AUNT JEMIMA ON THE WOMAN QUESTION.

(F. A. S., in *Boston Transcipt.*)

AUNT JEMIMA gave a real old-fashioned quilting party the other day in honour of a niece who was visiting her, and freed her mind in this little lecture to her guests, who were all young girls :—

"We are livin', galls, in a fast age—a progressive age they call it, when women are a-puttin' on airs and a-settin' up to be the equals of man. 'Twan't so when I was a gall. Women didn't then pretend that they'd a right to vote and sing bass, and speechify in public. Galls didn't go galivanting off to college and universities, and rack their brains over ologies and furrin' lingos till they was turned inside out.

"Do you suppose that, if I'd a ben one of that sort of young women, Solon Pettibone would ever have took a fancy to me, and chose me out of twenty other galls that was just a-dying for him? For Squire Pettibone, whose weepin' relict I now am, was a great man in his day, a member of the school committee, a justice of the peace, head of the board of selek men. He served two terms in the State Legislatur, and was even talked of for Congress!

"He was a man of deep larnin' and great powers of mind. He read a good deal, but it was mostly in science books too deep for me. Whenever in his weekly newspapers he came to a artikel headed 'Women's Spere,' 'Advice to Wives.' and sich like, he'd insist on readin' it to me, even if I had to leave my salt risin' a-runnin' over, or the dinner-table a-standin' on the floor, to listen. Sometimes of an evenin', arter the children was all asleep, and I sot in the chimbly corner a-darnin' stockins or doin' up my week's mendin', he'd take dauwn some larned volum from the book-case that he allers kep under lock and key, and if he come acrost enything suited to my needs or capacerty he kindly read it to me. E'enamost all the larnin' I ever got came in this way.

"I remember just as if it was yisterday how kinder pleased-like he'd look over at me and the work I was a-doin', while he read some lines from Sheridan Knowles, beginnin'—

'Women act ther parts
When they do make their ordered households know 'em,'

—or these words from another great poet—Shakespeare or Martin Farquhar Tupper, I disremember which—

'What I do most admire in woman
Is her affections, but not her intellek.'

"One line of Vargil was a pertikelar favourite of his'n. He said it in his sort of hectorin' way to me so often that, though I don't know no Latin (I should hope not). I larned this lingo by heart and can repeat it naow :

'*Varium et mutabile semper femina.*'

"(Husband said it meant, 'More fickle than the winged winds is woman.')

"At family prayers, which he kept up constant, and where he was the most eddifyin' of men, he used to ransack the scriptures for passages improvin' to me and the galls—such as—

"'Wives, be in subjection to your husbands.'

"'Whose adornin' let it not be that outard adornin' of plaitin' the hair, of wearin' of gold, or of puttin' on of apparel, but the ornerment of a meek and quiet sperit.'

"But the verses he set the most by was them of King Solomon describin' the vartuous woman. I know the hull on 'em by heart. Them books upon woman's spere by Dr. Todd and Dr. Fulton come out jest afore he died, and was the solace of his last hours. How many times when I was a-ministerin' araound his dyin' pillow he quoted to me them lovely words of Dr. Fulton: 'Woman is God's first gift to man, and to be helper to man is nobler than to be queen of heaven. For this God created you. For this he preserves you.'

"One day the squire added, smilin', 'Jemima, you've ben to me a meek, lovin', industrus, devoted, obejent wife. I shall leave you the income of a third of my estate as long as you remain my widder. No son of my own can bear my name and honours, but the Pettibone name must be kep' up, and tother two-thirds—the hull when you are done with it—goes to Solon Pettibone, my second cousin's son, who is named arter me. When galls gets so uppish and inderpendent in their idees as our galls, they's better be left scratch for theirselves. I leave 'em jest one dollar apiece.'

"No, Susan Maria, I don't think that was too bad. Our galls went agin' their par's teechins, and it was his duty to punish 'em.

"For nigh upon thirty years I was blest with this high, improvin' companionship, and, though a poor cretur at best, I tried in my humble way to be a help-meet for my husband. The squire was a master-hand for good victuals, and I made his likens and dislikens in this line sich a study, that I ontirely won his heart. And, galls, the straightest road to any man's heart leads right through his stummick. From rise to set of sun, my work wos never done. I looked well arter the ways of my household. I never ate the bread of idleness. My husband was known in the gates, when he sot among the elders of the land, and that was glory enough for me.

"You ask if the squire was kind to me, Matilda Jane! He made me keep my place; I don't suppose *you'd* call that kind, but I was content. If I'd gone on the way lots of women in these days is goin' on, he'd a shut me up in a lunatic asylum, and sarved me right. He had a tremenjus will of his own, and I didn't dare to oppose it. I do believe that if he'd a smit me on the one cheek I'd a-turned to him t'other one also. In all things he was lord and master. I had promised to serve, honour and obey him, and I kept my word. If I'd a sot up my Ebenezer, and tried to have my say contrarywise to his'n, I should aroused a sperit no power on airth could quell. You have heerd of the iron hand in the glove of velvet. That was Squire Pettibone exactly. He just took it quietly for granted that his word was law—like unto that of the Medes and the Persians, which changeth not.

"My galls—there was three on 'em—didn't grow up as they'd orter under such pius teachin's. They used to say to me: 'Mar, you're a drudge and a slave. You don't dare say your soul's your own—you hain't got the sperit of the worm that turns when it's trod upon. Par thinks all women his inferiors, and he's allus bewailin' the heavy cross laid upon him in having his children all darters instid of sons.' (It was a heavy cross. I never could forgive myself for loadin' him with sich a burden.)

"Jenny, our eldest, thought her par kept a-dingin' into her ears John Milton's works, 'one tongue is enough for a woman'—Jenny, she went on and learned Latin, French, and German, in spite of him. He used to call her his polyglot darter. Susanna, she went through college, and then up and studied medicine. Ruth, arter gittin' a high-up edication, graderwated from the Boston School of Oratory, and now reads and elocutes in public.

"Jenny, she's married, and keeps house in a new-fangled, labour-saving sort of way, and seems to have her say about everything. Her husband thinks there's only one perfect woman on the airth, and seems so dazed and dumfounded like at his luck in marryin' that one that he don't even have sperit enough to manage his own household.

"Susanna says that she is wedded to her perfession. Ruth, who allers was a saucy minx, declares that she is wedded to her art; that she don't want to be like her mar—a man's slave while he lives, and his relict arter he is dead. They're bright, good-lookin' galls, if I do say it, and might have their pick of the best, if 't want for their obstreporous ways and highfalutin' notions.

"If their par could come back to the airth and see how things is agoin' on everywhere, even in the bosom of his own famerly, he'd find hisself a sayin' oftener than ever, 'We-al, this ere *is* a curus world!' and would be likely to make still more frekent use of that favourite phrase of his'n. when things in the world didn't go on to suit him, '*O tempora! O Moses!*'"

A CHRISTMAS IN WAR TIME.

A TRUE STORY.

(By CHARLOTTE CURTIS SMITH, in *Ave Maria.*)

IN the year 1862 Dennis O'Hare enlisted in the ——th regiment of Wisconsin, and marched southward to join the army. All his friends marvelled at his going to war, for he left six children at home for his wife to support.

"Don't mind me and the little ones. With the help of God we'll weather it through," said his brave-hearted wife.

"Hip, hip, hooray!" gaily shouted his four boys, as they stood on the top rail of the garden-fence to watch their father march away.

But the two girls clung to their mother's skirts and cried when they heard the music of the drums and fifes and the measured tread of the soldiers.

For two years the mother and the six children got on very comfortably. Mrs. O'Hare did plain sewing and washing and cleaning for the village people; so she paid her rent and provided for her six children. But in the autumn of 1864 the times were hard. The war made money scarce and prices high. Everyone suffered. The village people could not afford to hire good Mrs. O'Hare to sew or wash or clean, and consequently she could not pay her rent. To be sure she heard now and then from her husband, and there was always money in his letters. But with the small sum she received she could not pay her rent and buy food for the children too; so she fed her little ones and let the rent go unpaid.

But the landlord did not agree with Mrs. O'Hare's plan. He demanded his money; and one week he told her that she must pay the rent the following Saturday or leave the house. Saturday came and she could not meet the debt, so the cruel landlord moved her furniture out of the house into the street.

The poor mother with her little brood fluttered wildly about. Where could she go? Where could she find shelter?

"I know a good place to go," declared Dennie, her oldest boy. "There's an old freight-car beside the railroad track, about half a mile from the village. Let's move in there. Sure no one'll charge us rent for it."

"Anywhere—anywhere for a roof over our heads," his mother answered.

Immediately the children got a wheelbarrow and began moving the stove, tables, chairs, dishes, beds and bedding down to the old abandoned freight-car; and before sunset the O'Hare family and all their furniture were inside the car. Then the boys set up the cooking-stove, and the mother cooked a warm supper; and by nine o'clock the beds were set up. And that night the soldier's family slept soundly—except when a train went thundering by, jarring the little beds, and making the children imagine that someone was after the rent.

Life in a freight-car was great sport for the O'Hare children. Now all their work seemed like play. They were very busy until snow fell, banking the outside of the car with leaves and sand, and carrying sticks and dead branches for the winter firewood. There were windows in one end of the car, and the wintry sunshine shone inside, making the place warm and cheerful. And at night, when the wolves were howling in the distance, the children were not at all frightened; they felt that the passing trains protected them.

But there was one thing that worried the mother; how was she going to make a merry Christmas for her children? Every year until the father went to the war the children had received gifts and eaten a turkey dinner. Since the father left they had given up the gifts, but they had had the dinner. This year Mrs. O'Hare did not see how she could afford to buy even a chicken for Christmas Day. At night, after the children were in bed, she darned stockings and patched trousers and gowns, and at the same time puzzled and worried about Christmas. At last one day she told the children that she could not afford to have anything extra for the Christmas dinner.