

meeting at first in the shacks. As the interest grew, a neat and commodious building was put up. During the winter a series of socials, parties and literary and musical entertainments kept the community humming. In the same settlement a young people's branch of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was organized, and held several oratorical contests, receptions and other social affairs. Somerset parties were also very much the rage in this particular settlement, while at the neighboring "town" (store and dance hall) the more gaily inclined found a chance to cultivate the "light fantastic."

It is not to be thought that the talents of the brilliant girl are wasted or buried in a napkin during her residence on the claim. Opportunities for social service are nowhere greater than in the claim country of the West. One does not need to live in Hull House or in a Frances Willard settlement in order to serve humanity. In a certain community called "Harmony Settlement" of western South Dakota some young women had come out amid the sighs and lamentations of friends that they were going "out West to that awful uncivilized claim country." But the young women themselves viewed the situation in an entirely different light. In the midst of the most primitive pioneer life—not without privation—a phrase often upon their lips was "We'll make our civilization." The west needs forming as much as the city needs reforming. There are children brought up on the ranges of South Dakota who do not know that they live in South Dakota or the United States of America! Surely the Honyocker school teacher who rides sixteen miles to and from her school each day may feel that she is doing a work as important as ever Mamie Rose did for Owen Kildare.

What think ye? Is it harder to ride in a street car in New York City to a mission in the slums to teach a Sunday School class of street gamins, or to walk seven miles in the burning sun, over cactus and sage brush and through deep draws, to take part in a temperance meeting in the West?

We are personally acquainted with one young woman who supplied two pulpits on Sunday, driving several miles between appointments. A gifted elocutionist who had delighted audiences in many states invited "all children under ninety-nine years of age" to a "safe and sane Fourth" providing with a friend refreshment and entertainment. A trained nurse who commanded a large salary in the city kept what was almost in reality a free dispensary, so lavishly did she give from her medicine chest in time of sickness. As healing as the medicine was the outpouring of sympathy from her full heart for her fellow creatures. Many a mile has she walked in the heat or cold to minister to a suffering neighbor, and it is probable that many a life has been saved by her efficient aid. The Bible class teacher in the Sunday School at Redig had expected to become a foreign missionary. But she took a claim and became a home missionary, delighting us Sunday after Sunday with her vivacious presentation of Jewish history.

Our musician studied in a Chicago conservatory and was offered a college position, but she too came west and took up land. She also took hold of the music in the little new church, directing the choir, training the children, and making the old reed instrument thunder and peal like a grand pipe organ.

Instances might be multiplied of the ennobling work of our young women in the new West, and of their fine courage and determination. Surely they are to be congratulated upon the opportunity thus wisely seized upon—to become stable factors in the economic life of the nation—and upon their adaptability, energy and perseverance in triumphing over the trying conditions of pioneer life. But no less is our Uncle Samuel to be congratulated that his pioneer country has so large a representation of that class of true nobility and sterling worth, the "Lady Honyocker."

Harding, South Dakota.

[The above has been published by kind permission of The Independent (New York), in which the article first appeared. Those who are interested will find, in

Ingle Nook of this issue, some information in regard to women farmers in Canada].

Letters from Abroad.

THE PALIO OF SIENA.

Siena, July 3, 1913.

My dear Jean,—As you see by the date, I am in Siena again. I could not resist coming back to see the Palio when I was so near by. Harmony did

mildly agitated over it, although he is so scornfully condemnatory of sporting enthusiasm in general. Incidentally, I may say that Siena is becoming quite a popular summer resort for English and Americans. Being a hill-town, it is delightfully cool and breezy when the valley towns are sweltering.

But I must tell you about the Palio, which the Guide Book defines dryly as a local horse race. It is much more than that.

It has a history which goes back to the Dark Ages, and its origin is distinctly religious in character. Medieval festivals of this kind were held on Saints' Days. In Siena the Palio of July 2nd is held on the day of the Visitation of the Virgin; the Palio of August 16th, on the day of the Assumption of the Virgin. The banner given for a prize has also a religious significance, being invariably ornamented with a picture of the Madonna.

The history of the palio is so interwoven with the Contrade of Siena, that I'll have to tell you about the Contrade before you can understand the intensity of the local fever which rages in Siena just at this time.

There are seventeen Contrade. The origin of the division is conjectural, but it is supposed by historians to have been military. Each Contrade bears the name of an animal, such as tortoise, goose, eagle, wolf. Each Contrade has special emblems, colors, banners, and a peculiar medieval costume. Each Contrade has a jockey, a trumpeter, a drummer, a standard bearer, and a beautiful banner. Each has a special church in its own district.

The Palio has been given in its present form for over two hundred years, but before that they had bull fights and donkey races. It is given on the Piazza del Campo, where all the chief events in the history of Siena have taken place. This piazza is of a most unusual shape, being semicircular and concave. It has been compared to a sea-shell in color and shape, and also to spread-out fan, with the handle low and the rim tipped up. It is completely paved with brick and is ringed about with magnificent old fourteenth century palaces of tinted stone, soft pinks and yellows and browns. In front of these palaces tiers of seats are

track for the race laid on the outer margin. A number of horses are tested and ten of about equal speed selected. These horses are distributed by lot, the solemn affair being conducted in the Municipal Palace. After this there are six "Prove" (trial races) on the Piazza, one every morning at nine-thirty and one every evening at seven-thirty. At each of these "Prove" the palace is thronged by an eager, excited, prophetic mass of people. The course is very difficult and dangerous, being short, uneven, and having a sharp corner which proves the Waterloo of a great many hopes. It is at this point most of the accidents occur, and sometimes horses and men are badly smashed. The horses are ridden bareback and each jockey has a heavy whip, with which he belabors the other horses—but not his own.

The day of the Palio began with a great pealing of church bells at a very early hour. The faithful were called to an open-air Mass, in front of the Municipal Palace, at five a.m. I had intended to go to this for photographic reasons, but at that hour my fervour was not as great as my sleepiness, so I missed the first event of the day. But I was in my seat for the second event—the last trial race in the morning. All the rest of the day was filled with excitement compared with which an Agricultural Fair in Canada is as nothing.

At two o'clock the rolling of the drums is heard from every part of the city, and each Contrade marches in full regalia to the Duomo—that being the time-honored custom. After this they disperse and return and prepare for the pageant.

At four-thirty the ten horses competing in the race are taken to church to be blessed—each horse to the church of the Contrade it represents. There is a special service for this important occasion. I was very anxious to see this part of the show, and was taken by some Italian friends to the Church of the Eagle Contrade, which was at the foot of a very steep hill. It was a very unique performance. A priest in full ecclesiastical vestments conducted the service. The horse, magnificently caparisoned but extremely bewildered and decidedly balky, was coaxed and pulled into the sacred edifice, and led up to the altar by a knight in shining armour and expensive plumes. The jockey stood at the horse's head. The men of the Contrade, costumed in yellow tights and slashed doublets, formed in two lines down the centre aisle. The service was necessarily brief, but the horse behaved quite properly until the priest sprayed its nose with holy water out of something he held in his hand, which looked like a baby's rattle. This agitated the animal to such an extent, that it displayed a disposition to bolt into the side-seats, but was calmed down by its attendants and received the benediction in quietness, after which it took six men to get it turned around and out of the church again.

After this there is a general rush for the Piazza del Campo, streams of people pouring into it from every street and lane and archway, until every available sight-seeing space is filled. The adjacent roofs are peopled with spectators. The surrounding palaces are as brilliant as flowers—every window and balcony gaily decorated with tapestries and hangings, and filled with people.

At six o'clock a gun is fired, and immediately the "Carabinieri" in their red cockades issue forth from the Municipal Palace and clear the course. This they do by walking completely around it—everything being pushed ahead of them like sweepings.

Then the great bell of the Nangia Tower, which is only rung on great occasions, begins to peal, and the pageant enters, headed by a band of trumpeters, playing the Palio march.

Following this come the ten competing Contrade, each one composed of a captain, five pages, a drummer, the jockey on horseback, a man leading the horse which is to race, and the "Alfieri" (banner carriers).

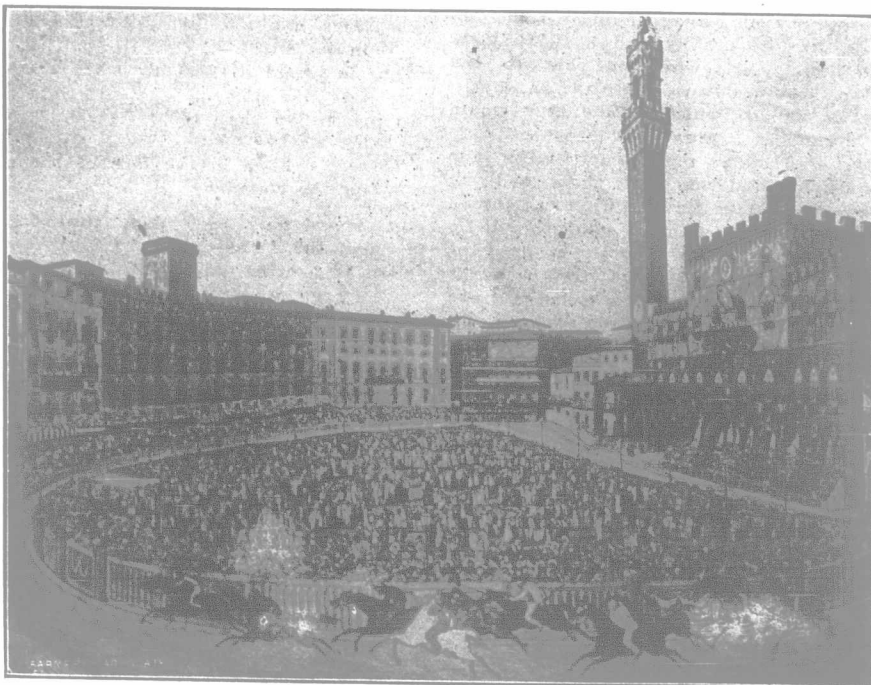
The costumes are magnificent—nothing faked up for show—no glazed cotton masquerading for silk, nor gilt paper pretending it is gold cloth. No! These costumes are the real thing and worth a mint of money.

The great feature of this picturesque



One of the Honyockers.

not come with me because she hates crowds, and she had an idea the race-course would look like a river of blood strewn with smashed jockeys and disabled horses. Of course, there were some accidents, but I think she made a great mistake in not coming, for the Palio was certainly a most entertaining, exciting and unique spectacle. As the learned Harvard professor, who sat next to me, remarked, "I don't suppose there is anything like it anywhere else in the world."



The Palio, Siena.

I do wish, Jean, I could make you see it as I did, but mere words cannot interpret so much life and movement and color. I cannot even send you any good pictures, as the Palio is run in the evening, when the light is too poor for snap-shots. The photograph I enclose was taken in the morning at the last trial race. You really must come to Siena some time and see the Palio for yourself. I think even Jack would get

erected for visitors, but the Siennese congregate in the enclosed area in the center. There are no seats there and the packing capacity is unlimited. During the race, the people there are jammed so closely together you couldn't wedge a tooth-pick between them.

Some days before the Palio, Siena wakes from its accustomed lethargy and the excitement begins. Cart-loads of sand are deposited on the piazza and a