, especially, has been such that many a society matron, perhaps somewhat foolishly unwilling to keep to old customs and not endeavor to emulate in her table those of larger purses than her own, has said with a sigh, "I must abandon my dinners." This is to be regretted for many reasons, and will largely increase the expenses of many young society men who live at lodgings or at clubs and depend largely upon their dinner invitations of the Winter to reduce their expenses.

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The week brought many weddings, all of which have been duly chronicled and described at length in THE TIMES on the mornings after their occurrence, so that it is unnecessary to do more than allude to them here. The two weddings that attracted the most interest were held the one in town and the other in the country. The first was that of Miss Amy Scott and Effingham Johnson. There was not a large attendance, and only a small reception followed at the Clarendon Hotel. The second wedding was that of Leroy Dresser and Miss Burnham, and took place on Wednesday at Matteawan, near Newburg, N. Y., not in New-Jersey, as many people supposed. There was a special train for the guests up and down, and the whole affair was very well managed.

This week will bring the weddings of William R. Travers and Miss Lillie Harriman and of Harold Forwood and Miss Kate Wynkoop tomorrow. Miss Harriman will be married very quietly at her father's house, in West Fifty-seventh-street, and Miss Wynkoop will be married in Grace Church. Reginald Ward of Boston and Miss Edith Newcomb will have a quiet home wedding on Wednesday, followed by a large reception. Miss Newcomb will not have regular bridesmaids, but a maid of honor, Miss Charlotte Zeraga, and some dozen young girl friends, among whom are to be Miss Emily Lenthion, Miss Mathilde Reynal, Miss Helen Dinsmore, Miss Mamie Turnure, and Miss Alice Ward will cluster around her during the ceremony.

Early December weddings will include those of Daniel Kingsford and Miss Fannie Bowdoin on Dec. 4, of Alfred Setou, Jr., and Miss Barbey on Dec. 5, and of Alfred Shattuck and Miss Mamie Strong on Dec. 12. All these will be church weddings, the edifices chosen being, respectively, Grace, St. Bartholomew's, and St. Thomas's. It is understood that Isaac Iselin will be an usher at two of these weddings, and he has grown to be as necessary a feature as an usher at a fashionable wedding as was formerly Lispenard Stewart as the leader of a Delmonico cotillion.

Engagements follow each other in quick succession. The last to be announced are those of Philip Livingston and Miss Juliette Morris, and of Stanley Mortimer and Miss "Tissie" Hall. The engagements are also reported of Carley Havemeyer and Miss Camilla Moss, and of Archibald Gracie and Miss Constance Schack. Mr. Mortimer is universally congratulated on his engagement, Miss Hall being one of the most popular of young society girls. He has not yet recovered from his recent accident while hunting, and it is said to be doubtful whether he will ever be able to ride again.

Next week will bring the first teas, those of Mrs. F. H. Betts and Mrs. George Appleton on Nov. 30. Mrs. E. G. Gerry will give a tea on Dec. 3. This week will bring Mrs. J. Pierpont Morgan's small dance to-morrow night. Mrs. Appleton will give a small dance for her granddaughter, Miss Carrie Fraser, following her tea on Nov. 30; Mrs. D. J. Stewart a dance on Nov. 29; Mrs. Sands a small dance on Dec. 2, and Mrs. Pierpont Morgan the second of her small dances on Dec. 6. Teas will also be given by Mrs. Pierson, to introduce her daughter, on Dec. 13; by Mrs. Bayard Clarke on Dec. 7; by Mrs. Charles Lanier on Dec. 12, and by Mrs. C. L. Perkins on Dec. 9. No definite announcement is yet made of any private balls at Delmonico's. Mrs. Lawrence Miller gave a small but pleasant reception on Thursday afternoon last, in honor of Miss Nina Smith of Boston. Miss Furness is to entertain the Thursday Evening Club at its first meeting of Dec. 5.

A good evidence of the changed conditions of social life in New-York is afforded by the fact that there is a general movement among young married people and young people not in the most wealthy set to form small theatregoing, dining, or dancing organizations. These will to some extent take the place afforded by the old cotillions and simply distribute the element which formerly supported those balls into smaller groups. One of the most recently-formed of these organizations is the In-and-Out Club, among whose members are Mrs. George Dickinson, Mrs. Franklin Paddock, Mrs. W. B. Lockwood, and Mrs. Isaac Sheldon. The club, with its guests, will either attend a theatre or enjoy a cotillion at the different houses of the members every alternate Friday.

The European steamers during the week brought home, among others, Senator Everts and family, Colgate Hoyt and family, Elbridge T. Gerry and family, Mr. and Mrs. Willis James, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Gilbert, J. C. Livingston, the Misses Stokes, Gen. Collins, Robert J. Livingstone, Mrs. E. S. Thayer, and Mr. Du Vivier. Among the few who sailed during the week were Mrs. Frederick de Coppet and Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Warren. Society people are much interested in the westward trip around the world of Miss Elizabeth Bisland, who started last week to Fogg's famous record of "Phileas" Fogg. Miss Bisland, who is a New-Orleans girl of excellent social position, and who is exceedingly pretty, has won for herself a wide circle of friends for her plucky work in supporting herself since she came to New-York three years ago. Her charms of manner and person have made her most popular, and although her education and surroundings, which have been those of refinement, if not luxury, have hardly fitted her for so arduous a task as to journey unprotected with the utmost haste around the globe, her friends have every confidence that her perseverance and ambition will carry her safely through.

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The annual number of the *Social Register*, which has just appeared, states that during the year just passed 149 men and 86 women well known in New-York society have died; that there have been 258 marriages within the "four hundred"; 218 arrivals from Europe for a permanent stay here of people who have long resided on the other side, while if Ward McAllister's statement is correct, the climax is reached in the horrible news that 406 people—6 over the famous number—society men and women, have sailed for Europe. What shall we do without the "four hundred," and where did the six extra come from?

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The wedding of Capt. Beaumont of the English Navy and Miss May Perkins, daughter of the late Charles C. Perkins of Boston and Newport, took place at Trinity Church, Boston, last night on Wednesday last. The wedding was extremely quiet. The couple had been engaged some four or five years. Miss Perkins has been noted as a beauty for some years, and the news of her marriage, following an engagement of so long a period, will be pleasant to her friends. Frederick Clinton Devau of New-York and Miss Sarah Hunt Putnam, daughter of Mr. George F. Putnam of Boston, will be married in that city on Nov. 26.

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The stage that has now been reached in the evolution of society in this country, and which may be called the "professional-beauty" period, being chiefly marked by the publication, it is probable in many cases willingly, of alleged portraits of young society girls and matrons in the daily press, and the exploiting of their charms and the amount of their wealth along with the portraits, has connected with it a feature which did not appear, or at least was not prominent, during the same period in the evolution of English society. This is the employment, directly or

indirectly, of a regular press agent to boom a new belle in the columns of such publications as are susceptible to the booming. This was first instituted two years ago in the case of a fair blonde, formerly unknown to society, who in consequence of advance notices gained an entrée, of which her beauty and tact enabled her to make good use. This Autumn the booming of belles is particularly vigorous, and the press agent has fairly outdone himself in his rapturous descriptions of "willowy figures," "scarlet gowns," "Worth creations," &c. This beating of drums and sounding of gongs for young girls who wish to obtain entrance into New-York society may be, perhaps, understood; but in the case of others, whose position is already assured and whose families are known, it is difficult to see why this booming is resorted to, except for the reason that it amuses the more intelligent of their friends, who must be discerning enough to see its source, and is of pecuniary benefit to the press agent.