

GUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

Is Protested Against by Dr. Talmage in a Sermon.

HIS WARNING TO PARENTS.

Finds a Timely Lesson in the Sacrifice of Jephthah's Daughter.

Thousands of Children Educated into Imbecility.

In his sermon Dr. Talmage lodges a protest against the parental heedlessness and worldly ambition which are threatening the sacrifice of many American children. He says: "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth."

Jephthah was a freebooter. Early turned out from a home where he ought to have been cared for, he consoled with rough men and went forth to earn his living as best he could. In those times it was considered right for a man to go out on independent military expeditions. Jephthah was a good man according to the light of his dark age, but through a wandering and predatory life he became reckless and precipitate. The grace of God changes a man's heart, but never reverses his natural temperament. The Israelites wanted the Ammonites driven out of their country, so they sought a warrior to lead them. Jephthah, a man of war, was chosen. He might have said, "You drove me out when you had no use for me and, now you are in trouble, you want me back," but he did not say that. He takes command of the army, sends messengers to the Ammonites to tell them to vacate the country and, getting no favorable response, marshals his troops for battle.

Before going out to the war Jephthah makes a very solemn vow that if the Lord will give him the victory, then, on his return home, whatsoever first comes out of his doorway he will offer in sacrifice as a burnt offering. The battle opens. It was no skirmishing on the edges of danger, no unimportant battles. Two armies met, the hurrying of men on the points of swords and spears until the ground could no more drink the blood, and the horses reared to leap over the pile of bodies of the slain. In those old times opposing forces would fight until their swords rattled his metal until they both fell, teeth to teeth, grip to grip, death stare to death stare, until the plain was one tumbled mass of corpses from which the last trace of manhood had been dashed out.

Jephthah wins the day. Twenty cities lay captured at his feet. Sound the victory all through the mountains of Gilead. Let the trumpeters call the warriors home. Homeward to your wives and children. Homeward with your glittering treasures. Homeward to have the applause of an admiring nation. Build triumphal arches, swing out flags all over Mizpah, open all your doors to receive the captured treasures, through every hall spread the banquet table up to the windows, fill high the tankards. The nation is redeemed, the invaders are routed and the national honor is vindicated.

Huzza for Jephthah, the conqueror! Jephthah, seated on a prancing steed, advances amid the acclaiming multitudes, but his eye is not on the excited populace. Remembering that he had made a solemn vow, that, returning from victorious battle, whatsoever first came out of the doorway of home, that should be sacrificed as a burnt offering, he has his anxious look upon the door. I wonder what spotless lamb, what brace of doves will be thrown upon the fire of the burnt offering.

Oh, horrors! Paleness of death blanches his cheek. Despair seizes his heart. His daughter, his only child, rushes out the doorway to the altar, in her father's arms and shower upon him more kisses than there were wounds on his breast or dents on his shield. All the triumphal splendor vanishes. Holding back this child from his heaving breast and pushing the looks back from the fair brow and looking into the eyes of inextinguishable affection with choked utterance he says: "Would God I lay stark on the bloody plain. My daughter, my only child, joy of my home, life of my life, thou art the sacrifice!"

The whole matter was explained to her. This was no whining, hollow hearted girl into whose eyes the father looked. All the glory of sword and shield vanished in the presence of the valor of that girl. There may have been a tremor of the lip, as a roseleaf trembles in the sigh of the south wind; there may have been the starting of a tear like a rain drop shaken from the amber of a water lily. But with a self sacrifice that man may not reach and only woman's heart can compass she surrenders herself to fire and to death. She cries out in the words of my text, "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord do unto me whatsoever hath proceeded from thy mouth."

She bows to the knife, and the blood, which so often at the father's voice had rushed to the crimson cheeks, smokes in the fires of the burnt offering. No one can tell us her name. There is no need that we know her name. The garlands that Mizpah twisted for Jephthah, the warrior, have gone into the dust, but all ages are twisting this girl's chaplet. It is well that her name came not to us, for no one can wear it. They may take the name of Deborah or Abigail or Miriam; but no one in all the ages shall have the title of this daughter of sacrifice.

Of course this offering was not pleasing to the Lord, especially as a provision was made in the law for such a contingency, and Jephthah might have redeemed his daughter by the payment of 30 shekels of silver, but before you hurl your denunciations at Jephthah's cruelty remember that in olden times when you were a parent all you wanted was to see your children prosper. They would execute them, perform them, whether they were wicked or good. There were two wrong things about Jephthah's vow. First, he ought never to have made it. Next, having made it, it was better broken than kept. But do not take on pretentious airs and say, "I could not have done as Jephthah did." If in former days you had been standing on the banks of the Ganges and you had been in India, you might have thrown your children to the crocodiles. It is not because we are naturally any better, but because we have more gospel light.

Now I make very practical use of this question when I tell you that the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter was a type of the physical, mental and spiritual sacrifice of 10,000 children in this day. There are parents all unrightly bringing to bear upon their children a class of influences which will as certainly ruin them as knife and

torch destroyed Jephthah's daughter. While I speak the whole nation, without emotion and without shame, looks upon the stupendous sacrifice. In the midst of the place of education in our day is a system of sacrifice. When children spend six or seven hours in school and then must spend two or three hours in preparation for school the next day, will you tell me how much time they will have for sunshine and fresh air and the obtaining of that exuberance which is necessary for the duties of our life? No one can feel more than I do for the advancement of common school education. The printing of books appropriate for schools, the multiplication of philosophical apparatus, the establishment of normal schools, which provide for our children teachers of larger caliber, are themes on which every philanthropist ought to be congratulated. But this herding of great multitudes of children into the same schools and poorly equipped halls of instruction is making many of the places of knowledge in this country a huge holocaust. Politics in many of the cities gets into educational affairs, and while the two political parties are scrabbling for the honors Jephthah's daughter perishes. It is so much so that there are many schools in the country today which are preparing tens of thousands of children and women for the future; so that, in many places, by the time the child's education is finished the child is finished! In many places, in many cities of the country, there are large appropriations for everything else, and cheerful appropriations, but as soon as the appropriation is to be made for the educational or moral interests of the city we are struck dumb and the money that is well nigh the death of us.

In connection with this I mention what I might call the cramming system of the common schools and many of the academies; children of delicate brain compelled to tasks that might appall a mature intellect; children going down to school with a strap of books half as high as themselves. The fact is in some of the cities parents do not allow their children to graduate for the simple reason, they say, "We cannot afford to allow our children's health to be destroyed in order that they may gather the honors of an institution." Tens of thousands of children educated into imbecility, so that connected with many such literary establishments are the signs of insanity, of the mad, of the idiot, of the imbecile, and the memory is ruined, and the health is ruined, and the health is gone. There are children who once were full of romping and laughter and had cheeks crimson with health who are now, in their old age, are as feeble as a child of three months old before their time. It is one of the saddest sights on earth, an old manish boy or an old womanish girl. Girls 10 years of age studying algebra! Boys 12 years of age racking their brain over trigonometry! Children unacquainted with their mother tongue crying over their Latin, French and German lessons! All the vivacity of their nature is run out of them by the heavy burden of a Greek lexicon! And you doctor them for this, and you give them a little medicine for that, and you wonder what is the matter of them. I will tell you what is the matter of them. They are finishing their education!

In my parish in Philadelphia a little child was so pushed at school that she was thrown into a fever, and in her dying delirium all night long she was trying to recite the multiplication table. In my boyhood I remember that in our class at school there was one lad who knew more than all of us put together. If we were fast in our arithmetic, he extricated us. When we stood up for the spelling class, he was almost always the head of the class. Visitors came to his father's house, and he was always brought in as a prodigy. At 18 years of age he was an idiot. He lived knowing his right hand from his left, and day from night. The parents and the teachers made him an idiot.

You may flatter your pride of forcing your child to know more than any other children, but you are making a sacrifice of that child by the additions to its intelligence you are making a subtraction from its future. The child will go away from such maltreatment with no exuberance to fight the battle of life. Such children may get along very well while you are alive, but when you are dead or old or dead alas for them if, through the wrong system of education which you adopted, they have no swiftness or force of character to take care of themselves. Be careful how you make the child's head ache or his heart flutter. I hear a great deal about black man's rights, and Chinese man's rights, and Indian's rights, and woman's rights. Would God that some body would rise to plead for children's rights. The Christians used to sacrifice their children by putting them into the arms of an idol which thrust forth its hand. The child was put into the arms of the idol and no sooner touched the arms than it dropped into the fire. But it was the art of the mothers to keep the children smiling and laughing until the moment they died. There may be a fascination and a hilarity about the face of the child of which I am speaking, but it is only laughter at the moment of sacrifice. Would God there were only one Jephthah's daughter!

Again there are many parents who are sacrificing their children with wrong system of discipline—too great rigor or too great leniency. There are children in families who rule the household. The high chair in which the infant sits is the throne, and the rattle is the scepter, and the other children map out the pavement where father and mother have no vote! Such children come up to be miscreants. There is no chance in this world for a child that has never learned to mind. Such people become the bête noire of the church of God and the pest of the world. Children that do not learn to obey human authority are unwilling to learn to obey divine authority. Children will not respect parents who are not respected by the parents. Who are these young men that swagger through the streets with their thumbs in their vest talking about their fathers as "the old man," "the governor," "the squire," "the old chap," or their mother as "the old woman"? They are those who in youth, in childhood never learned to respect authority. Eli, having heard that his sons had died in their wickedness, fell over backward and broke his neck, and said, "What is the life of a father whose sons are detached? The dust of the valley is pleasant to his taste and the driving rains that drip through the roof of the sepulcher are sweeter than the wines of Helbon."

There must be harmony between the father's government and the mother's government. The father will be tempted to too great a rigor, the mother will be tempted to too great leniency. Her tenderness will overcome her. Her voice is a little softer, her hand seems

better fitted to pull out a thorn and soothe a pang. Children wanting anything from the mother, cry for it. They hope to dissolve her with tears. But the mother must not interfere, must not coax off, must not beg for the child when the hour comes for the assertion of parental supremacy and the subjugation of a child's temper. There are times in the history of every child an hour when it is tested whether the parents shall rule or the child shall rule. That is the crucial hour. If the child will rule in that hour he will prepare some day make you crumh. It is a horrible scene. I have witnessed it. A mother come to old age, shivering with terror in the presence of a son who cursed her gray hairs and mocked her wrinkled face and begrudged her the crust she manched with her toothless gums!

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!

There are many who are sacrificing their children to a spirit of worldliness. Some one asked a mother whose children had turned out very well what was the secret by which she prepared them for usefulness and for the Christian life, and she said: "This was the secret. When in the morning I washed my children, I prayed that they might be washed in the fountain of a Saviour's mercy. When I put on their garments I prayed that they might be arrayed in the robe of a Saviour's righteousness. When I gave them food, I prayed that they might be fed with the manna from heaven. When I started them on the road to school, I prayed that their path might be as the shining light, brighter and brighter to the perfect day. When I put them to sleep, I prayed that they might be folded in the Saviour's arms. Oh, you say, that was very old fashioned. It was quite old fashioned. But do you suppose that a child under such nurture as that ever turned out bad?"

Further on thousands and tens of thousands of the daughters of America are sacrificed to worldliness. They are taught to be in sympathy with all the artificialities of society. They are inducted into all the hollows of what is called fashionable life. They are taught to believe that history is dry, that love is delirious, that duty is a joy, have rivaled a Florence Nightingale in heavenly ministries or made the father's house glad with filial and sisterly demeanor their life is a waste, their beauty a curse, their eternity a demolation.

I lift up my voice against the sacrifice of children. I look out of my window on a Sabbath morning and see a crowd of children, unwashed, uncombed, unchristianized. Who cares for them? Who prays for them? Who utters to them one kind word? When the city missionary, passing along the park in New York, saw a ragged lad and heard him swearing, he said to him: "My son, stop swearing. You ought to go to the house of God today. You ought to be a Christian." The lad looked in his face and said: "Ah, it is easy for you to talk, well clothed as you are and well fed. But we chaps ain't got no chance!" Who lifts them to the altar for baptism? Who goes forth to baptize them? Who today will go forth and bring them into schools and churches to be educated? Who today will go forth and put underneath them the fires of sacrifice, stir up the blaze, put on more fagots, and while we sit in the churches with folded arms and indifference crime and disease and death will go on with the agonizing sacrifice.

During the early French revolution at Bourges there was a company of boys who used to train every day as young soldiers, and they carried a flag and they had on the flag this inscription, "Tremble, Tyrants, Tremble; We Are Growing Up." Mightily suggestive! This generation is passing off, and a mightier generation is coming on. Will they be the foes of tyranny, the foes of sin and the foes of death, or will they be the foes of God? They are coming up! I congratulate all parents who are doing their best to keep their children away from the altar of sacrifice. Your prayers are going to be answered. Your children may wander away from God, but they will come back again. A voice comes from the throne today, encouraging you, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." And though when you lay your head in death there may be some wanderer of the family far away from God, and you may be 20 years in heaven before salvation be brought to his heart, he will be brought into the kingdom, and before the throne of God you will rejoice that you were faithful. Come at last! though so long postponed his coming. Come at last!

I congratulate all those who are tolling for the outcast and the wandering. Your work will soon be over, but the influence you are setting in motion will never stop. Long after you are gone in garments for the skies, your prayers, your teachings and your Christian influence will go on and help to people heaven with bright inhabitants. Which would you rather see, which scene would you rather mingle in the last great day, being able to say, "I added house to house and land to land and manufactory to manufactory; I owned half the city; whatever my eye saw I had, whatever my hand touched I got, or I had said to have Christ laid upon full in the face and say, 'I was hungry, and ye fed me; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me, inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me?'"

An exchange gets off the following: I want to be a farmer and till the virgin soil, and labor for the sunshine to sweat and stew and boil; I want to earn large acres whereupon the rye to sow, and watch the cornstalk waving, and hear the mortgage row; I want to be a farmer, and grow a Hubbard squash, the pumpkin and potatoes, and other stuff, by gosh; I want to be a farmer, I do upon my soul, but I haven't got the money to buy a gopher hole.

A SPECIAL dispatch to the New York World from Manila says: "It is the universal opinion among the Filipinos that it will require the presence of 50,000 American troops to occupy the territory that has been taken and to keep open communications among the islands." We would infer from this that our forces are not making much progress towards pacifying the natives of the Philippines.

A paper published a long obituary says an exchange of a son who had died in the common way, and he said to the community: "Long processions of friends followed the remains to the last resting place." The family read the note and discovered the supposed error and asked the editor to make correction in the word "roasting," but he said he could not do it until the seven years back subscription; which deceased owed him had been paid.

The only man that doesn't make a fool of himself occasionally is the one that nature saved the trouble.

STATE DISPENSARY.

The Formal Report of the Legislative Committee.

EVERYTHING IS ALL RIGHT.

The Profits and Losses, Receipts and Disbursements, Assets and Liabilities Tabulated.

The legislative committee, after making a formal inspection of the dispensary, has submitted its report. From the figures submitted the expense was greater than the profit last quarter. The time covered by the report. The total receipts for the quarter amounted to \$877,694.24 and the total disbursements to \$991,236.57, bringing down the balance in the State treasury at the close of the year from \$46,073.24 to \$32,433.91. The report follows:

Dear Sir: The committee appointed by the officers of the general assembly to investigate and examine the books of the State dispensary for the year 1890 begs leave to submit the following report for the quarter ending March 31st:

The stock on hand was taken on March 31st and April 1st by D. F. Eird, representing the committee, and Messrs. Miles and Boykin, representing the State board of control. All liquors, supplies, machinery and office fixtures were exhibited and taken, as an inventory submitted to the committee. The committee met April 17th and proceeded to examine the books and vouchers for the months of January, February and March. We found the collections and expenditures, with vouchers for each and every item properly recorded.

We append hereto the following statements: Assets and liabilities for said quarter; profit and loss account, and cash statement of receipt and disbursements.

We find that the books of the institution correspond with the cash balance of the State treasurer, with the exception of warrants issued which have not been presented for payment.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

T. J. Stanland,
D. F. Eird,
A. C. Lyles.

Quarterly statement of State dispensary for quarter ending March 31:

ASSETS.

Cash in State treasury	\$ 32,433.91
Merchandise in hands of dispensary March 31.	210,283.18
Merchandise at State dispensary	135,449.98
Supplies	35,421.70
Teams and wagons	150.00
Machinery and office fixtures	2,500.00
Contraband	776.00
Real estate	34,899.43
Suspended accounts	5,517.95
Personal accounts payable for royalty on beer, etc.	7,255.88
Total assets	\$462,696.43

LIABILITIES.

School fund	\$406,325.58
Personal accounts due by State for supplies, whiskeys, wines, beer, alcohol, etc.	56,370.85
Total liabilities	\$462,696.43

Statement of profit and loss account for quarter ending March 31st:

PROFITS.

Gross profits on merchandise sold during the quarter	\$100,334.40
Discounts on whiskey purchases	1,323.31
Contraband seizures	1,904.17
Permit fees	4.50
Profits from beer dispensary	6,422.98
Total gross profits	\$109,939.36

LOSSES.

Supplies, bottles, corks, labels, wire, tin foil, boxes, etc., used during quarter	\$ 31,773.32
Depreciated value of teams and wagons	30.00
Depreciated value of machinery and office fixtures	388.30
Constabulary	12,927.22
Breakage and leakage	131.73
Freight and express charges	19,242.22
Labor	3,997.03
Insurance	217.50
Expense account	5,200.69
Litigation	130.00
Loss by robbery at Salkematch dispensary	14.72
Loss by fire at Jacksonboro dispensary	226.86
Worthless wines at W. J. Mott's dispensary	59.10
Undercredit of prices of goods at the Manning dispensary	100.00
Unpaid license by dispenser at Ulmer's, the profits of that dispensary not being sufficient to bear expenses	50.00
Total losses	\$74,354.24
Net profits on sales for quarter, passed to the credit of the school fund	\$35,695.12
Cash statement for quarter ending March 31st, 1899:	

RECEIPTS.

Balance in State treasury	\$ 46,073.24
January receipts	139,740.76
February receipts	117,747.19
March receipts	120,116.29
Total	\$423,677.48

DISBURSEMENTS.

January disbursements	\$151,536.14
February disbursements	133,568.95
March disbursements	106,073.48
Total	\$391,236.57

In 1511 when the Spaniards, under Velasquez, were devastating Cuao, a chief by the name of Itanay, was condemned to be burned alive. When urged at the stake to embrace Christianity, that his soul might find admission into Heaven, he inquired if he was answered in the affirmative, he exclaimed: "Then I will not be a Christian; I would not go again to a place where I must find me so cruel!" What impressions of Christianity are we giving the heathens of the Philippines?

THE New York World's account of the burning of the Vanderbilt country place, "Idle Hour," where W. K. Vanderbilt, Jr., and his bride were spending their honeymoon, contains this bit of information: "Two Pinkerton detectives were on the premises. One was outside the house, the second had accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Vanderbilt to 'Idle Hour' to express wish of the bride, and occupied a room in the same floor as the young couple."

PAPER COLLARS.

They Are Still Made, Largely for Export.

"Oh, yes, paper collars are still made," said a haberdasher, smilingly, in reply to an inquisitive customer. "Thirty years ago they were worn by men who considered themselves very good dressers. No other use is made of them now, except for the young rakes strove their hardest to develop some peculiarity or curious prejudice, by which their names would become famous, and possibly through this be handed on to posterity."

Just now there is an eccentric old gentleman living near Luton, in Bedfordshire, who persists in donning the attire of an earlier time. Any day he may be seen taking his walks, wearing knee breeches and an indescribable green waistcoat, whilst his silk hat is peculiarly antique. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of his friends, he refuses absolutely to dress up-to-date, protesting that he is a great admirer of the good old days and of all its customs. The present-day orthodox dress is far too sober and severe to suit his tastes.

Equally singular is the prejudice against modern things shared by another old gentleman who is the squire of a small village in Derbyshire. He also shuns from his tables any French or continental dishes, allowing the cook to prepare only plain food, in which a saddle of beef always plays a conspicuous part. As might be expected, he is a firm believer in the greatness of his country, and has never yet evinced a desire to travel further than Scotland, where he possesses another residence.

A celebrated author professes a terrible prejudice against cats. He can neither eat nor work while one is in the room, and says that, without seeing the animal, he can tell whether one is about. A well-known politician is similarly prejudiced against the feline race.

Music halls and theaters are the pet aversion of another individual, who ascribes much of the wickedness of this age to their influence. His eldest son, of twenty-two, once visited a certain place by this description, and so enraged was his father that the latter vowed that if it occurred again he would cut him off with the proverbial shilling.

A wealthy old lady living in Derbyshire has never yet entered a train, although her age must be very nearly eighty. Her ideas are naturally very old-fashioned, and so great is her dislike to railways that she has fixed up on a house some fifteen miles away from the nearest line. When she does travel, she accomplishes it by means of a pony chaise very similar to the one the queen uses at Balmoral.

The Berlin newspapers have lately been getting with great glee of a triumph of science over crime. In one of the great offices of the German capital a number of petty thefts had been committed, the pockets of coats hanging in the anterooms being visited and cigars and small change extracted. The police were for a time nonplussed and invoked the aid of science. A professor of a delicate aniline powder in the mouth and end of some cigars to be placed at the mercy of the thief. The next morning there was a summoning of the clerks at a general inspection of their mouth. One unhappy youth was discovered with aniline tongue and lips.

Formerly the ashes on steamships were gathered into great cans, hoisted to the decks with more or less difficulty and thrown overboard. Among the new devices for labor saving in this direction is a chute into which a very strong air current is forced. The ashes are placed in the chute as they accumulate and are almost instantly blown overboard into the sea. The amount of labor saved by this means can scarcely be appreciated by those who have not watched the wearisome dragging of the enormous quantity of refuse from the furnaces in steamships and large plants of this description.

Eighteen hundred years ago or thereabouts, the Roman emperor Trajan built a bridge across the Danube, the piers of which were supported by the mouths of labor-saving in this direction is a chute into which a very strong air current is forced. The ashes are placed in the chute as they accumulate and are almost instantly blown overboard into the sea. The amount of labor saved by this means can scarcely be appreciated by those who have not watched the wearisome dragging of the enormous quantity of refuse from the furnaces in steamships and large plants of this description.

At Roubaix, one of the socialist strongholds of France, the 11,000 public school children receive free food and clothing at the expense of the town. Their dinner at school consists of soup, bread, vegetables, meat and a glass of wine. At the beginning of summer and of winter each child receives a complete suit of clothes.

Perhaps the strangest pet ever kept by a man was a wasp which Sir John Lubbock caught in the Pyrenees and resolved to tame. He began by teaching it to take its meals on his hand, and in a very short space of time it grew to expect to be fed in that way.

Some of the pet-fish found in Arizona, it is said, is so hard that steel tools will not work it. The pet-fish is only three degrees less in hardness than a diamond.

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A somewhat pathetic letter comes from an old colored citizen. It is as follows: "De rain has done beat down my cotton, an' most er my co'n is done hurt. My son wuz a soldier in de war wid de Spaniards. He lost two legs in it. Do you reckon de gov'ment will give him \$2 a leg fer 'em?"

The bottom of the Pacific between Hawaii and California is said to be so level that a railroad could be laid for 500 miles without grading anywhere. This fact was discovered by the United States surveying vessel engaged in making soundings with a view of laying cable.

PECULIAR PREJUDICES.

Nearly Everyone Manifests Some Favorite Eccentricity.

Everybody, more or less, possesses a favorite prejudice, which in the eyes of everybody else, appears nonsensical and unnecessary. In the gay time of the Georges, for instance, the young rakes strove their hardest to develop some peculiarity or curious prejudice, by which their names would become famous, and possibly through this be handed on to posterity.

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Formerly the ashes on steamships were gathered into great cans, hoisted to the decks with more or less difficulty and thrown overboard. Among the new devices for labor saving in this direction is a chute into which a very strong air current is forced. The ashes are placed in the chute as they accumulate and are almost instantly blown overboard into the sea. The amount of labor saved by this means can scarcely be appreciated by those who have not watched the wearisome dragging of the enormous quantity of refuse from the furnaces in steamships and large plants of this description.

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At Roubaix, one of the socialist strongholds of France, the 11,000 public school children receive free food and clothing at the expense of the town. Their dinner at school consists of soup, bread, vegetables, meat and a glass of wine. At the beginning of summer and of winter each child receives a complete suit of clothes.

Perhaps the strangest pet ever kept by a man was a wasp which Sir John Lubbock caught in the Pyrenees and resolved to tame. He began by teaching it to take its meals on his hand, and in a very short space of time it grew to expect to be fed in that way.

Some of the pet-fish found in Arizona, it is said, is so hard that steel tools will not work it. The pet-fish is only three degrees less in hardness than a diamond.

An exchange gets off the following: I want to be a farmer and till the virgin soil, and labor in the sunshine to sweat and stew and boil; I want to earn large acres whereupon the rye to sow, and watch the cornstalk waving, and hear the mortgage row; I want to be a farmer, and grow a Hubbard squash, the pumpkin and potatoes, and other stuff, by gosh; I want to be a farmer, I do upon my soul, but I haven't got the money to buy a gopher hole.

A somewhat pathetic letter comes from an old colored citizen. It is as follows: "De rain has done beat down my cotton, an' most er my co'n is done hurt. My son wuz a soldier in de war wid de Spaniards. He lost two legs in it. Do you reckon de gov'ment will give him \$2 a leg fer 'em?"

The bottom of the Pacific between Hawaii and California is said to be so level that a railroad could be laid for 500 miles without grading anywhere. This fact was discovered by the United States surveying vessel engaged in making soundings with a view of laying cable.

The Great Reunion.

The great reunion of the Veterans of the ever to be venerated Confederacy is now but a little more than a month off.

The undying patriotism of dear old Charleston is oozing at every pore and such extensive preparations are being made for the reception and entertainment of the thousands who will visit the old shrine of chivalry as will cause this to overshadow all other reunions, especially in open-handed hospitality and the coming together of the scattered survivors of the heroic armies that stood the shock of the world's charges in legion for more than four years. As the Rock Hill Herald says, it is to be a great occasion and every old Veteran who followed the Starry Cross ought to be there, and as the battalion's move once again over Charleston's proud thoroughfares, hear as in days of yore the invisible "rebel yell." It will be there and will awaken memories of the immortal achievements of the grandest armies that ever faced an overpowering foe in battle. Gen. Joe Wheeler will deliver the oration and the ever-faithful city will be gorgeous in holiday attire in honor of the coming once again of the men who stood their firm defenders for so many years. The Veteran visit to Charleston may be their last pilgrimage to the Mecca of Southern chivalry and honor, and there will be no disappointments. The News and Courier tells us of the great preparations being made, and from it we learn that more money has been subscribed than in any of the other Reunion cities and the end is not yet. Nearly \$15,000 have been raised and the means of contribution have by no means been exhausted. In addition to the funds secured for the entertainment of the Veterans the city has expended over \$50,000 in the erection of the handsome Auditorium in the Southern States. There is another very significant indication of the general interest in the Reunion, and that is of all the money raised not \$500 have come from people or places outside of city of Charleston, and not a cent of the fund for the entertainment of the Veterans is the result of municipal appropriation, but represents the patriotic offerings of the people of the city to the men who wore the Grey. The committee on quarters and housing has provided sleeping places for 30,000 visitors and every day new names are added to the list of those who will assist in taking care of the guests. A very important feature of the arrangements for the reception of the people is the erection of a delicate aniline powder in the mouth and end of some cigars to be placed at the mercy of the thief. The next morning there was a summoning of the clerks at a general inspection of their mouth. One unhappy youth was discovered with aniline tongue and lips.

Equally singular is the prejudice against modern things shared by another old gentleman who is the squire of a small village in Derbyshire. He also shuns from his tables any French or continental dishes, allowing the cook to prepare only plain food, in which a saddle of beef always plays a conspicuous part. As might be expected, he is a firm believer in the greatness of his country, and has never yet evinced a desire to travel further than Scotland, where he possesses another residence.

A celebrated author professes a terrible prejudice against cats. He can neither eat nor work while one is in the room, and says that, without seeing the animal, he can tell whether one is about. A well-known politician is similarly prejudiced against the feline race.