FARM LIFE IN FRANCE.

Glimpses Between Paris and Geneva.

Correspondence of the New York Sun.

In going from Paris to Geneva, via Dijon, we pass through the best portion of France. For hundreds of miles every inch of ground is cultivated. The abrupt side hills are in grape vines and the flat land in grain. Here we see the phenomenon of double crops—a crop of grain and vegetables growing under a crop of trees. The Normandy poplar trees are from an inch to three feet in diameter. They are planted thickly, but give no shade. They are trimmed within six feet of the top. The boughs, which are cut off every year, make faggots enough to warm France. We often see men and women cradling wheat or hoeing beets in the midst of a wood giving no shade. When you look across the country the tall, boughless trunks look like black streaks painted against the sky. They make the view very picturesque. Our farmers on the prairies could plant black walnut trees where they want fences, trim them to the tops, preventing shade, and then string barbed wire on the trunks for fences. At the end of fifty years the black walnut trees on a man's farm would be worth more than his farm! Wood in France is sold for a third of a cent a pound. It is worth as much as corn in Kansas by the pound. So when the Kansas man burns corn, he is no more profligate than the Frenchman who burns faggots. The French farmer would never think of burning wood to heat his house. He sits in the cold all the winter long, only using wood to cook with. The average farmer does not know enough to buy coal or kerosene yet. He does not live as well as the poorset negro in the south. He has no home comforts, poverty and ignorance are his companions.

France is literally one large garden. Every inch of soil is cultivated. In riding from Paris to Dijon, 150 miles. we counted only thirty cattle. We saw no sheep or hogs. The farms have usually from one to ten acres. Some farms have half an acre, and some have as many as twenty acres. They are usually from 30 to 300 feet wide and from 1,500 to 2,00 feet long. There are no fences between them.

When I asked a French farmer how his farm happened, like all the rest, to be so long and narrow, he said:

"It has been divided up so often. When a French father dies he divides his farm, and each one of his children has an equal share. He always divides it lengthwise, so as to give each one a long strip. The long strips are easily cultivated because we plough lengthways. These strips always run north and south, so that the sun can shine into the rows."

"How large is your farm?" I asked.

"My father's farm was 300 feet wide and 2,000 feet long. When he died my brother had half. Now my farm is 150 feet wide and 2,000 feet long. It is quite a large farm. There are many farms much smaller than mine."

"What do you plant in it?" I asked.

"See over there," he said, pointing to what seemed to be a gigantic piece of striped carpet, "is a strip of wheat 60 feet wide. Then comes a strip of potatoes 25 feet wide. Then comes 40 feet of oats, then 10 feet of carrots, 20 feet of alfalfa (luzurne), 10 feet of mangel-wurzels, 5 feet of onions, 5 feet of cabbages, and the rest is in flowers, peas, currants, gooseberries, and little vegetables."

"Can you support your family on a farm 150 feet wide and 2,000 feet long?" I asked; for the narrow strip seemed like a man's dooryard in America.

"Support my family?" he exclaimed. "Why the farm is too large for us. I rent part of it out now."

"But your house," I said, "where is that?"

"Oh, that is in town. Five families of us live in one house there. My wife and I come out every morning to work and go in at night."

"Does your wife always work in the field!"

"Yes. My wife," he continued, pointing to a barefooted and bareheaded woman, at least six feet around the waist, "she can do more work than I can. She pitches the hay to me on the stack. All French women work in the field. Why not? They have nothing to do at home."

This is true. The wife of a French, English, Irish, or German farmer has nothing to do at home. They do not "keep house" like the wives of American farmers. They have no houses to keep. The huts they live in are like stables. They live in the same building with their horses, hens and pigs. They never wash a floor. There is no table cloth. They live like brutes. The handsome farm house off by itself, surrounded by trees and gardens, does not exist in France. They live no better, and are really no better off than were the slaves of the south defore the war. French farmers always congregate in little tumble-down villages situated about two miles apart. These villages may have been built three hundred years ago. The roofs are moss-covered, the houses are dirty, and remind one of a country poor-house in New England.

There are millions of farms in France containing from a quarter of an acre to four acres.

I find that an acre and a half is about all the most ambitious man wants. The rent for land is always one-half the crop. The land is worth about $400 an acre; or, if in grape vines, $600

This is why France is like a garden. In England there are 227,000 landowners; in France there are 7,000,000 landowners. The Frenchman on his two acres, with his barefooted wife cutting grain with a sickle by his side, is happy and contented, because he knows no better. Such a degrading life would drive an American farmer mad. The Frenchman thrives because he spends nothing. He has no wants beyond the coarsest food and the washings of the grape skins after the wine is made. Yes he is thrifty. He saves money, too. The aggregated wealth of 20,000,000 poor, degraded, barefooted peasants makes France rich. The ignorance of the French farmer is appalling. I never saw a newspaper in a French farm village. Their wants are no more than the wants of a horse. The Frenchman eats the coarsest food; about the same as he feeds his horse. He will eat coarse bread and wine for breakfast; soup, bread, and wine for dinner, and perhaps bread and milk for supper; he does not know what coffee or tea is. The negroes of the south live like kings compared to a French farmer. Still, the Frenchman is satisfied because he knows no better.

When I asked a French farmer who was cultivating his farm (150 by 1,500) if he saved any money, he said:

"Oh, not much. I go to all the fetes. I laid by 500 francs ($100) last year. I put it in the Caisse d'Epargne."

"What is that?" I asked of the landlord.

That is the government savings bank. The government takes the money of the poor, up to 1,000 francs, and gives them 3½ per cent. for its use. The peasant farmers of France have nearly $800,000,000 on deposit in these savings banks. These poor, degraded, half-fed farmers keep the French treasury full of money.

The French farmer loves the republic, but the people of Paris hate it. The empire made Paris. Without the empire, trade is bad in Paris; so Paris sighs for some Louis XIV. or Napoleon III. to come and establish an expensive court again.

I asked a farmer near Dijon if he preferred the republic to the empire.

"Yes," he said, but we most of all want peace. We are sick of war. If the empire comes they will want us to fight. We want to stay at home on our farms. Frenchmen do not like to fight. The Parisians want an emperor who will collect millions of dollars from the country and spend it on opera houses and public buildings in Paris."

I found Paris very dull. Trade there is stagnant. The people there are dissatisfied. I would not be surprised to hear any day that the republic was dead and another empire declared. All that is wanting is the right man with old Bourbon blood in him and a few generals in the army. Dijon, Macon, Amiens, and all the provincial cities like the republic—but Paris is France.

The crops in England and France are good everywhere, with the exception of hops in Kent. Wheat in France is splendid. The fields are so small that they are reaping it with a sickle. A man and his wife and three children can reap with the sickle and bind about as much wheat as one man can reap and bind in America. In America the wife is attending to her household duties and the children are at school. In France the whole family is in the field.

Indian corn is raised all over the southern half of France. They plant one stalk in a hill and hoe it by hand. The weeds are all hoed out of the wheat, barley and oats by hand. Wheat is worth in Dijon $1.25 per bushel.

English and French Girls.

London Letter to Philadelphia Telegraph.

As a rule, the young English girls that one meets in society have as little to say as have the French society damsels, though they are by no means kept under such severe restraint. It has been suggested that the French girls say nothing because they are not permitted to speak, while the English girls say nothing because they have nothing to say. They are very sweet, and simple, and modest, but they lack sparkle and entrain most woefully. English girls, too, are in general far less brilliantly educated than are their American contemporaries. There is very little serious devotion to literature or accomplishments, such as one sees in the more literary circles of America, among the younger members of society. The amateur singers, for instance, are too dire and dreadful to be even named in the same breath with the usual run of our girl musicians. In many instances, voice, time, and tune are altogether lacking, and yet the vocalist will placidly warble straight through the innumerable verses of a ballad or attack a difficult Italian aria with the serene conviction that the whole affair is passing off admirably.

How is she to know that it is not?—there is nobody among her hearers to enlighten her. On the other hand, they have much taste in fancy work, and English homes are prettily decorated with satin cushions, mantlepiece draperies, etc., painted by hand in water colors or with fine and delicate embroideries, the handiwork of the ladies of the family. But as to either intellectual or artistic employments, they are far less adicted to them than our own young girls. They ride well and are devoted to lawn-tennis and other out-door games, and in the main are a healthy, happy race, "physically superb, but lacking mental brilliancy and charm. It is perhaps for this reason that the married state in England differs so widely from the same institution in America. Here it is a monarchy, while with us it is a republic. The English husband is an autocrat, and admits of no discussion respecting his decrees. The household and its movements are regulated to suit his whims and convictions, and his wife and daughters must shape their actions accordingly. But there is plenty of warm mutual love manifested between husbands and wives in England, and so matrimony here far more resembles the same institution with us than does the wedded state in France.

Taste in Wives.

From the New York Tribune.

A worthy young Connecticut farmer being persuaded that "it is not good for man to be alone," came to this city to seek a wife. Several of his neighbors had taken to themselves helpmeets from among the plump and pleasing immigrants, and these matches had all turned out so well that he was minded to follow suit. But having inspected the arrivals of eligible girls at Castle Garden for two or three days, and not having as yet seen any one to whom his heart went out, this adventurous agriculturist bethought himself of another plan, and one for which, indeed, he had no warrant of neighborly example. He had read in the papers some little time ago an account of the arrest of a young woman named Emma Larrabee for burglary. This young woman was described as a professional burglar, and it was said she had an unconquerable passion for that kind of illegitimate amusement. Now it occurred to the young man from Connecticut that if Miss Larrabee would marry him he might be able to reclaim her, and forthwith he sought her out. As he promptly ascertained that she had a prior engagement in the penitentiary, it may be hoped that he will detach his affections from this bright particular star, and rest content with some less notorious but probably more trustworthy maiden from over the sea, if indeed the good state of Connecticut connot furnish him with a home-made American wife.

But though his taste in choosing a wife may seem odd it is but the outcropping of a tendency which is by no means new. When, formerly, Australia was a penal colony, the settlers were allowed to marry the female convicts, and it was observed that those women who had the "hardest" records always were snapped up first. In the same way when young women have committed startling crimes they have invariably attracted suitors if they escaped the gallows. A remarkable instance of this was the case of Madeline Smith, a Scotch girl of good family and position who poisoned her lover in Edinburg some thirty years ago. The trial was very sensational. It was shown that the prisoner had had a liaison with the deceased, who was a Frenchman, and that desiring to marry a man in her own station she deliberately murdered the lover. The jury brought in the Scotch verdict, "not proven," though her guilt was clear, and within a week she had more than twenty offers of marriage, though she was known to be a poisoner. Cases of this kind go to show that the women who gush over murderers and fill their cells with flowers, have not a monopoly of that particular sort of folly, but that men, too, are amenable to the subtle magnetism of notoriety, and are quite as capable of playing the moth to criminal luminaries, provided the latter are young and good looking. And it is not always that the friendly walls of a pentientiary interpose between these fascinated moths and the fatal attraction which would so surely singe their wings.

An Imbecile Chained for Thirty Years.

A most heartless case of cruelty and inhuman treatment has just been brought to light in Crawford county, Pa., by the Committee on Lunacy of the State Board of Public Charities. The victim, who is an imbecile, has been kept chained in a little hut by his brother for over thirty years. The man who imprisoned his brother for three decades is a farmer. Thirty years ago his younger brother became an imbecile through disease. Though perfectly harmless he disliked to have him about the house, and so he built a little shanty about a hundred feet away from the farmhouse, and there kept his brother chained like a wild beast. When the committee's agent appeared upon the farm he found the insane man lying on the floor of his hut naked and in desperate straits. He was reclining on a bale of straw, which had done service as a bed for many months. Within reach lay a big black pan filled with bones and the refuse of the family table, on which the prisoner was expected to make his noonday meal. It is expected that other revelations of the same kind will be made after a vigorous examination of the commissioners.

THE BOOK OF MORMON.

A True History of Joe Smith's Remarkable Piece of Jugglery.

From the St. Louis Spectator.

How many people know anything about the origin of the Mormon religion, or rather of the Book of Mormon, which is its authority? I knew precious little about it until this week, when I accidentally fell in with Clark Braden, who has recently given the subject a most searching investigation. His story shows of what stuff religion may be made. The Mormons number probably 300,000. They are divided into many sects, but the principal are the polygamous Brighamites in Utah and the non-polygamous Josephites scattered in various places. The story may be given in a few words. The Book of Mormon was written by an old broken down Presbyterian clergyman named Solomon Spaulding. Spaulding was born in Connecticut in 1761. He graduated at Darthmouth college and settled as minister for a Congregational church. He made a bad failure at preaching, and went into business with his brother in New York state, did not succeed, and started an iron foundry in a town in Northern Ohio. He soon failed in that venture and became very much discouraged. His wife supported the family by taking boarders and he spent his time in writing, though what did not then appear. The family moved to Pittsburg, when he rewrote his book, adding a second part. He afterward rewrote the entire book, adding a third part. This is the origin of the manuscript.

Now, what became of it? Spaulding made arrangements to have it printed in Pittsburg. After a part of it had been set up the whole manuscript was stolen by a tanner named Sidney Rigdon, who was in the habit of loafing around the printing-office. Rigdon kept it concealed for some years, until he fell in with Joseph Smith, who evolved the plan of producing it. Smith belonged to a not over reputable family living near Palmyra, N. Y. They lived in a house and susported themselves by hunting and fishing and other means suspected to be more questionable. Joseph one day found a remarkable clear crystal, shaped much like a child's foot, and he declared it was a "peepstone," in which he could read the future and discover stolen goods, strayed cattle, etc., and on several occasions was so successful in predicting the locality of goods and cattle that he soon came to have considerable reputation. He then extended his field of operations by divining where treasure was buried, and under his directions a great many diggings were made, unsuccessfully, however. These diggings extended over a large area, some 50 miles or more, around Palmyra, and some of them may be seen now. He fell in with Sidney Rigdon, who told him of the manuscript. Smith soon devised a scheme for producing it under proper surroundings. The alleged book of copper plates was found under divine guidance, on which characters of reformed Egyptian were graven. The book was accompanied by a pair of spectacles of wondrous power, which enabled Smith to translate the remarkable characters. This he did from behind a screen, while an amanuensis took down his words. The book of Mormon was printed in 1830 at Palmyra, N. Y., a farmer, Martin Harris, putting up the cash to pay the printer. Thus Solomon Spaulding's manuscript found its way into print with such additions and alterations as Smith chose to make for his own benefit.

A book will soon be published by the Christian publishing company giving all the investigations of Mr. Braden and the complete chain of evidence establishing the authenticity of his story. A manuscript of the Book of Mormon is still in existence in the possession of Mr. Withmer of Richmond, Mo., and the compositor who set up most of the book at Palmyra, 50 yerrs ago, is still living, J. H. Gilbert. Mr. Braden is now trying to arrange that Mr. Gilbert shall see this manuscript to say whether it is the copy from which the book was originally set up.

What Ed. Stokes is Doing—The Slayer of Jim Fisk.

Gath:—Differences of opinion will always exist as to the extent of provocation he received from Fisk. Fisk had become a very dangerous man in his community, and was perfectly unscrupulous about meeting an opponent, and he had confederated with a number of desperate outlaws and many corrupt lawyers and judges, who would take his money and use justice itself to punish his private enemies. He was the precursor of nearly all the swindlers we have had for the past fifteen years in New York. He would seize the property of any railroad he could by force, and break open its safe and steal the books and papers. He systematically debauched the judiciary and took judges among his women, of whom he kept a swarm. One of these women, whose jealousy was aroused, turned against Fisk, and in the effort to send Stokes to jail he met that young man while proceeding into a hotel to meet some females, and in a few hours the most notorious character of this country had passed away.

The feeling in New York against Stokes was tremendous for a while, and the newspapers of that day, many of which were subsidized in the interest of Fisk, the employes in many cases being on his pay lists, turned in and endeavored to drive Stokes to the gallows. Stokes conducted himself during the different trials with both anxiety and dignity. His relations with Fisk's woman operated against him in a certain large class which, did not much regret Fisk's loss. He paid the penalty, however for these things, and his wife obtained a divorce from him. With the exception of his white hair he preserves his full bodily strength and health; his skin is of a rather quicksilvery tint, his eyes are dark and playful, he probably weighs about 160 pounds, generally dressed in a cool, summer style, and does not say much of his own reminiscences of an exciting nature, and has apparently made up his mind that certain things are predestined and cannot be avoided. It is a sign of the elastic nature of this country the way he has been able to recover a certain amount of friendship and public support, and finally united himself with one of the most successful men here and with a distinguished capitalist.

It is understood that Stokes, after trying in a variety of ways to make money, met Mr. Mackey in California, who liked him for the danger he had passed, for the hopeful vision he took of life, and for his unaffected off-hand manners. It was soon rumored that Stokes had acquired an interest in the Hoffman house, but this seemed to be denied for awhile. Then the gorgeous barroom there was opened, and it was understood that this belonged to Stokes. After a time it became clear that Stokes was a large part of the Hoffman house. Almost everybody who enters there desires to see him, and a good many want to know him. He takes life just as it comes, resents nothing, understands why some people might have hostility to him and if he gets a rebuff now and then the probabilities are that in the course of time the offending person will come around and be pacified.

A Funny Story By A Senator.

Bill Arp in the Atlantic Constitution.

I heard Zeb Vance telling how he captured the vote of a backwoods settlement in North Carolina when he first ran for Congress. He said he had never been in that settlement and didn't know the boys. He rode over the mountains and found about sixty sovereigns at a cross-roads grocery and he got down and hitched his horse and began to make their acquaintance and crack his jokes around, and thought he was getting along pretty well with them, but he noticed an old man with shaggy eyebrows and big brass spectacles sitting on a chunk and marking in the sand with a stick. The old man didn't seem to pay and attention to Vance, and after a while Vance concluded that the old man was bellwether of the flock and that it was necessary to capture him, so he sidled up close to him and the old man got up and shook himself and leaned forward on his stick and said solemnly: "This is Mr. Vance, I believe?" "Yes, sir," said Vance. "And you have come over here to see my boys about their votes, I believe?" "Yes, sir," said Vance, "that is my business."

"Well, sir," said the old man, "afore you proceed with that business I would like to ax you a few questions."

"Certainly, sir, certainly," said Vance.

"What church mout you belong to?" said the old man.

That was a sockdologer—Vance didn't belong to any church. He knew that religion and meeting was a big thing in the backwoods and controlled their politics, but he didn't know what their religion was, for North Carolina was powerfully spotted. But he squared himself for the responsibility and says he! "Well now, my friend, I will tell you about that, for it is a fair question. Of course it is. Well, you see my grandfather came from Scotland, and you know that over in Scotland everybody is Presbyterian." Here he paused to note the effect, but saw no sign of sympathy with his grandpa.

"But my grandmother came from England and over there everybody belongs to the Episcopal church." He paused again and the old man marked another mark in the sand and spit his tobacco away off.

But my father was born in this country in a Methodist settlement, and so he grew up a Methodist." Still no sign of approval from the old man, and so Vance took his last shot and said: "But my good old mother was a Baptist, and it's my opinion that a man has got to go under water to go to heaven."

The old man walked up and taking him by the hand said: "Well, you are all right, Mr. Vance," and then turning to the crowd said: "Boys, he'll do and you may vote for him, I thought he looked like a Baptist." And the old man slowly drew a flask from his pocket and handed it to Vance to seal his faith.

Smuggling Chinese immigrants through from British Columbia into Washington territory has become a profitable business for photographers and the makers of affidavits. The contrabands under the U. S. Chinese restriction act are landed in British Columbia, and they are got into the territory of the United States by means of a game played with photographs and affidavits. The Chinamen are photographed in Victoria, and the photos are sent to Seattle and exhibited to those in the scheme, who do the swearing that the Chinaman photographed was a resident on United States territory before the passage of the restriction act. Thus the Chinese are run over the line as rapidly as they were permitted to land at San Francisco. The people of California are greatly enraged at the continued attempts of judicial authorities to override the Congressional enactments for the exclusion of the Chinese.

A Story of A Tree Frog.

One sultry night in Indiana, I sat busily writing up-stairs close to an open window. My lamp, placed upon my desk, attracted countless numbers of the insect world that come out to see their friends only after dark; there was a constant buzz around the lamp and many a scorching victim, falling on its back, vainly kicked its little legs in air.

Suddenly a clear, low whistle sounded from the window—a whistle somewhat like the sound made when a boy blows into the orifice of a trunk-key. Startled for a moment, I turned my chair and beheld on the window-sill a little tree-frog gravely looking at me. His skin—of an exquisite apple-green color—shone in the lamp light. Fearful that I might frighten him away, I sat motionless in the chair, watching him intently. Presently he gave another little whistle, as clear and sharp as a bird-note. He was evidently making up his mind that I was to be trusted—a confidence not misplaced—, and soon he gave an easy spring and was on the desk before me. I hardly dared to breathe, lest he should be alarmed. He looked at me carefully for a few minutes; and then, hopping under the lamp, he began a slaughter of the insect creation, such as I had never before witnessed. He captured in a easy way any careless fly or moth that came near him, declining to touch the dead ones that had cremated themselves.

After half an hour's enjoyment of this kind, my apple-green friend hopped rather lazily across the desk, repeated the whistle with which he had entered,—as if to say good-night,—and went out into the dark. I proceeded with my work and soon forgot my visitor. But judge of my surprise when on the next night he again appeared, again signaled his coming with his musical cry, and again took up his position under my lamp.

For nearly three weeks did my small friend visit my room nightly, and he and I became great friends. House flies were his special delicacy. Stealthily crawling up the painted wall, clinging to the smooth surface with the little disks, or suckers, on his feet, he would draw close up to his body first one leg and then the other, and when within proper distance, he would dart forward, and, snatching the fly, would swing head downward, his hind feet firmly glued to the wall! Then, attaching his fore feet, he would move on in quest of another.

He never missed his aim, and he would quietly and calmly zigzag up and down the side wall after every fly he saw there. He became quite accustomed to me, and would hop on my hand, and sit there looking at me with a grave composure ludicrous to behold.
—T. Lancey, in St. Nicholas for September.

Funeral Etiquette.

From the Medical Times.

In cases of death from contagious disorder, public funerals are very properly forbidden by health authorities, although occasionally a "wake" is surreptitiously held, with its unfortunate but natural, results. Of this, however, we need not speak, as the wisdom of thus limiting infection is acquiesced in generally by intelligent people, and the law is usually obeyed. There are some minor infractions of the laws of health that should be mentioned, which physicians have repeatedly called attention to, but the higher laws of fashion and custom appear to exert a preponderating influence. For instance, there are very few days in the year when delicate women can ride long distances in a close carriage, and then, reaching the cemetery, stand upon the damp, cold sod for a grerter or less time during the final ceremonics at the grave without physical injury to themselves.

A custom also to which especial attention should be directed, in order to have it changed, is that of men standing bare-headed in the open air, apparently indifferent to the burning sun of July or the cold winds of March, without regard to the season or weather.

Taking into consideration the associated conditions, the necessarily depressing influence upon the emotions of the sad duty which at the time is preeminent in the mind, the physical condition resulting from sitting in a cramped position during a tedious ride in a carriage, and the unaccustomed exposure to the weather, it is not surprising that cases of illness result from the removal of the head-covering, particularly in elderly people with an enfeebled circulation. On a hot day there is danger of producing, if not actual sunstroke, at least a congestion of the membranes of the brain, which causes persistent and violent headaches, and to this ministers and those officiating are particularly liable.

Whether the day be hot or cold, wet or only windy, let the services be held at a place where the health of the attendants need not be imperiled; let delicate and weakly persons be restrained from riding to the cemetery and from standing on the damp ground; and especially let men obey common sense and keep on their hats when they risk sickness by their removal.