The rapidly waning season grows gayer toward its close. The past week has had considerable of incident and interest during its seven days, and the one that opens this morning promises still more of entertainment to the members of the gay world.

The falling of the curtain on the winter's gayeties is now announced for February 19. The last act of the drama, or rather the comedy, now holds the stage and there is that unmistakable rustle in the audience which gives evidence that the play is nearly over.

The week opened, as did both its predecessors, with a number of theater parties followed by a number of dinners and dances or balls. It is difficult to always draw a distinction between the entertainments known as a dance and a ball. The latter term, applied indiscriminately to all events where dancing is a feature, has to some extent become meaningless, like the good old names lady and gentleman in these days, when those terms are applied to every one no matter what their reputation or profession may be. A ball is really a large dance, and properly speaking mean an assemblage of at least 300 people.

The Terpsichoreans' guests numbered about this figure, and as it was given in a large hall it may be called a ball. It was a somewhat juvenile gathering, most of the girls not yet being out in society and many of them only this season's buds. A prettier set of girls has never been seen in this City before or a prettier ball given. The supper was served in the usual dining-room. The cotillon was danced in the large canvased ballroom, whose walls, from base to ceiling, were lined with palms, ferns and garlands and draperies. The music was particularly good, all the selections having been well chosen.

The following night came the third meeting of the Friday Night Club, a full account of which appeared in yesterday's CALL.

Last evening came the annual dinner and dance given by the guests of the Hotel Richelieu to their many friends. The dinner was followed by a very spirited dance, which kept up until midnight, when the guests partook of a delicious supper. Among those at the several dinners and dances were: Mr. and Mrs. Peter McG. McBean, Miss McBean, Miss Kip, Miss Mary Kip, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Elliott, Morton Gibbons, Miss Ida Gibbons, Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Emma Butler, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Magee, Mrs. Morley, W. H. Magee, Mrs. Samuel Hort, Miss Julia Tompkins, Miss Ethel Tompkins, Miss Williams, Miss Hannah Williams, Miss Hobart, Walter S. Hobart, Phil Tompkins, Mr. and Mrs. Preston, Miss Preston, Baron von Balveron, and a number of others.

Miss Hyde of New York has been spending the week here with her friend, Miss Genevieve Goad, whose charming house is a most delightful place to stay. It goes without saying that Miss Hyde has enjoyed herself and has been the recipient of much attention, for she is such a favorite that she is sure to make friends and have a good time either at home or abroad. At the Cotillon Club on Friday she looked remarkably well and wore a becoming and stunning gown.

Oakland has not often had a more charming addition to its society than Mrs. Seward B. McNear (nee Baroll) of Baltimore, who has lately come with her husband to live there. She made her first appearance in San Francisco society at the cotillon on Friday last and was very much admired. Already many luncheons, teas and dinners have been given in their honor.

We have now come to the part of the year when we can no longer put off anything, except, perhaps, a visit to our poor relations, which may be safely left for the duties after the Lenten season; but it will not do to defer many other things. Our visiting list is before us, and the old refrain of "After Christmas I will do so and so," "and go here and there" can no more be said. No, we must face the situation, and if we do not intend to give a "tea" or an "at home" we must start out and call on the "smart set" or else we are "not in it."

A tea, however, cancels our visiting obligation, except our party calls for dinners or luncheons, or when we wish to specially honor the stranger within our gates.

Some witty woman said lately that "a tea was a great clearing-house for cards," and it is an unwritten law of society that even if we only send our small pasteboard representative the most exacting has no right to say that we "owe" them a visit, so this in these busy days is decidedly an advantage. Visiting on old-time methods has entirely gone out. Then one called season after season, with painstaking regularity, and probably never saw the person whose doorbell was so religiously rung. Now all this is done away with. Every one has days, or, as said just now, gives some form of tea or large reception, to which all are bidden, and, therefore, the social function of visiting is made much pleasanter, for at least we really meet people and sometimes strike up an agreeable intercourse which enables us to be quite sociable and chatty when we meet in the summer at the resorts.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Samuel announce the engagement of their daughter, Miss Hattie, to Mr. I. Despres of Chicago.

Miss Lillie Rosenblatt of Portland, Or., is visiting her sister, Mrs. E. Beck, at 1911 Pacific avenue. At home first and second Fridays.

Dr. and Mrs. M. E. Gonzales will spend the winter in Italy.

Owing to the death of their uncle, John Crellin, the Misses Crellin of Oakland will not appear in further festivities this season.

EDWARD POND HONORED.

A number of dinners and other entertainments have been given in honor of Edward Pond, son of Hon. E. B. Pond, ex-Mayor of this City, and Miss Isabel Grant, daughter of C. W. Grant, well known in insurance circles, since the announcement recently of their engagement. The progressive dinner given by the parents of the groom-elect on Thursday last in compliment to them was one of the most elaborate and enjoyable affairs of the season, and the guests of honor were recipients of many good wishes. The decorations were artistic, the music excellent. In addition to the above named there were present: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Douglass Fry, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Haight, Mr. and Mrs. John Partridge, Mr. and Mrs. Alpheus Bull, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Whitney, Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Moulder, Miss Butler, Miss Castle, Miss McMullen, Miss Gross, Miss Henrietta Sheppard, Miss Annie Sheppard, Miss Fannie Grant, Miss McNeil, Henry L. Wilson, Arthur F. Allen, Samuel Pond, Charles D. Farquharson, Milton S. Latham, Philip Thornton, Albine Whitney.

THE HOLT TEA.

Miss Grace Holt, a charming debutante, was formally launched into the whirl of society last Saturday through the medium of a large tea given by her mother, Mrs. Charles Holt. The affair was a great success, many of the gowns exhibited were most beautiful creations and a number of the very prettiest of Oakland's girls were present.

AT NEW YEAR'S.

Enjoyable Festivities in Honor of the Advent of 'Ninety-Six.

A New Year's dinner was given by Mrs. H. J. Earle on Wednesday last.

Major and Mrs. Darling entertained a number of friends at a card party on New Year's eve at the Presidio. It was a merry party that assembled, and at the stroke of 12 the New Year was accorded a welcome and best wishes for future happiness and prosperity were extended one another. Mrs. Darling and her daughter, Miss Catherwood, have given quite a number of pleasant affairs of late, all uniformly successful.

On New Year's eve Miss Ethel Kittridge entertained "The Thirteen Club" at her home in Oakland. This organization is composed principally of the debutantes of the land of Oaks and their meetings are held at the different homes of the individual members, and merry times they have. The last one above mentioned was no exception to the rule, and in fact was more enjoyable than previous ones. The parlors were decorated in charming holiday effects, principally holly and red berries.

Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Zohler entertained their friends on New Year's eve at their home on Eleventh avenue, in the Sunset district. At midnight the guests, in fantastic garb, sallied forth with tin horns, drums and other noisy instruments to convey the information to their neighbors that the new year had come. They met with much success, and after their labors returned to the house, where a collation was found awaiting them.

On New Year's eve the residence of Mr. and Mrs. James G. Jones, 208 Valencia street, was the scene of a large gathering of persons, both young and old. Miss Mabel Gertrude Jones celebrated the eleventh anniversary of her birthday. Her young company had assembled in the parlor and were playing at their games, when a loud ring at the door bell announced the arrival of a party of older persons, coming as a surprise to Mr. Jones, and consisting of the members of his German and Spanish classes. They repaired to the upper rooms, and were soon engaged at games of cards. At 12 o'clock refreshments were served in the dining-room, the children having partaken of theirs earlier in the evening. While their elders were at table the young people were greeting the arrival of the new year by the vigorous blowing of tin-horns.

J. Hutton Vint entertained the company with a number of recitations. Altogether the affair was a very pleasant one, and the hour of 2 had nearly arrived before all had taken their departure.

The Ramonas gave their first party on New Year's eve at 531 Frederick street, the home of one of the members, Miss Edith Trewavas. Those present were: Miss Susie Leffler, Miss Josie Leffler, Miss Emma Prosek, Miss Josie Franks, Miss Edith Trewavas, Miss Maud Haas, Miss Belle Hemingway, Miss Mamie Voorsanger, Miss Kate Rooney, Miss Harriet Rooney, Miss Alice Dunn, Miss Rose McCormick, Miss Kate Gaines and Miss Sadie Gardiner.

The Sequoia Club gave a New Year's party at their hall on Wetmore street. The evening was spent in singing, dancing and games. At 11 o'clock suppor was served and the merrymakers departed at 1:30. Those present were: Mrs. Eoff, Mrs. Hotaling, Miss Alice Hotaling, Miss Annie Sellon, Miss Grace Rankin, Miss Mabel Leary, Miss Polly Smith, Miss Laura Lieb, Miss Ida Neill, Miss Meta Boysen, Miss Maud Cartan, Miss Laura Neill, Miss Lillie Reynolds, Miss Lois Eoff, Miss Alice Cameto; Messrs. Eoff, Simes, Burnett, Joseph Gallagher, Will Cole, Charles Shedden, Jack Renton, Joe McEvoy, Joe Walsh, Earl Cartan, Will Stoermer, Jessie Eoff, Eugene Dimmer.

A very enjoyable surprise party was given to Miss Sallie Cline at her residence, 733 Eddy street, on New Year's eve. An elaborate supper was served at 11:30 P. M., where the guests all stayed to see the old year out and the new one in. Among those present were: Miss Sallie Cline, Miss Eva Jacobs, Miss May Selig, Miss Celia Pechner, Miss Lily Susman, Miss Miriam Morris, Miss Babette Cline, Miss Rosie Cahen, Miss Blanche Lotz, Miss Babette Cline, Leo Susman, Milton Auerbach, Sanz Sansberg, Lucien Simon, Joe Levy, Henry Auerbach.

A very pleasant New Year's party was given to Miss Olive Glazier by a number of San Francisco friends New Year's eve in Fruitvale. The evening was spent pleasantly in singing, dancing and horn-blowing. At 12 o'clock the guests blew in the new year. Immediately afterward they adjourned to the beautifully decorated dining-room and partook of a delicious supper.

Among those present were: Miss Olive Glazier, Miss M. Keller, Miss F. Glazier, Miss L. Knipe, Miss Ida Cramier, Miss Clara Classin, Miss Madah Aspden, Miss Edith Craig, Miss Mae Sims, Miss Minnie Aspden, Miss L. A. Sims; Messrs. J. Sims, W. Kemp, A. Stevens, P. Burr, A. Rountree, C. Hammond, L. Keller, C. Smith, E. Hatfield, F. Stackpool, J. Classen, Mr. Hoyle and others.

An enjoyable surprise party was given to Herman Goetz, in honor of his birthday, at the residence of his parents, 634 Green street, on Tuesday evening last. Dancing was indulged in to excellent music. At 12 o'clock the passing of the old year was celebrated, after which the guests adjourned to the supper-room, which was appropriately decorated for the occasion. Dancing was then resumed until the wee small hours of the new year. Among those present were: Mr. and Mrs. L. Goetz, Mr. and Mrs. C. Pflaumbaum, Mrs. I. Seale, Mrs. Thall, Mrs. M. Boisse, Miss Emma Goetz, Miss Susie Goetz, Miss E. Kaiser, Miss C. Wiggin, Miss B. Maaks, Miss A. Kaiser; Messrs. William Kaiser, G. Boisse, William Westphal, P. Bowlin, J. Faunt le Roy, S. V. Richter, W. P. Bell, H. Hughes, J. E. Kramer, C. Kuser, A. Levy, Herman Goetz, A. Gudehus and others.

Miss Tillie Euphrat of Golden Gate avenue gave a charming New Year's party Tuesday evening to a large number of friends. The programme consisted of music, games and dancing, and an elaborate collation was served at midnight. Immediately after supper a flashlight photograph of the guests was taken, one of which will be presented to each guest as a souvenir. Among those present were the Misses Openheimer, Misses Calisher, Miss Queenie Nathan, Miss Minnie Nathan, Miss Annie Graff, G. Wehser, Miss Minnie Meyers, Miss Ella Friedlander, Henry Friedlander, Theo Fershstand, A. Kallman, Louis Nathan, Martin Meyer, Hugo Lyons, W. E. Wehser, Maurice Just, Emanuel Euphrat.

THE BUDDE PARTY.

A very enjoyable evening was held at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. J. Budde of 21 Baker street recently.

Both parlors were handsomely decorated with evergreens and flowers, making a very effective appearance. An address of welcome was delivered by the host, after which speeches and toasts followed. The fore part of the evening was passed in singing, dancing and games. A great song and dance was given by Mr. Hufschmidt, after which the guests adjourned to the dining-room, and a bounteous repast was therein partaken of. After the guests' appetites had been appeased they returned to the parlor, where both vocal and instrumental music was enjoyed, after which games and dancing followed until the early hours of the New Year, 1896.

Among the invited guests were: Mr. and Mrs. J. Budde, E. Budde, A. Budde, Charles Hufschmidt, Mr. Hoehne, Henry Kuhls, Oscar Tolle, Robert and Charles Schafft, A. Freund, Alexander Volkmann, E. Hermann, Eugene Kast, Henry C. Droger, Mr. and Mrs. Kronen, Miss Lulu Kuhls, Miss Mollie Comerford, Miss Grethe Schaftt, Miss Josephine Budde, Miss Louise Hufschmidt, Miss Dora Hufschmidt, Miss Alvene Siebrecht, Miss Emma Siebrecht, Miss Tillie Volkmann, Miss Bella Crichton, Miss Alice Walsh.

"MIDNITE'S" REUNION.

The annual reunion of the "Midnites" was held at Mission Opera Hall on New Year's eve. Fifty ladies and gentlemen celebrated the new year. Dancing commenced at 9 o'clock and continued until 12, after which time a grand march was formed and proceeded to the banquet hall, where there was a tempting display of viands. Numerous toasts were given, and F. A. Sullivan eulogized the fair ladies in his own inimitable way and offered the toast, "Our Fair Midnites," which was responded to by James O'Connor. The utmost good will prevailed and all enjoyed the occasion. After the supper dancing was resumed for a time. Recitations were rendered by Miss Kate McDonough, F. A. Sullivan, F. A. Mahoney, J. P. Hayes and many others. Miss Agnes O'Brien and Miss Margaret Gibbons rendered a charming duet. Miss Loretto Miller sang the beautiful song "Scenes That Are Brightest," with much applause. Miss Kittie Holland and Miss Sadie Ross gave an exquisite rendering of "Then You'll Remember Me." J. I. Richards captured all by his splendid vocal powers in "The Brown October Ale." F. A. Mahoney as master of ceremonies and Eugene Lacy as floor manager kept up their reputations for ability.

The following ladies and gentlemen participated in the festivities: Miss S. J. Gibbons, Miss M. Gibbons, Miss Margurite Gibbons, Miss Loretto Miller, Miss Agnes O'Brien, Miss Tessie Roche, Miss Annie Devine, Miss Kate McDonough, Miss Rebecca Grace, Miss Helen Grace, Miss Lucy Roche, Miss N. Attridge, Miss S. Murphy, Miss Kittie Holland, Miss S. E. McQuaid, Miss M. Rowland, Miss Eva Brolly, Miss G. Fay, Miss C. Hogue, Miss M. A. Beardsley, Miss Josie Moriarty, Miss Lizzie Moriarty, Miss S. Ross Miss M. Cunningham, Miss Lydia Jordan; Mr. F. A. Sullivan, Mr. F. Duggan, Mr. J. Duggan, Mr. Charles McGinley, Mr. J. I. Richards, Mr. D. A. Lawler, Mr. James O'Connor, Mr. F. Salter, Mr. George Mahoney, Mr. Joseph P. Hayes, Mr. James Meekan, Mr. D. Gibbons, Mr. T. J. McCormack, Mr. F. Mahoney, Mr. E. Lacy, Mr. Ed Hackett, Mr. F. Mahoney, Mr. J. Dickson, Mr. J. F. Douglass, Mr. F. Danton, Mr. H. Rowland, Mr. G. Bramhall.

RICKE SURPRISE PARTY.

An enjoyable surprise party was tendered to Miss Lena Ricke last Thursday evening at her home, 1013 York street. The affair was managed by her numerous friends, and the evening was spent in singing, dancing, games and conversation until an early hour of the morning, when a novel repast was served. Among those present were Mr. and Mrs. Ricke, Mr. and Mrs. George McKay, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kolden. strod, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Classen, Mr. and Mrs. D. A. Sylvester, Mr. and Mrs. W. Straub, Miss Lena Ricke, Miss Amelia Ricke, Miss Mary O'Brien, Miss Mary Ryan, Miss Lucy Holden, Miss Annie Holland, Miss Amelia Ginnia, Miss Fanny Doherty, Miss Charlotte Fenielus, Miss Lizzie McDonald, Miss Ella Boyd, Miss Gussie Wacker, Miss Annie Flanagan, Miss Kittie Doyle, Miss Julia McNally, Miss I. Stevens, Miss Mary Dolan, Miss Lizzie Doyle, Miss Maggie Shannon, H. J. Thomas, George H. Buttler, Henry Feitzen, Fred Becker, Henry Rupple, Al. McKenzie, Ernest Peterson, Joseph Lyngreen, John Holden, Henry Winner, Dietrick Jansen, Olie Heilberg, Gus Bart, Charles Ricke, Fred Ellenburger, Frank Stanwood, Gus Whal, Thomas Fitzpatrick, James O'Brien, Peter Duffy, Louis Mayer, George Skiverton, John McGury, Eugene Lacey, Julius Henning, Lawrence Dunn, Peter Flynn, Henry Flowers.

IN THE FUTURE.

Long List of Attractive Events Promised Between Now and Lent.

The eighth anniversary ball of National Parlor No. 118, N. S. G. W., will take place at National Guard Hall, 815 Ellis street, on Tuesday evening, the 14th inst.

Mr. Andrew Bogart will give a matinee song recital on Saturday, January 11, at Golden Gate Hall.

The Welcome Club has issued invitations for its leap-year party to be held at California Hall, Thursday evening, the 16th of January.

The annual election of officers of the Alabama Club was held at their clubrooms last evening and resulted as follows: President, Edward Kenny; vice-president, J. Reynolds Simpton; financial secretary, Joseph Levi; treasurer, Neil Kelley; sentinel, Joseph Britt. It was decided to hold the second grand ball at B'nai B'rith Hall on Saturday evening, January 18, 1896.

The eleventh party of the Golden Gates at California Hall will be a leap-year party on Thursday evening, January 9.

The Palms will give their second anniversary grand souvenir ball at Union-square hall, 421 Post street, Sunday evening, January 26.

The Filbert Club will give their first grand ball of 1896 at B'nai B'rith Hall, 121 Eddy street, Saturday evening, January 11. It will be the second anniversary and the club will spare no expense in making this one of the most delightful of any yet given.

The employes of Goldberg, Bowen & Lebenbaum will give their second entertainment and hop next Friday evening at Golden Gate Hall.

The second anniversary of the Jolly Twelve will be celebrated by a dance to be held on the 16th inst. at Union-square Hall.

The P. D. C. gives its fifty-fourth evening dress party at Odd Fellows' Hall on next Tuesday, January 7. It will be the occasion of the club's third anniversary, and an enjoyable time is assured to all its friends.

A short musical programme and a reading by Mr. Edward W. Townsend, the popular author, from "Chimmie Fadden," will be given under the auspices of the Mercantile Library Auxiliary at the Auditorium, corner Mason and Ellis streets, on Saturday, January 11, at 3 o'clock. Unusual interest was taken in the annual election of the Mercantile Library Auxiliary on Thursday afternoon, January 2, 1896. The following regular ticket was elected: President, Mrs. Lovell White; first vice-president, Mrs. Henry Gibbons; second vice-president, Miss Sarah D. Hamlin; third vice-president, Mrs. Mary Prag; fourth vice-president, Mrs. F. Vassault; recording secretary, Miss Marian J. Snook; business secretary, Miss Charlotte Thompson; treasurer, Mrs. Samuel C. Bigelow; directors—Mrs. W. F. Herrin, Miss A. G. Catlin, Miss Tessa Semple, Mrs. Thurlow McMullin, Mrs. Edward Probert, Mrs. Fanny M. Lent.

NEXT WOMAN'S CONGRESS

"Woman and Government" Will Be the General Theme of Discussion.

Mrs. Ellen M. Henrotin and Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Stetson Will Participate.

The Woman's Congress of 1896 is launched.

The executive board of the Woman's Congress Association of the Pacific Coast met in the parlor of the Occidental Hotel yesterday afternoon to arrange details in relation to the congress, which will open May 4 and continue one week.

It was announced that in addition to Miss Susan B. Anthony, Rev. Anna H. Shaw and Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, whose services had already been engaged, it was expected that Mrs. Potter Palmer of World's Fair fame, Mrs. Ellen M. Henrotin, president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Stetson, well known on this coast and at present a resident of Hull House, Chicago, would attend and participate.

"Woman and Government" was the general theme chosen for the consideration of the Congress.

"We chose this topic," said Mrs. George T. Gaden, chairman of the programme committee, "because of the fact that California will soon be called upon to decide whether or not women shall be enfranchised, and we believed it would be wise to arrange for a presentation of the truths about government by trained thinkers of this coast and the East, with a view to the coming situation. Our aim is comprehensive. We want to consider the theme in its most important phases, for instance, analysis of government as a social function, the birth, growth and latest development in government, the main lines of governmental excesses and failures, the distinctive features of American government, and woman in fact and fiction—that is, woman as she is in fact and woman as viewed simply in the light of sentiment."

The opening day of the Woman's Congress will be devoted to the consideration of "Government." On May 5 "Forms of Government" will be discussed. "Woman" will be the theme on May 6, "An Historic View" on the 7th, "Special Phases of Government" on the 8th, "Claims, Special and General," on the 9th, and on the closing day (Sunday) the "General Ethical Side of Government" will be discussed.

The programme was arranged by a committee consisting of Mrs. George T. Gaden, Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Stetson and Mrs. John F. Swift. The board which met yesterday to indorse it comprised Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, Mrs. Ada Van Pelt, Mrs. George T. Gaden, Mrs. Nellie Blessing Eyster, Mrs. John F. Swift and Mrs. A. A. Sargent.

Sixty-seven papers, whose authors have not yet been chosen, will be presented at the congress. Gentlemen will be invited to participate in the afternoon as well as the evening sessions. The executive board will hold frequent meetings to arrange details even to the minutiæ of the convention.

The committee whose duty it is to select a place for meeting has been making a canvass for that purpose, but has as yet made no choice. It is designed that the congress shall not be held in a church. The members of the board express much enthusiasm and predict that the coming congress will be greater than any of its predecessors.

Miss Anthony and Miss Shaw are expected to arrive the latter part of next month or early in March to assist in the woman suffrage campaign.

Two Days for Oelrichs.

Judge Hebbard has granted Herman Oelrichs two days more in which to file his bill of exceptions to the order of Judge Slack denying his petition to be appointed guardian of his son. Judge Seawell gave him two days from January 2 because his attorney could not find Judge Slack, and for the same reason Judge Hebbard gave him two days more. He asked for ten days, but as the case was before Judge Slack, Judge Hebbard declined to give more than two.

BAB ON RINGS AND HANDS

The Jewels and Superstitions of Some Prominent Women.

DISAPPEARANCE OF THE BLONDE

A New Idea Said to Be Afloat as to the Survival of the Fittest.

NEW YORK, N. Y., Dec. 31.—The woman who is best pleased with her Christmas gifts is the one who got what she called "the loveliest of rings." There is something particularly fascinating about a ring to a woman. Sometimes I think it is because she can look at it; sometimes, because she believes it makes her hand look more beautiful. The girl with a short, plump, dimpled hand ought to make up her mind to give up every ring except the one which is put upon her finger during the marriage service, for she whose hand is of the style described does not add to its beauty by wearing rings, but makes it look thick and coarse when the jeweled bands are upon it. It is the lady with the long, slender, taper fingers who can wear rings advantageously, and just now fashion permits her to jewel the third and little fingers of each hand up to the first knuckle. But she must be careful in arranging these rings. If she chooses pointed marquise with a sapphire or ruby set about with diamonds, that must be the one ring on the third finger, while the little finger may have upon it three bands, two formed of diamonds and one of rubies. Not to mix one's gems is a law not only of order but of fashion.

Bands of sapphires and diamonds are greatly liked, not only for the real beauty of the stones, but also because dark sapphire tends to make the band look whiter and more dainty. The round turquoise framed in a band of dull gold is counted rather better form than a turquoise framed in diamonds, because one wants to be able to consider the perfect blueness of the stone, and not to have this lessened by the glitter of the other gems.

The smartest men are wearing the engraved gold ring—that is, a square or round surface of dull gold, which has engraved upon it either a crest or a monogram, as if it might be a seal; and it is used very often for that purpose. Wonderful rings of aquamarine have the crest or initials cut into the stone, but are quite as often swung on watchchains as worn on on the finger. American men, unlike the Prince of Wales, have not a great affection for rings; and I confess myself to thinking that, unless a ring is an heirloom, and essentially a manly ring, it is best off a man's finger. As for jewels, they should be left to women.

A marvelous turquoise, oval in shape, and quite deep, is set in gold and worn by Mrs. Langtry, who confesses to the pretty superstition that the wearing of turquoises keeps friends true. A square emerald makes whiter, by contrast, the beautifully shaped hand of Olga Nethersole, who hopes that it is true that emeralds bring good health. Fanny Davenport is seldom seen without a ruby ring, that flashes with greater brilliancy than any diamond, and is so deep in color that it suggests only the oldest and most crimson of Burgundy wines. This is a jewel with a history. For hundreds of years it was in the forehead of an idol in India, but, unlike the moonshine, it has brought good luck to its nineteenth century wearer.

Somebody asked me, what is a beautiful hand?

First of all, it isn't a fat hand. A beautiful hand is slender at the wrist, broadens proportionately, has long fingers, that shape out like tapers, and when the hand is laid flat the tip of the thumb should almost touch the very beginning of the first knuckle of the forefinger. A short thumb is evidence of a lack of brain. Wasn't it Sir Isaac Newton who said, "Show me the imprint of a man's thumb and I will tell you the strength of his mind"? The nails should be thin, oval and pink. To give them an extremely high polish is in very bad taste, and to make them extremely pointed is to suggest that they are on incapable hands. American women, as a rule, have small hands, but they do not have beautiful hands. English women have large hands, but usually they are well shaped, white and soft, though firm in grasp. French women have small hands, well-formed hands, but dark hands; but it is among the Spanish and Italian women that the most beautiful hands are found. In India the hands of the women are beautifully formed, exquisitely dimpled, indeed, have every attribute of beauty; but they correspond in color with the slightly dark faces that belong to their owners.

American men seldom care enough for their hands to make them anything more than cleanly. Undoubtedly the climate here, first hot and then cold, has much to do with making the skin of the hand dry and the nails brittle, but if only a little care is given to the hands they respond quickly, and certainly a beautiful hand is a joy not only to its possessor, but to all those who either look at it or touch it. Haven't you shivered with horror as you shook hands with him of the clammy hand? Haven't you distrusted her whose hands were as soft and fat as a pincushion? And haven't you felt almost fearful as you touched the hand that was dry, hot and a bit leathery in its feeling? When the ideal hand is touched, it is cool, not cold; it is delicate, not rough, and if one is conscious of the nails at all, it is as if one felt the inside of a shell.

Some time ago there was a fad, a very silly one, for wearing a ring on the thumb. The women who prefer to be conspicuous in their get-up adopted this fashion, and a few actors were also adorned, doubtfully adorned, by the thumb ring. A little search has proven that the thumb ring at one time was dedicated to the slaves alone, consequently, in wearing it now, one is simply marking oneself as a slave to somebody or something. First of all, as a slave to folly.

The wedding ring is always the same whether it is worn by the Queen of England or she who yesterday stood behind the shop counter, and it is in very bad taste to have any other for the wedding but the plain gold circle. In this country a plain gold ring is occasionally worn by women who are not married, and this is questionable taste. In every other country a glance at the left hand of a woman tells whether she has a right to be addressed "Madame" or "Mademoiselle." A jeweler here says that in New York alone there are enough plain gold rings made in one year to encircle the entire island of Manhattan. And somebody else has started the question of the pins in connection with them—i. e., What becomes of all the plain gold rings? Among the Germans the husband wears a wedding ring, and I believe that this custom also obtains among some of the Hebrews, but generalizing it is the wife only who wears the gold symbol of marriage.

Speaking of marriage, I see that some woman has been giving as a reason for the existence of the new woman the fact that, by being a new woman and earning money, she does not have to ask a man for it. And then she went on to say: "The horror of asking one's husband or father for money is evident to all feminine minds, even though all men are not like him who exclaimed: 'What can a woman possibly want with $5!'" Bother! The average mother and daughter must be getting dreadfully below the average if she finds it difficult to ask her mankind for money.

There are no women in the world who handle as much money as the American women—I mean those women who have to ask their mankind for it. And this is a constant surprise to the English or the French women, who get what they wish and have it charged, but really handle very little money in absolute cash. I never go to the theater on Saturday afternoon that I don't feel like getting up and cheering for the American man, since through his generosity the American woman is having a good time. He makes it possible for her to invite her dearest woman friend to go out with her, to present her with a box of candy, to give her a treat after the performance, and he is satisfied if his special womankind has had a good time. English and French husbands are not so generous. They take the women out themselves and they get all the credit for spending the money. I tell you our men are fine, but we don't half appreciate them.

Frenchmen make better sons, but Americans make better husbands. The Frenchman's first thought is of his mother. He expects his wife to be subservient to her, while the wife finds her greatest happiness in her sons. But once an American is married all his family are secondary to his wife, and his mother is not of very much account until she becomes "Grandmamma," and then she is appreciated because she never forgets the children. A standing newspaper joke is about the woman who has to beg and worry her husband for money, or who has to steal it from him while he is asleep. I don't believe in that woman. I know a good many women and a good many men, and I don't know a single man mean enough to ask a woman what she is going to do with the money he gladly gives her; and I don't know a single woman who objects to asking her husband for money, for she knows if he has it she is welcome to it as the flowers of May. And as for women stealing money—well, I think the average American woman is sufficiently strong intellectually to get the better of a mean man, and to enjoy herself by forcing him to give her the money against his will. But there are not very many mean men. Of course there is the exception that proves the rule, but he is seldom a happy man, for the greatest pleasure in life after all is the giving of whatever we hold best and most beautiful.

It is a pleasure to have somebody remember you, but that isn't half as pleasant as tying up a package that is to go to somebody else.

There is a new idea afloat in regard to the survival of the fittest. It is said by those learned people who know everything that, in both England and America, blondes are disappearing. This learned person says that where you found ten blonde women five years ago you find one now, and in fifteen minutes' walk on a crowded street where 200 women were counted of these thirteen only were blondes, the rest having hair that ranged from light brown to jet black, and skins and eyes in harmony. Some famous Englishmen who examined the hair of a thousand young women came to this conclusion:

That the brunette was preferred to the blonde in matrimony in the ratio of three to two. Then he explains the growth of the brunette in this way: "It is a principle in the law of natural selection that nature adorns its pets, the men and women whom it wishes to survive and continue the race with such allurements as will prove attractive to the other sex." Now, according to this, nature has found that men prefer brunettes, choose them for wives, and then, through the hereditary transmission of traits, the blonde becomes extinct. This learned gentleman really says "is becoming extinct," and doesn't say they are extinct, otherwise I could n't be alive, but I do agree with him that there are fewer natural blondes.

Poets, however, explain it in another way; they claim that men love brunettes because they are more affectionate, that blondes make intellectual and not loving wives, consequently the blondes are out of fashion. I am sorry, but that is of no use for feminine grief against science is as nothing against the British army, so all I can say to the blondes is to be as perky as possible about their wits, and correspondingly contemptuous of the affectionate brunette. The finest combination, mentally and physically, so says a French doctor, is the blonde hair, the brunette eyes, brows and lashes and the semi-blonde skin. This woman will never make herself unhappy by her affection, but she will love discreetly and be sufficiently wise to be an agreeable companion. Learned doctors are great for citing just what types of women men ought to marry, and then if they commit the act themselves they are just as likely to make mistakes as mere ordinary men, for after all doctors are no more infallible than ordinary people who don't know the names of the bones and the reason why the nerves act as if controlled by Satan.

Personally, I prefer a blonde baby, a dark man and a semi-brunette woman. Babies with black hair always look like monkeys, while those with either fair or perfectly bald heads do suggest angels. A dark man may be no braver than a blonde one, but he looks it, and the girl with black hair, blue eyes and a fair skin is a thing of beauty and a joy forever, but you have got to go to the west of Ireland to find her.

Whenever I sit in front of the looking-glass and brush out my golden locks, and realize that the scientists say that the blondes are dying out, I chuckle at my reflection and console myself with the verse:

If bards of old the truth have told
The sirens have raven hair.
But o'er the earth since art had birth
They paint the angels fair.

Like Mr. Silas Wegg, of honored memory, dropping into poetry has been a weakness of all great people, so added to the list of Disraeli, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gambetta, Count Bismarck (I did not say Mr. Cleveland) comes the name of BAB.

The applicants for the post of secretary to the city of London schools reached the extraordinary number of 260.

NEW TO-DAY.

Kelly and Siebes
Cloaks and Suits
120 Kearny St.

Gigantic Clearance Sale—Cloaks Suits—Furs.

The Annual Cape, Coat and Suit event of San Francisco. A deliberate destruction of regular prices to clear out the balance of winter stocks.

DOUBLE CAPES, Kersey or Cheviot, all wool, velvet collars, blue or black, length 24 inches, were $7, now only.. $4.00

DOUBLE CAPES, like cut, blue or black Kersey cloth, 6 rows braid and cloth straps on top cape; were $9, now only $6.50

DOUBLE CAPES, fine Boucle, 4 rows braid around collar and top cape, black or blue, 24 inches long; were $9 50, now only $6.00

DOUBLE CAPES, fine Curly Boucle, trimmed with band of stitched satin, length 26 inches; were $10, now only. $6.00

FINE KERSEY JACKETS, black or blue, the very latest styles; were $9 50, now only $5.

FINEST ROUGH-CLOTH and BOUCLE JACKETS, latest styles sleeves, fronts and buttons; were $12 50, now $7 50.

VERY SPECIAL.

150 FINE CLOTH JACKETS, big sleeves, good materials; were $15, your choice now $3 50.

200 FINE ALL-WOOL CLOTH JACKETS, black or colors; were $20, choice now $4 50.

Kelly and Siebes
Cloaks and Suits
120 Kearny St.

Gigantic Clearance Sale—Cloaks Suits—Furs.

Plain figures on every garment. No reduction from the marked price. Send mail orders at once for advertised goods.

SINGLE CAPES, Kersey or Boucle, 8 rows braid and cloth straps as in cut above, 27 inches long, extra full, blue or black; were $9 50, now..... $6.00

SINGLE CAPES, Kersey or Boucle, plain or fur trimmed, 24 inches long and very full, black only; were $13, now..... $7.00

FINE SILK PLUSH CAPES, big, wide sweeps, fur trimmed, silk lined; were $12, now only..... $8.00

ELEGANT VELOUR DU NORD CAPES, braided and beaded, fur trimmed as in cut top of column, silk lined; were $22 50, now only..... $13.50

NOBBY VELOUR DU NORD CAPES, braided and beaded, silk lined; reduced from $15 to..... $10.00

FINE PLUSH DOUBLE CAPES, fur trimmed, silk lined; reduced from $17 to..... $7.50

Waists.

BOUCLE CLOTH WAISTS, made in the latest styles, black or tan; reduced from $3 to..... $1.75

Children's Jackets.

CHILDREN'S JACKETS, fine cloths, very pretty styles, sizes from 6 years up; were $7; very special price..... $4.00

Kelly and Siebes
Cloaks and Suits
120 Kearny St.

Gigantic Clearance Sale—Cloaks Suits—Furs.

Not "Back Numbers," but the newest, nobbiest garments in the city, reduced one-third to one-half from beginning-of-season prices.

FINE CHINA SEAL FUR CAPES, look and wear like real seal, silk lining throughout, length 24 inches; were $19, now only..... $13.50

27 inches, were $22 50, now..... $15 00
30 inches, were $27 50, now..... $16 50

Any of above with Black Marten Collar $2 extra.

BLACK BALTIC SEAL FUR CAPES, 24 inches long; were $13 50, now only..... $7.50

WOOL SEAL CAPES, Opossum edged, silk lined, 24 inches long; were ; now only..... $12.50

27 inches, were , now $15 00
30 inches, were , now..... $17 50

HEAVY TAILOR'S SERGE DRESSES, box fronts, jackets and skirts fully lined, black or blue; were $22 50, reduced to $15.

ROUGH BOUCLE-CLOTH DRESSES, box fronts, skirts and jackets fully lined, many different color effects; were $29, reduced to $16 50.

VERY SPECIAL.

275 FINE CLOTH DRESSES, box-jacket styles and full skirts, the $15 grade; choice now for $7 50.