

The Sun

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1915.

Published at the Post Office at New York as Second Class Matter.

Subscriptions by Mail, Postpaid. DAILY, Per Month, \$1.00; Per Year, \$10.00.

THE EVENING SUN, Per Month, 75c; Per Year, \$7.00.

Published daily, including Sunday, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association, Inc.

London office, 11 Abchurch Lane, E.C. 4.

Paris office, 10 Rue de Valenciennes, 101.

San Francisco office, 100 California Street.

Chicago office, 100 North Dearborn Street.

Philadelphia office, 100 North Second Street.

Boston office, 100 North State Street.

New York office, 100 Nassau Street.

Washington office, 100 Pennsylvania Avenue.

San Antonio office, 100 West Commerce Street.

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Seattle office, 100 Third Avenue.

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cannot afford to be suspected of indifference to the appeal of humanity.

As to the charge that the British Government has for some time refused permits for the despatch of all hospital supplies to the enemy, there appears to be a misapprehension somewhere.

Examples for Certain Reformers of Humanity. It is a fortunate coincidence that at the moment when this country is discussing the moral aspects of the sacrifice of an infant's life because in the judgment of its parents and their physician it was doomed to mental and physical malformation a traveler only recently returned from a land where infanticide is more common than it now is here should refer to us the practices of the race among whose members he has observed it.

The infant is taken with her [the mother] to the river and is washed and ducked. If it survives this drastic treatment its body is covered with what the Witoso call "hettagee," that is, rubber latex, over which a brown or red clay is smeared.

It is not from mere callousness that the infant is subjected to this harsh test. His parents have faith in a definite philosophy, which the traveler thus describes:

"If to be sickly and deformed is an undesirable state the Indian sees no reason why any unfortunate being should be condemned to live in such a condition, and, moreover, the sufferer must handicap others as well as himself in the strenuous race for life. Therefore deformed children are never seen. A child that is discovered to be in any degree abnormal or sickly at birth is allowed to die on immersion by the very simple method of holding it under water until life is extinct."

True logicians, the practitioners of this method of preserving tribal strength, should they discover the child to be deformed after immersion, have another way of treatment for it:

"If, however, the deformity is not discovered until after the child has been brought to the tribal house the medicine man is called in to deal with the case. If the mischief be beyond his power to remedy he declares that it was caused by some evil spirit, and may work ill to the tribe, so as a precautionary measure the wretched little creature is taken out and left exposed in the forest, or some tribes go so far as to bury it alive. This is done with no intention to cause unnecessary suffering, but simply that as it had to die it might as well die by suffocation as by any other means."

As infants unlikely to grow into robust and self-sustaining men and women are thus disposed of for the good of the tribe, so the preservation of feeble and useless adults is not attempted. Why should it be? They are incapable of aiding in the defence of the tribe, they are non-producers, and they constitute a constant source of danger. So:

"A man who cannot hunt or fight is regarded as useless; he is merely a burden to the community. Should he show no signs of eventual recovery his friends unhesitatingly leave him to die, or, if a medicine man has not been commissioned to put him out of the way, he is driven into the bush, where the same end is speedily attained."

and prepare a scientific plan of army organization. As the result of its labors an Army Council was created and a General Staff and an Administrative Staff with separate functions and well defined responsibilities were constituted by the Army Order of September 12, 1906. But that was only a beginning. Officers had to be found for the new staff duty and the supply was very limited. It would be interesting to know what officer—"one of the ablest Generals in the army," Lord HALDANE calls him—prepared the memorandum on which the Army Order was based. Internal evidence indicates Sir JOHN FRENCH, who has been the target of attack by a Major of yeomanry cavalry.

The greater problem at first was the Administrative Staff, for which there seemed to be no good material. It was solved in part by the London School of Economics, to which officers were sent by the Quartermaster-General to make a scientific study of supply and transportation questions. There they learned how everything that an army needed in the way of food, clothing, equipment and traction was made. They were drilled in geography, commercial law and the money markets. The mobilizing and transportation of the British army in August, 1914, was no less creditable to the new Administrative Staff than to the General Staff. When Sir JOHN FRENCH was ordered to France in August, 1914, the Government was able to say to him: "You will find a machine waiting for you. You may do what you like with it."

But Lord HALDANE is obliged to admit that while the machine is well constructed there are not enough competent men to operate it smoothly. For forty years Germany has been training staff officers for her machine, and it seldom or never drops a cog. The British General Staff and the minor staffs of division commanders have sometimes worked at cross purposes in France, and on more than one occasion this confusion has made the difference between success and failure. The Administrative Staff has done very much better. It is almost as thorough as the German. Happily when Baron ST. DENIS made his sensational attack upon British operations in France, Lord HALDANE, who had been at headquarters, was present to correct the yeomanry major's misstatements.

New York's Appeal to Washington. The Public Service Commission for this district is a State agency, and its appeal to the United States Government for aid in ending the alleged discriminatory practices of the Standard Oil Company typifies the numerous efforts made by States to have the Federal Government do their work. The reason for the confession of futility involved in it is difficult to find; it is a fact that the commission in conducting its inquiries has exhausted the broad powers conferred on it by the Legislature.

It may be that the State officers are not competent to undertake a nationwide investigation of the petroleum trade, although Mr. HADLEY of Missouri, while serving his State as Attorney-General, supplied a precedent that has not been forgotten. But the commission has ample authority to reveal the relations between the oil company and its customers here by an inquest into the conditions and terms on which the New York corporations affected transact their business. These having been laid bare, the correction of any inequitable practices that might be disclosed—if any exist—should be attempted under the State laws. Should those be found inadequate, which is improbable, there would be justification in soliciting the intervention of the Federal Government.

To seek the aid of Washington before every resource of the State is exhausted is to belittle the authority of New York and condemn its sovereignty. It is to yield to the too common impulse to load on the United States the tasks that should be performed by the State, and thus to decrease its usefulness. Because this has frequently been done the phrases Federal aggression and State rights have lost much of their significance. Disinclination and neglect by the States to perform their duties account in large measure for the intrusion of Federal officialdom into purely local matters. There is no excuse for New York to give impetus to this seriously disquieting political development.

Mad Dr. Cobb. It has cost the State \$16,700 to compile a list of 200 men who, in the opinion of the commission having the matter in charge, should not be allowed to beget children, a sum respectable in itself and of particular interest to the taxpayer. It is not greater than THE SUN had believed it would be; indeed, we thank the commissioners for their moderation. They might have been more expensive. Incidentally the inquiry into their expenditures has drawn from Dr. O. H. Cobb, superintendent of the State Institution for Feeble Minded Children at Syracuse, this illuminating revelation of the manner in which the employees under him are compelled to waste their time:

"Delays and confusion resulting from the system of commissions and boards which deal with the affairs of the State charitable institutions are charged by Mr. STONON.

"He says that Dr. Cobb told him that a large part of the work of the clerical force of the Syracuse Institution was taken up for two months each year in making reports to various boards and committees at Albany, each commission-

ion requiring its information in a form slightly different from the others.

Dr. Cobb recommended that one central authority in Albany be created through which all the business of the various State institutions could be done.

These essentially duplicated reports, which in many of their details are originally unnecessary, go to Albany to give employment to scores of other clerks; they furnish material for printing presses working on State contracts; they are tabulated, reduced to percentages, checked off, totalled, subdivided, and generally bedevilled in an imposing manner; and all this is done at the expense of the taxpayer, from whom the operations supported by his pocketbook are carefully concealed. All he is allowed to know is that an enormous amount of money is spent annually for reports that mean nothing and whose ultimate destiny is to pile up the State's bills for storage.

Dr. Cobb wants centralization, economy of money and the time of clerks, a generally sensible system. Does he not realize that the principal object of Government is to provide useless jobs, utter documents nobody will ever read, and generally to keep the mere citizen from retaining too large a proportion of the cash he is lucky enough to get his hands on as he skirts the gantlet of determined and skillful tax eaters?

Norway has put an embargo on the export of sardines preserved in lard, but so long as the Maine Fisheries export their supply of the Mediterranean delicacy will be unimpaired.

The idea that Mr. BRYAN will take the place of Mr. HENRY FORD on the quarter deck of the Ark of Peace is amusing. If Mr. BRYAN could see nothing in the enterprise for him before the Ark put out on the face of the water, he must now be congratulating himself upon his wisdom. All of Mr. BRYAN'S ideals pay.

One of the war correspondents STANLEY A. MOSELEY'S "Pictures From Gallipoli" in the *Fortnightly Review* is a hospital ship on the route from the peninsula to Alexandria. A severely wounded officer, with head and chest swathed in bandages, is "screened from the rest." Always he is reading and never has a word to say. MOSELEY wonders why this man is isolated, although he is comfortable as possible. One day he reads the *Vivande* days: "You could just see his face, and the man was dying." In the afternoon of the fourth day "a short but impressive service was held, and then a body encased in sackcloth—looking like an Egyptian mummy—was shot overboard, landing the water with a splash upon the blue waters of the Mediterranean." The reader was dead—he had read on without heaving his pulse back to flutter, and then he died.

The Arab burying his face in his burrows as he lies in the walls of a stately man's end. Here was an Englishman who had served his country well and missed a soldier's glory, philosophically accepting fate's decree far from his kindred. Over the managed and futile Gallipoli campaign death seemed to be ever brooding. The soldiers of the Allies fought on with out hope, and as many thousands as would make an army corps gave up their lives and were buried in the sands or sunk in the sea. It was war at its worst, too terrible to ponder on.

The elevator man who struck on Friday and inconvenienced the tenants in the building they serve because the management could not agree with them on the basis for dividing the Christmas gifts showed a disposition very wisely refrained from their usual Christmas party. The grateful exhibitor of the day remembrances is genuine and unaffected; the avaricious and habitually impolite elevator operator is a creation of the imagination. But if rows over Christmas presents because the coveted elevators would reform their open handed habits!

The gentleman who subscribed \$2,000 to a charitable enterprise and finds himself celebrated as the giver of \$200,000, will not believe the world is ungenerous with other people's money.

spades and shovels. The question whether or not a shovel is a spade has recently engaged the attention of the Federal Board of General Appraisers. It is important because the law places a tax on shovels and not on spades, exempting the latter on the ground that they are agricultural implements. The matter was argued before the board by learned counsel on each side, and the president of the board took the reports of the arguments fairly on shovels and not on spades.

Detailed reports of the proceedings, which were held in Omaha, have not been widely published, but it is reasonable to presume that on the part of the Government the lawyers went back to the expression about calling a spade a spade and held that it fortified a valid reason for calling a shovel a shovel. It will be remembered that when Aristophanes used the expression it was in a horticultural relation. He spoke of calling flags flags and a spade a spade. Here, as designation in the Greek mode, the designation of the object in use instead of that of the instrument. The common Greek word for spade is "spathe," but Aristophanes chose to use "skaphe," a hollow in the soil made, as in this instance, with a horticultural implement.

The translations of "skaphe" into "trench," which in these days is decidedly a war term, but "trench" is also an agricultural word, and it was such long before trench warfare became known. In latter days the spade always has been the implement used for digging and not for digging trenches and drains.

The shovel also is used by agriculturists, but more for scraping together and handling material—its name, allied to the Latin "scabere," indicates that in the growing of crops, in comparison with the hoe, it is a means of shovelling done by the Romans in railway, subway building and other non-agricultural operations farm uses of the shovel are negligible.

It seems that between these two utensils, so nearly alike that a comparatively few persons can distinguish one from the other, there is much to be said in support of the Government's view that the spade has the better right to be considered as an agricultural implement.

CHRISTMAS TREE WASTE. A Plea for the Preservation of the Forests of America. To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: The good-wishing sermon which you published over for wasting the natural resources of the country in a reckless manner for the sake of one day's enjoyment.

To be sure, we are publicly held everywhere as the most wasteful nation on earth. There is here in point of recklessness exceeds any other nation. It has been stated by good authority that over a million young trees of pine, spruce and fir are annually cut to serve Christmas Day as holders of a few dollars.

FAITH, THE SWORD OF GOD. An Advocate of Disarmament Sets Forth His Theory of Preparedness. To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: I want to know if you would publish an exposure of the doctrine of unpreparedness as it is now being taught by an advocate of what I believe to be the only lastingly effective preparedness, but as his doctrine is the direct antithesis of the preparedness as it is now being taught by a man who is known to me by the name of "I also wish to state 'I want to know' to read and reflect on an article headed 'How Prayer Keeps the Home Going' on page 5 of THE SUN of December 21.

Why Are Apples High? To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: I am so abundant, why are we obliged to pay from three and a half to six cents apiece for good eating apples? Why are they not sold in other countries? As Apple Lovers, NEW YORK, December 24.

STUDY FOR PREPAREDNESS! Why Not Let Congress Do the Needful Work Now? To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: All Americans believe in being prepared. But as to what preparation is for, or when or where it will be needed, nobody is agreed. I believe that preparation as much as the next man. But I want to base it on a definite conception of its end in the way of time and times required for its accomplishment.

Before Congress changes the present policy, military and foreign, of the country, it should investigate the general military situation developed by the war, and report to the country. This report should be the issue in next year's political campaign. That such knowledge should precede discussion and that discussion precede action is a political maxim as old as the Funeral Oration of Pericles. There is no doubt that the war has created a change of policy that will need the general and awakened support of the whole country should not be inaugurated by a hasty and unconsidered expenditure of a large sum of money.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN. Has the Colonel Spotted His Chances for a Third Term? To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: Theodore Roosevelt ever indulges in retrospection. He must occasionally have a bitter taste in his mouth. I believe that 1916 would have looked had he not been mastered and made mad by a selfish ambition which he had not the moral and mental strength to resist.

WHERE IS THE PROFIT? Retrospective Consideration of Government Pursuit of a Monopoly. To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: Will you kindly figure out at your leisure how the American people have gained by the Standard Oil Company's fight directed against the Standard Oil Company?

NEGRO EDUCATION. As an Investment Its Success Is Attested by Continued Support. To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: If the negro race in this country is to be educated, it is necessary that the negro race should be educated in the sciences and arts, though he is not a Newton, Bacon, Morse, Edison or any other great man.

Church Historians to Meet. The Annual Meeting of the Theological Society to meet at the University of the South. The Annual Meeting of the Theological Society to meet at the University of the South.

Help for College Heads. Institute for Public Service Will Issue List of Suggestions. The Institute for Public Service will issue a list of suggestions for the improvement of college heads.

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A Sad Vision of Modern Manuscript Readers Tackling the Classics. To the Editor of THE SUN:—Sir: In a dream "that was not all a dream" I saw the authors of the past submitting their undigested works to the modern experts of this day, who never had seen them: for such was the vagary of my vision. And after this I saw the modern experts, in their eagerness, cast, as it were, upon a picture screen, and these I send to you. The first, to Miss Charlotte Brontë, was from a famous New York publishing house:

Dear Madam:—We have to report that after a careful examination of your "Jane Eyre" our readers do not seem to think that the work is one which we ought to undertake. Of course you will understand that we do not say this without due regard to the merits of the work, but there is a certain inappropriateness in the characters, many of whom are really sinful and commonplace, that we really might be offensive to our very cultured and refined readers. Our house does not publish to strictly high grade literature, and for this reason often must decline to accept works that might find a ready sale in the hands of the vulgar. With regret that we do not see our way to assist you, we are, Yours sincerely, WALTER DILLON.

GERMAN EXHIBIT AT SCHOOL. Washington Irving Students Will Display Work. The second annual exhibition of the Washington Irving High School will be held in the school building, Irving Place, from December 27 to 31.

Infant Mortality Increases. Growing Figures in the City Point Record for State. An increase in the infant mortality rate in New York during the first nine months of the year caused the number of deaths to reach 1,100, according to the report from the State Department of Health.

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SCIENTISTS GATHER FROM ALL AMERICAS. Secretary Lansing Will Make an Address at Opening of the Congress. Reception by President Wilson.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25.—Delegates to the Pan-American Scientific Congress began to arrive here today. The gathering of scientists, statesmen and legal authorities of the American Republics will hold its first session on Monday.

A great force of clerks and translators, who have been busy for the past two months at the Pan-American Union, are now installed in offices established at the New Willard, where their attention from now on to the affairs of the Congress and the forty-two sections they meet.

The first meeting of the congress, which will be addressed by Secretary of State Lansing and formally called to order by Ambassador Edwards, started at 10 o'clock today. The opening session will be held at Continental Hall Monday morning. The delegates will meet in forty-two sections, each section will be divided into sub-sections so that there will be a total of 1,000 sub-sections.

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