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A LEADER OF SWELLS.

HOW WARD McALLISTER WON HIS FAME.

Lawyer and Fond of Gossip Society. He Established an American Aristocracy - New York's Four Hundred and How It Was Made Up.

It was his statement that New York society consisted of four hundred people that made Ward McAllister a national character.

Ward McAllister was the product of New York conditions, and he was proud of the factors that made and kept him prominent.

He never made any mistake with regard to his own talents and functions. To estimate him as a literary man, as a thinker, a reformer, a doctrinaire, is manifestly unjust.

He was a social, not an intellectual influence. He had a profound belief that a really good society, in the social sense, must be founded, even in a republic, on something better than mere wealth.

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He was the spokesman of his set. Self elected, perhaps, but tolerated, recognized and looked up to by the set itself.

He rode into popular recognition on a phrase. And his limitation of the genuine society of New York to "four hundred" was the first intimation of his set views of the exclusiveness of that society.



WARD McALLISTER.

His authority for so many years as a master of ceremonies was the result, first of a somewhat variant and confused notion of "proper form" in our society, and, second, of the absolute need in all fashionable functions of an expert who had made a study of details, who knew to perfection just where the cross currents of the different sets touched, and who could with masterful adroitness bring together the right people and so manipulate the function that everybody would feel at ease and know that the viands and the wines and the service were invisibly selected and consummately handled.

He was a member of various clubs, a connoisseur in wines, a gourmet and an arbiter of elegance. His name was known to everybody within the portals of society, and his good offices were sought by those who desired admission to the charmed circle, but the multitude had never heard of him.

Through him all news about the great subscription balls had been given to the public, and to him a reporter went one day in the spring of 1888 to obtain information about the number of persons who actually composed New York society.

Mr. McAllister separated in his mind the 400 sheep from the million and three-quarters of goats and gave the facts to the world. The public was amused and surprised. Nobody had imagined that New York's society was composed of so limited a number.

This limitation of society took a firm hold on the imagination of the people at large, and the sensation it created did not die out in a day. The endless discussion of Mr. McAllister seemed to please him. A flattering offering was made to him to write a book. The title that followed the publication of "Society As I Have Found It" did not discourage him in the least.

Although recognized as the great society leader, Mr. McAllister was not particularly fastidious about his attire. He usually wore sack coats in the street, and was not "dandified." He was stout, weighing probably 200 pounds, and about 5 feet 10 inches tall.

He was born in Georgia more than sixty years ago. His grandfather was

chief justice of the State, and his father a judge of the United States circuit court. Ward McAllister was admitted to the bar in California in 1851, and for a time practiced law with his brother, Hall McAllister, who subsequently became the leading lawyer of the Pacific slope.

HOW TO RIDE A BICYCLE.

Hints That Will Prove Useful to a Beginner.

The proper position for a bicycle rider is, in the first place, an upright one. He should push nearly straight downward with his legs—not backward, as one must do who leans far forward.

On the other hand, if you ride with the arms a little bent, and acting as a kind of buffer to all jarring influences, they will save you an injurious though unnoticeable shaking up each time you go out.

Another feature of this stiff arm is the position into which the shoulders are thrust. Try it; grow a little tired with a long ride and then see where your shoulders are. You have gradually come to lean on one side or the other.

No; the weight of your body should never come on the hands and arms, but on your thighs, and thence be transferred to the seat, with the unconscious springy action of your legs, which in a measure allows some of your weight to come on the pedals.

In riding ten miles, for example, I should never go the whole distance at one pace. Slow, steady riding has its merits, so has sprinting for short distances. When a good clear road looms up ahead have a brush for two or three hundred yards with the boy who is with you.

Beneficial Effects of Sugar. There are certain medical authorities who have for a long time been arguing in favor of a more general use of sugar as an article of diet.

The rattlesnake bite, always disastrous to smaller animals, is rarely fatal to man, death following in less than 10 per cent of the cases.

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A Fakir's Ingenuity.

Enormous business has been done lately at French fairs by a man who professed to sell rat powder that was perfectly harmless and that struck rats dead on the spot.

A Joke That is Pointless.

"I am getting tired," said the man who always reads the newspapers, "of that stale joke about the newly married couple who gave themselves away because the man did not know how much sugar his bride put in her tea or coffee.

A GREAT OTTER TRAPPER

He Wore a \$225 Overcoat When Out Hunting.

A generation ago the otter was still plentiful along the streams in the vicinity of Roulette, Pa. Probably the greatest otter trapper that ever lived in this region was the late Larry Lyman, of Roulette.

He bagged hundreds of them in his day. Otter pelts were worth from \$8 to \$15 apiece during the time Lyman trapped for them. When they were at their greatest value he saved fifteen of the finest skins from those he had trapped and had them made into an overcoat by a famous New York city furrier.

But other disappeared from the waters of Pennsylvania years ago. Not one, not the sign of one, had been seen in the part of the State where Lyman trapped his game for some twenty years.

Brown had never seen an otter, but he instantly knew that this was one. He didn't know exactly how to handle his rare prize, but while he was considering the proper course to pursue his dog undertook to solve the problem right there, and pitched into the strange animal.

At a meeting of the members of the Academy of Sciences recently Professor Vandenberg read an unusual, interesting and instructive paper on "Snakes," especially the rattler, and suggesting various antidotes to counteract the venomous virus of this species.

Cure for Snake Bites.

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