

vegetables which require long cooking, and therefore are out of the reach of the woman who must work outside of her home many days in the week. The managers of the New England Kitchen do not feel that they have reached a point where the work can go on without any addition or improvement; on the contrary, they are still experimenting slowly and carefully, and no doubt before many years pass they will have solved one of the greatest problems of the age—how the masses may be economically and well fed. When the people who to-day depend for two thirds or more of their food upon bakers' bread, pies, cake, and doughnuts, with tea or beer as a drink, are educated up to the point where they choose soups, well-cooked cereals, and good milk instead, there will be a great gain in their physical and moral condition. It is not that this country lacks the raw materials with which all the people could be well fed, but the material is ruined in the cooking. One has only to spend a little time in a few of our large institutions to see that immense quantities of food are spoiled in the unscientific methods of cooking. I think the New England Kitchen will do for good cooking what the Fleischmanns have done in the last fifteen years in this country for good bread. When they started the Vienna Bakery at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia they set the right example of bread-making. People acquired a taste for good bread, and demanded it, and they have been getting a better article every year. This will be the case with the people as they acquire a taste for savory, nutritious foods scientifically cooked.

*Maria Parloa.*

#### Parks and Playgrounds for Children.

The New York Society for Parks and Playgrounds for Children was incorporated on November 18, 1890. Mr. Abram S. Hewitt is the President. Its purpose is to provide healthful recreation for the 500,000 boys and girls in this metropolis, and thereby help to counteract in New York the physical and moral degeneration which follows the crowding together of people in great cities. The movement began in an effort to open Rutgers Slip for the children of the Seventh Ward. In this division of the city are 75,000 people, most of them living in tenements, and there is not in the ward a foot of ground where children may play without interference by the police. Rutgers Slip is an open plot of ground 320 by 174 feet. For twenty years it has been covered with rubbish, and until a young man, walking summer before last through the overcrowded East Side in search of sites for possible parks, happened upon it, nobody seems to have thought of the place except as a potter's field for broken-down wagons and decrepit tinware. Through the efforts of the new society Rutgers Slip has been set aside for playground purposes by the city authorities, and the Park Board is now devising plans for improvement.

Meanwhile several ladies secured from the Astor estate permission to fit up as a playground a plot 50 by 100 feet in West Fiftieth street, near the North River. This is the first public playground in New York. At the time it was laid out Boston had 19 playgrounds, exclusive of the Common, and London had 365. New York has 5157 acres of parks for grown-up persons and

children on dress-parade. It had then no spot belonging to the children.

In 1887 the legislature of the State of New York, at the request of Mayor Abram S. Hewitt, passed the "Small Parks" Act, permitting New York city to expend a million dollars yearly in acquiring land and laying out small parks in the crowded districts. The provisions of this law are not being carried out as rapidly as the promoters of the project desire, and one object of the society is to induce city officials to purchase land for new parks to the extent permitted by the statute.

In August of last year a meeting was held to advocate turning the "Old Ball Ground" and "The Green" in the southwest corner of Central Park into a public playground. This meeting started a general movement which found expression in public meetings in halls and the open air, and in parades of workmen. At a meeting of the Park Commissioners held September 24, 1890, the matter was referred to Superintendent of Parks Samuel Parsons, and to the landscape-gardener, Mr. C. Vaux. These gentlemen, with Chief Engineer Kellogg, reported that the scheme was entirely feasible. They recommended the erection, at a cost of \$50,000, of a combined playhouse and bridge over the driveway which separates the two meadows, and the expenditure of \$25,000 in providing means for outdoor sports. The issue is still undecided.

On January 8 was opened the first public playground of the new society. William R. Stewart secured from the Rhinelander estate the indefinite free lease of a plot of ground 200 feet square and extending from 91st to 92d street in Second Avenue. This plot has been graded at a cost of \$1000 and inclosed by a high board fence. Two young enthusiasts have been placed in charge, and the playground has been fitted up with swings, wheelbarrows, shovels, toy wagons, and saw boards for small children. For the older boys games like foot-ball and "pull-away" are organized, and races and other athletic exercises encouraged. The most popular diversion is a parade with drums, banners, and American flags. The first parade ended in a riot, in which one of the well-meaning but unappreciated organizers was pelted with stones; but the boys have now learned the practical value of discipline, and the parades are successful.

Individual life in New York is so active that friendships between old and young, which are common and helpful in the country, are almost unknown. Parental influence is also very slight, and this condition obtains not only among the working masses but among the pleasure-seeking classes. Children are isolated in New York. Those of the poor are constantly subject to the contaminating influences of the street without the tonic of a healthy home life. The tendency of modern living is not toward the home, but toward the street, the saloon, the school, the lecture-hall, the restaurant, the reading-room, the night classes, the vices of the dark—toward everything and every place that means aggregation. The children live in a state of imperialism while in the school-room, and lapse at once into a state of anarchy when they leave. To them law and discipline are tyranny and disobedience is freedom. The Society for Parks and Playgrounds believes that the easiest way to teach children ethics is by object-lessons, and it purposes adding a course in democracy to the

lessons in autocracy and anarchy which children imbibed in the schools and streets. The society intends to furnish not only playgrounds but organizers of games. It purposes to find instructors who will join with the children in their sports, teach them the economy of organization, and demonstrate that the happiness of the individual depends upon the harmony of his relations with his associates. All this must be taught by example and not by lecture, and tact, patience, and enthusiasm are necessary in the teacher. The society believes, however, that the result in bodily health and mental discipline will repay the effort.

Briefly stated, then, the objects of the New York Society for Parks and Playgrounds are these:

To furnish eventually, for all boys and girls, at pub-

lic expense, the playgrounds which not even wealthy parents now provide for their children.

To invoke immediately private liberality in furnishing temporary playgrounds which shall be models for municipal imitation.

To secure, in public parks, plots specially devoted to children's recreation.

To obtain the coöperation of labor-unions and political organizations.

Similar societies should be formed in all large cities. The smaller towns and villages should set apart large open spaces for the children now while land is cheap. The physical welfare of the children means the happiness of future humanity; and this deserves one thought even in the rush and whirl of modern business.

Walter Vrooman.



## IN LIGHTER VEIN.

• Understood.

I LOVED a maiden once as well  
As she was passing fair,  
And that is more, the truth to tell,  
Than now to love I'd care;  
And she would let me kiss her hand  
When I'd been very good—  
That is, if I would "understand."  
At length I understood.

I asked her for her photograph  
To light my lonely room;  
She laughed a merry little laugh,  
But left me to my gloom;  
For that was such a "strange" demand  
She did not think she could—  
Because I might not "understand."  
And then I understood.

I wooed her in the morning, noon,  
And afternoon, and night,  
I would have fetched the very moon  
And stars for her delight;  
She said my love was truly grand,  
And that some day she would—  
And hoped that I would "understand."  
How well I understood!

At last I took by force of arms  
The kisses she denied;  
Her dimples were her chiefest charms,  
And so she never cried,  
But faltered as with nimble hand  
She rearranged her snood,  
"I knew you would n't understand!"  
But I *had* understood.

William Bard McVickar.

Smithy Song.

WHEN I am half a-dreaming,  
And only half asleep;  
When daylight's grayest gleaming  
'Gins through the blinds to peep,  
Oh, then I hear the dinging  
Of the smithy hammers ringing,  
Ching ching, ching ching,  
Ching ching, ching ching.

At eve when I'm returning  
From labors of the day,  
Their forges yet are burning,  
And still their hammers play;  
And oft the smiths are singing  
To that measured, merry ringing,  
Ching ching, ching ching,  
Ching ching, ching ching.

Often with rhythmic bending  
Of bodies to and fro,  
They toil in couples, sending  
The sparks out, blow on blow;  
One hammer always swinging  
The while the other's ringing,  
Ching ching, ching ching,  
Ching ching, ching ching.

O merry anvils sounding  
All day till set of sun!  
It is by steady pounding  
That noblest tasks are done.  
By sturdy blows and swinging  
That keep the world a-ringing,  
Ching ching, ching ching,  
Ching ching, ching ching.

George Horton.