FARM AND FIRESIDE.

Some Practical Suggestions for Our Agricultural Readers.

We have read many interesting facts under the heading "Curiosities of Vegetation," but we do not remember of ever seeing any special notice of what has always seemed to us one of the most curious, and that is the ability of plants to manufacture, as it were, so many different articles from the same general character of soil, each plant finding in it the material it requires. Take any miscellaneous collection of plants and pot them in soil taken from the same heap, and one will produce quinine, another theine, and others oxalic acid, perfumes of the most varied kinds, virulent poisons, sweet, acid, bitter, or astringent fruits, oils bland and acid, and so on, until we might enumerate every vegetable production.

Chemistry endeavors to supplement facilities for the increase of special productions, and while much has been done in this direction, much still remains to be done, and chemists are sanguine as to their ability to point out the methods for the increase of special principles in crops to a greater degree than has yet been accomplished.

Formerly great pains were taken in preparing soil for potting plants. In old gardening works we read about the *compost heap*. This was merely the receptacle for all vegetable refuse, such as cabbage stalks, carrot tops, pea straw, lerves, weeds, and such-like refuse, which would ultimately become rotted after many years and frequent turnings over. This was a favorite ingredient as a mixture in soils for greenhouse plants, and formed a really good source of plant food.

Then each species of plant was supposed to require certain proportions of this compost, mixed with measured quantities of rotted manure from the barn-yard, rotted leaves from the woods, sand, clay, &c., all of which was merely empirical, and not based upon any rule except individual fancy.

Modern florists content themselves with a soil produced by rotted sods. The best is that which is taken from an old pasture field or any spot where the common blue grass has formed a tough, fibry sod. These sods are placed in a heap to rot, so as to destroy all vegetative power in the roots of the grasses and plants of which it is composed. When in its best condition it is full of fibry matter, which constitutes its chief value. The organic matter gradually decomposes and furnishes food for the plants potted in it, and what is equally important, the fibry nature of the material insures good drainage, and allows the air free access to all parts of the soil. All kinds of plants seem to grow well in rotted sods, although something depends upon the soil from whence they are taken; if from a heavy or clay soil a mixture of sand, manure rotted to a mould, or leaves well decayed, will assist in maintaining suitable porosity even after the fibry roots have disappeared; charcoal dust is also of great value as a corrective in heavy soils.

HARDY WHITE GRAPES.

The introduction of a first class white native grape has long been a desideratum. For the past twenty-five years grape lists have contained white varieties, but of indifferent value. About that time we had the Cassidy, the Rebecca, the Cuyahoga, and the Maxatawny, none of which have maintained themselves as standard kinds. The Martha was next introduced, a good, hardy variety, but rather foxy flavored for most tastes. Then the Lady was brought into notice as a grape that everybody should possess; this is a very sweet kind and has given general satisfaction, but it is a small bunched variety, although quite productive. Now we have a number which, in pomological parlance, are "very promising." Among these are the Niagara, not yet on the market for general purchasers, but is being tested by its owners in different States, in order to establish its value in a variety of situations and climates; the general impression is that it possesses great merits.

Then the varieties, the Prentiss, Lady Washington, Dutchess, Pocklington, and Noah are on trial. The Pocklington is a large, showy variety, the vine robust of growth, and, like the Concord, may prove better in Southern locations than it is in the North. The Dutchess is a choice sweet grape, and is an acquisition. The Lady Washington is a variety of great beauty and of fine quality; it has suffered much the present season from rot in the berries. The *Rural New Yorker* mentions great success with this variety by *bagging* the bunches, thus preventing rot. The Prentiss is a large bunched, prolific variety, but has tender foliage, and will only be satisfactory where the Isabella or the Iona do well. The Noah is a Missouri production, and promises abundant crops of fairly good fruit.

Grape culture has made rapid strides during the past twenty years. The demand for the fruit in all the large cities increases yearly, but the supply is well kept up and prices are not extravagant, although sufficiently remunerative to the grower when near a market. Large growers always have the alternative to turn them into wine if market prices for the fruit are not satisfactory, but the best wine grapes are not those which command the best prices for table use.

VARIED USES OF INDIAN CORN.

It is stated that a bushel of Indian corn contains more nutriment than a bushel of wheat. There is no grain which can be used in so many different ways as corn. First comes green corn, which can be obtained for three months in the ear, and for the entire year in the shape of canned corn, which, if not so good as when in the ear, is still good enough for any one to eat. Then comes hominy made from the mature grain, which is also a healthful dish. But corn can be made into many kinds of attractive dishes when ground into meal. The simplest form is the corn-cake made of meal and water, with a little salt, made into dough, and baked on a griddle. Next comes the pone, a favorite food when properly made. Of the many other uses, such as mush, boiled and fried, corn-meal pudding, &c., every housekeeper can bear testimony, although it is not every one that has the tact of cooking palatable dishes from this wholesome article, which is the cheapest and most nutritious of vegetable productions.

POTASH IN SOILS.

From some experiments made in Saxony with potash as influencing the production of sugar in beets it was found that chloride of potassium exercises no essential action in wet seasons, while in dry years 1½ cwt. per acre secures an increase of three tons per acre; and that the salt of potash acts less by furnishing that element to vegetation, than by its absorbing and retaining humidity for the plant.

This is of much importance in raising root crops in dry climates, the lack of sufficient moisture in the soil being one of the greatest drawbacks in the profitable production of beet sugar in many, or rather in most, parts of this country.

PLANTING TREES.

We recently published some remarks about planting trees in the fall. We are well convinced that this is the best time to plant deciduous trees over a large portion of the United States. Thirty years ago, when we first advocated fall planting, it met with considerable opposition, but the fall sales of trees in all our nurseries show that nearly as many are planted in the fall as in the spring. Even with trees for spring planting it is advisable to procure them in the fall and place them in trenches, covering them well up the stems, so that they will be on hand ready for setting out when the planting season arrives, thus avoiding delays which frequently interfere with the prompt performance of spring work, and perhaps losing the best opportunity.

NOTES AND EXTRACTS.

A Digest of Information Collected From Various Sources.

There are two difficulties in the way of making sugar from sorghum; the first is in producing a cane in which the gum and glucose, or grape sugar, have passed on to the condition of true sugar at the time of ripening of the seed. This depends almost exclusively on the intensity of light and heat at the period of ripening. Before the head appears, the juice contains gum, with a little glucose; as the bloom appears the gum is rapidly transformed into glucose, and as this fades the glucose begins to pass into the condition of true sugar; but if the light and heat fail at this point, the transformation becomes slow, or is entirely suspended. A fair sirup, with half the sweetness of sugar, may be made from this juice, but the presence of gum and glucose prevents the crystalization of the sugar that has been formed.

TOADS AND BEES.

The Canadian *Farmer* says: Those who keep bees need to look out sharply for toads. Go among the hives in the "gloamin'," and ten to one you will see a solemn toad beside each of them, with face upturned heavenward as though praying. So he is, phonetically speaking; but phonography, with all its advantages, fails here, for you must spell that word with an "e." He is preying on your bees, and if you watch him closely you will see him every now and then dart out his long, slimy tongue and gather them in with a celerity and gusto perfectly marvelous. Toads are valuable in a garden, but destructive in an apiary.

FEEDING.

Deficiency of food is not less injurious to the animal health than an excess of it. If continued for many days it leads to wasting of the body, weakness of the muscles, great depression and fever. Animals insufficiently nourished prove susceptible of contagious disorders, which they quickly contract when exposed to infection. Moreover they become more readily the victims of parasitic affections. Lice and the peculiar minute plant or fungus to which ringworm is due are both found to flourish and propagate vigorously under the influence of poverty and dirt.

BAGGING TOMATOES.

The *Rural New Yorker* states the result of bagging tomatoes, which procured fruit of a brilliant color, and when cooked were less acid than usual, and the fruit ripened and colored round the stem the same as elsewhere. Bagging gave no protection against rot. The same is said of grapes. It has been frequently asserted that covering grapes in a paper or in a thin muslin bag, would prevent them from rotting, but the assertion does not seem to be realized by those who have tried it. The grape rot has not yet been met by a sure preventive.

FEEDING CATTLE.

A good guide for a safe quantity of grain per day to maturing cattle is one pound to each hundred of their weight; thus, an animal weighing one thousand pounds may receive ten pounds of grain.

In using roots, it is one guide to give just so much, in association with other things, so that the animal may not take any water.

Never check the fattening process, for as soon as an animal begins to fret for food, it immediately begins to lose flesh.

SUGAR FROM BEETS.

Experiments made in the United States Department of Agriculture in 1872, reveal the important fact that the quantity of sugar in the beet diminishes as the summer temperature increases. In no climate that shows a mean temperature of 70° for the three summer months can sugar be profitably made from beets.

The price of sugar will not permit the manufacturer to pay more than five dollars for a ton of beets, and a ton of hay can be put on the market with less labor.

SUGAR BEETS.

Sugar beets have been tested and results show them to be most nourishing, and yielding a milk without foreign flavor, and rendering the milk without a yellow hue so common when carrots are fed. In France and Belgium hundreds of farms grow them exclusively to feed cattle upon. In feeding beets caution must be taken to supply the cattle with an ample amount of hay to avoid any bad results.

RAINFALL.

The average rainfall of the United States is twenty-nine inches, or 25,000 barrels to the acre. Over 46,000,000 of our population have more than the average of rain, 22,000,000 having between forty and fifty inches. In the regions having this large average rainfall the average population to the square mile is largest, while but few live where the average annual rainfall is less than twenty inches.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Our Agricultural Editor's Weekly Chat With His Readers.

A correspondent, writing from Texas, desires to be informed where he can purchase the true California grape. *Ans.:* The grapes which make up the bulk of those grown on the Pacific slope are foreign varieties, which can be supplied by most nurserymen; they are not, therefore, in a botanical sense, California grapes, although they may be said to have been grown in that State.

Mrs. S. E. Radnor will find that the simplest and most efficient protection to her roses is to bend the shoots down so that they may be fastened with wire to pegs driven in the ground, then cover them over with straw, leaves, or common soil; a slight covering will suffice when the shoots are laid on the ground.

"I have seen it stated that the barberry plant makes a good hedge. I wish to know if this is correct; and, if so, how is it propagated?"—Subscriber, Hamilton, Ohio. *Ans.:* The barberry forms a very ornamental hedge, and when well grown, a good fence against cattle or stock of any kind. It is easily raised from seed.

"How can I keep hickory nuts and walnuts until planting time next spring?"—J. S., Pittsburg, Pa. *Ans.:* Plant them at once before they become dry and hard; if this cannot be done, keep them in moist soil or sand in any corner outdoors; freezing will not injure them when thus covered.

"What two varieties of cherries would you recommend for this part of Virginia?"—J. R., Berkeley co. *Ans.:* The black Tartarian and Knight's Early Black. These are both fine growing trees, produce the best kind of fruit, and are quite productive, especially the latter variety. The Tartarian forms a fine shade tree.

"Will the cork tree grow in this part of Virginia?"—W. C., Fredericksburg, Va. *Ans.:* The cork oak is an evergreen tree, a native of Southern Europe. We think that it would stand the winters as far north as you date from. A zero frost will not materially injure it.

HOME, SWEET HOME.

Something About Woman's Work Above and Below Stairs.

The Woman's Institute of Technical Design opened September 27th, at No. 124 Fifth avenue, New York. Instruction is given in practical design in a great many industries, among them carpets, mosaics, tiles, wall paper, prints, wood-carving, embroidery, &c. A limited number of free scholarships have been provided for applicants of moral worth who show evidences of adaptation to artistic designing and are in need of benefit. The circular of the institution sets forth: "The demand in every branch of industry is greater than the supply, not because the supply is not offered, but because it is bad. What is needed is *good* work; and good work, work that has a practical value, can only result from acquired knowledge and training. If women will recognize this truth, we shall hear little more of the difficulty of obtaining work, for the corresponding difficulty of obtaining good work will no longer exist. New designs, original conceptions technically conveyed, and perfectly adapted to the purpose for which they were intended, are always welcomed by manufacturers, and the demand for them never dies out, because one design is no sooner upon the market until another is called for."

Mrs. General Lew Wallace has been permitted to see the greatest beauty of Prince Feramorz's harem in Turkey. Two wonderfully ugly black eunuchs met the visitor at the iron gate of a beautiful garden and conducted her to a large room, rather barren of furniture, but hung with fine Eastern draperies. Here she found the Prince's latest acquisition, whom she thus describes in the *Independent:* "Among the billowy cushions and vaporous veilings rose the young face. Oh! what a revelation of beauty! uplifted in a curious, questioning way to see what manner of women these are who come from the ends of the earth with unveiled faces, and go about the world alone, and have to think for themselves—poor things! The expression was that of a lovely child waking from summer slumber in the happiest humor, ready for play. A sensitive, exquisite face, fair as the first of women while the angel was yet unfallen. A perfect oval, the lips a scarlet thread, and oh! those wonderful Asiatic eyes! —lustrous, coal-black, long rather than round, beaming under joined eyebrows."

A house in the country without trees is happily a very rare sight. Few people, where the opportunity exists for tree planting, will, at the present time, live in a house not ornamented in some manner with trees and shrubs. The mistake, however, is too often made of planting large-growing trees too near the dwelling, so that in a few years the building is overshadowed, the sanitary influence of sun and wind are excluded, the walls become damp, and a general gloomy aspect prevails, all having a tendency to endanger health. No large-growing tree should be planted nearer than sixty feet to a country dwelling. The best aspect for a house is to front in a southeasterly direction, and no large trees placed directly in front. A group of evergreens, or rather detached groups, may be placed at proper distances from northeast to northwest, and groups of deciduous trees similarly disposed towards the south and west. A background of evergreens gives a cheerful appearance to a house during the winter, and has the effect of modifying the wintry storms. No large evergreen tree should be planted near the front of dwellings, for if planted in masses their influence will be felt although a hundred feet from the house.

There is more to be learned about pouring out tea and coffee than most ladies are willing to believe. If these decoctions are made at the table—which is by far the best way—they require experience, judgment, and exactness; if they are brought on the table ready made it still requires judgment so to apportion them that they shall prove sufficient in quantity for the family party, and that the elder members shall have the stronger cups. Often persons pour out tea, who, not being at all aware that the first cup is the weakest, and that the tea grows stronger as you proceed, bestow the poorest cup upon the greatest stranger and give the strongest to a very young member of the family, who would have been better without any. Where several cups of equal strength are wanted, you should pour a little into each, and then the strength will be apportioned properly.

At the recent beauty show at Buda Pesth the first trophy was carried off by a local nonpareil. The second prize fell to a paragon from the United States. The two next in merit were a fair Spaniard from Castile and a German belle from Dresden. Two of the English professional beauties presented themselves as claimants for prizes, but one was marked eleven, with a certificate, and the other was not placed. This was so mortifying that she created a scene, and in her rage she struck the mayor of Buda, who was one of the judges.

The London *Truth* says that an American girl wears a gown with a flight of embroidered swallows, beginning on her left shoulder and ending at her right foot. More swallows fly about her parasol.

Among the premiums offered at a fair in Texas are a pair of smoothing-irons to the ugliest woman present. They will, indeed, be sad irons to the winner.

Adelaide Phillips, the American contralto, died at Carlsbad, Germany, October 3.

Annie Fields and Sara Jewett are at Interlaken.

Emma Abbott's mother refuses to tell her age.

THE CONSERVATORY.

Although the best winter-flowering plants are not obtained by lifting and potting the plants which have furnished the flower-beds all the summer, yet for coming in later, during the early weeks of spring, plants taken up before freezing weather injures them, and properly cared for will be a great addition to the blooms in the parlor window or house conservatory. Foremost of these may be placed the varieties of double geraniums, of which there are numerous colors, from pure white to deep scarlet; these are even more perfect in the house than when out in the heat and droughts of summer. Tea roses are also not difficult to manage and flower well after they recover from the check of removal. Heliotropes, abutillons, Chinese hibiscus, rose and other fragrant-leaved geraniums, and now that they are popular, the varieties of Chrysanthemum frutescens, or Marguerites of the French, can be removed and potted with more or less of success, the last-named easiest of all.

But some timely attention is requisite to ensure satisfactory results. If the soil is dry the earth will not adhere to the roots, and most of the small root fibres will be sacrificed, thus necessitating a severe pruning of the shoots. In the case of heliotropes and geraniums of all kinds which have grown to a large size this pruning must needs be so radical as to leave little else but stumps of the shoots or branches. Roses also will require close pruning, otherwise the whole plant will shrivel and die before new root growth commences. But all depends upon the position the plants occupy for six or eight weeks after being potted. They should be protected from sun and winds and watered only by sprinkling water over them; the soil in the pots should be soaked with water immediately after potting, but it should not be kept too wet while as yet there are no active roots nor active foliage to make use of water in the soil.

No effort should be made towards forcing the growth of shoots until root growth is somewhat advanced; many people fail because the plants are at once placed in warm rooms where the tops are encouraged to make a feeble growth, which soon dies off because the roots are not sufficiently active to continue the growth.

FASHION NOTES.

The new cloaks are very long.

Phosphorus color is the latest thing out.

Green is the favorite color of the season.

Woven jerseys are introduced for small girls.

Fur bands will be a favorite cloak trimming this winter.

Old silver ornaments are worn on pale blue velvet bonnets.

Velvet ornaments for dresses and cloaks are much in vogue.

Claret color and pink combine beautifully in new costumes.

Plaid materials are again in high favor, but not in bright colors.

Jackets almost covered with braiding will be worn by young ladies this season.

Scarlet huzzar jackets, embroidered with gold soutache, are fashionable in Paris.

The sale of plain black velvet this autumn is greater than it has been for several years.

Pictures, consoles, and mirrors of every kind throughout the house are now frequently framed in plush.

Paris ladies obtain ulsters and riding habits from London, and will now send there for their boots.

Many of the new small bonnets have soft cap crowns of velvet, some of which are beautifully embroidered.

One of the newest color combinations is an amber shade, with Russian green checks and light blue threads to form the plaid.

Gipsy kerchiefs are the newest fichu for street wear. Orange, deep cardinal, myrtle green, and gold, and dark blue and silver are the colors chosen for these.

Letters from abroad say that furs have already appeared in Paris. Sealskin is not to have exclusive sway this winter, but is to share the honors with ermine, which is the most elegant of all furs. Large ottoman velvet pelisses are lined with ermine and bordered with fox. Something still more elegant is the pelisse lined with kid or "mouton de Chine." This is a very peculiar fur, with long, wavy hair. It is close and deep like swan's down.

THE KITCHEN.

To make a Nice Delicate Pudding—Take three tablespoonfuls of corn starch dissolved in a little cold water. Have one pint of water boiling on the stove; in this stir the corn starch and the well-beaten whites of three eggs; let it boil up once; pour it into an earthern pudding dish which will hold three pints; steam the pudding for ten minutes. For the sauce use the yolk of the three eggs, one cupful of sweet milk, and a small piece of butter; boil for a few minutes; when cool, flavor with lemon or vanilla. The pudding also is to be eaten cold.

To make Mock Champagne Jelly—Take one quart of fine cider, mix this with one pound of loaf sugar or sugar to taste, the juice of four lemons, the grated rind of one, and some pieces of stick cinnamon, the whites of two eggs well beaten, one box of gelatine, soak the gelatine in a pint of cold water one hour, then add a pint of boiling water, the cider and other ingredients, stir the mixture until the gelatine is well dissolved; then put it on the fire and boil five minutes, strain through a jelly-bag into molds, set in a cool place or on ice to harden.

To make Tomato Catsup—First, have nice ripe tomatoes, wash them clean in cold water, cut out the cores, and then put the tomatoes into the kettle and boil till cooked soft, then mash through a fine wire sieve. To two gallons of the juice, add two tablespoonfuls of ground cinnamon, two of ground allspice, two of celery seed, one-half teacup of fine salt, one teacup of sugar, two tablespoonfuls of best mustard, one nutmeg, a tablespoon even-full of Cayenne pepper, two tablespoonfuls of ground black pepper, and one quart best cider vinegar, mix well together and boil till very thick—taking care to prevent scorching. Bottle while hot and seal, and it will keep for years.

To Roast Wild Duck—The birds should be carefully plucked, wiped with a damp towel, and drawn without breaking the entrails. Wild ducks should be cooked rare without any stuffing; roast them in a hot oven not longer than thirty minutes, or until the breasts are plump and full; baste them at first with salted hot water, and when nearly cooked with melted butter and flour to froth and brown them; send to the table very hot on a dish of watercresses dressed with a plain French salad dressing; the dressing is made with one tablespoonful of lemon juice, three of olive oil, a saltspoonful of salt, a little cayenne, a teaspoonful of vinegar.

To make Apple Bread—Scald with boiling milk one quart of Indian meal—the yellow granulated meal is much the best. When cool, add a teaspoonful of salt and stir in one pint of ripe sweet apples chopped very fine, two well-beaten eggs and a teaspoonful of butter. The butter may be beaten into the meal while it is still warm enough to mix thoroughly. Add a half teaspoonful of dissolved soda. Mix into a stiff dough, adding as much sweet milk as is needed for that purpose. Bake or steam. If steamed let it cook three hours. Another method of utilizing sweet apples: Stew them in a porcelain kettle with just enough molasses, syrup and water to prevent their burning on to the kettle until cooked through, and then transfer them to the oven with all the liquid residuum to dry and brown. This gives a baked apple, half jellied, delicious in flavor and moisture. Sweet pickled—by some considered superior to the old-fashioned apple-sauce—are made by partly baking sweet apples and then saturating them in a pickle of vinegar, sugar, and spices.

WILL SOME LADY PLEASE ANSWER THIS?

Dear sisters of the household: As the Editor has so kindly given us a "Home" in his paper are we all going to stand back and make him do all the talking? That would hardly be fair, would it? Now I want to know a great many things—common things, too—but I don't know them, and perhaps some of you could tell me just as well as not; and perhaps some of you would like to know things that I could tell you. But how are we to know what each other wants to know if we don't ask?

Now I propose, with the editor's permission, of course, that we all write and ask questions of each other, and give all the information in our power, and so both learn and teach at the same time.

What I wish to know just now, most of all, is how to can sweet corn in glass cans, such as we can fruit in. I never have any trouble with my fruit, but so far I have failed to keep sweet corn, and should very much like to learn how. Will some one be so good as to tell me? I will not ask too much this time, as the editor may refuse to admit me; but if he does not, I shall come again, and will give any information in my power. ZELBE.

SOUTHERN PRISON LIFE.

"Free Lance" Continues the Doleful Story of His Experiences.

XV.

Dec. 9th.—I have celebrated my twentieth birthday by stealing a cordwood stick, and devouring my usual rations of gruel. Sylvanus Fisher and four other boys of our regiment were brought into the stockade to-day. They were all captured on the road to Savannah, whither Sherman was moving. Eleven of them were sent out on the flank of the army to collect some forage, and reaching a fine residence, they halted and ordered the slaves to cook them some dinner. Very carelessly, they hung their muskets and cartridge-boxes on the boughs of some trees, and were lounging about in very unsoldierly fashion, when a company of rebel cavalry dashed in upon them and shot six of their number dead and captured the other five. The rebel soldiers were eager to kill the whole party, and only were restrained from doing so by their commanding officer with the greatest difficulty. Fisher says that Sherman is "knocking the stuffing out of the confederacy," and that the war will be over by spring. On the 22d of last July, when our brigade was fighting pretty much the whole of Cleburne's division, a private soldier of the Fifteenth Iowa, by the name of Reuben Meek, captured eighty-five rebels without anybody's assistance. A heavy charge had been made on the Fifteenth, and after it had been repulsed, Meek started down to the ravine in front of the position to fill his canteen with water, supposing that all the rebels had fled. Much to his surprise, he came upon a large party of them lying in concealment. They sprang up and began cocking their muskets, when, in a furious tone, he ordered them to "ground arms" instantly, or he would order the skirmishers to kill the last man of them. Presuming that a large force of Yankees were at hand, they threw down their muskets, and Meek marched them up to the regiment and delivered them to his colonel.

RED HEAD'S BRUTALITY.

Dec. 10th.—A Presidential election was held in this prison on November 8th, the same as at Millen, and Lincoln beat McClellan three to one. Surrounding this stockade are two lines of earthworks. When the prisoners were first brought here from Charleston, 1,500 of them broke through the guard lines one night, while still detained on the outside, and, in spite of the musketry, most of them made their escape. They were all recaptured, however, within a few days, and many of them were murdered in the woods by their captors. Packs of bloodhounds are kept here for the pursuit of prisoners, who are barbarously treated if recaptured. "Red Head's" favorite amusement is to take such men, tie their wrists together behind them, and then suspend them in the air by a rope fastened to their wrists. The bravest and strongest man cannot undergo this ordeal without finally screaming and shrieking with pain. A rebel guard fainted one day at merely witnessing the agony of a Union soldier tortured in this way. "Red Head," however, dances about such a brutal scene in the height of physical and intellectual enjoyment. Another custom of his is to suddenly appear with an armful of heavy clubs and hurl them, one by one, into clusters of unsuspecting prisoners. He has dangerously injured quite a number of men in this way. He would not dare to enter the stockade alone if it were not for the fact that we would be held responsible, collectively, for any injury done him. He generally has guards with him, however. The First Georgia infantry, composed of soldiers who have seen fighting, is well spoken of by the prisoners.

Dec. 11th.—A soldier belonging to the Sixth West Virginia cavalry informs me that he was one of a gang of 700 Union prisoners who were temporarily confined in a tobacco warehouse at Lynchburg, Va., last July. It was a one-story structure on the outskirts of the town. The rations consisted of ham and corn dodgers. The rebel sergeant commanding was a sailor who was in the South when the war broke out, and was conscripted in spite of his Union sentiments. The guards were convalescent veterans, and treated the prisoners well. In the cellar of the warehouse was a large quantity of tin, which the prisoners stole to make cooking utensils out of. When the owner of it found out what had occurred, he applied to the authorities for permission to put powder in the cellar and blow the prisoners up. The matter was adjusted by a rebel colonel, who shut off the rations of the prisoners until the sale of the same indemnified the patriot who owned the tin.

COTTON-SEED FLOUR.

Dec. 12th.—One of the paroled men mentioned a fact to me to-day which he heard on the outside. Several years "befo' the wah" some Southern gentlemen conceived the idea that they might not only make money out of cotton, but also feed their slaves on flour manufactured from cotton seed. They accordingly had a quantity of cotton seed ground up into flour, and had a loaf of bread baked from the commodity produced. A negro was then compelled to make a repast from this bread, but died in consequence. The symptoms were those of poison. Strange that we have never been fed on cotton-seed flour.

Dec. 13th.—To-day I saw a prisoner shot dead for asking a sentry to throw him a chew of tobacco. The guards are even more bloodthirsty here than they were at Andersonville.

Dec. 14th.—Last night a poor, sick, emaciated fellow got bewildered in the swamp, in the darkness, and although he was only a short distance from the causeway, he fell into a water hole and was drowned. His body was found this morning. A good many men heard his cries, but no one went to his assistance.

Dec. 15th.—To-day we were notified that the guards have instructions to shoot all prisoners who speak to them. Such instructions were issued several days ago without our knowledge, and many prisoners have been killed in consequence. The object is no doubt to prevent us from learning anything concerning the movements of Sherman's army. For some days past the rebels have been taking prisoners out of the stockade for exchange, endeavoring to select only those who are maimed, certain to die, or whose terms of service have expired. Among the lucky ones taken out to-day was Spurgeon, of our mud hut, and of my own regiment. "Spurge" is very thin from long starvation, and got himself up for the occasion. "Humping his back," hobbling with a stick, and putting on a fearfully miserable visage, he succeeded in imposing on the credulity of a rebel surgeon. I tried "the hundred days' dodge," assuring the surgeon that I belonged to a hundred days' regiment, the time of which had long ago expired. "Will you ever go back to the army?" he asked, scanning me sharply. "Never!" I fervently declared. "I think you would," he answered dryly, and passed on.

FROZEN TO DEATH.

Dec. 16th.—As I went to the brook this morning for water I saw a mere boy sitting in the ruins of a mud hut, half of which had fallen down. He was sick, destitute, covered with vermin, and too weak to help himself. By the time I returned he had frozen to death. This is said to be the coldest winter known in the South for many years. Ice freezes a quarter of an inch thick almost every night. A large proportion of the prisoners are without any kind of shelter, and have no fires, and innumerable deaths occur from the cold. There are many cripples here.

Dec. 17th.—More prisoners were taken out to-day for exchange. A large squad who failed to be selected for exchange went out and galvanized. The suffering here is simply terrible. This is a worse place than Andersonville, and Barrett is a more brutal wretch, if possible, than Wirz.

Dec. 18th.—To-day I learned the probable fate of Ware, one of the two men who owned the ground I and my chums first occupied at Andersonville. He was last seen at Millen, and was black and blue in the face from scurvy, and by this time is no doubt dead. He was a Maine man, of excellent principles, and often spoke to me with great feeling concerning the family he left at home. A brain fever is making great havoc in our ranks. The rate of mortality is sufficient to alarm the boldest.

Dec. 19th.—Fisher visited our hovel last evening. He had his pockets filled with excellent tobacco, and loading up our pipes we had a very pleasant evening, crouched before our blazing little hearth. When our regiment, on the 22d of last July, capitulated, it was to Govan's brigade. Fisher states that that brigade and two batteries were captured just a week afterwards by a direct charge on breastworks made by the troops of Gen. Davis. Fisher has not been a prisoner long enough to lose his affability. Many of us have concluded to bother no longer about exchange, but have settled down to the grim determination to live till the confederacy collapses. It is said that most of the Andersonville raiders are now in the rebel army. They came from the slums of New York city.

Dec. 20th.—Among the various barbarities of "Red Head" should be mentioned his habit of knocking down and kicking sick prisoners, who are prevented by debility from obeying his peremptory orders with sufficient promptness. Lung diseases are very prevalent here, originating from exposure to the severe cold weather.

A FRIGHTFUL DEATH-RATE.

Dec. 21st.—Nine-tenths of us are without shoes, and must tread bare-footed on ground that is frozen and full of ice much of the time. A cut is liable to result in dry gangrene, in which case away goes a limb or life. We are utterly destitute. One man dies out of about every three who are brought in here.

Dec. 22d.—Very few new prisoners arrive, but when they do, many of them give the thing up in despair, at the start, and speedily die. (About five thousand men perished at Florence.)

Dec. 23d.—The police force of this prison is not very popular. Some of its "big chiefs" are on very good terms with the rebels. The task of governing nine or ten thousand skeletons is not an arduous one.

Dec. 24th.—In order to encourage enlistments in a "galvanized" company "Red Head" is trying to raise, rations have been reduced smaller than ever. We suffer for want of salt especially. Gruel without salt is wretched stuff. The "galvanized" soon fatten up when they get regular confederate rations.

Dec. 25th.—Christmas and two-thirds of a pint of corn meal! I saw a prisoner shot dead to-day by a guard for walking near the dead-line to hang his ragged blanket on a pole.

Dec. 26th.—Some of the "shebangs" here are built of mud bricks, and do very well under the circumstances. A good shelter greatly assists in prolonging life. Since Spurgeon got exchanged, Wright and Jones and I are not so crowded. We still "flank" wood.

Dec. 27th.—It is reported that the prisoners at Raleigh, N. C., are treated like human beings, having barracks to shelter them, and very good rations. We are hoping that our next move will be in that direction.

Dec. 28th.—The "galvanized" say that a great many Southerners in the rebel army are serving from compulsion and against their desires. The confederate government is a mere military despotism. Our salt ration has diminished to half a teaspoonful per day.

Dec. 29th.—Cold nights, meagre rations, disease, destitution, starvation, despair and death.

Dec. 30th.—The air is full of exciting rumors concerning Sherman's army. It is difficult to form an opinion regarding the military situation, beyond the fact that our side has the best of it. A man can hear almost anything here, and hardly knows what to believe.

Dec. 31st.—A year could scarcely be wound up in a worse manner than by starving in Florence. A year hence none of us will be in rebel prisons. We will either be in the Union lines or in our graves.

SARCASM OF THE SEASON.

January 1st, 1865.—The boys, with much sarcasm, are wishing one another "a happy New Year."

Jan. 2d.—Yesterday Winder dropped dead in his tracks, while entering the quarters of the Post Sutler to eat a New Year's dinner. There is no doubt whatever concerning the direction his spirit took.

Jan. 3d.—Several weeks ago the ladies of Florence decided to make a large confederate flag and present it to the prison garrison on New Year's day. In anticipation of the event, Iverson had a very tall flag-pole erected on the commons in front of his headquarters. It was cut in the woods, handsomely dressed, and erected in position by paroled Union soldiers. In putting up the pole an accident occurred, and one or two of the paroled men were killed. That Union soldiers should perform such a service for the rebels, under any circumstances, created the greatest indignation in the prison, and it was universally determined that we would hoot the rebel flag vehemently when it should be raised. Iverson heard of this, and as the ladies of Florence were to be present at the flag-raising, we were warned by the rebel roll sergeants to make no demonstration on pain of losing our rations for twenty-four hours. We then concluded not to "demonstrate." When the rebel flag went up, however, and its nefarious folds danced in the air, a loud, prolonged yell of derision burst from the stockade. Then, for ten minutes or more, the air was rent with cries of "Hurrah for the Union!" "Hurrah for Lincoln!" "D—n the Confederacy," etc. The ladies of Florence were shocked, and we lost our rations. Florence is a wretched little town, 120 miles from Charleston, and about as far from Wilmington.

Jan. 4th.—There is a camp of slaves on the north side of the stockade. The rebels never require them to work on Sunday. They are well fed. Salt is not issued to us half the time, and we suffer extremely for want of it.

Jan. 5th.—Nearly every man in this prison whom I have any acquaintance with is sick. A particular friend of mine named Vale, of the Eighth Iowa cavalry, died to-day. Starvation, exposure, and crowded, filthy quarters originate nearly all the diseases we have.

Jan. 6th.—It is an event for a prisoner to secure any kind of reading matter. To-day, through the kindness of a friend, I am reveling in Bulwer's "Pelham."

Jan. 7th.—On several occasions the prisoners at Richmond were without food for 48 hours.

Jan. 8th.—Incarceration in a rebel bull pen means gradual starvation. The intention is to kill us in a manner that will escape the condemnation of the world. Our death will be attributed to excusable causes.

Jan. 9th.—I think almost as much suffering exists here from cold as from hunger. Starving men cannot withstand exposure and severe weather. A depleted physical system invites all manner of disease. A sick dog in the North would be cared for better than sick prisoners are cared for here.

[To be continued.]

[Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1882 by The National Tribune in the office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.]