RURAL TOPICS.

Some Practical Suggestions for Our Agricultural Readers.

THE ALMOND TREE.

The common almond tree, *Prunus communis*, is a native of Asia Minor, Syria, and Persia. It grows from twenty to thirty feet in height, and in appearance closely resembles a peach tree. The fruit consists of a dry, coriaceous exterior, surrounding a wrinkled stone, which incloses the seed, and constitutes the almond of commerce. Almonds are divided into two very distinct kinds: the bitter and the sweet. There are many varieties, especially of the sweet, which differ in size and shape, the hardness or softness of the shells, and the value of the kernels. The softest shelled almonds are called Princess; these are very tender, the shells are easily crushed, and the kernels are highly esteemed.

The production of almonds in California is rapidly increasing and will soon supply as good an article as the imported, and in quantities sufficient to meet all demands. Although very indigestible, almonds are much eaten. They are also largely used in cookery, confectionery, and perfumery. The bitter almonds of commerce are mainly produced in Morocco, and are used for flavoring various foods and confections, and in medicinal preparations. An oil is obtained from almonds by expression. The oil from the sweet almond is nearly colorless, has a sweet taste, an agreeable smell, and has a great resemblence to olive oil. It has been recommended as a means of providing a pleasant substitute for milk during sea voyages, by mixing it with double its quantity of water and half its weight of gum arabic, beating the whole rapidly together until a sort of cream is produced.

The deleterious principle of prussic acid does not exist in the kernel of the sweet almond, although found in its bark, leaves, and flowers. After expressing the fat oil from the kernels of the bitter almonds, the cake or mare which is left is reduced to powder by grinding; this, when distilled with water, gives over a volatile oil called oil of bitter almonds. This oil has a yellowish color, a bitter, acrid, burning taste; it is powerfully poisonous, and in a greatly diluted form is sold as the essence of almonds. The oil of bitter almonds, besides a peculiar volatile oil, contains also hydrocyanic acid, a small proportion of benzoic acid, and a concrete principle called benzoine. It also contains 8 per cent. of prussic acid, which can be removed by redistilling it over potash. The culture of the almond tree is exactly similar to that bestowed upon the peach tree.

SORGHUM SUGAR IN JAPAN.

Some of the rural papers are getting terribly mixed up regarding sugar from sorghum. These are mostly managed by young editors who have no knowledge of what has been done, either in this country or in other countries, in sugar making from sorghum. The *Farmer's Review* states: "All the sugar of Japan is made from sorghum, and in 1871 seventy-one millions of pounds were exported. The sorghum is grown from cuttings, the stalks being cut and buried in September, and sprouts are started through the winter from each joint; these sprouts are cut off and planted in the spring."

Strange that the editor could not see that this describes the culture of the tropical sugar cane. It has been repeatedly stated by those who have made special effort to get at the facts, that neither the Chinese nor the Japanese make sugar from sorghum. About fifteen years ago a Government agent was sent out to China and Japan for the express purpose of procuring the best sugar bearing sorghum seed, but he reported that it was not cultivated as a sugar bearing plant. Next in order will be the recommendation to cut stalks and plant in September, "same as they do in Japan." If the question is asked, "Why propagate it from cuttings when it can be more profitably cultivated from seeds?" the questioner will be rated as one opposed to sorghum culture; at least, that is about the usual way that practical gradgrinds are answered, if they ask for information. E. S. G.

RIPENING OF FRUIT.

It is well known to those who have had the opportunity of handling fruits that the best flavored, best colored, and finest specimens of fruits are those which have ripened on plants having an abundance of healthy foliage, and where the fruit could be entirely screened and shaded by the leaves. The finest strawberries are those found in the densest foliage, and so with grapes and all other fruits. We know of no exception to this rule. Yet we are very frequently asked whether or not the leaves should be removed from the bunches of grapes so that they may be exposed to the sun and thus hasten their maturity; it is even advised by some practitioners as a necessity, and we are told that it is a rule to do so in some of the vineyards of Europe. To all this it may simply be said that the removal of leaves never yet improved the quality of fruit or hastened its maturity.

The results from covering bunches of grapes in bags ought to be convincing that direct sunlight on the fruit is an injury rather than a benefit. But the foliage must have all the light possible, and the more healthy foliage on a plant the more fruit it will mature.

The mere coloring of grapes is not a sign of maturity, although it is a sign of approaching to ripeness. The only true indication of a ripened bunch of grapes is when the shoot upon which it is growing has turned brown and hard, and the leaves beginning to change their color. Pulling the leaves from figs, grapes, or any other fruiting plants with a view to assist in ripening a crop, is a fatal error, because it has the opposite effect.

SOWING WHEAT.

We see it stated that there are about 630,000 seeds in a bushel of wheat weighing sixty pounds, and each seed requires a square foot of soil in which to develop into a perfect wheat plant. Now, this gives us about 43,560 plants to an acre, so that a bushel of wheat is enough to plant ten and one-fourth acres with. When a man puts in a bushel and a half there is enough for about fifteen acres; therefore, the greater number of the seeds are killed in the struggle for existence, whilst every plant in the field probably suffers from the contest. We have seen 132 heads growing upon a plant raised from a single seed sown upon good soil, with plenty of room to grow in, and left undistrubed from time of sowing until gathered.

These facts are mentioned, not because we think it is practicable to sow ten acres with one bushel of seed, but to show that it is quite possible to sow too much to the injury of the crop, and to call attention to the advantages of the seed drill as a method of distributing a small quantity of seed regularly, and thus not only saving in the quantity of seed grain, but at the same time enhancing the value of the crop.—*Australian paper.*

While the lesson inculcated in the above is valuable, we are in doubts about the accuracy of the number of grains in a bushel of wheat; we think that it is at least three times too high, even if a small seeded wheat be taken.

HINTS ON SHEEP MANAGEMENT.

An experienced sheep grower says: "I do not keep many sheep, because it is not well to keep too many on a small farm. Sheep should not be in one field too long; they should be changed every two months to a fresh pasture. I believe the greatest secret to the health of sheep is to keep them dry during winter and early spring. I never let my sheep get wet from October to May, day or night. I put them in a warm, dry place with plenty of air and light. I believe that catarrh in sheep is the result, either directly or indirectly, of exposure. In feeding I prefer the blade fodder, either from corn or sorghum, to any other roughness. I do not think that hay is best for sheep. For pasture I prefer short grass. In feeding grain I prefer shelled oats to any other grain. Corn and oats mixed make a good feed. If I had no oats, I would feed corn with a liberal feed of wheat bran once a week.

"I find Southdowns more hardy than Cotswolds. I am raising from imported Cotswolds now; have some ewes that are one-eighth Southdowns. The best sheep I ever raised for wool and mutton was a cross between these two breeds, one-fourth Southdowns. My experience has only been with Cotswolds and Southdowns."

CALIFORNIA RAISINS.

It has been thoroughly proved that as good raisins can be made in California as those from any other source, provided sufficient care is bestowed upon the curing of them. But, whatever may be the cause,—too great anxiety to harvest a large crop with insufficient means, or a want of a thorough appreciation of the necessity of furnishing the best article,—it is a fact that the raisins from that State do not keep well. The trouble appears to be simply that time is not allowed for them to become properly dried before packing; they keep through the winter, but turn sour in the spring. We hope that an industry so important, so profitable, and which may become of great magnitude, will not be allowed to suffer through mere carelessness in the mechanical operation of preparation for market.

SUBSTITUTE FOR PARIS GREEN.

An Ohio cultivator, being opposed to the use of such virulent poisons, as Paris green and London purple on potatoes and cabbages to kill bugs and caterpillars, tried the following experiments with alum:

He dissolved four ounces of alum in two gallons of cold water, and sprinkled it on the potato vines with a handful of broom corn, which was tied together to use for that purpose. After a careful observation it was found that the bugs were all killed in about five or six days, and one application was all that was needed; the bugs did not bother after that, and the potato vines were not stunted as by the application of London purple, but were more thrifty and looked greener.

The alum water was tried on cabbage in the same proportion, and one application was made; after that the butterfly that deposits its eggs on the cabbage leaf had no effect on the cabbage, and when it was cut in the fall not a worm could be found in any of it.

We apprehend that this remedy will have to be repeated in order to establish its efficiency.

SUGAR AND GLUCOSE.

The humble beet can hold up its head with pride when its sweetness is contrasted with that of the grape. The grape is sweetened with glucose, an ignoble form of sugar which the chemist can make in the laboratory, where its production does not require the employment of costly or rare materials. The sweet juices of the grape can be made from old cotton rags and old newspapers, or from sawdust. But human art has not yet been able to number among its triumphs the production of the sugar of the beet, the maple or the cane. The watermelon has the faculty of manufacturing cane sugar in large quantities; and the apple, peach, strawberry, cherry, and pear have the power of bringing into play a chemistry by which is produced distinct forms of sweets which no art of man can imitate.

WOOD ASHES FOR PEAR AND APPLE TREES.

Those having pear and apple trees which are unproductive, should try the effect of a heavy dose of wood ashes. If a tree is large, three or four bushels will be none too much if spread over a good wide space, so that it may be not more than half an inch in thickness. How much trees will bear around their roots without injury is probably not exactly known. It is recorded that an apple tree which was remarkable for the heavy crops it had borne of very highly colored fruit, received eight bushels of unleached wood ashes as an annual dressing to its roots. This shows that even this large quantity was well employed. While cases of overmanuring may be seen, yet the number of cases where undermanuring takes place are much more plentiful.

HOLSTEIN COWS.

The following is a Holland description of this breed: "The cow should have considerable size, not less than 4½ or 5 feet girth, with a length of body corresponding, a finely formed head, with a forehead or face somewhat concave, clear, large, mild eyes.

"Yields of sixty to ninety pounds of milk per day are expected of all native Holstein cows on good pasture. But her strongest recommendation to the dairy is not her daily yield, but the fact that she continues to give a full flow throughout the year. Cows yielding 16,000 pounds of milk per year are not scarce, while a few have gone much higher, and the mature cow that would fall short of 10,000 pounds would be an exception."

BUTTER.

There are some things about the dairy that everyone interested in it should constantly bear in mind. One of these things is that a pound of poor butter costs just as much in feed, labor, and general care, as a pound of good butter. While they cost just the same, one often sells for double or thrice the sum paid for the other. While one builds up, increases and ornaments the dairyman's reputation, the other, on the contrary, injures and destroys it. Carelessness in butter making has made oleomargarine possible; many people actually prefer it to poor butter—so that dairymen, instead of trying to stop the manufacture of what they consider an adulteration, should endeavor to limit its sale by providing a cheaper, saleable, and preferable article.

RICH CHEESE.

When the milk is kept in the factory over night, and properly stirred and cooled, the sweet cream should be dipped off in the morning before the morning milk is added, and kept by itself until the milk is all in, and then warmed to the desired degree for applying rennet. Then warm the cream to blood heat, or thereabouts, and run it through a clean strainer, rinsing it through with plenty of warm milk; then stir it in thoroughly, and apply the rennet, stirring the milk as long as it can be safely stirred, and give it time to become still before it begins to coagulate.—*Exchange.*

SUBSOIL PLOWING.

Breaking up the bottom of the ordinary furrow with a subsoil plow, by preparing the ground so that the roots can penetrate deeper, prevents in a very great measure the winter killing of grains, which is mostly caused by the surface strata being saturated with water, and the roots, not being able to penetrate through the hard subsoil, suffer in consequence. A slight mulching of manure, properly distributed over wheat and rye just before, or just after the first freeze, will also prevent winter killing and largely increase the crop.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Our Agricultural Editor's Weekly Chat With His Readers.

I want to plant a few shade trees on my lot and do not want to lose any time, so I ask whether I should plant them in the fall or wait till next spring.—Amicus, Montgomery county, Md.

Ans. By all means plant this fall, as you will gain nearly a year by doing so as compared with planting next spring. Endeavor to have the planting done not later than the middle of October, and if the trees have not dropped all their leaves by that time, pull them off; this is important.

Would the editor of "Rural Topics" favor us with his opinion about wheat turning to chess? Our club have had the matter up for discussion, and some of us believe in the change.—Granger, Kentucky.

Ans. We do not consider this a question for discussion at all; just as well discuss the question of turnips turning to carrots, or oats turning to timothy.

What is the best method of preparing city sewage water for manurial purposes?—R. S. S.

Ans. So far as we are informed, the only profitable method of using sewage water from cities is for the purpose of irrigation. Where this can be applied it is valuable, but where it cannot be used in this way, no use can be made of it, so far as it is a fertilizing agent.

In my inquiry of the cause of grape vine dropping its fruit just after blossoming I forgot to state that the vine was transplanted when in fruit. The planting was carefully done, the leaves not wilting, but the grapes dropped, being about the size of shot at the time. Can it be a bad habit then formed which has become chronic? Give us light.—Constant Reader.

Ans. Although the transplanting caused the fruit to drop, it does not follow that the fruit will drop annually in commemoration of the circumstance. This is not a sufficient reason for the trouble, but what causes it we do not pretend to say.

Does the editor consider the European sparrow a curse or a blessing to this country?—E., Troy.

Ans. Thirty years ago we were asked to assist in the introduction of the European sparrow to this country, and we strongly opposed the measure. But it has been brought here, and it will be as difficult to get rid of it as it would be to get rid of mice or rats. These birds feed their young on caterpillars, grasshoppers, and insects of various kinds, as any one may discover who watches them feeding their young. Whether or not the old birds devour insects for a living to any great extent we cannot say, but we think that they rather prefer grains of all kinds. When they become numerous in farming districts they will as certainly become destructive of grain crops; their history everywhere goes to prove this.

Young and middle-aged men, suffering from nervous debility, premature old age, loss of memory, and kindred symptoms, should send three stamps for Part VII of pamphlets issued by World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y.

LOYAL WOMAN'S WORK

The Fireside and the World Wide. Helpful Hints and Friendly Talks.

[Conducted by Kate B. Sherwood.]

How to keep as comfortable as possible is well worth the study of those who think and reason. Summer headache is the cause of much discomfort to very many persons. In some cases it is traceable to malarial poisoning, when quinine is the only specific. But very often the headache is caused by too much blood in the head. In such cases it will be found a very great relief to bathe the head very frequently in cold water, and, if it is persistent, to fold a compress, wet it, and lay it on the top of the head, just above the brow. Not only those who are obliged to spend much of their time in the sun heat, but those who are confined to close rooms and offices will be greatly benefited if they will remember this.

It is well to take a piece of cloth about the size of a large napkin, fold it into several thicknesses, and in size like the palm of your hand, wet it, and if your headache is very severe, cool it frequently, placing it under your hat, or a lady may fasten it with hair pins. Those who have ice convenient may place a piece in the folds of the cloth. This will give relief in very many cases. Besides proving grateful and cooling, it is much more convenient than to bind a compress around the brow, this being something to which those only who have leisure can resort. It can be worn with the greatest comfort, and those who have tried it will not trust themselves without it on a hot day.

Persons who are over-heated should be very careful that they do not take cold by cooling off suddenly, by plunging into a cold bath, or seating themselves in chilling draughts. But there is an effectual way of bringing the blood to its normal temperature, if one only knows how. To go swimming or seek the bath tub with the blood at fever heat may lead to very serious consequences, and many persons have been crippled for life from such heedless practices. In such cases there is danger of congestion and paralysis, by driving the blood from its courses to the vitals. The surface of the body is cooled, but at the expense of some overcharged organ and the consequent derangement of the entire system. But, by the course indicated, the blood itself is cooled, which may be accomplished as follows:

When you come in very much overcome with the heat, remove your outer clothing, your coat or dress, or other outside garments. Then, in a basin of cool water, bathe your head and arms, dipping the water freely upon your wrists, where the hot blood is pulsing rapidly; then sit down quietly with some cold compresser bound around your wrists and upon your head. If you use a fan, use it to some purpose, and instead of fanning yourself violently, still further over-heating your blood, fan slowly, directing the cooling air against your throbbing temples and the pulses of your wrists.

Bear in mind that very much summer sickness is caused by drinking too much ice water, which is more or less injurious, particularly when eating, as it chills the stomach and retards digestion. Very many are also seriously affected, when traveling, by a change of water. The best way in all cases is to drink water sparingly when overheated or after a full meal. To allay thirst, a little lemon or other acid may be added to the water or a little cold tea. In such cases the relief secured is more certain and the disturbances likely to result from too much cold water very greatly allayed. On the other hand, cold water, when it is pure, and at a temperature of about fifty degrees—in other words, neither too warm or too cold—may be drank freely under ordinary circumstances with very wholesome results. This when at home. When traveling, be on your guard, and do not fail to provide yourself with a little brandy or peppermint, which, even with the greatest care, may be needed to keep your stomach from protesting against the abuses it may be subjected to.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

A correspondent from Kendalville, Ind., writes us for minute directions for making Saratoga potatoes, as she has tried several recipes and failed. If she will follow this recipe accurately she cannot go amiss.

Saratoga potatoes: Slice your potatoes very thin with a slaw cutter. If done by hand, be careful to get them thin and even. It takes a long time, as they cannot be hurried.

Cover the potatoes with water and let them stand several hours in a very cold place; an ice chest is the best. If you want them for breakfast it is best to prepare them the night before. To stand in cold water makes them more crisp, though, if you are in a hurry, they may be done without.

When you take them from the water rub them dry, a few at a time, with a towel. While drying them have a kettle of lard heated as for fried cakes. Drop a slice in and if it browns quickly the lard is hot enough.

See that you have provided a wire basket, like a small pan in shape, and used for the especial purpose of frying potatoes, croquets, &c. Put your potatoes in the basket and place it in the boiling lard. See that your basket is not too full, or that you have too much lard, or the potatoes will float into the boiling mixture. Potatoes may be fried without using the basket, and then dipped out with a skimmer; but this way is both slow and unsatisfactory. You may stir the potatoes while cooking with a fork, that all may be evenly done.

Take the potatoes from the basket and drain off the lard; then throw them upon a soft cloth or porous paper, shaking them around to absorb all the grease. Sprinkle salt over them and place in a tureen, uncovered, that their crispness may not be destroyed by the steam.

If your potatoes get greasy and heavy looking before browning, it is because they are not well dried or that the lard is not hot enough. It is best to do but few at a time, and while you are rubbing the grease from one lot the other may be frying. Saratoga potatoes are excellent for a luncheon, cold, as well as hot for breakfast or tea.

PRECAUTIONS IN CANNING.

Mrs. M. L. D., of Canton, O., inquires if tin cans are not safe for canning. To this we would unhesitatingly say that they are, provided that only the common resin sealing wax is used and that the can is never used after it has become corroded. A series of investigations, growing out of cases of poisoning from canned meats and fish, has shown that the trouble has arisen from the use of flux for sealing purposes. Flux is the muriate of zinc, a very active poison. This flux, when used for solder, very often gets into the cans, when it enters into a chemical combination with the meat, making the contents very poisonous to most persons, particularly those of sedentary habits.

Now, as no private family uses this solder in canning, care in such cases must be turned to the cans themselves. In this connection it should be remembered that it is not only necessary that the cans should be bright and new when used, but that they should not stand too long before using. Not only tomatoes, but peaches and other fruit will, if allowed to stand too long in cans before using, eat off the tin, and so develop active poison. For this reason all fruit, meats, or vegetables put up in tin should be used within the year. Many persons using tin cans are not as particular about this as they should be, and canned fruit is allowed to get several years old before using. This is all wrong, and may account for many an attack of griping and colic.

It is not improbable that the result of the important investigations referred to will be the substitution of Japanned iron, or pure iron cans, for tin. When this is done those who adhere to glass, which is both expensive and perishable, need have no fear in using cans. Until then great care and precaution should be used not only in the purchase of canned goods, but in scrutiny of home products.

WHISKY PICKLES.

S. L. Clark, Vernon, Mich., sends us this recipe for whisky pickles, in response to an inquiry recently published in these columns:

Here you have the Michigan way: Take whisky and water, half and half, and put your cucumbers into it. Place a weight on top to hold them in the liquid. If they heat, you will have to stir them up; keep in a cool place. The Michigan whisky is so poisonous that it eats the cucumbers up. Perhaps Minnesota whisky is better.

And here is a letter that is sharper and more purgent than the strongest whisky pickles:

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

In the last TRIBUNE a lady calls for a recipe to make whisky pickles. Now, if she is a mother, and has any boys, I want to give her the recipe that I learned first in the old Buckeye State some thirty years ago, while visiting at a friend's in Lake county. While dinner was preparing, the lady of the house asked me to taste her pickles, made from a new recipe, and called whisky pickles. I was not much for pickles, but ate about half of a small one. In a very short time the house began to turn round. I said to the lady: "I thought your house was built upon a rock foundation, (they were strong pillars in the church,) but I find it is on sand," for when I went to walk the house would tip over on one side. After a little, however, the house and I got solid again, and we have staid so, as far as whisky pickles are concerned. I wish I could say as much for that family. That mother had three bight little boys, from six to twelve years of age, and where are they now? They all fill drunkard's graves, and I know their first taste for whisky was acquired from those very pickles. There is no use for whisky in any form. What causes all the suicides and devilment we read of in every paper? It is the cursed whisky. I have no boys, but others have, and I would as soon, or rather, see their innocent throats cut while young, than see them grow up and, through the influence of whisky, do it themselves. I am a great reader of THE TRIBUNE, but do not want any whisky in it. God never intended man to sink below the beast, and a whisky drinker is far below. Respectfully,

OSKALOOSA, IOWA. M. M. M.

Our Weekly Experience Meeting.

GREETING FROM A LITTLE GIRL—WOMEN WHO ARE WORKING.

Our first letter is from a loyal little girl of ten, who is very proud that her papa was a soldier, and tells his story like a little heroine. Are there no more little girls who are glad their papas were soldiers and who will write us all about them like little Bessie Brickel? Bessie is welcome, and must come again.

SEDALIA, MO., July 16, 1883.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

I have been wanting to write to you ever since papa first began to take your paper, to tell you how much we all enjoyed it. Last winter mamma would read us a little story every night while she was getting the baby asleep, and the rest of us would sit as still as mice. I am the oldest and will be ten years old the 1st of September, and I have four brothers, whose ages are seven, five, three and one. Don't you think I am rich in brothers? Mamma says she hopes you will keep up the household department, for she appreciates it so much. We feel very proud because our papa was a soldier and served all through the war. Papa's name is John L. Brickel, company L, Second Kentucky (Kilpatrick's) cavalry, and he was with Sherman in his march to the sea. At one time papa might have been killed by a shell, which exploded and a piece lodged in his haversack. Papa has the piece of shell yet. I hope that our soldier paper may live and flourish forever.

I remain, your little friend, BESSIE BRICKEL.

A SOCIETY WITH BRIGHT PROSPECTS.

ELGIN, July 16, 1883.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

It may interest you to learn that our new society is progressing finely, with bright prospects for the future. A number of our ladies met Thursday, July 1, and succeeded in organizing a Woman's Auxiliary of Veteran Post, No. 49, G. A. R. We begin with a membership of eighteen. The officers elected are: President, Mrs. D. R. Beebe; vice-president, Mrs. M. M. Briggs; secretary, Mrs. A. Manahan; treasurer, Mrs. P. C. Gilbert. In the "eternal fitness of things" it seems very appropriate that woman, the soldier's help in war, should be a helpmeet in every good work in time of peace. NELLIE R. MANAHAN,

Secretary, Woman's Auxiliary.

THE FIRST AUXILIARY IN CALIFORNIA.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

We claim the first Auxiliary in California, organized last evening in the hall of Heintzelman Post, No. 33, G. A. R., Commander J. P. Jones assisting in the organization. The officers are: Mrs. Mary P. Jones, president; Mrs. Nellie Stutler, senior vice-president; Mrs. J. W. Leonard, junior vice-president; Mrs. H. B. Rice, secretary; Mrs. Lucy Dannals, treasurer; Mrs. Maria Palmer, chaplain; Mrs. H. M. Crowell, conductor; Mrs. Jennie Roberts, guard. On the evening of July 31, Mr. T. F. Kirk, a "professional," gave a benefit for this Post, the net proceeds—about $110—going to the Post. He is to give another on next Thursday evening, July 17th, for the same purpose, the proceeds to be applied to the building of a hall to belong exclusively to the G. A. R. here. Several hundred dollars have already been subscribed, also a lot donated, and as soon as the requisite funds are secured the hall will be built, which we hope to be able to do yet this fall. The Post is prospering, and additional members added nearly every meeting.

Yours, in F., C., L., W. J. WHITNEY,

SAN DIEGO, CAL. Late Co. A, 57th P. V.

FROM AN EXCLUSIVE AUXILIARY.

MARLBORO, MASS., July 20, 1883.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

I have read with interest the discussion in THE TRIBUNE concerning the admitting of loyal women to membership in Woman's Auxiliaries. In the month of December, 1879, an Auxiliary to the Post of this place (John A. Rawlins, No. 43,) was formed, whose membership was restricted to the "wives, mothers, sisters, daughters and widows," and as such has since continued. This society has grown from twenty to one hundred members, meeting monthly, on the afternoon of the Post meeting night—business meeting in the afternoon; family supper and literary entertainment from 6 to 10, in which the comrades and ladies are equally interested, the Post by by-law devoting that evening to a union meeting. They do this because they are interested—because their families are there. It is home-like, and a reunion of old comrades. Upon this social feature has greatly depended our success in the past thirteen years. We have done constant and effective work in connection with the Post. Through these social meetings each month we have all become much better acquainted, and thereby carry on our work in greater harmony and a more thorough manner.

At the convention in Fitchburg, in February, 1879, called for the purpose of organizing a State Corps, the delegates from Marlboro declined to join, because they believed the basis of membership was broader than would work successfully in our society, and we have never had reason for changing our decision. In Marlboro—a town of some ten thousand inhabitants—there are many charitable societies where all loyal women can work, and in this place all are loyal, and what woman—or man even—would own to a trace of disloyalty?

Many of those who would ask admission to the Woman's Auxiliaries have come upon the stage of life since the war, with none of the enthusiasm born of suffering to inspire them to work. Would not theirs be a short-lived enthusiasm? And if such as these were in our societies, what would constitute its Free Masonry? And if you admit all loyal women, what will you do with their husbands, who were not soldiers? Think of the many occasions on which these Auxiliaries, composed in part of women whose husbands were not in the war, would meet for business. Would the husbands of those lady members be excluded? And if not, would those occasions be such distinctive G. A. R. gatherings as they are and have been?

In our society we care for each other in sickness and need, considering it our own especial duty and pleasure. It is not a mere charity; we are one family. Would it be the same were all admitted? Would our benefactions extend as freely to the families of these loyal woman members? Where can we draw the line without offending? For, once in the society, they have all the rights and privileges of that society. Not having the common memory of our dead as have the soldiers and their families, they would sooner lose their interest, and by so doing the Auxiliaries would be likely to decline and finally vanish, as has many another charitable organization. To the soldier and his family it is a life-long work. Why should we weaken our forces by weakening the fraternal feeling—a sure result if all women were admitted.

I believe that I state the views of this Auxiliary when I say they do favor a National Association if membership is confined to "wives, mothers, sisters, daughters and widows of soldiers."

With us secrecy and ceremony are not essential.

MRS. EMMA J. BARNES,

Of John A. Rawlins Post, 43, Woman's Relief Corps.

The reasons which Mrs. Barnes gives in favor of confining membership to the immediate relatives of soldiers are not without force, but they can be readily answered.

First. She says her society has prospered as an exclusive organization; so has the Forsyth (Toledo) Auxiliary and, in fact, *every* society, as far as we know, that has been organized on the non-exclusive plan, while it is certain that some exclusive societies have not flourished. Is not the prosperity of the whole Massachusetts Department a proof of the wisdom of the plan on which it is conducted, and is there any reason to believe that her society would have been less prosperous had it affiliated with the Department instead of standing aloof? Unless Mrs. Barnes can show that societies which admit all loyal women are less thrifty, the fact that her own society is thrifty is of no special consequence.

Second. Mrs. Barnes thinks it inadvisable to admit all loyal women, because many have come upon the stage of life since the war, with none of the enthusiasm, born of suffering, to inspire them to work. Well, so have many soldiers' wives, for that matter, and women of that sort would not be apt to seek admission—at least they *have* not in the case of societies organized on the liberal basis. But, on the other hand, there are many women, not immediate relatives of soldiers, who do possess this enthusiasm—who possessed it in 1861, and worked shoulder to shoulder with soldiers' wives in the charitable work of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, as nurses in the field and city hospitals, and at home, making up boxes of clothing and delicacies for our defenders. If we welcomed their aid then, why should we not now? They have quite as precious war memories as ourselves—more real and substantial than those of many a woman who has become the wife of a soldier since the war—and know quite as well how to make charity effective. And, by the way, if these societies are intended to be really auxiliary to the Grand Army, is it not a perversion of their purpose to so conduct them that the Grand Army will be deprived of the aid of a class of women whose help our veterans were so glad to have twenty years ago? As for their husbands, why should they not be admitted to these social meetings of Post and Auxiliary? Is it not of the highest importance to our veterans that the people of the community in which they live should mingle with them at their gatherings, so that they may become acquainted with their real worth and learn to hold them at their true value? What is it that has caused this hue and cry to be raised against the soldier—this allegation that he is attempting to swindle the Government in applying for a pension—but the ignorance of the public as to his true character? Is it not worth while to disabuse the public mind of this false impression, and how can it more effectually be done than by bringing civilians into personal contact with our veterans? It seems to us, indeed, that the very thing Mrs. Barnes is so anxious to guard against is just what the welfare of the Grand Army requires.

THOSE UNMARKED NURSES' GRAVES.

In a recent number of THE TRIBUNE, it will be remembered, we printed a letter from a comrade of the Grand Army Post at Silverton, Oreg., requesting us to furnish the names of the nurses whose graves are unmarked in the National Cemetery at Shiloh, and stating that the Post proposed to defray the cost of erecting suitable headstones. We accordingly wrote to Comrade T. Cotton, Purdy, Tenn., for the desired information, and have now the pleasure of publishing his reply:

PURDY, TENN., July 20.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

In accordance with your request, I have made the best effort in my power to ascertain the names of the women who are buried in the Shiloh National Cemetery at Pittsburg Landing, but I regret to add that I have not been as successful as I could wish, notwithstanding the very kind and faithful assistance of Captain L. S. Doolittle, superintendent of the National Cemetery, whose researches have been thorough and exhaustive. We first examined all the record books, going back to the original field-notes of Messrs. Alhot and Fills, quartermasters' agents in disinterring the dead. We found it necessary to make a thorough and laborious search through the cemetery, on account of the discrepancy existing between the old and new enumeration of graves. As the result of our efforts, we were enabled to identify and locate the graves of four women described on the mortuary records, as follows, viz.:

1. Mary Owens, wife of Henry Owens, taken up invicinity of battlefield and re-interred in National Cemetery in section B, lot I, grave 14.

2. Amelia L. Pinkerton, a laundress of the Fifty-third Illinois volunteer infantry. Died April 10, 1862; buried in National Cemetery, section M, grave 7.

3. A. F., the remains of a woman found buried with the Seventeenth Wisconsin volunteer infantry. Buried in National Cemetery, in section A, lot 4, grave 35.

4. Eli-b., (afterward written Elizabeth,) a woman from Wisconsin, found buried with the Fourteenth Wisconsin infantry. Died May 30, 1862. Grave 549.

Two of these four graves are each of them marked by a square marble block, numbered, but without a name—the same as the 2,361 unknown soldiers. The remaining two graves are without stone or tablet of any sort.

This is a very meager and unsatisfactory report, but it is the best I can make at present. I have conversed with neighbors and old citizens residing on the battlefield, but can obtain no satisfactory information respecting these four women, their history, and the circumstances of their deaths. These who could probably have given some particulars have either died or removed from this part of the country. If the mystery is ever solved, it must be by surviving veterans of Shiloh. Will some of the comrades of the Fifty-third Illinois infantry and the Fourteenth and Seventeenth Wisconsin give us the desired information through the columns of THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE?

T. COTTON,

Late Chaplain, 122th Ill. Vol. Inf.

As it does not appear to be known whether these women were actually nurses, it may be well for our Oregon comrades to suspend action until it is seen whether any of our veterans can furnish a clew to their identity.

A TRIBUTE TO AN ARMY NURSE.

We print the following with pleasure, and hope it will prompt others to give their testimony:

ALBERT LEA, MINN., July 17, 1883.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

I was very glad to read Commander-in-Chief Van Dervoort's letter in last week's TRIBUNE, relative to Mother Bickerdyke, not because it was my privilege to have seen and known her, but because I have often heard private soldiers sing her praises, and because it brought to my mind other lady nurses whom I did know, and who are in every way worthy the most earnest consideration and honor of every member of the Grand Army of the Republic. It was my good fortune while lying in the hospital at Chattanooga, Tenn., in the spring of 1864, to fall into the ministering hands of Miss Hall, Miss Dada, and another lady, whose name I cannot recall, all from the State of New York, and I shall ever remember with warm gratitude the constant attendance and kind care they bestowed upon the suffering soldiers of the Union army. From early in the war they had consecrated their time, strength, and labor to this sacred cause, abandoning for years the comforts of home and pleasures of society in which they were well fitted to shine by virtue of their station and accomplishments, and followed and shared the fortunes of the army in the tent, field, and hospital, soothing and encouraging the wounded and sick, bathing their wounds, smoothing and cheering the oft-times horrors of hospital life, keeping a vigilant lookout for the ignorance and mistakes of army surgeons, and prompting and correcting careless attendants. I know that thousands of the readers of THE TRIBUNE remember and bless these ladies for what they have done for them and for others, and I believe no soldier, however brave, true, constant, and vigilant he might have been, is more worthy of a Nation's gratitude than they. I know not whether they are living or dead, but living, the Grand Army of the Republic owes it a duty to itself to extend to them an honorable recognition of their sacrifices and invaluable services, and dead, to honor and perpetuate their memories. I trust, however, that they are still living to enjoy the fruits of their sterling loyalty, bravery, and patriotism. Should any of our comrades whose eyes light upon these lines chance to know these ladies, if they will send me their respective addresses, I will gladly engage to subscribe for and send to each a copy of THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, for one year, at least.

Yours, truly, F. W. DRAKE.

ALL ALONG THE LINE.

Mrs. Seth Z. Rice, secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary at Homersville, N. Y., writes us that her society favors exclusive membership and secret work, and is conducted on that basis.

Matilda A. Lawton, Treasurer Department of Massachusetts Woman's Relief Corps, writes us that she is "delighted with THE TRIBUNE," and wishes every man in the Grand Army could see it.

The loyal women of Brunswick, N. J., have lent material aid to the G. A. R. in their various charity entertainments, but have no representative organization. They favor a society admitting all loyal women.

Mrs. Emma McCammon, of Woman's Auxiliary of Robert McCook Post, Carthage, O., sends a favorable account of the work of that society, one of the first to organize in the Buckeye State. This society was ably represented at Denver by Mrs. Col. C. A. Sautmeyer.

The ladies of Minneapolis have for some time assisted the G. A. R. in their charity work, but have had no organization. A number attended the Denver meeting for the express purpose of learning all they could of the working of other societies, with a view of organizing upon their return.

There is a Woman's Auxiliary in good working order at Portsmouth, O., which is a continuation of the Aid Society established during the war. The society never disbanded, but has preserved its organization intact, and, as there is a large old soldier element employed in the mills there, the society has done much good, particularly in the terrible hard times of some years since.

Postmaster-General Gresham has shown himself possessed of an old soldier's heart in the appointment to his Department of Miss Van Lew, of Richmond, Va., whose services in behalf of the soldiers of Libby Prison entitles her to the everlasting gratitude of her country. Miss Van Lew was in charge of the Richmond post-office during General Grant's administration.

Soldier Pioneers of California.

[From the San Francisco Chronicle.]

Many prominent army officers spent the early years of their service on this coast. Before the war Gen. Grant was in Oregon, Gen. Sherman was a partner in the banking-house of Lucas Turner & Co., of this city, in the early days. Gen. Hooker owned a ranche in Sonora. Gen. Fremont lived for a long time in Mariposa. Gens. Halleck, Baker, and Shields practised law in this city. Gens. Stoneman and Hooker operated a saw mill at Bodega, so unsuccessfully, however, that they gave it up in a short time. Gen. McPherson left Alcatraz and went directly South and was killed in front of Atlanta. The names and faces of Gens. Ord, Lander, Buell, Keys, Heintzelman, Sumner, Wool, Harney, Denver, Nagle, Geary, Hancock, Stone, Porter, and Boggs were familiar to the old Californians.

Loveliest Among the Lovely

is she who renews or preserves the beauty of her teeth with SOZODONT, confessedly the most effective preparation for them. Volumes of evidence might be adduced in support of its claims to public confidence, as a means of invigorating the teeth and rendering them pure, glistening and spotless, and not less satisfactorily proven is its balmy influence upon the breath. Ask for genuine SOZODONT, and accept no cheap substitute.

ZINTHA'S FORTUNE.

All the Result of a Little Verse of Poetry.

[By Kate Tannatt Woods.]

Whiz! whiz! whir! whir! puff! puff!—and the Through Pacific Express, on its way to the Golden Gate, paused before the station at Fremont, Nebraska. The engine drew a long breath, like a boy after a race. The passengers hurried out to get some dinner at the refreshment-room near by; the train dispatcher, conductors, and telegraph operators joked each other merrily; and every one was smiling and happy although the day was unusually warm for June.

On one side of the track stood a large grain elevator, and many men were busy loading some cars with barley destined for the New York market. The elevator platform, like that of the station, was crowded with people. A little apart from the crowd stood a girl of twelve, with long braids of hair down her back and a sturdy baby boy in her arms. At the open window of a Pullman car a young lady and two children sat watching this girl. A strange, wistful look in her eyes attracted them.

"Come here, little girl," said the young lady; "come and