

# A GREAT GERMAN FESTIVAL

## HARVEST HOME CELEBRATION AT SULZER'S PARK.

THOUSANDS IN ATTENDANCE AND LOTS  
OF FUN—GREAT VARIETY OF GAMES  
AND SPORTS FOR OLD AND YOUNG  
—MUSIC AND DANCING.

As much of American Germany as could get into Sulzer's Harlem River Park, at One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Street and Second Avenue, was there yesterday afternoon and evening celebrating the opening day of the Connstatter Volksfest. The festival is to remain in full swing for three days longer.

The social spirit ruled the day. Hans, in his long-sleeved coat and short-sleeved trousers, and Fritz, with his military stature and stride, drank together. They brought their wives, and they had lager also. And the wives brought an assortment of children, who were permitted to drain the last drops in the beer mugs, because they were very good children, and because of the harvest-home festival, and because everybody was happy and chatty and indulgent toward everybody else. And everywhere were distracted but smiling waiters, and the smoke of German-puffed tobacco, and the sound of German laughter and of German hymns and airs as interpreted by three German bands. In order to make the festival still more strongly smack of the beloved Vaterland, hosts of boys and girls and of handsome youths and maidens wandered about, dressed in bright-colored, picturesque German peasant costumes. Their elders looked at them approvingly and thought of the old days across the water.

Endless amusements were provided. Really, one must have been terribly out of temper with the world not to find some pleasure, some relaxation from the monotonous daily life outside the park wall. There was excellent music, and the best floor that ever was danced upon. The floor was never unoccupied; couples walked about while the musicians rested, and when the violin drew a moaning, wailing breath, they all hung expectantly waiting for a moment, and then swung into the rhythm of the music. They couldn't help it; they would not have been Germans if they could.

Those who didn't dance walked about the grounds and saw the games, the tests of skill and strength. They saw the sign where the self-styled "King of Astrology" had erected a slab throne, covered with striped bed ticking, and a crowd surrounded him. He was dealing out lovers and sweethearts at 10 cents apiece. Each lady, his placard announced, would receive a photograph of her future husband, if she was going to have one; same as to each gentleman. The dimes showered in upon him. Big Fritz paid 10 cents and got a letter and a photograph, and he read the letter to a shouting crowd. It was a letter in rhyme:

"In rain or shine, by day or night,  
With you, dear Sir, I will take delight."

Then Fritz had to show the photograph, and then there was no end of laughter at his expense.

The man who outs out silhouettes is at the park, and there also is the man with the muscle tester. He has a crowd around him that groans with Fritz as he grows red in the face with his effort, and cheers wildly when Hans beats him and sends the tally weight up the rod till the bell rings. If Hans's sweetheart is there she is proud of him and sends him a swift glance that tells him so. And there is the carrousel, where for 5 cents one may gallop smoothly around the ring till he falls off his steed. What a menagerie is brought under the control of the carrousel keeper! For the babies, parents, and grandparents mount fearlessly the backs not only of horses, but of camels, rhinoceroses, lions, giraffes, and tigers, and prance about as unconcerned as though the only creature near them was the fireside cat.

Across the way are the swings and the Punch and Judy show, which may be incongruous, but is just as entertaining for all that. And then to the long gallery where the shooting is going on. One can hear the guns popping away like corn over a hot fire, and once in a while a bell rings out the announcement that the bull's-eye is hit. The shooting is competitive, and the score of prizes to be awarded to the best shots are displayed as an inducement to pay a quarter and shoot. The prizes are of a kind that would naturally appeal to young fellows who are about to begin housekeeping. There are chairs and footstools and clocks and china, all the prizes objects of domestic usefulness.

Next door is a bowling alley, where one may knock down ninepins for a prize. The attractions here are canes and umbrellas and such things as a well-circumstanced young German would want under any conditions. But the larger crowd is around the shooting gallery, and it looks to American eyes as though there would shortly be numbers of marriage certificates made out in good German names and a corresponding number of visits to the favorite German pastors.

Scattered all about in pavilions and in the open are numberless little tables and benches where wine or beer is served to the bibulously inclined. The benches are occupied, the walks are thronged, the bands play, the sun shines. The festival is a happy, whole-souled occasion of enjoyment. It is all bright, all cheery, all German.

In the centre of the park there towers a pillar, full 40 feet high, which is the Altar of Adoration. Everybody goes to it, walks around it, and gets the neckache looking at it, clear to its very top. It is of wood, decorated tastily with fruits and vegetables of all kinds, all varieties. All countries and climes, from Iceland to the equator, must have contributed of their produce to help complete this testimonial of a successful harvest season. It was erected by Mr. Eugene Moller, 311 Fourth Street, Jersey City. The fruits and grains and vegetables are nailed on with bright-headed nails, and with their varied colors and shapes are generally grouped in regular geometrical figures. Yet a combination of squashes and red peppers makes very effective three-horned dragons at each of the four corners, and the inscription of welcome stands out "whitely" in peanuts against a magenta background of assorted products. It is all a fine piece of work, and is duly admired.

It is now twenty years that the Cannstatter Volksfest has been annually celebrated in this country. It is a plain harvest-home festival, marking the end of harvest with songs and merrymaking. The custom is transplanted from Germany, where from time immemorial it has been observed. It will continue three days longer, and the programme of each day will be the same. The programme itself is in a great measure fixed by custom. Thus in Germany there is a legend in connection with the festival which is each year acted, and which will be presented here to-day and on the two succeeding days. The legend is this:

"One Winter the cold was very severe, so that it penetrated all the hiding places and burrows of the animals. And food was scarce with the wild things, for the season's crops had been a failure. Then the hare, a big fellow, as big as a small boy, became very hungry, and decided that, come what might, he would have something to eat. To do this, he had to go into the city; and into the city he went.

"Now, the citizens had never seen such a beast, and were in great terror as the hare hopped about, picking up food. And they called on the Mayor to save them. The Mayor called on his Constable, and the Constable on his five deputies, and at last the seven men, armed with a long lance, which they all took hold of and handled like a battering ram, moved against the hare.

"The hare sat up and viewed their approach. The men came quite near, and at every step they took the hare raised his ears in surprise and wonder, so that the seven men, not knowing what the movement of the ears meant, hurriedly retreated behind each other. There was great confusion, till at length the Mayor took hold of his Constable and said:

"Look you, Haussier; you must go ahead. You have on long boots, and the beast can't bite you."

"Then the beast was slain and the city freed from its great fear."

This legend, carried out minutely by the actors will be the chief attraction at the park to-day.

### CHARLES BROWN'S STRANGE STORY.

Charles Brown of 22 Albany Street is now locked up for attempting to take his wife's life yesterday morning, between 4 and 5 o'clock. Brown tells a strange story. He says that at that time he was awakened by a tall man, whom he saw but indistinctly, trying to force the door of his room. He had broken the lock off, when Mrs. Brown got up to see what the matter was. The tall man then fired at her with a pistol, and the ball took effect in her face.

It was 11 o'clock yesterday morning before the matter was reported to the police. Then the ball was taken from Mrs. Brown's face at the Chambers Street Hospital. It was found that her cheeks were burned with powder. As the ball of the room showed no signs of having been tampered with, and as Mr. Brown himself was regarded with suspicion, he was locked up. Four witnesses are held, one of whom, Mary Dey, says that Brown did the shooting; that she saw him have the pistol in his hand, and heard the whole "racket." She adds that Brown and his wife do not live together in peace and happiness, but frequently quarrel.

### THE NEW-JERSEY STATE FAIR.

The managers of the New-Jersey State Fair at Waverly have, from time immemorial, dared the elements by fixing their week's exhibition for the time when the Fall equinoctial storm is due. This year they are to repeat the annual programme. The fair will begin on Monday next and continue till the close of the week.

The exhibition promises to be as attractive as any that has preceded it. The tents and exhibition buildings have been put in shape, and the number of entries of cattle, horses, and fowl, flowers, fruit, and machinery exceed those of any other year. The entries for the races that beguile the throng that flock to the grounds include some of the most notable of coursers, and Mme. Marantette will treat visitors to a display of her hurdle riding with five horses.

Thursday will be the big day. The politicians from all parts of the State are expected to be on hand that day, and by the time they leave for their homes a good many knotty political problems will have found solution.