

# The Pinehurst Outlook.

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## CORN SHUCKING.

### Annual Husking Bee at Mr. J. B. Saddler's Last Monday.

### A Party from Pinehurst is Royally Entertained by this Hospitable Host.

### A Pleasant and Novel Experience for All of Our Villagers Who Attended.

It is an old custom in agricultural districts in many parts of the world to celebrate the harvest time by a season of rejoicing and feasting, after the bountiful crops have been safely stored away for the winter. In different localities this celebration takes different names and forms, but the same spirit of gladness and goodwill presides over all.

In the region about Pinehurst the "corn-shucking" is the popular autumn festival, and is still observed in the good old fashioned way. Corn is one of the last of the big crops to be harvested here, and when it has been gathered the most pressing part of the fall work is over and the farmer is therefore at liberty to devote a little time to merry-making.

When the corn (which in this section is not golden, but white) is brought from the fields it is placed in great piles near the corn crib. Then a day is set for the husking, or "shucking" as it is called here, the neighbors for miles around are notified, and all turn out to help in the work and enjoy the fun that follows. The farmers' wives and daughters are kept busy preparing the good things for the feast, and the blazing logs roar in the huge fireplaces while the numerous pots, kettles and Dutch ovens send forth appetizing odors indicative of the savory contents.

The shucking generally commences in the afternoon, so that all the work may be finished early and the evening be devoted to the good time that always follows. Part of the workers gather about the big pile of corn and the air is soon filled with flying missiles, the shucked ears being thrown into a pile in front while the husks are thrown to the rear where they are gathered together by another party and stored away. The people chat and joke, and the infectious laugh of the darkeys is heard continuously; but while tongues are active, fingers are not idle, and the huge pile of husked ears rapidly increases in size. When night comes lanterns and torches are produced, and large bonfires send forth light and warmth.

The variety of corn grown here produces plenty of red ears, and—well of

course everybody knows what that means at a shucking. And if some luckless swain from Pinehurst is so unfortunate as to secure but few of these prizes, the "Squire" (who declares he is too old for such "foolishness") is sure to slyly hand him one of the coveted articles and then stand back and enjoy watching the result.

But the corn is all shucked at last, and the tired but happy company adjourns to the house where long tables loaded with eatables await the hungry host. After the feast is over the floor is cleared, banjo and violin are produced, and dancing and games are enjoyed well into the small hours.

Last Monday Mr. J. B. Saddler held his annual corn shucking at his plantation about four miles from Pinehurst, and invited a number of our villagers to be

knife in her pocket, and if the worst happened she would be able to make a wigwam and build a fire so that all would be comfortable.

However, one of the guides soon returned from a scouting expedition and announced that the right road was close at hand, and a short cut through the woods and over a few fallen trees, brought them to the right path, and a few minutes later the party reached its destination just as the full moon was peeping above the tops of the trees.

On arriving at the house the party was warmly welcomed by Mrs. Elizabeth Saddler and her son, who informed them that the last ear of corn had been shucked about ten minutes before. Most of the workers were found busily engaged in clearing away the husks. In front of the door a group



A COUNTRY RESIDENCE.

present. Most of the young people here have lived in Northern cities most of their lives, and their knowledge of a "shucking" was confined to what they had read or heard; consequently all were anxious to accept the invitation.

At 7.15 o'clock Monday evening the wagonette and another team with the Pinehurst party aboard started from the store on their way to the scene of the festivities. Messrs. Louis Letien and J. R. Ritter acted as guides, and managed to pilot the party across the ford at McKenzie's mill, past the McKenzie homestead, and over the bridge at Little river in safety; but the night was dark and the woods thick, and shortly after passing the river the wrong road was taken and traveled several hundred yards before the sharp-eyed guides discovered the mistake. Visions of a night spent in the woods rose up before some of the timid members of the party, but one young lady quieted their fears by the announcement that she had matches and a

was gathered about a large bonfire, as the night was a little chilly. Numerous youngsters were skylarking about in a happy mood, and casting wistful glances through the open door at the good things prepared for the feast that was soon to come. One little darkey created considerable fun by dancing on the sand in front of the fire.

The kitchen chimney built of sticks and mud was soon discovered to be on fire, having caught from the great blazing logs in the fireplace where the extensive cooking operations were going on, but a few buckets of water skillfully applied soon quenched the flames and no damage was done. It seemed queer to the Northerners in the party to see but little excitement over the fire, but chimney fires are of frequent occurrence here.

After a short time spent in looking over the premises and getting acquainted, supper was announced, and the call was welcomed by all present. The visitors from Pinehurst were given the place of

honor, and were soon seated at a table loaded with good things for the inner man.

In the South the sweet-potato pie occupies about the same place in the hearts of the people as the pumpkin pie does in the North. To many of the Northern people present this was the first opportunity to sample this dainty, and few neglected to embrace the chance. Great piles of these and other kinds of pies were placed near at hand, while vegetables, meats and cake of various kinds were lavishly provided, and it seemed to the visitors that preparations had been made to feed an army instead of a few score of people. But the sequel showed that those in charge of this department knew their business. The best that the country afforded was there, and it was dispensed with a lavish hospitality that left no doubt about all being welcome.

But at last even the pickaninnies found that their capacity was limited, and could only look longingly at the sweetmeats for which they could find no more room. Then the company repaired to a large building near by, the banjo was produced and dancing began. Several of the young men gave excellent exhibitions of clog dancing, and a young darkey danced a jig and was heartily applauded. Then a party of young people went through the intricate figures of the cotillion in the good old-fashioned way, and preparations were being made for playing games, when it was discovered that the hour was late and the Pinehurst party felt obliged to leave.

Mrs. Saddler and her son left nothing undone that would promote the pleasure of their guests. All were made to feel that they were heartily welcome, and the Pinehurst party regretted that they were unable to stop longer.

The return trip was made by the light of the moon and the company arrived in the village about midnight. The outing was a new experience to many of our villagers and will be pleasantly remembered for many years to come.

### A Pretty Child Story.

The prettiest child story that I have seen lately is in French. A mother tells her little girl that because she has been naughty she will not kiss her for a week. Before two days have gone by the child's lips hunger so for her mother's kiss that she begs her not to punish her any more. The mother says: "No, my dear; I told you that I should not kiss you and I must keep my word." "But, mamma, mamma," says the little girl, "would it be breaking your word if you should kiss me just once to-night, when I'm asleep?" —*Boston Transcript.*

The leading papers and magazines are to be found in the reading room on the second floor at the Casino. This room and contents are for the free use of our villagers.