

# GREAT IRISH-AMERICAN FAIR.

of the wavy black hair, gray eyes, fringed with the heaviest black lashes, which intensify the soft coloring and pronounce their merry, twinkling brightness. She has a clear, rosy complexion, which tells tales of the fresh air of the Lakes of Killarney. This, too, accounts for much of that romantic sentiment for which the Cork colleen is famous. They say that no one can live within sight of those beautiful lakes and not imbibe some of the romance and sentiment surrounding them.

The colleen from the west is a type peculiar to her part of the country, inherited as it is from her ancestors, the early invaders. Her coloring is dainty and rich. The brown eyes and skin of milky whiteness needs just this burnished glow of auburn hair to brighten her face and make her classed among the most beautiful of Irish colleens.

Most of the colleens who are to take part in this coming fair have just come from Ireland, and are showing their devotion to the land of Erin and their country people by the labor they have performed in the past month to make the Irish Fair a success. None can realize the necessity of a home in America as do these girls, who are landed in New York after a long and tedious voyage with little money and possibly no friends, except those made on board the ship. It takes weeks for them to obtain suitable employment and to find the friends who can aid them. During this time they are homeless and possibly without funds. All this will be done away with when the new Irish Palace is built, for it will open its doors for just this kind of people, those who need help and encouragement.

Through the efforts of these colleens of the fair many a family treasure has found itself over in this country. For months past friends of those living here have canvassed the different counties and collected sums of money and articles which have been sent over to be disposed of by the colleens at the fair. Fine china, from old Menton down to the modern wares, laces of cobwebby texture from the ancient convents or fresh from the looms of to-day, and linens of every grade. There are many old pictures, too, and a few spinning wheels of antique make; all sorts of souvenirs made from the logwood, and harps with histories that date back almost to the time of St. Patrick.



A linen spinner from Belfast, who will show you how the finest wear is made.



A colleen from Dublin, a typical milkmaid in her native frock.

You may buy there a mug of fresh milk from the hand of a winsome dairy maid, dressed in her country gown. You may watch the wheel, guided by the hands of a fair spinner, disentangling the linen threads, or have a bright-eyed girl from Cork lure you into the Blarney Castle. You have but to slip a coin into her hand, kiss the far-famed stone, and henceforth you shall find your words are honeyed, and all you desire shall be obtained for the asking, so great is the power of the Blarney stone.

These colleens are singers, too—singers sweet and tuneful. From the days of the strolling minstrel and his harp the melodies of Ireland have been sung.

Many of the songs are of the shamrock and the harp, and are so beautiful that their words have floated over the seas and become household songs and their melody, so tuneful and sweet, has formed a part of the beautiful music of the world. Some of these melodies are dedicated to the native colleen, and none are more filled with poetry and love than these.

The women of Ireland have been the greatest workers for this fair. Some months ago, when the subject was approached, it was the women who began the work to raise funds and to collect articles suitable for transportation. The old women who, through long years of service, have become skilled in knitting, weaving and making lace with the bobbins, renewed their energies in these lines, and have sent over the sea many beautiful specimens of their art. These women, some of whom are so old and crippled that this work was a task to them, have made these articles, each contributing her mite, for the big fair, to further the building of the palace and thus secure a home for the young girls when they leave their native heath and cross the big ocean to enter upon a new lifeocean to enter upon a new life in the land of liberty.

The intention of the people having the fair in charge is to raise funds to build a temporary home and meeting place for all Irish people who come to this country. The plan has been talked of for years, but it is only within the past few months that any work has been done toward it. Now it is proposed to do something practicable. The committee have furnished the opportunities for a great Irish Fair, and the colleens will do the rest. Thirty-two counties will be represented in as many booths, and there's the liveliest kind of rivalry to see which one will do the best for the cause. The lucky representatives of Cork have not only colleens galore, but a piece of the original Blarney stone, sent over here under the seal of the happy mayor who guards its sacred resting place. But the other counties are not cast down one bit over Cork's luck. They have colleens themselves, and such colleens. They declare there's enough blarney about them to knock out the Cork product, even if it were as big as the pillars of Hercules.