Rural Homes.

[From the Pacific Rural Press.]

EDITORS PRESS.—In my last short article I touched on the condition of our rural houses, contrasting the present with the remembered past. In continuation of the same subject, I shall make a few remarks toward elevating the condition of "country houses," socially, morally and spiritually.

It cannot be denied that the outward appearance is sometimes overlooked because of expense and time necessary for adornment; there are many noble exceptions, and these exceptions will be found equally advanced in all the internal arrangements of the household. Fence, trees, flowers, fruits and vegetables should form the surroundings of every well ordered rural home. Insensibly the mind partakes of the beauty of such surroundings and betrays itself in all the arrangements of the farm; outward habits of taste and culture produce a love for the beautiful in the internal arrangements of home; the young are elevated by contact with a well kept garden patch. Flowers have lessons of quiet repose, teaching the guardianship of a power which adorns and beautifies with almost heavenly colors the flora of nature. Mark the homestead thus surrounded, and you will find the inmates cultivated in mind, refined in manners, and honest in purpose; order reigns supreme in all the different walks of life; the picture is an ever present joy to the inmates and to the visitor who may refresh his senses by the surroundings of cultivated rural life.

Bleak Homes.

California has many specimens, although each revolving year presents a less number. An acre of beautiful black loam may yield its forty or fifty bushels; cattle, sheep and hogs may run at large in almost countless numbers, still the unpainted house stands alone in the midst of bare plains, or may be under a solitary oak, whose giant trunk has withstood the winter blasts for half a century. No fruit trees, or cultivated shade trees are to be seen, no blushing flower to drink the evening dew, so as to open its bright petals to the morning sun; nothing greets the eye but broken fences and windows; hogs and chickens striving for possession: every appointment, within on a par with what we find without; all outward appearances only a reflex of the mind within; if a paper finds its way to such a home, it belongs to the yellow cover literature; cards and cordials take a front rank. The young men here, under such influences, are experts in riding mustang horses and using the lariats. Those who have been close observers of California rural life know full well that the picture is not overdrawn. These articles are written for the purpose of elevating such rural homes as above described, through a plain picture of contrast. I once heard a gentleman remark that he could tell where the inmates of a rural home came from by its surroundings. There is no denying the fact that as we beautify and cultivate the surroundings of home, we at the same time cultivate and elevate the mind.

Morals.

As we elevate our finer sensibilities, our moral nature becomes correspondingly sensitive; pride—in its true sense—is enlarged, and we take a broader view of the nature of an obligation; the love of truth blends with the love of the beautiful. The lover of "tree, shrub, fruit and flower," is also a lover of childhood, and those who are lovers of children can never cultivate the immorality belonging the ignorant and vicious. Therefore, the beautifying of rural houses raises the possessor morally in the scale of being, and makes him one who wields an influence in the community in which he dwells. Show me one man whose home is unpainted and void of green foliage, who has made his influence felt as a statesman or Christian, and I will show you many from the houses of the beautiful. Education, culture and morality follow the footsteps of a pleasant home, outwardly adorned with tree, fruit and flower.

Spirituality

Is engendered by having our finer sensibilities quickened by contact with the beautiful. Order is one of nature's grandest laws. Where the beautiful is cultivated in home surroundings, order generally prevails in all the business and domestic departments. The color and fragrance of the rose naturally attract the better part of our nature from Nature up to Nature's God, and the duties and burdens of life are cheerfully performed, as a duty, in return for all the blessings which a kind Providence has bestowed upon us.

Our surroundings educate the mind, develop our latent energies, and build a foundation of peace—or pain—for the present, and shadow forth the future when time with us on earth shall be no more. JOHN TAYLOR.

Mount Pleasant, Sept. 30th, 1873.

Thanksgiving Proclamation by the President.

WASHINGTON, October 14th.—By the President of the United States of America, a proclamation:

"The approaching close of another year brings with it the occasion for renewed thanksgiving and acknowledgment to the Almighty Ruler of the Universe. Of the unnumbered mercies which he has bestowed upon us, abundant harvests have been among the rewards of industry. With local exceptions health has been among the blessings enjoyed. Tranquility at home and peace with other nations have prevailed. Frugal industry is regaining its merited recognition and merited rewards. Gradually, but under the Providence of God, surely, as we trust, the nation is recovering from the lingering results of a civil strife. For these and all mercies vouchsafed, it becomes us as a people to return heartfelt and grateful acknowledegments; and with our thanksgiving we may unite prayers for the cessation of local and temporary suffering. I therefore recommend that on Thursday the 27th day of November next, the people meet in their respective places of worship, to make their acknowledgements to Almighty God for His bounties and protection, and to offer to Him prayer for their continuance.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at Washington, this 14th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1873, and of the independence of the United States the ninety-seventh.

(Signed,) U. S. GRANT, President.
By Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State.

HAM TOAST.—When a ham gets unsightly for the table, take off as much of it as you require and mince it finely. To one pint of mince put two tablespoonfuls of cream, or fresh, rich milk. Boil it five minutes; prepare well buttered toast, and spread the mince on them. Strew over this well grated bread crumbs, a little parsley and some small pieces of butter. Brown in a quick oven and serve hot.

American and European Agricultural Fairs.

In every European country where agricultural fairs are held, the prime object is to draw together the producer, consumer or purchaser. The large majority of visitors go either to buy or sell something. Of course it is made a gala day, and the farmers' sons and daughters all turn out to the fair, because every farmer expects to sell something, of which the sons and daughters get their share of the proceeds, and as shopkeepers offer their best on these occasions, it is the very time to buy.

We have personally visited an English fair, where sixty-five different lots of butter from as many dairymen, were on exhibition. Now will anyone suppose, that if the real object was to secure the one single premium, as offered by our State Society for the "best 25 pounds of butter at least three months old," that 65 dairymen would trouble themselves to exhibit simply for the premium? We hardly think they would. But offer ten premiums for the best ten lots of butter—and the price of one less horse race would furnish the money—and we get an exhibit that commands not only the attention of committees and visitors, but purchasers, and knowing that a large quantity of the best butter in the State would be on exhibition and for sale, crowds of buyers would be in attendance to lay in their winter's supplies.

We are aware that many find it inconvenient, if not impossible, to keep their butter in good condition for the examination of committees and purchasers at the State Fair, owing to the heat of the weather. And why? Only because the managers appropiate the people's money for the purchase of hay and grain to feed scores of fast horses at the race track, that ought to be expended in procuring a refrigerator to be kept cool by ice, in which 20 or 30 lots of butter—which would be exhibited, if the least regard was had to the importance of this great industry—might be kept in good order and shown to committees and purchasers, and an interest awakened that can not be in any other way; and what we say of butter will apply equally to many other farm products.

We want more attention given to those important products that are the food of the nations. The cereals should come in for an extended list of premiums. The best specimens of wheat in all its varieties should be shown in considerable quantity, that farmers may make comparisons by measure and weight and learn just where they can obtain their supplies of superior grains for seed. In short, fairs should be made the great market days of the year, in which the best of everything grown or manufactured in the State is brought together for the very purpose of finding purchasers.

Premiums should be offered which would bring out the best, from all parts of the State, instead of spending the society's means in providing purse-money and feed for the maintainance of horse racing. Give us the old style fair in which the pavilion and legitimate stock grounds are the points of attraction, instead of the miserable apology now presented at our animal fairs, of an unattractive pavilion, as a mere cover to a pool-selling, betting, horse-racing show, where our children may learn to perpetuate the evil.

Our Patent System.

The more familiar we become with the relations that exist between progress and inventions the more thoroughly are we impressed with the great value of our patent system as a promoter of knowledge, and a source of revenue to the government. Few branches of industry present so fair a prospect to the man of mechanical sense and judgment as that of supplying some public want with a new invention, and to the man who really posesses mechanical talent no labor is more inviting, than to explore the field of mechanics in order to discover some new and useful improvement, and no labor is better rewarded than that which results in relieving a public want.

The young man who possesses a medium quantity of brains, *mixed with a fair share of inventive genius*, can readily supply a want of capital by a proper use of his mechanical knowledge. The world is full of crude implements and machines. The boy of to-day will live to see many of our present wonderful machines superseded by others far superior. When the old Hoe hand press which was capable of printing about two hundred sheets per hour, at the expense of an exhausted human operator was first introduced to the public, the world stood aghast at the wonderful improvement and the praises of that machine still linger in our ears. But what a crude embodiment of mechanical ideas it now appears to us who are familiar with the operations of lightning cylinder presses which turn off rising 20,000 sheets per hour. And this is but one illustration out of thousands which we might produce.

Step by step we progress. One improvement suggests another, until finally we begin to wonder where this thing is going to stop. the fact is, *there is no stop*. It is invent, improve, to the end of the chapter, and when that end will be, and what the result will be when it does come, are questions which we never try to answer, and hardly stop to think about. The inventor is as necessary to the healthy organization of a community or a government as the farmer, the mechanic, the manufacturer or the skilled workman. Each has his field and each supplies the other with the means for producing successful results from his labors, and all combined form a healthy, industrious, progressive people.

SINGULAR EFFECT OF COLD.—A German experimentor, Herr Harvath, in studying the physical effect of cold on frogs, claims to have made the singular discovery that the immersion of the human finger in alcohol at a temperature of 25° Fahr. renders the finger insensible to pain, but not insensible to contact with other bodies. He also claims to have discovered that upon immersing wounds and burns in cold alcohol the pain immediately ceased; this effect being very remarkable in the case of burns, the subsequent progress of recovery being greatly accelerated by this means

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THE illustrations show that master artists have been secured and that they will compare favorably with many more pretentious productions in other journals. The publishers have found it necessary to re-issue their first and second editions.—[Amador Ledger

WE have received a copy of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS, a new publication just issued by Murray, Dewey & Co., the proprietors of the MERCANTILE DIRECTOR. It is filled with very choice and well executed engravings, and is creditable to its proprietors. It will be issued monthly, and cannot fail to become very popular.—[Examiner.

ILLUSTRATED PRESS.—This publication is certainly a credit to the Pacific coast. The illustrations are from excellent designs, and executed in an admirable manner. This publication should certainly be well patronized.—[Colusa Sun.

THE January number of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS is before us. We have been thinking a field was open for just such a magazine, and sure enough here it is. The publishers are both enterprising and cautious, know just what they are about, and, if we mistake not, they will make this publication a first-class success. The first number is gotten up on the right plan and in excellent taste. It is a grade lighter than the *Overland*, and will become more popular—that is, it will be more universally read, because better adapted to the wants of the common people. Being a Pacific Coast production, and dealing chiefly with Pacific Coast subjects, it will undoubtedly command the support of every liberal citizen on the coast. We wish and predict for it abundant success.—[Napa Register.

WE have received the January number of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS, and find it all that its publishers claim for it. Many of the illustrations are really elegant, and the articles are good and pointed. This is the first attempt of the kind on this coast, and it deserves success, for the first number comes out full fledged, prepared with much care and great expense.—[Yolo Democrat.

THE number before us is a good one, containing some fifteen choice illustrations and a large amount of excellent reading matter; so good, indeed, that we can hardly conceive how it can be issued in monthly numbers for the small sum offered.—[Placer Herald.

NEW MAGAZINE.—As we go to press we find before us the first number of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS. After a casual and hasty glance at its contents, we feel confident that its publishers will succeed in accomplishing their object.—[Southern Californian.

TWENTY-EIGHT pages, embellished with engravings, at a low price. Some of the engravings and portions of, the letter-press are evidently imported; but they are good, and there is nothing in the history of art and literary publications in California to encourage the belief that the ILLUSTRATED PRESS would live were it *entirely* of home manufacture.—[Alaska Herald.

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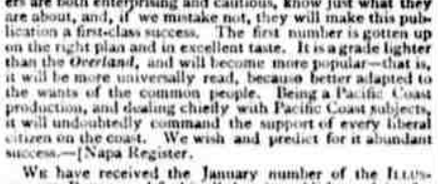

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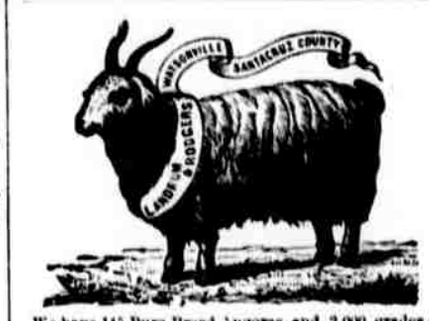

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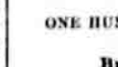

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