

rary 1, Straddling the Fence (!) 8, no character at all 1.

AN EXTRAORDINARY NATURAL PRODUCTION.—We have in our office (where our citizens and farmers are requested to call and see it) a most singular species of corn.—The history of this rare freak of nature is substantially as follows. About three years ago, a Mr. Carrico, living in Gallatin county, Kentucky, planted some of the common Indian corn in the neighbourhood of a swampy piece of land which was growing over with thick grass resembling sedge grass.—In the fall of the year when he was gathering his corn, he was surprised to find that years of corn were growing and ripening upon the grass, and that on the blades of grass separate grains were growing. Struck by the singularity of the circumstance, he carefully preserved the grains and planted them next spring. The result was extraordinary, producing a growth partaking of the qualities both of the grass and the corn, and superior to both as forming a third article very advantageous to stock farmers. The stalks in our office present most remarkable appearances. The tassel does not bear any resemblance to the corn tassel, but it is more like the heads of coarse grass—the blades are long and very slender, resembling more the blades of oats than of corn. Upon the extremities of these blades separate grains of corn, enclosed in a husk presenting the appearance of hazel nut burs, are found, and to the bodies of the stalks more perfect ears of corn are attached. The stalks themselves are long and slender, and not unlike wild rye of the country, only stronger and more substantial. We believe that this grain is at least one thing new under the sun, and, unlike more novelties, it promises to be useful.—*Frankfort Kentucky Commonwealth.*

WHY DO SOAPS CURDLE WITH HARD WATER?—The sulphuric acid of the sulphate of lime, to which it generally owes its character of hardness, combines with the soda of the soap. The lime and oil, or tallow, being thus freed from their respective combinations, float through the liquid medium in flakes; the phenomenon, therefore, is one entirely of decomposition. On this principle solution of soap will determine the relative hardness of water, and is generally employed by the well-digger.—*Murray's Manual of Chemical Experiments.*

CHARACTER OF FERDINAND VII.—Ferdinand loved despotism; he loved it with enthusiasm; but his was not the generous passion of Louis XIV., who identified his own with the glory of his country. Ferdinand's despotism began and ended with himself, his whole anxiety being to make a mere machine of the people, and to continue amongst them the reign of ignorance. So well organised was his countenance for hypocrisy, that his caresses were always esteemed by a functionary as a decisive token of dismissal; and many an exile has received the first intimation of his approaching banishment in a warm embrace from his Majesty. Ferdinand's intellect and taste directed him to the association of his grooms and scullions. The antechamber was his favourite retreat during those hours which he devoted to

pleasure. Grijalba, who just preceded him to the grave, was taken out of livery to be the companion and private counsellor of the King.

A SECRET WORTH KNOWING.—In rough weather the fishermen of the Bosphorus spread a few drops of oil on the surface, which permits them to see clearly to a great depth. I was aware that oil would calm the surface of the sea; but until recently I did not know that it rendered objects more distinct beneath the surface. A trinket of some value had been dropped out of one of the upper windows of our palace into the Bosphorus, which at this place was ten or twelve feet deep. It was so small that dragging for it would have been perfectly fruitless; and it was accordingly given up for lost, when one of the servants proposed to drop a little oil on the surface. This was acceded to, with, however, but faint hopes of success. To our astonishment, the trinket immediately appeared in sight, and was eventually recovered.—*An American's Sketches of Turkey.*

THE FIRST BALL IN A NEW SETTLEMENT.—The first indication of regular society is generally public holidays. The 4th of July, the day of independence; the 22d of February, the birthday of Washington; the 3d of January, the battle of New Orleans; are so many occasions. Some time before, a public meeting is convened at a tavern, and a chairman and secretary (for everything is done in form) are appointed by acclamation. An orator proposes to celebrate the day, and gives his reasons; afterwards another moves that there be dinner; the proposition is discussed, and is opposed, for want of a room large enough to contain those who would desire to partake of it. Another proposes a barbecue,—dining in the open air; this is supported, and carried; another, that a speech be delivered: carried also. Somebody proposes a ball; but there are only three ladies in the town who dance. Had there been four, assuredly the motion would have passed. The meeting appoints a chairman, and a managing committee and separates. The resolutions, duly signed, are inserted in the newspaper, (for already there is a weekly one,) to the great satisfaction of the editor-printer who, is short of matter. On the day appointed the citizens form themselves into procession, and proceed to the church, or the tavern, to the court-house or to a granary, according to circumstances, and hear a speech, which is in general sensible and eloquent; for I must always remind you of the contrast which is found here between the man and that which surrounds him. From thence the meeting repairs under the trees, where an ox and some pigs roasted, await them. The expense is defrayed by subscription; and toasts are given expressive of the political opinions of the people. The following year there is another barbecue, speech, and ball. The ball is also by subscription. This time the court-house has been prepared; the judge's bench is occupied by an old negro scraping the violin, accompanied by two little negroes playing the tambourine and triangle; tallow candles illuminate the scene; but the women are as pretty and as smart as at New-York. The

planter has doffed his coarse hunting-jacket and drawn from his trunk the blue frock of former times and of another country, and his manners are of the best society. The defects of the music do but augment the mirth of the dancer.—*Murat's United States 2d edition.*

AN AMERICAN COUNTRY ELECTION.—It is in the country places that an election should be seen. The day arrives. For some months previous the candidates and their friends have been in motion, taking their calls from habitation to habitation, trying to persuade, accuse, explain, &c. In general, the friends take more trouble than the candidates themselves. The governor, by proclamation, fixes the day, and divides the country into precincts, in each of which he chooses a central house, and appoints three election judges. These three dignitaries of a day meet on the morning, and swear, kissing the Bible, to conduct themselves with integrity, &c. They seat themselves round a table at a window. An old cigar-box, duly patched up, with a hole in the lid, a sheet of paper, and a writing-desk form the materials of the establishment. Every one presents himself outside of the window, gives his name which is registered upon the paper, deposits his ballot in a box presented to him, and withdraws; if the judge doubt his qualification as to residence or age, they administer an oath to him. Within the room every thing passes in an orderly manner, but it is not the same outside. The wood is soon filled with horses and carts. The electors arrive in troops, laughing and singing, often half tipsy since the morning, and exciting one another to support their favourite candidate. They or their friends present themselves to the electors as they arrive, with ballots ready prepared, often printed, and expose themselves to their jokes and coarseness. Every new comer is questioned about his vote and is received with applause or hisses. An influential man presents himself to vote, declares his opinion and his reasons in a short speech; the tumult ceases for a moment, and he draws away many people after him; nobody offers to molest him. In the meantime the whisky circulates; towards evening every body is more or less tipsy; and it is not often that the sovereign people abdicate their power without a general battle, in which nobody knows what he is about, and in which all those who have managed to retain their carriage take good care not to embroil themselves. Every one goes home to sleep. The judges scrutinize the suffrages, and send the result to the capital. The next day beater and beat are as good friends as if nothing had happened, for every one has learned, from his childhood, to submit to a majority. *Vox populi, vox Dei*, is here an absolute axiom. It should be observed, that the public interest does not suffer from these tumults, because, generally, every one has made up his mind long before voting and holds in it drunk or sober. The excitement of an election is soon over. Before it takes place nothing else is talked of; the next day there is no more question about it than about the Great Mogul.—*Murat's United States 2d edition.*