

The first was made of a large block of wood, about three feet long, or the stump of a tree, with an excavation burned or dug in one end. By means of a "pestle," sometimes fastened to a "sweep," which was made to fit the hollow in the block, the corn was pounded into meal, from which "mush" and "Johnny cake" were made; and by the same means wheat could be ground into flour which, though not so fine and clean as our modern brands, was both palatable and wholesome. The "grater" was a half circular piece of tin, perforated with a punch from the concave side, and nailed by its edges to a block of wood. The ears of corn were rubbed on the rough edges of the holes, the meal falling through them on the block, which, being in a slanting position, discharged it into a cloth or bowl, placed for its reception. The "hand-mill" was better than either of the former. It was made of two circular stones, the lowest called the "bed stone," the upper the "runner." These were placed in a hoop, with a spout for discharging the meal. A staff was let into a hole in the upper surface of the runner, near its outer edge, and its other end through a hole in a board fastened to a joist above, so that two persons could be employed in turning the mill at the same time. These mills are still in use in Palestine, and it was doubtless to a mill of this sort our Saviour alluded, when, with reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, He said: "Two women shall be grinding at a mill, the one shall be taken and the other left."

The clothing worn by men and women was almost entirely of domestic manufacture, and, as might reasonably be supposed, was very coarse and poor. Linsey, made of flax and wool, was the warmest and most substantial cloth in use. But even this could not be readily commanded. The flax crop was uncertain and sheep destroyed by wolves and other ravenous beasts of prey. Almost every house contained a loom, and almost every woman was a weaver. In like manner tanning, shoemaking, tailoring, &c., were performed by each family; for it is well known that necessity has no law, but is "the mother of invention." Such a state of society as

existed during the first years of the settlement of our country was well calculated to call into action every native mechanical genius. In nearly every neighborhood some one was found whose natural ingenuity enabled him to do many things for himself and neighbors, far above the average order of mechanical exploits. When such a person could be found his services were in constant demand, and, considering the tools in use, the work performed was certainly creditable. Their plows, harrows, and wooden ware for holding milk and water, were well executed. Their brooms, also, though heavy, did the work required of them very satisfactorily. Moccasins, made of deer skin, and coarse shoes and shoe-packs were worn on the feet. The women usually went barefoot in summer, and at best their shoes would cut but a sorry figure beside the elegant balmorals, gaiters and morocco slippers which ornament the feet of their grand-daughters. The linsey petticoat and bed-gown were the almost universal dress of the fair sex; which, with the additional luxury of a small homemade handkerchief about the neck, and perhaps a cap of white frills, completed an attire then thought both neat and comfortable. It is a question whether our maternal ancestors had not a more enlightened conception of hygienical laws and organic functions than the extravagantly dressed belles of modern society. But this does not come within the scope of our ability to determine.

When possession was first taken of the frontier townships already located by government surveys, it was feared by many that the soil would become quite barren after several years' cropping and that they would be compelled to remove to new locations. This belief, doubtless, arose from the experience of those who came from the Atlantic coast, where the fertility of the soil is soon exhausted, and requires long rests to recuperate. But an application of Virgil's test reconciled all to the natural resources of their adopted country. The test referred to is this:—If a hole of any reasonable dimensions and depth be dug, and the earth taken out be lightly thrown back, it will scarcely fill the hole if fruitful, and