

### A "CORN-SHUCKING"

AWAY DOWN IN GEORGIA IN OLD PLANTATION DAYS.

The Gathered Hosts—Choosing a Leader—Keeping Time to Song and Chorus—Popping Joe's "Blessin'"—The Banquet Table.

[M. F. De M. in Valdosta (Ga.) Times.]

I suppose our Yankee friends would call it a "hunting bee," as they are wont to call other such gatherings "paring bees," "quilting bees," etc., etc. But we call it a corn shuck. You must imagine that it is early autumn. The foliage of the distant woodlands have taken on all the variegated colors of the rainbow. There are gum trees and maples whose tops are one sheet of flame, oaks and towering hickories crowned with a mass of orange and golden colored leaves. The persimmon trees are loaded with their innumerable and the late summer grapes hang in rich purple clusters along the fence rows next to the swamp. The pines alone are not affected by the change of season. They rise, gaunt and grim, the somber foliage taking on a deeper tint by the contrast of colors.

The bread fields of cotton are white as snow, and only the "slip shucks" remain on the stalks where lately hung pendant the rusty ears of golden corn which are now piled in a semi-circle inside the barnyard. I say after day the loaded wagons have deposited their precious freight on the growing pile, until now it forms a rampart high enough to conceal a man and long enough to allow 100 men to seat themselves along its line. Invitations have been sent to all the neighboring farms, and as the dusk deepens and the first timid stars raise the purple curtain and gaze timidly down on the beautiful earth, they begin to drop in, singly, in pairs and in small parties. They are mostly big, brawny darkeys with phenomenal lung power, intermixed with a fair sprinkling of hardy farmers and "young masses" who have either received permission, or have run away to enjoy the festive frolic.

Now there is considerable discussion about a leader. Every big farm has an acknowledged leader, and each party stoutly maintains the excellency of its own favorite. Charlie Green is finally chosen, and seizing a long pole of corn he mounts the corn pile, pulls his hat and bows low to the "boss" and to his auditors and followers, and then strikes up his wild song.

"O! dey's on 'ing a po' man siliom ober do, Frow out de clo co'n to frow in de new. O! rally roan' de co'n pile Hoo jolly ho!

Rally roan' de co'n pile, Hoo jolly ho!

All hands join in the chorus, and the rustling of the shucks, and the steady patter of the clean ears as they are tossed into the open space in front, makes a spirited accompaniment to the weird music. Up and down, back and forth, the leader trends the corn pile, singing at the top of his voice and swaying hands and arms, head and body, in time to his music. All are careful not to hit him, and he seems to pay no heed to the shower of ears that is lying around his head.

From Saturday night twell Sunday, De gals is on my mind, But Monday mornin' bright an' soon, De white man got me a gwine.

O! git'er long down de road, O! git'er long down de road, Come git'er long down de road, my lab, Come git'er long down de road.

The pile of rough corn diminishes rapidly, the shucks are being carried away by the boys who have some high old times practicing gymnastics on the yielding pile, the glistening ears fall thick and fast on the accumulating pile of clean ears.

There has been an increasing light in the east for some minutes, and now the full autumn moon arises above the tree tops, and glides up the purple sky in all her majestic and bewildering splendor. By her light we see the dusky faces, and the fantastic movements of the long row of brawny arms that are busily working, all unconscious of the hardness of the labor, so interested are they in the songs of the leader.

Suddenly, at a signal from Charlie, all hands stop, and the "Old Marster" approaches the leader with a fat looking brown jug and a tin cup. He speaks a word to Charlie, who makes obeisance, and in a loud voice, calls out:

"Silence! Gem'len an' friends! I drinks dis to de heart of de good marster, de mistis, de young marster, de young masses; may dey lib long an' be happy!" Amidst prolonged cheers the toast is drunk first by Charlie, and then the jug is passed along the line, each man drinking his "spec" of de marster and de mistis; should the first give out another is put in the hands of the server and particular pains is taken to see that all are treated alike. Then the leader strikes up:

Fifty weight of Johnny cake, Fifty weight of cheese, A big pot of hominy, An' a little pot of peas.

O! Jenny, ain't yo' ash cake done my darlin'?

Jenny ain't yo' ash cake done, my darlin'!

Away they go, and the laugh and song, included with jests at the expense of the leader, who is sure to be ready with a fitting repartee, are kept up until the last nibble is shucked.

Then comes the tug of war. For some time there has been a contest on the breeze, from the great kitchen a most delicious aroma. Now the tables are laid with a bounteous repast for the white neighbors in doors. For the darkeys, who are largely in the majority, long tables have been improvised beneath the great trees in the yard. Large fires are kindled so that the tables are well lighted, and buxom servant maids cast long sidelong glances at certain besuited-looking swains of dusky hue, as they move around briskly piling up and arranging the loaves of brown bread and the dishes of meat, potatoes, vegetables and other delicacies. Charlie directs the movements of the banqueters, and they are soon ranged along each side of the long table.

"Hats off, boys, an' tention while Popper Joe ax's de blessin'." A venerable negro whose woolly locks are scant and gray, appears before the head of the board, slowly and reverently he lifts his palsied and withered hands. All heads are instantly bowed in reverence.

"O! Hebenly Marster! Bress 'im in basket an' in store. Bress 'e family, an' 'e servants, an' 'e propy and all dat am bis'n. An' grant, oh! good Lead, to sanctify dis food to de good ob our peashin' bodies an' feed our souls on de bread ob life, fo Jesus make 'Amos!"

"Now, des' dey's selves boys," cries Charlie, and straightway they proceed to devour the tempting viands. After supper, in response to a request from the marster, they sing a few of their wild plantation songs, and then disperse in all directions.

### HINDOO RELIGION IN CALCUTTA.

A Dirty Devotee—Sacrificing Goats—Education, Cremation, Cleanliness.

[Calcutta Cor. G.azette Herald.]

The Hindoos are great in religious professions, and you can hardly be long in the street without meeting one of the fanatical devotees dressed in gaily muslin and tinsel carried along to the sound of the tom-tom—a melancholy sort of drum—and accompanied by quite a crowd of idlers, evidently bent on amusing themselves.

We followed one of these groups toward evening one day, and found that they ended by throwing the idol into the river. Another time we found a crowd following a devotee a dirty-looking fellow, holding his right hand on high in a rigid position. We saw that the idol had been clenched in so long that the nails had grown through the hand, and stuck out at the back fully an inch. We had read of such a thing, but thought it no longer existed; but there it was, in a crowded street in Calcutta, not a stone's throw from the schoolhouse of the church mission, and hundreds of natives following the man in admiration and reverence.

Superstition is rampant here. Temples are in every street. They are in general poor erections, with tawdry decorations and hideous gods and symbols of worship. Brahmin priests are waiting about, and crowds constantly going in, not in reverence or silence, but with a continual chatter which is perfectly deafening. At one temple which we visited, they were sacrificing goats. The head of the poor beast was stuck in between two sticks and held down with a pin, and then chopped off with one blow of a heavy knife. This was done to about twenty-five goats while we were there. These are the substitutes for the human sacrifices that at one time were made to the idol Kali, and we believe that more than 200 goats are daily sacrificed in this temple. As the heat was great, and the whole place very untidy, the smells were most disagreeable. Whatever may be the principles of the Hindoo religion, we formed the very lowest opinion of its practices.

There are many excellent educational institutions, both governmental and private, in the native part of Calcutta, and large numbers of natives speak English, but the great bulk of the common people seem sunk in ignorance, cremation is practiced by the Hindoos, and you will often see a couple of coolies trotting along with a bundle suspended from a bamboo pole. This is a dead body being taken to the burning grate, which is an inclosure by the river side. Here the bodies are placed on piles of wood, the legs tucked under to shorten the pyre, and the fire is lit, while a few seeming indifferent spectators stand about. The ashes are afterward gathered in a basket and thrown in the river. The scenes along the banks of the river are very interesting. There are numerous ghats, as they call the flights of steps, usually ornamented with a colonnade at the top.

Here great numbers of people are continually bathing and washing their scanty garments, all ages and both sexes mixed promiscuously together. The Hindoo women of the lower classes do a great deal of outdoor work. They mix lime and carry bricks for the builders and bear great loads of produce from the country on their heads. They never wear shoes, but some of them paint their feet so as to resemble them. They all wear great quantities of cheap jewelry—anklets, armlets, ear-rings, and nose rings, and rings on the fingers and on the toes. The ornament of the thumb—white, red and yellow principally—is gracefully folded round the person and throw over the head. No Hindoo woman ever wears a hat or a cap. The better class of females, we suppose, are secluded in the zenanas, as we never saw any, although many closed carriages are to be seen in the streets and drives, which we suppose contained Hindoo ladies.

### TIMELY WARNING.

THE RISK THAT IS RUN IN CHECKING PERSPIRATION.

What Killed a Noted Orator—How Cold It Taken—A Few Individual Cases Which Teach a Significant Lesson.

[Hall's Journal of Health.]

Edward Everett, the finished scholar, the accomplished diplomat, the orator, the statesman, the patriot, became overheated in testifying in a court-room on Monday morning, went to Faneuil hall, which was cold, at in a draft of air until his turn came to speak; "but my hands and feet were ice, my lungs on fire. In this condition I had to go and spend three hours in the court-room." He died in less than a week from this checking of the perspiration. It was enough to kill any man.

Professor Mitchell, the gallant soldier, and the most eloquent astronomical lecturer that has ever lived, while in a state of perspiration in yellow fever, the certain sign of recovery, left his bed, went into another room, became chilled in a moment, and died the same night.

If while perspiring, or while something warmer than usual, from exercise or a heated room, there is a sudden exposure to stillness, to a still, cold air, or to a raw, damp atmosphere, or to a draft, whether an open window or door or street corner, an inevitable result is a violent and instantaneous closing of the pores of the skin, by which waste and impure matters, which were making their way out of the system, are compelled to seek an exit through some other channel and break through some weaker part, not the natural one. The idea is presented by saying that cold has settled in that part. To illustrate:

A lady was about getting into a small boat to cross the Delaware; but wishing first to get an orange at a fruit-stand, she ran up the bank of the river, and on her return to the boat found herself much heated, for it was summer, but there was a little wind on the water, and the clothing soon felt cold to her. The next morning she had a severe cold, which settled on her lungs, and within the year she died of consumption.

A stout, strong man was working in a garden in May, feeling a little tired about noon he sat down in the shade of the house and fell asleep; he woke up chilly; inflammation of the lungs followed, ending, after two years of great suffering, in consumption.

A Boston ship owner, while on the deck of one of his vessels, thought he would "lend a hand" in some emergency, and pulling off his coat worked with a will until he perspired freely, when he sat down to rest while, enjoying the delicious breeze from the sea. On attempting to rise, he found himself unable, and was so stiff in his joints that he had to be carried home and put to bed, which he did not leave until the end of two years, when he was barely able to hobble down to the wharf on crutches.

A lady after being unusually busy all day, found herself heated, and tired toward sundown of a summer day. She concluded she would rest herself by taking a drive to town in an open vehicle. The ride made her uncomfortably cool, but she warmed herself up by an hour's shopping, when she turned homeward, it being late in the evening, she found herself more decidedly chilly than before. At midnight she had pneumonia (inflammation of the lungs), and in three months had the ordinary symptoms of confirmed consumption.

A lady of great energy of character lost her cook, and had to take her place for four days; the kitchen was warm, and there was a draft of air through it. When the work was done, warm and weary, she went to her chamber and laid down on the bed to rest herself. This operation was repeated several times a day. On the fifth day she had an attack of lung fever; at the end of six months she was unable to leave her chamber, only to find herself suffering with all the more prominent symptoms of confirmed consumption; such as quick pulse, night and morning cough, night-sweats, debility, short breath and falling away.

A young lady rose from her bed on a November night, and leaned her arm on the cold window sill to listen to a serenade. Next morning she had pneumonia, and suffered the horrors of asthma for the remainder of a long life.

Multitudes of women lose health and life every year, in one of two ways: By busying themselves in a warm kitchen until weary, and then throwing themselves on a bed or sofa, without covering, and perhaps in a room without a fire; or by removing the outer clothing and perhaps changing the dress for a more common one as soon as they enter the house after a walk or a shopping. The rule should be invariable to sit at once to a warm room and keep on all the clothing at least for five or ten minutes, until the forehead is perfectly dry. In all weathers, if you have to walk and ride on any occasion, do the riding first.

### Discretion of the Type-Writer.

Chicago Herald.

That young woman who the other day sent her "young man's" letter back and dismissed his suit at once and for all because the youth was thoughtless enough to address her with a type-writer ought to be regarded as a pioneer in a much-needed reform. She certainly will be commended in many quarters for grasping boldly an evil and setting her foot on it. The type-writer is no doubt a useful and labor-saving machine, but it is gradually becoming an implement of discourtesy, all the same, and its power for evil in this respect needs to be checked. While there are thousands of business men and others who make constant use of these machines there are also many other thousands who do not, and who retain the old-fashioned idea that in a correspondence of a semi-friendly or confidential nature no eye should fall upon it but the two participants.

Nothing is so exasperating to a person who does not use a type-writer or employ an amanuensis as to write an autograph letter to a friend on some topic of a half-private nature, and receive in reply a sheet covered with the cold, mechanical machinery of the type-writer. It realizes that the nature of his business is known to at least two others besides the one who alone has a right to know it, and he chafes under it, and naturally resolves that the next time he has occasion to communicate with that friend he will go and see him in person.

Again, the type-writer, except with letters of the most formal business character, is discourteous, because it carries with it a suggestion of indifference, and nothing can be more impolite than to regard a friend's communication. As was before said, the type-writer is useful, but those who employ it so universally should be cautious and mindful of the courtesies and amenities that should always govern correspondence. Between business men, business correspondence may be done by machinery, but between friendly acquaintances on matters not wholly relating to business, a reply by type-writer to an autograph letter can be considered little less than an affront. It certainly is a discourtesy.

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