

Abbeville Meridional.

Letter from Shell Beach.

Editor Abbeville Meridional.

On the western border of Vermilion parish lies the beautiful sheet of water, Lake Arthur. Upon its banks, which are broken by a pleasing irregularity, now running out into points, and now receding and forming little bays, we have a fringe of forest trees—live oak, cypress and gum, with here and there nestled in a grove of orange trees, an old home, where children, and in many cases grandchildren, have been reared to manhood and womanhood. For while not a thickly settled country, still this has been populated for many years. Being out of the way and inaccessible but few people were aware of the great beauty and the possibilities of Lake Arthur and surrounding country. Within a few years, however, the eye of immigration has been upon our land, and we find many desirable families from the cold North, not only casting longing eyes upon our land of fruit and flowers, but they are already knocking at our door for admission, and the question for us to answer is, shall we open our doors and receive them cordially, or shall we give them a reception as cold as the winters of their Northern homes.

It is not necessary to dwell long upon the advantages we will derive from this immigration. We have all seen, and we all know, that it increases the value of our lands, it gives a market for our fruit and produce, it gives us more and better schools, in a thousand ways we are benefited, shall we then try to keep back that which will help us more even than we can estimate? No; but let us welcome with outstretched arms all good, industrious settlers who come among us with a view to make homes for themselves and their families. But there are some things else that we must do; we must put our advantages forward in the best possible light, and remove any disadvantages that may exist. Among other things it is imperative that the western part of Vermilion parish have at least one public road leading toward the county seat. On the eastern side of Vermilion bayou there are many roads, and the parish has spent thousands of dollars on them, but cross the bayou to the west, and when you leave it a few miles, you are entirely without public roads. I am sure I speak within bounds when I say that there is not a public road within thirty miles of the western boundary of Vermilion parish. The people living along Lake Arthur are particularly inconvenienced by being obliged to open and close thirteen gates within a distance of six miles, and are constantly in private property, liable any day to be refused the privilege of passing through any of these places. And to reach Abbeville, the county seat, they must go around into Cameron parish, making a much longer drive; and, should the water be at all high, they can't go at all.

We must have a direct road from Lake Arthur to Abbeville, and we must have it at once. An effort was made last winter to secure this road, and for twenty-five miles the people were unanimously in favor of it, but the police jury refused us what they should have granted years ago, because, ye gods, there was one "old sheep" opposed to the improvement, a "dog in the manger," who would not buy lands himself, but wishes to keep others from doing so. This one kicker does not own a foot of land in the parish outside of the graveyard; has sent his cattle and ponies into other parishes, so that he pays but very little tax here. Is it right, is it justice, that hundreds should be deprived of their rights because of one such man as this? Yet such is the case, and I wish to state the facts fully and clearly that all may read and know, then let the blame rest where it belongs. But I would urge earnestly that our police jury do us justice in this matter at once, that we may present a more favorable state of affairs to would be settlers.

There is too much here that strikes a stranger unfavorably—too much that gives one the idea that we are dead and ought to be buried. It is time for us to throw off this inactivity, arouse ourselves and meet the situation in a way worthy of ourselves and our beautiful country. Let not one man be the stumbling block in the way of progress; but if he persists in standing in the way,

let the wheels of progress pass over him, and the place shall know him no more. While our State, as a whole, is doing so much to encourage immigration it behooves us to do all we can to attract stragglers to our parish; for this immigration means more money in the country (and we will all try and get some of it), more taxes, which means more improvements, and eventually lower rate of taxation. So let us give every encouragement, every inducement to the stranger to come and settle with us. Our prairies are large and broad, there is room and to spare, so let us join earnestly and heartily in our welcome.

I can not close without a word about our new town, Shell Beach, laid out by our enterprising merchant, saw mill man and land owner, Mr. E. Dechamps. The advantages it offers are many—beautifully situated at the head of Lake Arthur, we have water communication with the railroad, a little north, and the gulf at the south. The lake abounds in fish at all seasons of the year, and it is a most beautiful place for pleasure sailing. On the lake and in the country surrounding Shell Beach is the Nimrod's paradise, where all game, from the snipe and plover to the fleet footed deer is to be found; and last but by no means least, we can offer an unsurpassed climate. Surely such advantages are rarely found in connection, and where they do exist together man should be happy and contented.

SHELL BEACH.

Ours is Home.

Texas papers are not in favor of repealing the constitutional provision in favor of homesteads, and some of them are advising people who have not done so to secure homes while lands are cheap and easily obtained. Texas has always aided and encouraged settlers to acquire a home. Southey long ago said:

"Whatever strengthens our local attachments, is favorable both to individual and national character. Our homes, our birthplace, our native land—think for a while what the virtues are which arise out of the feelings connected with those words, and if you have any intellectual eyes, you will then perceive the connection between topography and patriotism. Show me a man who cares no more for one place than another, and I will show you in that same person one who loves nothing but himself. Beware of those who are homeless by choice; you have no home or a human being whose affections are without a taproot. The laws recognized this truth in the privileges they confer upon freeholders, and public opinion acknowledges it also in the confidence which it reposes upon those who have what is called a stake in the country. Vagabond and rascal are convertible terms; and with how much propriety may any one understand who knows what are the habits of the wandering classes."

St. Laundry Flax.

On last Monday morning, Mr. John Simms brought a fine sample of prepared flax to our office, the fibre of which measured about thirty-six inches in length. It was raised by some Belgians, on Capt. Blackshear's place, in prairie Plaisance, who had planted about a quarter of an acre as an experiment, to see if the plant was adapted to this soil and climate. They are gratified beyond their most sanguine expectations, and say "that flax not only grows more luxuriantly here than in Belgium, but it only requires half the time in the 'rotting process' to prepare the fibre for market. With a decorticating machine to prepare the fibre for market, flax, ramie and jute can all be successfully grown here, and will be strong competitors against cotton, as a staple article, in the future. What is now wanted to start these new industries is cheap and effective machinery to prepare the fibres for the markets of the world.—Opelousas Courier.

Girls are good for teaching school, and good for keeping books; good for telegraph and telephone operators, and good for raising chickens; good for short-hand and type-writers, and good for newspaper reporters; good farmers and merchants, and good printers; good for nurses and doctors and authors and artists, and good for everything that men are good for—except politics, base ball and prize fighting.—Ex.

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Methodist Nuns. Methodist nuns are to be a novelty in feminine experience. They were created by the Methodist General Conference, after a careful consideration of the subject by the committee on missions. The committee reported favorably, and the conference inserted in the discipline of the church a section regulating them. They are to be called deaconesses, and they will be very similar to the nuns of the Roman Catholic Church, except that they are not to take vows of life service or of celibacy. Every annual conference in which these deaconesses are established will have a board of nine members to control this work. Nothing more definite than that was done by the conference, but the impression is that the Methodist nuns will wear distinctive costumes and live in houses to themselves. They will minister to the poor and sick, care for orphans, and do other work of charity. They will be required to serve a probation of continual service of two years before being made deaconesses, and they will have to be at least twenty-five years of age.

It has long been a desire of Rev. Dr. Dix, of Trinity, to have such duties performed by regular order of women, and he succeeded several years ago in forming an organization of Episcopal nuns, but they have not been formally indorsed by the denomination, and so the Methodists are the first Protestant Church in America to attempt the recruiting, and uniforming of religious sisters. The first of these deaconesses will very likely be seen in Chicago. And what costumes will the deaconesses wear? was asked of nearly every member of the committee responsible for their creation. No definite answer could be obtained. Naturally a sober garb will be chosen.—New York Sun.

Hope for the Drunkard. Of course there was never yet a young man who, while "sapping it" lightly, could be made to believe that he would ever become a common drunkard. Ah, no; he was only taking a little for sociability; no danger in the world of his ever reaching that frightfully degraded state where all self-control is lost, all moral sensibilities completely deadened. Many; untold millions, reach that depth, nevertheless. Some are too far gone to even desire reformation. But to those who do, a chance is held out if the Russian physician referred to in the following paragraph is correct:

A Russian physician named Portugaloff declares that strychnine is an infallible cure for drunkenness, administered in subcutaneous injections. He asserts that the experience of physicians has shown the cure to be as rapid as it is certain. The effect of the strychnine solution is to change the craving for drink into positive aversion, and this change is effected in a day. After a treatment of eight or ten days the patient may be discharged. The strychnine is administered by dissolving one grain in 200 drops of water, and injecting five drops of the solution every twenty-four hours.—Shreveport Times.

What Are They Proud Of? A chronic grumbler caught the Rambler's ear recently, and this is what he had to say: "An aristocracy in a republic is a pestilent anomaly, and yet that is precisely what is growing up. A self-made man who has worked for his wealth with unflagging industry and keen intelligence, retains his democracy, but not so his wife and daughters, who have done nothing but cultivate expensive tastes. They elevate their noses at less pretentious neighborhoods and lament that their parent has no dignity whatever. They manage to tolerate him because he keeps their lily white hands from the necessity of toil, but they make him feel his immeasurable inferiority when any social question turns up. What are they proud of? They are proud of doing nothing and of being no earthly use to anybody or even to themselves. Usefulness of any kind is horridly vulgar. They call themselves 'good society,' and what with holding their heads very high and keeping everybody except their own particular set at a distance, they have managed to persuade a great many that they really are superior in some mysterious fashion to other citizens."