

THE NEW ENGLAND FARM HOUSE.

Decidedly one of the best arranged and most pleasing features of the Fair is the New England Farm House. It is situated in the south end of the Soldiers' Home, in close proximity to the Union Hall, and is open every day and evening. We do not know who is entitled to the credit of getting up the affair, but she is deserving of the thanks of all whoever she may be, and those who have so successfully carried out the idea are no less entitled to every praise for the spirit they have evinced and the labor they have taken in having everything as perfect and complete as possible.

On entering the Farm House we find ourselves in an immense room, the very appearance and atmosphere of which bespeak the genuine hospitality of the olden times. The air we breathe is impregnated with fumes of cooking viands, and if the nerves of the nasal organ are in good order we can distinguish the different flavors that salute them. We have the substantial roast-beef, the somewhat lighter roast mutton, the genuine pork and beans, the solid corn beef and greens, and mingled with them comes as a sort of desert for the olfactory nerves the flavor of apple jack, pumpkin pies, stewed apples, and some other articles which we are too modern to know the names of, and yet which whet the appetite and make one wish to eat whether he feels hungry or not.

Looking around the apartment we find a curious scene, which recalls to our minds what we have heard with our ears and what our fathers have told us of the old time before, and we verily imagine that Father Time has reversed his course, and that we have flown backward through "the long vista of departed years," to the days of our grand parents' childhood. Everything we see is ancient, in appearance at least, if the fair ladies around us will forgive us for being so ungallant as to say so. Their costumes only are ancient, for on their cheeks is the bloom of health and youth, and on their lips the smile of happiness; they are but pictures of the girls that our grandfathers courted a century ago, before modern innovations usurped the place of the beauty of simplicity.

Any candid observer looking at this scene must admit that the ladies are decidedly more becoming in these simple costumes of the olden time than in those of the present day, and as for the comfort of them we can only say that we slyly overheard two of the young ladies remarking to each other that they felt very much more at ease in the old style of dress than in those they usually wore. On this latter point we, of course, can only speak from hearsay, for being a bachelor, we felt a delicacy in speaking on the subject, and therefore could not get the opinions of the ladies themselves, as we might have, were we so fortunate as to be a benedict. Of the dresses we can only say they are of different patterns, though there is a sort of uniformity in the make of them. They are all short in the skirt, coming to within three to five inches of the floor, and beneath each peeps out a little pair of old fashioned slippers, decorated on the toe with buckles or rosetts. The waists are nearly all short and cut low in the neck, though some few of them are high-necked and short sleeved. Crinoline, of course, is entirely discarded. The hair is dressed in various ways, some having it all combed back from the face and rolled over the top of the head in the Martha Washington style, which style, by the by, is we believe, being introduced in New York at the present time. Some have it tied in a big bunch at the back of the head, and ornamented with a large back comb; others have it gathered at the top of the head in Queen Elizabeth style, while others again wear it in various ways that we cannot describe. The whole of those present constitute one family—a duced fine one to go courting in, we should think—and is presided over by grandpa and grandma, after whom come Marm and Pap and then all the girls. They all have names and each one for the time being is known by that name only. Most of the characters are remarkably well taken and entered into with all the earnestness and spirit imaginable. Grandpa and grandma are very good and are represented by Mr. Simpson and Mrs. Loomis. Marm Winslow is done very well, by Mrs. Wilson, as is also that of her partner Increase Winslow by Mr. Sison. Thankful is one of the best rendered characters of the family, and is taken by Mrs. Tillinghast, who enters into the undertaking with great spirit. Rachel by Miss Louisa Duffield, is also good, as is that of Deborah by Miss Mary Duffield. The characters in fact are all well taken, and excite the admiration of all who enter the old kitchen. The following are the names of the principal ones in addition to

those we have already mentioned: Patience, Jennie Nicholas; Patty, Lizzie Stewart; Nabby, Mrs. Turner; Dorcas, Mrs. Jacobs; Keturah, Mrs. Hibbard; Prudence, Mrs. Nixer; Melvina, Sallie Nicholas; Polly, Mrs. Osgood; Betsy, Mrs. Hawkins; Belinda, Mrs. Gillett; Priscilla, Dora Thomas; Hester, Fanny Griggs; Sallie Ann, Julia Griggs; Joannah, Carrie Higgins; Hiram, Mr. Baker. There are others in the family but their names we did not learn.

The room is furnished with old articles of all kinds. There are old pictures, looking glasses, and books; an ancient fireplace, over which hang dried apples, knitted socks, all sorts of cooking utensils, and around it stand a number of genuine high-backed chairs, such as straightened the backs of the old chaps of the last century. The chest of drawers, the spinning-wheel, the cradle, baby and all, the warming pan, the old family plate on the sideboard, and the china on the dresser, are all to be seen. Everything, in fact, is complete and proper, so far as we can judge, and the articles are not imitations, but real old relics that have been gathered up through New England with much trouble and expense.

The scene in the evening is always a lively and interesting one. The youngsters play "oats, sweet beans," "Who's got the button?" "Twirl the trencher," some other old game, which they enter into with downright earnestness, and appear to enjoy immensely. At the same time old folk sit near the fireplace enjoying the scene, while some of the middle-aged women sit at the loom or spinning-wheel, and work away, humming an old song or talking of old times to some one near. Thus the evening goes by in a right jolly manner, and while one looks on he cannot but feel that the scene is a pleasant and merry one, and that these people of another age, as they appear to be, are indeed contented and happy in the enjoyment of those innocent sports in which they spend their leisure hours.

During the day the scene is a very different one, for then all is bustle, work and activity. Hundreds of persons dine here every day, and have all the good old dishes served up to them in the good old style by the fair ladies in the quaint dresses. Those who wish to enjoy a good substantial meal in a fine pleasant way, should not fail to call in at the New England Farm House and get it.

The Baptist ladies have charge of this attractive spot, and they are certainly deserving of every praise for the great labor they have used and the success which has attended them.

Any one who wishes to get married in an unusual manner, can be accommodated at the Farm House, where clergyman, costumes and all will be provided. We do not know whether this takes in the lady too, but those young gents who feel a curiosity on the subject can have this point settled by enquiring of Patience, or Rachel, or Deborah, or Sally Ann, or Priscilla, or any other of the girls who have not yet gone through this interesting ordeal. Step up, boys, and let us have a wedding in the old style, just to see how it was that the old folks got through the work. If you think it necessary to do any "courting" beforehand, you will have every chance and a large audience to look at you.

DOGS IN THE MANGER.

While it may be conceded as an argumentative postulate that there is in every human being a germ of goodness, it must be conceded that in many cases the aforesaid germ remains totally undeveloped and without the slightest indications of vitality. The sun of Divine goodness shines upon it; the tears of affliction water it; it is buried in the soil of society whose nourishing elements might be appropriated, but still it is the same dry, hard, useless substance. While others choose from the circumstances of life and the dealings of Providence materials for development and culture, and silently absorbing the vital forces, become strong and vigorous, beautiful and blooming. These "germs" are as shrivelled as though they had lain in close proximity to an Egyptian mummy for the last three thousand years.

We protest, in advance, that we do not mean to trench upon theological ground—that bourne from whence no controversial traveler ever returns—but it does seem to a plain sinner that there is a failure in these "germs" which won't or can't grow, despite all the inviting influences of example, and all the coaxing of nature and grace. Around the germ of grains or fruits is stowed away a supply of starch or sugar to feed it until it takes root in the soil and can draw its nutriment thence. Around these germs of humanity, however, no spiritual starch or sugar can be discerned by microscopic examination. This may explain the paradoxical phenomenon.

What or where the difficulty lies, whether in inherent deformity or peculiar affinity for villainy, it is not easy to determine; but it is a lamentable fact which cannot be concealed, that there are many mean people in this world of ours. We do not feel disposed to speak sneeringly or depreciatingly of this "sublunary" world. It is, upon an average, a tolerably respectable concern, a very decent affair. We manage to enjoy it and do not mean to grumble. At any rate it is the best world we ever had anything to do with—according to our best recollection—and it is a trifle dubious how soon we shall start business in a better one.

But as a philosopher, we are of course interested in every phase of humanity, and try to study everything connected therewith in a Catholic spirit and with an eye to scientific results. But our researches have utterly failed to throw any clear light on one class of mysterious phenomena; mysterious upon any other theory than "total depravity," which we don't here insist upon. We mean the mystery of meanness; meanness in the concute and meanness in the abstract; meanness in season and out of season, which some people are endowed with, and will positively insist upon displaying on all possible occasions. Does any person actuated by the purest motives, project some plan for a purpose purely philanthropic and with self-denying zeal carry the purpose into practical results. These preternatural specimens of meanness begin at once to suspect some sinister motive. They are certain there must be selfishness at the bottom. It makes no difference how great the sacrifice made, how noble the object, how untarnished the good name of those engaged therein, immediately these low curs begin to asperse their characters and villify their motives, and howl in horrible dissonance about honesty and honor, as if they had any conception of those qualities of character.

Confessing the goodness of the cause and the necessity of the work they not only will not engage it nor encourage others, but oppose and injure in every possible way.

The great Fair, like every other occasion of magnitude, unkennels some—a few, only, we are happy to say—of these canine beauties whose discordant voices, however, are drowned by the general meed of praise. They have discovered that the Fair is got up for a speculation! They are positive that some one is "feathering his nest," and their virtuous indignation is aroused. What matters it to them the weeks of weary toil, the patient labor day and night, the generous self-sacrifice which seeks not even publicity for itself? They can only see through jaundiced eyes some "questionable shape" of selfishness.

We do not wish to elevate these people to the dignity of opponents. We feel for them, personally, as much contempt as we can for human beings, but, viewed as a class, they become subjects of philosophical study and analysis. We have not yet solved the knotty problem, however. We cannot see how a man can feel happy in being mean, nor pleasure in growing meaner every day. We have not quite settled the uses of these harpies in this dispensation. It comes too near the question of "original sin" which poets from Pope to Timothy Titcomb have theorized upon; novelists have expounded, and divines often elucidated beyond all controversy.

We will modestly suggest, however, that they may be intended to increase the radiant luster of goodness by, contrast with their dark deformity. If we might be allowed to hint at metempsychosis, we should say the persons in question were noxious vermin, or snarling puppies in some previous state of existence, and had not rid themselves of their former delightful characteristics.

So we say to all good men and women; take the matter in most imperturbable good humor. Wasps will be wasps, and mosquitoes will annoy if they can; and there is, probably, in the "eternal fitness of things," a reason why they should. Go on in sublime indifference, sustained by a consciousness of generosity in purpose, and unflagging zeal and energy in action, and

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite,  
For God hath made them so."

BRYAN HALL, 6 P. M.—VOTE ON GOLD PISTOL.—Sheridan, 70; Grant, 34; Sherman, 85; Logan, 10; Thomas, 3; Hooker, 1; Grierson, 2; McClellan, 3; Surgeon Gen. Barnes, 1.

SILVER PISTOL.

Gen. T. O. Osborn, 156; Schofield, 21; Sweet, 5; Paine, 1; Bradley, 3; Meredith, 1; Stolbraud, 1; McCook, 1; Col. Pritchard, 1; Hough, 1; Hancock, 2; Strong, 5; Capt. J. T. Shanks, 2.

—What is the difference between ancient and modern chivalry? One wore coats of mail and the other coats of female.

READING FOR THE WOMEN.

—A number of ladies of Paris have formed themselves into an association for the purpose of collecting clothes and linen for the enfranchised slaves of the United States. They have severally undertaken to form groups, by each of which at least five pounds' worth of articles shall be forwarded.

—The huge necklaces which are now worn in Paris, even above high dresses, have all large crosses suspended from them. These crosses are in a style somewhat similar to those worn formerly by the French peasants, and called *a la Jennette*, the only difference being that they are a trifle flatter. The jet necklets have jet crosses barred vertically; with the gold necklets the crosses are made of dead gold, studded with stars. Many ladies belonging to the higher circles are wearing large necklaces, the beads and crosses of which are made of sandal-wood.

—Taste in dress can scarcely lead its possessor astray, and is, indeed, a moral guide. It is full of reminders and admonitions; nor can a woman dress herself in perfect taste without a distinct knowledge of her personal defects. A hundred fashions are pretty and charming in themselves, but she knows they are *not for her* and resists them. They are forbidden by something in figure, complexion, station, age, or character, which, though not flattering to her vanity, she does not permit herself to forget. Passion for dress profuse and extravagant; taste in dress is full of wise, philosophical economies, knowing that the merit of decoration is not in its elaborate richness or expense, but in its adaptation. Taste in dress is essentially moderate and self-collected; never forgetting that the object of dress is not to exhibit itself but its wearer; that all that the most splendid toilet has to do is to set off a noble, graceful and winning presence, and itself to be lost in a pleasing or effective, or, it may be, dazzling general impression. Passion for dress is always intent on what others will think—on taking some new eye by storm; taste has self-respect, and, before all things, must satisfy its own notions of propriety and grace.

—TUSCAN HATS.—The hats and bonnets of *paile d'Italie*, which enjoys such favor in the fashionable world, are all manufactured in Tuscany, and, according to official returns, their annual value is about eleven millions of francs. Tuscany is the only part of Italy which produces straw fine enough for those bonnets, and the finest of all is grown in the immediate vicinity of Florence. The attempts made to grow the same straw in the Marches, Romagna and Naples, have met with little success. The straw is the produce of a particular kind of wheat, the stems of which never exceed fifteen or sixteen inches in height, and bear very small ears, containing just enough seed for re-sowing. All the women in the district are straw-plaiters, and the finest specimens of the plait are frequently seen in the hats worn by the peasant women, who have made them for their own use, and refuse to sell them at any price. The sewing or jointing of the plait is a difficult and tedious operation, as a hat, to be perfect, must seem to be of one piece. At Florence, the number of these hats made yearly is about 530,000. In certain localities, as at Impoli, for instance, four thousand women and girls are employed at this work, and at Sesto there are about two thousand.

—THE WOMEN OF PARAGUAY.—The author of "Sketches in Paraguay" gives us this fragment morsel:—Everybody smokes in Paraguay, and nearly every female above thirteen years of age chews. I am wrong. They do not chew, but put the tobacco in their mouths, keep it there constantly, except when eating, and, instead of chewing it, roll it about with their tongues and suck it. Only imagine yourself about to salute the red lips of a magnificent little Hebe, arrayed in satin and flashing with diamonds; she puts you back with one delicate hand, while, with the fair taper fingers of the other, she draws forth from her mouth a brownish black roll of tobacco, quite two inches long, looking like a monstrous grub, and, depositing the savory morsel on the rim of your sombrero, puts up her face and is ready for your salute. I have sometimes seen an over-delicate foreigner turn with a shudder of loathing under such circumstances, and get the epithet of *el savaco* (the savage) applied to him by the offended beauty for this sensitive squeamishness. However, one soon gets used to this in Paraguay, where you are perforce of custom obliged to kiss every lady you are introduced to; and one half you meet are really tempting enough to render you reckless of consequences; you would sip the dew of the proffered lips in the face of a tobacco battery—even the double-distilled "honeydew" of old Virginia.