M'ALLISTER'S BEST EFFORT.

A NEW YEAR'S BALL THAT WILL ASTONISH THE TOWN.

Society Wants a New Sensation—The Head Secretaries Proposes to Furnish It—A New Social Era Promised for New York—The 400 Must Go—Their Old Chieftain Is not a Socialist but He Teems with Social Theories—He Explains Some of Them—How He Creates the Grand Society—His Finishing Touches—Read All.

The New Year's subscription ball, which Mr. Ward McAllister is preparing, is to be the fulfilment of a promise he made to New Yorkers last May. The promise was made on the day after the memorable Centennial ball. He had just been telling a SUN reporter what that affair should have been and how it ought to have been managed. He added, smilingly:

"Next winter we shall have a ball in New York."

The coming subscription ball, Mr. McAllister says, will be the one he had then in view. He believes that it will prove to be the most perfect ball ever held in this city. It will be the result of the best experience and observation of his life, and the practical embodiment of his ideal. In no respect, however, can this ball and the Centennial ball be compared. They are cast in totally different moulds. The crowd, the ceremony, and the spectacular features which belong to a public ball will be totally lacking in McAllister's supreme effort. As a result the entire machinery will be different from that which he recommended for the Centennial ball. The New Year's ball aims to be such an affair as the most careful society woman might give in her own home, only it will be so big no private residence in the city of New York could begin to hold it. Mr. McAllister has laid down a few general principles which must be absolutely observed in the making of a perfect ball, and these he is applying with the utmost rigor to his present effort. He holds, by the way, that a public ball cannot approach anywhere near the perfection mark among balls, for the reason that the first and most important element of the perfect ball is the judicious selection of the guests.

Mr. McAllister's ball will be noteworthy, he thinks, because it will mark the birth of a new era of social entertainment in New York city. As he explains his meaning, this new era is practically the abolition of the 400. Society, he says, is getting tired of the uninterrupted round of Patriarchs' balls, and the Patriarchs are getting tired of each other's exclusive company. There is a demand for variety in social events. People want something new. They want to broaden their acquaintance also.

"Society," says Mr. McAllister, "is always growing, you know. It is constantly moving. It moves in a circle, and with each revolution gathers new material. Every year new men are entering society. You couldn't keep them out if you would, but no one wants to keep them out, for the men whom society admits are acquisitions. They are men who push their way to the front. In fact, as the Prince of Wales says, there are certain people who are bound to come to the front. They are men who made marks in the world, who show that they are of superior stuff by making a success in one way or another. They are admitted in various ways, but it is chiefly women of long and recognized social standing who first appreciate them and introduce them. It is well that we do get new blood, for the Knickerbockers, sure of their place, are apt to be indifferent about social duties. They are also apt to object to the new men sometimes. The Patriarchs objected to several whom I introduced, but the event has proved that I was right in admitting them. So society grows year by year. The Patriarchs' balls, where lack of dancing room limited the attendance to 350 or 400, are no longer adequate to include society and its additions. There is a demand for something bigger in the shape of social entertainments.

"With the New Year's ball I shall inaugurate the new era. I will give a ball which 1,200 or 1,500 persons may attend. The idea is not entirely new with me. The New Year's ball that I got up two years ago had that idea in view, but this ball will be much bigger than that. I have no doubt whatever but that it will be repeated next year and become the great permanent social event of New York society, in which case we may see fit to reduce the number of Patriarchs' balls. I look forward to the time when two such balls in a winter will be the custom. The great expense attending them will stand in the way for a time, but I have no doubt the demand will force their success notwithstanding."

The reason Mr. McAllister assigned for holding the ball just after New Year's was that it would supply a substitute for another social feature of which New Yorkers are rapidly tiring. That is the custom of making New Year's calls. The more conservative people in society have been frowning upon New Year's calling for several years, because it has been so overdone. It has not been an uncommon thing of late for families to leave town on New Year's so as not to be compelled to receive. But the long-established custom holds its own among the many, in spite of the efforts of the elite. Indeed, some great innovation at New Year's to crush the custom once for all. This is the reason why Mr. McAllister settled upon Jan. 8 as the date of his ball. Amid the preparations for the great event no one could expect the ladies to receive calls, and those ladies who still cling to the custom will be compelled to abandon it.

The ball is to be held in the Metropolitan Opera House. There is no other hall in town which is suitable for an event of its size. No private house would hold it.

"There are only four private residences in this town," said Mr. McAllister, "where a ball of any size worth speaking of can be held. The best of these, of course, is Mrs. William Astor's house. The parlors are large and finely proportioned. William H. Vanderbilt's house is doubtless the next best. When he had his famous ball there some years ago he used his art gallery for a dancing room. The ballroom in it is a superb house for a ball of moderate size. I believe Mr. Astor entertained 800 or 1,000 people there, but it was too many. Mr. Belmont can make his house admirable for the purposes of a ball by throwing open his art gallery. I would place his house third in order of adaptability. Pierre Lorillard's fine house makes a good fourth. None of the houses I have mentioned are adapted to balls of more than 500 or 600 persons."

"How about the Stewart mansion?"

"Oh, that is equally out of the question for the purposes of our subscription ball. It is too small in that it has no single rooms of very large size and the proper shape. Of course, all the houses I have mentioned might accommodate a large number of guests, but you see they are not adapted to the purpose.

"That brings me to the kind of a place a ball should be held in. No one wants to go to a ball and not be in the big dancing room. A ball, big or little, should be held in one single room. The room should be of good ceiling height so as to give a large, spacious effect. It should be round, oval, or square, so that a person in any part of it can get at once a view of the entire scene. In all the private houses that I have mentioned the guests would have to be divided up among many rooms, one of which would be the dancing room. Few would be able to dance at once, and those who were not dancing would not be able to see what was going on. One of the greatest pleasures of a ball is to watch the dancers.

"There have been a few large balls in other private houses than those I have mentioned. There was the famous ball that Bradley Martin gave in his house in Twentieth street several years ago. There were 500 people there. His house was small, and to accommodate them he built two rooms back of the house on a level with the parlor floor, covering the entire back yard. These he used for supper and cloak rooms, and reserved the parlors for the dancing. But even with that addition the ball room was very crowded.

"Private houses being out of the question, there is no place in the city except the opera house which fills the requirements of such a ball as we are going to have. The Brunswick has a fine ball room, but it is too long for the shape of it. Delmonico's is really a fine place for a small ball. To be sure, the first New Year's ball of two years ago was held at Delmonico's, and there were nine or ten hundred people there. The worst feature of Delmonico's is the upper supper room and the hallways. We got around the difficulty by making a connectatory of the supper room, decorating the hallways with Gobelin tapestry, for which we cabled to Europe, and making the other small supper room into a Japanese reception room. But still, although we occupied the whole house, it was far too crowded for effect.

"I propose to make the opera house as much like a private parlor as possible, since this is a private ball. I will accomplish it by covering up all the boxes. Otherwise people would gather in the boxes and sit there all night. This is quite the proper thing, of course, in a public ball, or one like the Charity ball, where the chief features of the entertainment are ceremonious and spectacular. But the New Year's ball has no such features. People will rather there as they would in a private house. It is, in fact, a private ball on a large scale. By covering up the boxes with partitions, draperies, and flowers I will compel the guests to keep to the floor and rather take part in the dancing or sit around the sides of the room in chairs as they would in a private parlor. I will have the chairs upon a low platform, though, so as to afford a view of the whole room. By closing up the boxes, too, I will have the corridors leading to them free for use for other purposes, and these I will arrange as ladies' dressing rooms.

"Of course I will have the floor raised to a level with the stage. My idea is to have the supper room on the stage. If there are only 1,200 people at the ball I will have the curtain down until the supper hour. Then it will rise and disclose the supper room within, a handsome effect. If there are 1,500 persons present perhaps I will have to have the curtain up the whole time. I think there will be plenty of room behind the curtain for all to dine at once. The European custom makes it much easier to manage balls on the other side than here. There they have the supper ready when the ball begins, and the people eat when they feel like it, beginning early in the ball. That keeps everything going all over the house at once. Americans won't stand that. They all insist on dancing together and supping together."

"How are you going to decorate the opera house?" was asked.

"Holiday decorations entirely, as befits the season. Evergreens, holly, and mistletoe, with mosses and ivies, and, of course, no end of flowers. I will have wire screens in front of the boxes, and flowers and ivy trained above."

"How will the ball compare with other great balls of the city and country?"

"You will not compare it with public balls, or the Charity Ball, at all. Not considering these, it will be undoubtedly the biggest and finest ball New York has ever had. The nearest approach to it was the Bachelors' ball in the foyer of the opera house several years ago. The Bachelors had a list of 100 subscribers, but they only got about 1,000 people out. They didn't ask the dowagers. That was their trouble. They had another big ball once before, too. The only balls in the country with which this ball can be compared at all are the Philadelphia yearly assemblies. They are very elaborate, but too big. They are sometimes attended by 2,000 persons. Now, no ball of over 1,500 persons can be properly handled. Balls of over that size become unwieldy, even though held in a hall sufficiently large."

"What will be the cost?"

"There will be," said McAllister, "125 subscribers at $100 each. That makes $12,500. This, I hope, will cover the entire expenses of the ball. Each subscriber will have twelve tickets, and I suppose there will be at least 1,200 persons present. The opera house will cost $2,000. The suppers will amount to $1,200. Champagne will cost $3,150. The decorations will cost about $2,000, and the music will be $800. The balance up to $12,500 will go for changes in the opera house, hire of attendants, printing, engraving, and minor expenses."

Mr. McAllister talked about the difficulties of getting up big balls and the elements which make up the perfect ball.

"No one," said he, "can get up a ball who does not possess the entire confidence of society, and particularly of society's most conservative leaders. This confidence must be based on long and tried experience, and must centre not so much in tested managerial capacity, though this is of vast importance, as in the judgment of the manager as to the social eligibility of all who knock at society's doors. The man who is the successful manager of society must have been perfectly familiar with society for many years; must know every one in society and out; must be out of business, so that he has none of the prejudices consequent upon business life and is entirely free from the influences of Wall street; must be capable of appreciating the social feelings and prejudices of every sort of people in society, and must be perfectly fearless in protecting the social interests of those who form the kernal of society as well as society in its entirety. It is only because I enjoy the confidence of society in these directions that I am in the position to get up such a ball as this. My success with the Patriarchs was very largely due to the fact that I was known to be perfectly uninfluenced by Wall street. A man in business could not have carried these balls to success. You know how it is in clubs. Men obtain admission every day solely through certain business influences. Society could not retain its integrity under such management.

"Now, I want to get up a ball. What is my course? Take this ball for an example. I have followed my usual course in this case. The first time I did that was to see a dozen or so of the most prominent men in society. I mean men of the most conservative social reputation, like Mr. Astor for instance, men whose standing is such that the whole world recognizes their importance. I laid my proposition in person before these men. The whole thing depended upon whether they liked my idea. They generally do like my propositions, and they liked this. They put their names down as subscribers. That settled the whole matter. The rest did itself. I wrote to a score of my others, explaining my proposition and naming the subscribers I already had. Acceptances came in on every hand. With the names I mentioned as backing me there was no delay. More than that, the affair got out, and I received letters from people among the subscribers by a great many men whom I had not asked. You can judge for yourself how the affair started off. I began to stir in the matter on Oct. 26, and have had $7,000 paid in on it up to Thursday. I had had 130 applications from eligible persons desiring to subscribe, and had yet to hear from forty-eight whom I had asked. As a rule, when a list reaches this point it begins to reduce itself. There are always a certain proportion who drop out through some change of plans, sickness, or the like. If, then, it is not within the limit I have set, my custom is to run my pen through the names of enough of the least desirable people on the list to reduce it to the proper number.

"When I have completed my list of subscribers for the New Year's ball I considered it fairly inaugurated. So far as I am concerned the general social complexion of the affair is complete. Its eventual success now rests with the subscribers. It passes from my hands to theirs. In the day between the two balls I become the manager. The success or total failure of the ball depends upon the persons who compose it. But I have chosen as subscribers men who cannot be bettered socially, and the first and most important feature, I might almost say the soul of the entire ball, is arranged for.

"My next duty was to arrange the artistic and mechanical details of the ball. I spent some time in deciding what its general character would be. In considering this, I considered the place where it would be held. I have, as I have already decided, that its size compels the selection of the Metropolitan Opera House. I considered what can best be accomplished here, thinking, of course, of the season and the object of the ball. Having determined on the general outlines, I sought counsel of my artists. These artists are men who have been tried on many and many a similar occasion. They are men who have the confidence of the people in society here, through long and successful service. They are men who, though nominally tradesmen, are in reality artists. Upon these men I lean. They are quick to grasp my ideas. They understand me at a hint, and I can bank upon their so interpreting my ideas through their art that the result approaches perfection. I do not hesitate to say that New York could not have a really great ball without the results of great ideas of Hunder on floral decoration, and without the art of Delmonico or Pinard upon the supper. With these men to aid me I can produce a great ball. They will work out my general idea to the perfection of detail. I rest easy upon the knowledge of their art. Of course the supper is the greatest feature of the ball. Decorations and music follow, though all are of such vast importance that perfection must be sought in each. The machinery of the cloak room and the facilities of ingress and egress are of the greatest importance also. I have resources in this department too. W. H. Johnson will, of course, have charge of these details. It remains for me only to plan them. So you see the details of the big ball are not difficult for me to manage after having developed the general ideas. But, of course, I keep informed of all the workings of my artists, and have no end of things to look after.

"But the most important of all my duties in connection with the ball is yet to come. I have said that once the subscription lists are made out the rest of the participants are concerned, is the affair of the subscribers. That is true so far as New York society is concerned. But others than merely the friends and families of a few prominent city men are necessary to make up the really great ball. There must be some sparkle and brilliancy which the usual New York ball does not have. All the genius of mind and beauty is not concentrated within the boundary lines of New York society. There are people in the world whose presence will set off the affair as diamonds set off a fair face, yet who will never in the world get invitations if they are left to be gathered in by the subscribers. As I said, the old-established society people of this city, whose positions are recognized and beyond dispute (and such are the subscribers to my ball), are very indifferent, you know. Some one must look after this important feature. The work requires the greatest delicacy and judgment and the widest kind of knowledge of people and social distinctions. The man who undertakes to do this for society must make the study of people the work of his life. He must read extensively and keep his eyes very wide open. He must keep his judgment clear of prejudices and influences of all sorts. He must never let a new face in a social gathering escape him. He must meet the new man or woman and make the closest inquiries regarding him or her. A failure to do this may involve him in difficulty later. He must keep his eyes open outside of society's borders, too, so as to be informed about the people who are likely to knock at society's door in the future. He must know their worth and the reasons for and against their admission, so that when the time comes he will be informed. He sees a woman in a theatre, say, whose beauty is remarkable. Who is she, he must ask at once. For society must have handsome women as well as witty women. He must find out all about her eligibility, and thus keep a stock of new people in the background for use upon occasion. Great talent is any field is a recommendation for men. Great beauty is a woman's passport. But of course remember that these are only passports when people are perfectly unexceptionable in all other directions. Here is where delicacy and judgment come into play. At a recent ball in Newport I introduced a girl of the rarest beauty. She never would have got into society had I not discovered her, and determined, after investigation, that she was too great a prize to lose. She turned out to be the event of the ball. She made a great sensation. After the ball she said to me:

"'Mr. McAllister, how can I thank you for having introduced me to such delightful people and to this delightful ball?'

"'Don't thank me,' I replied. 'I did not introduce you. It was your own grace and beauty that did that.'

"This was no idle compliment. It was the plain, unvarnished truth. I tell it because it illustrates one of the principles upon which the man who aspires to be the manager of a great ball must act. Again, I must keep the sharpest lookout for the débutantes of the whole country. There are many of them whose relations of acquaintance or friendship with society people of this city are not such as to secure them invitations. Yet some of these débutantes are women of the rarest wit and grace and beauty, whose presence would be one of the features of a great ball. I must know all about these young women and see that such of them as will add to the lustre of the occasion receive invitations. Then the strangers in town. I must watch the hotel registers for men and women who will enhance the enjoyment of the occasion by reason of their wealth, talent, brilliancy, beauty, or reputation. I must see that such people are invited. I must also watch the steamships for people from abroad or Americans returning home from abroad. Such of these as will be acquisitions I will invite. I will thus brighten my ball with new people of worth and brilliancy. Society people know this and like it. They say, 'McAllister is going to give us something new.' They are on the lookout for surprise."

"But how do you get these people invitations, when the tickets are all in the hands of the subscribers?"

"Ah, that is another trouble. After I find out who people from the outside I want to bring into my ball for its adornment, then I have to secure tickets for them. This requires a great deal of inquiry and uncertainty and running around. A great many of the subscribers, don't you know, do not use all their tickets. Some have a good many left over. I have to find out who have these extra tickets and then go and buy them. But most people, you know, are uncertain, up to the last moment, how many tickets they will have over. If, indeed, they have any, and that pushes the rush and worry of the affair closer and closer to the day of the ball. There are subscribers, though, who never use nearly all their tickets. Some of these I can turn over to me at the start what they know they won't want, and leave it to me to distribute them according to my best judgment among outsiders whom I want to see at the ball. All these matters, together with the thousand details of the ball, can and sometimes do, come thrust upon me as the ball approaches. It is hard work, but, of course, it is a great pleasure to me to think that my friends place such great confidence in my ability, and especially my social taste and judgment."

Mr. McAllister went over the applications to the subscription list very carefully yesterday. The result may be that the ball will be bigger than was originally intended. Mr. McAllister found 136 names of people whom he wanted at the ball. He says he may decide to increase the limit to 150 subscribers. Here is the list to date. It does not include the name of Mr. Stuyvesant Fish

Charles T. Abercrombie,		Lawrence Kip,	
John E. Alexandre,		Luther Kountze,	
Lloyd Aspinwall,		William Lanier Langdon,	
John J. Astor, Jr.,		Charles Lanier,	
William Astor,		John Lawrence,	
W. W. Astor,		Arthur Leary,	
Samuel G. Babcock,		J. Bowman Lee,	
C. C. Baldwin,		Edward Livingston,	
J. B. Baldwin,		Johnston Livingston,	
Samuel Barlow,		Pierre Lorillard, Jr.,	
Franklin Bartlett,		E. Livingston Ludlow,	
James H. Beekman,		Peter Marie,	
J. William Beekman,		Brevoort Martin,	
Perry Belmont,		Ward McAllister,	
George H. Bend,		Thomas C. Meyer,	
Henry W. Bibby,		Philip S. Miller,	
Frank Bohorn,		Robert S. Minturn,	
George S. Bowdoin,		Pierpont Morgan,	
B. H. Bristow,		A Sewbold Morris,	
James A. Burden,		H Victor Newcomb,	
John Townsend Burden,		Harry Parish,	
Sir Roderick Cameron,		John E. Parsons,	
Moses Taylor Campbell,		O. H. Payne,	
Amory S. Carhart,		H. A. Post,	
Hamilton W. Cary,		Edmund D. Randolph,	
Henry Clews,		J. S. Rhinelander,	
Smith Ely, Jr.,		Sidney Dillon Ripley,	
William Cooper,		H. A. Robbins,	
Austin Corbin,		J. A. Roosevelt,	
H. C. Cram,		Elliott Roosevelt,	
W. W. Cryder,		William A. Schermerhorn,	
F. Brockholst Cutting,		Eugene Schieffelin,	
R. Fulton Cutting,		George R. Schieffelin,	
Robert L. Cutting,		Elliott F. Shepard,	
W. Bayard Cutting,		W. W. Sherman,	
William Cutting, Jr.,		Wallace Sibbits,	
George L. Dean,		William D. Sloane,	
Frederick J. de Peyster,		Lispenard Stewart,	
Channcey M. Depew,		Ryam K. R. Stevens,	
Charles D. Dickey,		A. Stewart,	
J. Coleman Drayton,		Charles E. Strong,	
James G. E. Duer,		A. V. H. Stuyvesant,	
William A. Duer,		E. N. Tailer,	
Edward A. Du Pivier,		H. A. C. Taylor,	
Ralph S. Ellis,		Frederick D. Thompson,	
John J. Farish,		H. McK. Twombly,	
Frederick Gallatin,		Cornelius Vanderbilt,	
James W. Gerard,		W. K. Vanderbilt,	
William Gibson,		A. Ernest Vanderpoel,	
Ogden Goelet,		George Henry Warren,	
Robert Goelet,		Alexander S. Webb,	
Chester Griswold,		Seward Webb,	
J. N. A. Griswold,		Sidney Webster,	
A. C. Gurney,		Henry De Forest Weeks,	
Oliver Harriman,		R. F. Wells,	
Robert S. Hargous,		William Storrs Wells,	
Frederick Havemeyer,		George Foster Peabody Wetmore,	
Abram S. Hewitt,		W. C. Whitney,	
Center Hitchcock,		G. A. Whittier,	
Robert Hone,		M. A. Wilks,	
Adrian Iselin,		Orme Wilson,	
C. O. D. Iselin,		R. F. Wilson,	
De Lancey Kane,		Buchanan Winthrop,	
Jonathan Kane,		G. Taylor Winthrop,	
Frederick Kernochan,		Robert Winthrop,	
James F. Kernochan,		S. F. Witherbee,	
Ambrose S. Kingsland,		James T. Woodward,	
George O. Kingsland,		John J. Wysong.	

A Coming French Tenor.

From the Times-Democrat.

Albert Louis Guille, the French tenor who has created such an extraordinary furore in San Francisco, has yet to make his great fame known in English-speaking countries, for he has hardly been heard as yet outside of Lisbon and Paris. He is one of the few great artists whose life does not contain a series of romances, whether real or fictitious, and his career has been uneventful outside of lyric triumphs such as have been won by no tenors since Mario, Nicolini, and Wachtel appeared as the phenomena of their generations. Guille was born in the pretty town of Avignon, in the Department of Vaucluse, in France, in the year 1854, and is consequently about 35 years of age. His father was a wealthy silk manufacturer, and neither he nor Guille's mother had the slightest vocal ability, nor have any of the family except the great tenor. Guille began to sing before he was ten years of age, and sang for the love of trying his pure, fresh voice. When he was about 18 years of age he attracted the attention of the third trumpeter of Napoleon III.'s hunting band, who advised him to cultivate his voice.

"There is a million francs in that throat of yours," said this third trombone player, "and you had better begin to get the money." The young Guille, his ambition being fired by the imperial bandsman, went to Marseilles, in the south of France, and had for his teacher the daughter of the author of "The Mascotte," and under her tuition he studied all the great operatic roles in three years.

He made his début at the Paris Opéra Comique, singing "Il Trovatore." He was an instantaneous success: the Parisians fairly rose at him, and so great was his triumph that he was forced to come out and sing no less than twenty-five times. He gave forty-five performances of grand opera in Paris, making a perfect furore, and at the close of the season made a tour of the principal towns, including Bordeaux, Marseilles, Toulouse, &c., appearing in "Romeo and Juliet," Rossini's "William Tell," and other great operas. In 1884 he found himself in Lisbon under engagement for three years to Kopoton Pontecchi to sing the tenor roles in French opera at the famous San Carlos Opera House. On his first appearance the King of Portugal was so delighted with his voice that he was called to the royal box and there made a Knight of the Order of Jesus Christ, which decoration he constantly wears. It was in Lisbon that Mme. Patti heard him, and when Abbey engaged her for this concert tour she suggested that he engage Guille as the tenor. Abbey sent an agent at once to negotiate, and paid the sum of 20,000 francs to secure his release from his Lisbon engagement, one year of which had not expired. Guille says his favorite operas are "Il Trovatore," "William Tell," and "Romeo and Juliet." He sang the first named over forty times in Lisbon, and the Portuguese never seemed to tire of hearing him. Such is his simple history before he became engaged with Abbey. He has used his great gift wisely and well, but has yet to reap the fullest benefit from it.

A Family Puzzle.

From the Lewiston Journal.

This is the fiftieth year of ex-Governor Garcelon's practice of medicine in Lewiston. Now 76 years old, he is constantly at work, driving from fifteen to forty miles every day. His health has not been quite so good as usual this fall, but his chaise has been seen bobbing over our roads just the same. The ex-Governor sat down the other day and figured up how many miles he had driven in those fifty years. He found that he had gone around the globe many times. His long journey amounted to a trifle over 360,000 miles! It further impressed upon the doctor the fact that he is getting along in years when he reflects that he has been personally acquainted with five generations of his own family, and is now visiting professionally families in Lewiston whom he has attended for five generations. What a procession he has seen go on and off the stage!

Over an evening lunch in his cosey home the other night, the ex-Governor gave quite a long drum. "I am now visiting regularly," said he, "a family composed of the following relatives, all living under one roof:

1 great-grandmother.	1 uncle.
2 grandmothers.	2 brothers
1 mother.	1 brother-in-law.
1 grandfather.	1 stepdaughter.
1 father.	4 granddaughters.
1 mama	1 great-granddaughter.
1 great-grandson.	1 great-grandson.
1 grandson.	2 wives.
2 sisters.	1 husband.
6 daughters.	1 granddephew.
1 daughter-in-law.	1 grandniece.
2 great aunts.	6 nieces.
5 aunts.	2 nephews.

"The question is," said the doctor, "how many people are there in the house?"

HOW THEY HUNT IN FRANCE.

ST. HUBERT'S MASS AND THE BLESSING OF THE HOUNDS AT CHANTILLY.

The Chase that Follows the Hunting Mass—Hunting the Roebuck in the Forests of La Vendee—A Drag Hunt at Pau—The Absence of Foxes not its Only Difficulty.

PARIS, Nov. 1.—There are two kinds of hunters in France, those who hunt for the love of sport and those who hunt because it is considered a *chic* thing to do. The Barons of Judah come under the latter category, and naturally in this plutocratic age the Barons of Judah, as they have the most cash, have also the finest hunting grounds. The Rothschild preserves at Ferrières are famous in the souvenirs of many crowned heads and of innumerable diplomatists; Messrs. Bamberger, Ephrussi, Stern, and Cahen d'Anvers are the lessees of the forests of the ancient royal domains in the department of Seine-et-Oise; the woods of Versailles, Rambouillet, and Saint-Germain, where Louis XIV. used to hunt, with sumptuous retinues, are now the rendezvous of the civilized Hebrews of the Stock Exchange, while Marly alone is retained by the state for the benefit of the President of the republic and his guests. The hunting in these ex-royal domains within easy distance of the capital is of two kinds: *chasse à tir* and *chasse à courre*, or, in other words, shooting pheasants, partridges, rabbits, and small game, and hunting on horseback with hounds, either the roebuck or the wild boar. As regards shooting in France, there is little to be said; it does not differ in any essential points from similar sport in other countries. The *chasse à courre*, on the other hand, is peculiar to France, where many of the traditions of the old royal hunts have been retained, both as regards the manner of hunting, the ceremonial of the hunt, and the costume of the *personnel*. The great example has been the Chantilly hunt, which ceased to exist when the Duc d'Aumale was exiled a few years ago. In this hunt the traditions of old French *venerie* were carefully preserved, and on it were modelled the crack hunts of the present day, like those of the Duchesse d'Uzès at Bouneles, of M. Servant, and of the Comte de Greffuhle.

Of these traditions the most curious is the mass of St. Hubert and the blessing of the hounds which marks the opening of the hunting season on Nov. 3. This ceremony used to be a great event at Chantilly, and it was well worth while getting out of bed at an unearthly hour in order to witness it. The church clock of Chantilly sounded at half-past 3, and a few minutes later candles were lighted and those who were anxious to see the St. Hubert ceremony left their warm beds and began to dress. Within half an hour there was a crowd around the church door, and, when the bells tolled, four lanterns gleamed in the distance and a whimpering was heard, growing louder and louder as the hounds drew near. Day had not broken, but the torches carried by the serving men threw a lurid light on the procession. The huntsmen and whippers-in were in full uniform—swallow-tail coats or jackets of Orleans blue, gray trousers with a blue stripe, gold-bound caps, and with hunting knives by their side. The procession was headed by the oldest whipper-in, who was distinguishable by his buckled shoes, white stockings and breeches. He held in leash the best and oldest dog of the pack, whose talent and fidelity had secured for him the place of honor. Then came Hourvari, the chief huntsman and one of the best performers on the horn in France. He was followed by his lieutenants and assistants, who marched two by two, their burnished hunting horns shining like gold. Next came the dogs, coupled and held by whippers-in, and after them the Duc d'Aumale, the Duc de Nemours, the Prince de Joinville, the Duc and Duchesse de Chartres, the Count d'Eu, the Duc d'Alençon, the guests of the château, and a great many officers from Senlis, where the dragoons and cuirassiers were quartered. Their royal highnesses were dressed in the hunting uniform of their house, consisting of blue dolmans with silver buttons, blue hunting caps, and long riding boots such as were worn in days when the King of France invited his court to follow him to the chase. Some of the guests wore scarlet, but "pink" for hunting costumes does not find much favor in this country, where each man seeks permission to don the colors of his host, thus preserving the traditions of the past and preventing the classical sport of *venerie* from becoming a common place pursuit.

The pauses of the hounds, M. Quicklet, received the royal party in the porch of the church; the dogs seated upon their haunches, looked gravely on, keeping their eyes fixed as though ready to chastise any whimperer. Cakes which had been blessed by the priest were offered to the hounds, and the mass began. The Abbé Desceaux officiated, and the service seemed even more impressive at the early hour in the morning, with tapers lighted on the altar and torches burning in the porch, where the hounds were waiting. When the mass was ended the hounds were sounded: "Saint Hubert" on their horns, waking up the echoes of the old church where the mortal remains of the Condés lie entombed. Babagas, the canine hero of the ceremony, forgot himself and started a deep bay, which was taken up by his companions, who thought, perhaps, that the service was too long. Coming out of church the "Bourbon," the "Orleans," and the "Rayal" were sounded by the huntsmen, who blew their horns lustily, thinking no doubt of the liberal gratuities they receive on St. Hubert's day. The procession then wound made off toward the forest, where they remained until 11 o'clock, when the Duc d'Aumale and his friends arrived at the appointed place of meeting, about two miles and a half from the chateau at the "Table Ronde," or huge stone table that stands in the middle of the Forest of Chantilly, and marks the spot where the hounds are uncoupled on St. Hubert's Day.

The arrival of the Princes and their friends was hailed by the hunting horn sounding the "Bourbon" and the "Orleans." The chief huntsman went up to the Duc d'Aumale and reported that his hounds were in readiness. Several stags were started, but his Royal Highness did not give the signal for uncoupling the hounds until a magnificent stag, followed by a hind, sprang from the covert close by. At the signal, the dogs started off in pursuit, and the stag, as I was told, had awaited him in the deep bay of the hounds, redoubled his pace. For some time the hind kept up with him as, with his long antlers aloft and with open mouth, he dashed through the underwood and sped up one long avenue and down another, with man and dog in hot pursuit. At last the female quitted him, as if abandoning him to his fate, and the gallant animal, hard pressed, turned and twisted about, with the yelping hounds at his enemies, whose bays grew louder and louder on his ear, while at times one or two of them came so close that he could almost feel their hot breath. After a sharp run of little over half an hour the stag was forced to take to the water near Commelle, where the statue of Queen Blanche stands out so picturesquely in view of travellers on the Northern Railway line. The stag defended himself bravely. Hound after hound was set on to prolong the agony until the Princes and their guests had arrived. It is the delicate thing to see the hunted beast endeavored in vain to free himself from his enemies, who clustered about him, seizing him by the head, staining the water with his blood from their sharp bites; finally the torture ended, the exhausted and sinking, abandoned itself to its fate, feebly agitating its antlered head. When the huntsmen came up a boat put off; the whippers-in called the dogs, and the unfortunate stag, its eyes already glazed with the agony of death, received the coup de grâce from one of the huntsmen armed with a carbine. The body was brought to land and broken up in true woodman's fashion, while the "Death" and the "Hallali" were sounded. The hounds had their share, and what still remained of the dead stag was sent home in the chateau, whither the Duc d'Aumale and his guests retired to change their costume and entertain those of the party who had not witnessed the opening of the hunting season.

Such used to be the stag hunts at Chantilly, and such they are still with more or less pomp and circumstance in the forests of Senart, Villers Cotterets, Rambouillet, and in the forest of La Vendée and Brittany, still full of legends of Merlin, Viviane, and Broceliande.

The celebration of the hounds' mass may seem a strange and even monstrous idea when we reflect what mass ought always to mean in the eyes of a Catholic. Still, we must not be surprised, for the folk-lorists will tell us that a pigs' mass used to be celebrated in honor of St. Anthony. The object of these masses, remnants of pagan beliefs, was to protect the animals from dangerous bites, from hydrophobia and madness. St. Hubert and St. Anthony were both considered to have prophylactic powers against madness, and all sorts of pilgrimages and curious rites were performed in connection with these superstitions. The prayers to heaven through St. Hubert, with a view to obtaining divine protection for the hounds—prayers which are, as we have seen, still offered in Catholic France at this very day—are obviously a relic of paganism. Arrian, in his "Cynegetics," speaking of the ancient Gauls, says: "Those who devote themselves to hunting must not neglect Diana the Huntress any more than Apollo and Pan, and the nymphs and Mercury who rain over roads, and also all the divinities of the mountains; for if he does not perform the necessary devotions he cannot hope for good luck; the dogs get wounded, the horses break down, and hunters come home empty handed." Xenophon, in his treatise on hunting, also speaks "of prayers to be addressed to Apollo and Diana, and of the custom of offering them the first fruits of the chase." Even in this year 1889 there are people who, when bitten by mad dogs, have made a pilgrimage to the Chapel of St. Hubert in the Belgian Ardennes and submitted themselves to cauterization and the application of relics before going to M. Pasteur's laboratory at Paris. Whether the Duchesse d'Uzès and the other masters of staghounds are aware that they are perpetuating rankly pagan usages in celebrating their dogs' mass is doubtful. The fact, however, remains, and much curious information about the point may be found in a volume of the Bibliotheca Mythica, by M. Henri Gaidoz, called "La Rage et Saint Hubert."

Hunting the *chevreuil* or roebuck is not a mere parade, as some skeptics say who have never followed the hounds in one of the thick and rough forests of La Vendée. It is quite a different business from drawing a covert and running a fox to earth or to death. The roebuck is a very vigorous animal, and as full of wiles and turns as a hare. The great difficulty in hunting this animal arises from the number of roebucks that are found in the French forests lurking in the thick underwood. When one roebuck is started you may start a dozen others before the first one is killed; nevertheless, the French hounds unharbor an animal and hunt this one alone, never changing to run after another that may cross the scent or come within sight. They hunt their animal by the scent and almost all the time they are in the underwood. A good roebuck will hold out before the dogs about two hours. If the dogs were not what is called in France "chiens de change," that is to say, dogs we know how to keep to one scent, they would never kill a single head of game, but would lose a whole day running first after one animal and then after another. Good hounds will hunt one roebuck in the midst of a score others without making a mistake; and this quality they have acquired partly by training and partly by heredity. The Vendean, Poitevin, and Saintonge hounds, and all the other French hounds now used for deer hunting, are crossed with English dogs, producing a fine race of bastards, sometimes nearer to French and sometimes nearer to English blood. On this point, it must be remarked, that the English and the French hunting dogs are in a measure cousins. From time immemorial the English and French kings used to send each other hounds. It is true, nevertheless, forty years ago French hunting hounds were flat animals with big heads, long ears, and thundering voices. They were poorly fed, wanting in speed, but above all wanting in stamina and health. They were, however, very trusty and true. These heavy French hounds have been crossed with English foxhounds, and the result is a hound of fine build, robust, a good feeder, and a fast hunter. Only, while the English seek above all things to develop the speed of their dogs, the French try to get, first of all, keenness of scent and loudness of voice. In order to hunt the roebuck and to avoid changing the scent the hounds must be very tender-nosed. They must also be loud-voiced, because otherwise the huntsmen would never be able to follow, for the hounds are rarely seen while hunting in the thick forest underwood. You follow them by ear and not by sight.

Of course pages and pages have been written about the respective merits of the English foxhound and the French deerhounds, and pages might still be written. All hounds are not alike and all French hounds are not alike. There are good dogs and bad dogs. The French hounds speak more or less according to the country in which they hunt. As a rule they speak more in the forest than they do on the plain. Good packs, however, speak wherever they are.

Beside the roebuck the French hunt the wild boar, which abounds in all the forests, even those in the vicinity of Paris. The wild boar is hunted on foot with the gun, and on horseback with packs of special hounds, generally Vendean shaggy-haired griffons. The wolf, too, is hunted in the less populous regions of France, with the gun or with the Vendean griffons, but in an irregular fashion. There are at present no packs of hounds specially trained to hunt this vermin. In short, the most picturesque and the most characteristic form of hunting in France is the *chasse à courre* with its accompaniment of dogs, pickers in bright uniforms, huntsmen in pink, and its special code of broken horn calls to sound the various incidents and the progress of the ceremony, the *lancer*, the *bien aller*, the *hallali*, and all the minute and nicely classified details which French *venerie* and French administrative genius have noted in the action of the hounds in the pursuit of their game.

In those parts of France where there is no game they organize what is called drag hunting. This is an English sport that was introduced into this country about half a century ago by a lot of English gentlemen who were in the habit of spending a portion of every year at Pau. At that epoch there were foxes in the Béarn country; but with the hunting parties and the war made upon the animals by the peasants, who treated them as vermin, they gradually disappeared from the neighborhood of Pau, and the masters of the hounds then began to introduce bag foxes. Finally, the Anglo-American sportsmen no longer took the trouble to look for the real foxes, or even to bring bag foxes into the field, finding it more convenient to organize the drag hunt, which is really an artificial scent hunt. This is the sport that is practised to-day in the country round about Pau. Here is how it is done:

The dragman who tries the scent starts out on foot and in shirt sleeves at 11 o'clock, or an hour before the hounds are let loose. He drags at the end of a rope about two yards long