it out. From its appearance it looked to me as if some one had used some kind of bar to prize it loose. The work had the appearance of being well done.

I remain, Yours, very truly,
Columbia Plumbing and Cornice Works,
H. B. Chapman, Manager.

Telegram:
Columbia, S. C., Feb. 18,1904.
A. C. Dover, Ocala, Fla.
Did the State house roof show flashings were torn out when you examined it?
(Signed) Frank P. Milburn.

Telegram:
Ocala, Fla., Feb. 18,1904.
Frank P. Milburn, Architect.
Yes, some half dozen places absolutely pulled away from wall.
(Signed) A. C. Dover.

Columbia, S. C., Feb. 15, 1904.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn.
Dear Sir: I am a native of Georgia, but now a resident of Charlotte, N. C. I am a practical cornice and metal and sheet worker, with 22 years actual experience.

I did a great deal of work on the State capitol at Columbia; had charge of the sheet metal work of the inner dome and the outer dome, and also the guttering, and the same was put in according to the plans and details for the same, by experienced workmen, in a good, workmanlike manner. I have read the published testimony of Mr. Hunt relating to my work, and the same is in the main not true.

I have this day been on the roof and examined the dome and gutters. The floor of the lantern of the dome has been badly abused since the work was completed and accepted. There have been holes made in the copper, which cause leaks in the inner dome. There is now a piece of timber there with nails in it, which might cause some of the holes noted.

As to the guttering, the statement of Mr. Hunt is generally not true. They are made of Merchant's old method IX tin, which is the standard of America, and proper material for that particular work. It rests on a granite foundation and has all the protection necessary. After three years use it is in perfect condition.

I have had large experience with roofs, and have been familiar with this roof, off and on, since it was put on. In this matter, again the testimony of Mr. Hunt is largely untrue. It is asphalt and gravel, and not tar and gravel. None of the stone used in its construction were one and a half or two inches, and the little slipping noted is only some slight excess of material, as is common to such roofs.

The cost of metal ceilings in 1901 and 1902 was very much less than it was in 1889, because of progressive ideas and methods in this kind of business and prices of material. Although I had no interest in the ceiling of the main lobby or elsewhere, my work was near it, and I had conversation with Mr. Unkefer about same, and I know that the new ceiling cost more than it would have cost to repair the old one, but to fix the old one would require the importation of special expert metal workers, and a great deal of time, which would have resulted in inconvenience to the legislature.

Yours truly,
(Signed) G. G. Ray.

To Whom it May Concern:
Gentlemen: I have read with surprice Capt. Hunt's testimony in regard to the roofing applied to the State house, and have the following to submit:

The roofing on this building is what is known as "Warren's Anchor Brand, Natural Asphalt Roofing," and was applied by the "Charlotte Roof and Paving company" of Charlotte, N. C., according to the plans and specifications adopted by the Warren Chemical and Manufacturing company of New York city. This roof is what is known as our "Standard Anchor Brand Asphalt Roofing," and has been applied according to our plans and specifications. It contains no coal tar, or coal tar products, and is composed out of asphalt throughout. In reference to Capt. Hunt's assertion that the roof is of little or no value, I might state that while there are some leaks in the roof, these leaks are occasioned, not through the fault of the roofing, but for other reasons not in the roofing contract. Now, the pitch of this roof, as nearly as I can ascertain, is about four inches to the foot, and the roofing is well adapted to this class of construction; in fact we do not hesitate to advocate, and furthermore to apply this roofing on buildings whose roofs have a pitch of (6) six inches and upwards to the foot. The crushed quartz used for the graveling surface is such as will pass through a mesh from 5-16 inch to 1-2 inch in size, and I am at a loss to understand how Capt. Hunt can say that he was able to find stones as big as pigeon's eggs, or the size of a man's hand. I submit the above testimony in defense of the Anchor Brand Roofing, which has been attacked by Capt. Hunt, and trust it will be accepted as such.

(Signed) Walter B. Harris,
Representing Warren Chemical and Manufacturing company, 17 Battery Place, New York city.

I notified the Charlotte Roof and Paving company repeatedly to send men to repair this roof. They sent men more than once, but finally Mr. Dover, the manager, told me that some one was tampering with the roof and that he thought that water was running through the copper work and around the windows. It is a fact that some of the frames and sash were blown in during a severe windstorm last summer, and more than likely this accounts for some of the leaking complained of. Mr. Ray informed me that holes had been punched in the copper dome. I cannot say as to this, but I do know that people were permitted to go and come at will.

On two or more occasions I sent my men to inspect the roof after it was reported to me that it had leaked. They reported that a scuttle, which is about three or four feet square, was left off; and one time both scuttles were off.

I required that the roofing contractors give a guarantee for 10 years, which fully protected the State's interests.

The committee say that a fine slate roof was torn off which cost the State a great amount of money, and they further say that it afforded perfect protection. But they did not produce a single witness to prove these assertions. Who told them? The absurdity of the statement is proved by the fact that the principal argument used in getting the appropriation for the improvements was that "the roof was full of holes and leaked like a seive." Besides being old and worthless as a roof, there was a very small portion of the slate on the roof, only that part that could be seen from the ground—that is, the steep mansard—the rest was of copper and was sold for junk.

Eighth. Numerous objections to the dome which are so disconnected as to necessitate somewhat of a general reply.

It should be clearly understood that I originally planned for the construction of this dome of cast steel, just like the material used for the dome of the capitol at Washington. Col. Marshall objected to this, and the commission, as I believe, largely influenced by its desire to satisfy him, directed the change to granite. This change necessitated a greatly increased load, and I not only carefully considered the strength of the main building to support it but, at my own expense, had the best expert in this line to make an examination and calculation of the pressure on the masonry, of the proposed increased load. The proposed change was feasible, but instead of supporting the dome on two steel beams, as first designed, I had put in four large box steel girders, and increased the thickness of all that metal. The expert referred to said, "We are satisfied that there is no question as to the strength of this revised design." With this change it became necessary to give greater pitch to the roof than originally intended, and to make numerous modifications and changes in the specifications and detail drawings for the work. For instance, the change in pitch of the roof obviated the necessity for the ventilators shown in the original plans, which would have been unsightly thereon. The modified and revised drawings for this portion of the work are still on file in my office and could have been seen by the investigating committee and their "expert" had they so desired.

It is charged that the window frames of the dome do not fit. This appearance is no doubt caused by the fact that some of them were blown in during a severe storm last summer.

Again, that there are kinks and crimps in the galvanized iron of the inner dome. But these are no doubt due to natural expansion and contraction.

Again that some stones on the outside of the dome are too short, and the contractors filled up the spaces. Now, the fact is, you cannot keep the water out of a close joint of stones; there must be space enough to calk and cement, and it is necessary at that point. It must be understood that the little water oozing past the cement swells the oakum and this makes the joint water proof.

But the great bulk of criticism of the work on the dome is that it is not according to plans and specifications, and that the plans actually used are not what they should be. It is true that much of it is not according to the drawings and specifications seen by the committee and their expert, but are a substantial compliance with the modified drawings and detailed working plans. As to the criticism by Mr. Hunt and the committee of the plans as changed and actually carried out, I insist that neither this contractor nor this committee are competent judges. Surely the members of the committee are no better able to judge of the work, at this time, than were the members of the capitol commission, who saw the work as it progressed and when it was completed and accepted.

Ninth. That the wood truss under the portico roof, called for by the drawings, is absent.

After the commission decided to omit the two columns before referred to, the wood truss was no longer proper, the drawings were changed and steel trussed perlins substituted, spanning the portico the shortest way.

And here again the committee undertakes to criticise the use of built up sections, as called for by the drawings, instead of expensive solid stones. Indeed, they criticise everything except the contract price, which every body knows was very low.

Tenth. That a sheet of galvanized iron 1-32 of an inch thick is all there is between the interior of the building and the "wide, wide world."

These gutters are not galvanized iron, but the best quality of IX tin, which is the best gutter lining that can be used. Copper lasts longer, but the expansion is too great. These gutters, which are of the usual thickness for this class of work, are painted on the under side, caulked with lead in the stone and the gutter bed lays flat on the stone cornice.

Eleventh. That one of the large lintel stones in the rear portico is cracked, this being the last of the specific charges which is numbered.

This stone showed no defect when the work was accepted, but has broken since then. I do not believe it is likely to "give away." Apparently perfect stones will sometimes crack in a building and cannot be guarded against. The committee could have easily found evidence of this fact, had they desired it, in several large stone, on the east side of the building, which are cracked and broken, as is also a very large stone on the south side near the west corner.

Next: That the contractors did not protect the interior of the building during the work.

It is almost impossible to fully protect a building during repairs and changes and let the occupants remain inside—it is not like an unoccupied building. I could not, and did not, undertake to prescribe just how the contractors should protect the old work, and they claimed to the commission that they had done all they could do to that end.

In this connection it must be remembered that many of the stains from leaks in different parts of the building were there before the work under investigation begun.

Next: As to the cement floors and water leaking from above.

Only one day last month I was surprised to see so much water in the passageway under the front portico, as it had not rained for several days, and I called the attention of Mr. William Banks of The State to the conditions. Careful examination showed that the walls of the building were sweating all around, but where the dirt was against the building it absorbed the water, while it was not so absorbed where the cement floors joined the walls. The walls sweat regularly. This would not have been the case had they been built hollow in the outset—they had enough thickness for air space in the centre. This is one of the most serious defects in any part of the State house. I had nothing to do with it.

Next: As to the defective water closets and plumbing.

This work was all done before the city had plumbing rules, or an inspector of sewers and plumbing, or even a sewerage system. These rules vary in different cities, and in the absence of any prescribed rules each architect uses such plans and methods as seem best, considering location and surroundings, general appearance and sanitary rules. In all these matters there is constant improvement, just as we have greatly improved on old closets in the basement, which were installed when Col. Marshall was on the commission in charge of the State house improvements. I trust that the State is able to get even more ventilation, by electric fans, as suggested, or otherwise, as the present location was not built for this purpose, or there would have been more ventilation. I think the following letter will enable the public to form a correct estimate of the inclination of this investigating committee to condemn everything in sight:

Office of A. W. Edens, C. E., Inspector of Sewers and Plumbing, Room No. 8, City Hall.
Columbia, S. C., Feb. 15, 1904.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn—
Dear Sir: At your request I take pleasure in stating that the plumbing under the two porticos of the State house will compare favorably with any plumbing that has come under my observation in this city which was installed prior to the passage of the present city plumbing rules. The closets and other fixtures are of good quality. The principal defect found was the want of proper ventilation.

Yours respectfully,
(Signed) A. W. Edens, C. E.

Next.

It is charged that the contractors, as "naked trespassers," carried away and disposed of old material, which was valuable property of the State; and the committee says they attempt to justify the act by an item of the specifications, which does not support the contention.

This is another evidence that the committee did not consider the reports of the capitol commission, as the legislature directed it to do; for it appears in one of those reports that under the item of the specifications referred to, the contractors, and other bidders, were told before bidding that they would get all the old material, except the marble; that the contractors allowed for the value of this old material in their bid; that the commission fully investigated the matter; that the attorney general gave his official opinion that the general opinion had been that the contractors owned the old material, and the commission could not claim it; that the opinion of the attorney general was approved by the commission, excepting only Mr. Marshall; and the commission referred Mr. Garfunkel's proposition to it to buy the old material from the contractors.

I repeat that I cannot believe that this investigating committee considered the report, or knew of these facts. If they did, I think a discriminating public can see that they are determined to uphold Col. Marshall's minority report, even if a suppression of cold facts is necessary.

Generally:

As an evidence that I gave the State good and honest service in the expenditure of its money on the State house, and in refutation of many charges made, but not sustained, by the investigating committee, I desire to submit the following statements of honorable, widely known contractors, notwithstanding the chairman of that committee, on the floor of the senate, where he was secure from reply, descended to the tactics of trying to besmirch and impugn any of and all witnesses who dared to speak the truth, if not in support of his report:

Nicholas Ittner, Contractor, P. O. Box 606, Atlanta, Ga.
Atlanta, Ga., March 22,1901.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn, Columbia, S. C.
Dear Sir: Your favor of the 20th to hand. I examined the material and workmanship at capitol building, and find it a first class job. I consider it a good, substantial piece of work.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Nicholas Ittner,
Contractor.

Savannah, Ga., Aug. 17, 1903.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn, Columbia, S. C.
Dear Sir: In reply to your inquiry of August 7th in regard to the work recently done on the State house, I will say that I have had considerable experience in large work, and have had quite a number of contracts from the United States government. I was one of the firm of the Stewart Contracting company, who bid for the contract in Columbia. I was in Columbia Aug. 14th, and while there inspected the State house work. As a whole, I think the work very satisfactory. There may be some minor things that I would have done different if I had been awarded the contract. Anyone looking to find fault can always find it. There is one thing certain, the State of South Carolina, in my estimation, has received full value for the money expended, and now has a capitol that any State might well be proud of. This is my honest and unprejudiced opinion. Yours truly,
(Signed)
J. E. Burgess, Manager,
Savannah Contracting Company.

Note. Mr. Burges remodeled interior of postoffice building in Columbia, in 1903.

Augusta, Ga., Sept.2, 1903.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn, Columbia, S. C.
Dear Sir: In reply to your favor of Aug. 25th, wanting an opinion from us on the new State capitol in your city, we beg to say the writer has frequently gone over this building during construction and since it was finished, and consider it as good a job as it is possible to make out of a remodeling job, and being familiar with the price paid for the work, I consider the State secured a regular excursion price on that building.

We have had considerable experience in remodeling work, and know how difficult it is to make everything perfectly satisfactory, as there is something always in the way that cannot be moved. You would have no trouble to prove up values if the matter was investigated, as you know from experience that it is much easier to criticise than it is to execute.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) J. H. McKenzie & Sons,
General Contractors.
By Charles F. McKenzie.

Johnson City, Tenn., Sept. 26, 1903.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn, Columbia, S. C.
Dear Sir: Replying to your inquiry of Aug. 25th, asking my opinion of the work recently done on the South Carolina State house, I will say that I considered the same well executed and fully up to the standard for such work. I have had experience in remodeling old capitols, and have found it hard to please every one, as they do not understand the many troubles that we have to contend with. I am surprised that any objections are raised in regard to the job, as I thought the quality of the work done, considering the quantity, was well worth the price paid for it. I should think it would be worth fully $200,000 to duplicate the same work now under the present conditions of markets, etc.

Yours truly,
Signed) J. E. Parrish,
Contractor and Builder, Lynchburg, Va.

Columbia, S. C. Feb. 3, 1904.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn, Columbia, S. C.
Dear Sir: Replying to your favor of recent date, in which you request us to inspect the work done on the State capitol building at Columbia, S. C., we beg to advise as follows:

After a careful inspection of the work, we are prepared to say that in our opinion, that the work seems to have been performed in a substantial and workmanlike manner. In our opinion, the appropriation was entirely too small for the amount of work undertaken. Very truly yours,
(Signed) W. T. Hadlow Co.,
By G. H. Hadlow,
General Contractors, Jacksonville, Fla.

Columbia, S. C., Feb. 15, 1904.
Mr. Frank P. Milburn.
Dear Sir: I have this day been through the capitol building at Columbia, S. C., and after looking over the work I am satisfied that the work done by the contractor is a faithful performance of the spirit and intent of the plans and specifications, as the work done is worth a great deal more than his contract price.

I also read Mr. Hunt's report as to steel ceiling and floor light and am satisfied that he is entirely too high in his valuation of the ceiling, and that the floor light appears to have been used or walked upon before the cement set, in which case the damages would not appear for some time.

And I would say farther, that in repairing or adding to buildings there are a great many things which no ability on the part of the architect can foresee, and which have to be taken up as they develop, so, after carefully looking over the matter, I am satisfied that the criticisms upon yourself and contractors are uncalled for and unjust.

I find that the granite used is not as hard as the original granite; the texture being coarser, it would not take the same finish. I find that the specifications provide that each class and style of work shall be so many cuts and the old work would not be taken by the contractor as his guide in performing his work, while the general style and outlines would be the same.

I do not consider that the removal of the [illegible] mentioned in Mr. Hunt's report would weaken the structure. I think the manner in which you provided for the change was proper. I find the thickness of the ceiling and gutters are such as are used on all good buildings.

It is my experience as a contractor for 20 years that a number of roofs leak for some time after the building is completed, and to cover this a guarantee is given for one year.

The copper and tile roof on the government building in Augusta leaked from time to time and gave the officers considerable trouble.

Respectfully,
(Signed) T. C. Brown & Son.
Per T. C. Brown.
General Contractors, Augusta, Ga.

THE GOVERNMENT EXPERT.

No doubt the public is curious to know something more of Mr. Hunt, upon whom the committee seems content to rest for the support of its numerous criticisms of designs, plans and work, with the single exception of the plumbing.

I had understood, until last week, that the name of this witness was H. H. Hunt, and that he was a government architect, as Committeeman Patterson announced in the house, and I made diligent inquiry in Washington as to identity and standing.

In the limited time at my disposal since Thursday, I have inquired as to the work, position, etc., of Mr. S. S. Hunt, resulting in the following information:

Before going to Washington, Mr. Hunt enjoyed the reputation of being a good mechanic.

The Washington city directory for 1903 contains his name as a contractor.

The congressional directory does not show any such office as "superintendent of constructing of the United States capitol." The last congressional directory shows as connected with the office superintendent of the capitol:

Superintendent, Elliott Woods, Congressional hotel.

Chief clerk, George H. Williams, 210 E. street.

Chief electrical engineer, Christian P. Gilem, 642 East Capitol street.

Clerk, John Welch, 310 North Carolina avenue, S. E.

W. B. Kilpatrick wires:
"Architect says neither S. S. Hunt nor H. H. Hunt, superintendent of construction capitol. Never heard of such Hunt."

J. K. Taylor, the supervising architect of the United States government, wires:
"Office has no knowledge of S. S. Hunt in connection with any of its work."

Paul J. Pelz of Washington, one of the three architects (and the only survivor) who designed the famous congressional library, says that his name is not in the government Blue Book; that he neither knows S. S. Hunt as a builder, contractor or architect, and that if he had been of prominence in either capacity, he would have known him.

Will South Carolinians endorse the libelous report of this investigating committee, confessedly based on the opinion of this witness, in the face of the opinions of Nicholas Ittner of Atlanta, J. E. Burgess of Savannah, Charles F. McKenzie of Augusta, J. E. Parrish of Lynchburg, G. H. Hadlow of Jacksonville, and T. C. Brown of Augusta?

The following extracts from the records of the Capitol commission will no doubt prove interesting to the public:

"Upon motion of Mr. Derham:
"Resolved, That when the work on the State house is finished, prior to accepting the same, the architect shall notify the governor, who shall call the commission together, who with the architect shall inspect the work, and if the same is satisfactory the certificate shall issue."

Columbia, S. C., May 22, 1902.
Hon. M. B. McSweeney, Chairman State House Commission:
Dear Sir—I wish to report that McIlvain, Unkefer Co., contractors, have completed the work as outlined by me on the State house. That is, the spirit, intent and meaning of the plans, specifications and modifications of the same, and are entitled to the final payment.

Frank P. Milburn.

P. S. This report to be filed when the commission are satisfied with the work as done.

"Resolved, That it appears to the commission for the completion of the State house that the work is satisfactory and that the contract has been substantially performed.

Whereupon Mr. Marshall made the following motion as a substitute:

Resolved, That in the opinion of this commission the work done under the contract to complete the State house has not been performed by the contractors according to the plans, specifications and contract, and therefore the work done is not satisfactory to the commission."

A roll call having been demanded upon the question of the adoption of Mr. Marshall's substitute, the substitute was rejected by a vote of 7 to 1, as follows:

Voting yes—Marshall—1.

Those voting no—McSweeney, Jennings, Mower, Johnson, Wilson, Bellinger, Derham—7.

CONCLUSION.

I have tried to briefly and calmly show the public the plain facts connected with the State house work, without resorting to rant and cheap claptrap about bamboozling, etc.

I have no desire to conceal anything from the public and I court the fullest investigation, feeling sure of a complete vindication from the cruel attack which has been made upon my character for the first time.

Very respectfully,
Frank P. Milburn.

A PREACHER WITH A RECORD.

The Rev. John Ruppe of Gaffney Has Tied 438 Matrimonial Knots.

Special to The State.

Gaffney, Feb. 15.—Rev. John Ruppe, who has possibly married more couples than any other man in this county married two more North Carolina couples last Sunday. These were Mr. A. Moore and Miss L. E. Settlemyer, of Henrietta, and Mr. C. A. Hawkins and Miss Hattie McSwain, of Boiling Springs. This makes a total of 438 knots tied by this aged divine. Many are the people who can date their greatest happiness to the time when they stood trembling before him.

Miss Blanche Wilson has gone on a trip north.

Mr. H. K. Osborne has announced himself a candidate for the office of alderman from Ward Six.

Mr. T. Davenport has sold his grocery business to Mrs. T. Davenport, who will conduct the business at the same place. Mr. Davenport will become a knight of the grip. His line will be groceries.

Help is Appreciated.

People's Recorder (colored).

It is indeed gratifying to note the interest the Columbia Daily State, the white citizens of Columbia and elsewhere, and Dr. Ray of lower Richland county are taking in raising and distributing contributions of money, food and clothing for and to the colored sufferers of lower Richland. All remember how their crops were all swept away by hail, wind and rain last year, and how hundreds of the poorer class have undergone almost starvation. Now these white friends, from their bountious storehouses, are most liberally contributing to the needs of the sufferers.

Being a Columbian, we do all the more appreciate this manifest Christian beneficence. May the blessed Lord restore to these benefactors ten fold. We thank them, is about the only payback that we can give.

A Fatal Explosion.

Buffalo, N. Y., Feb. 21.—Two men were asphyxiated, one burned to death and several were seriously injured in an explosion of blast furnace gas at the plant of the Lackawanna Steel company today. The dead are: Geo. Reynolds, a mason; Michael S. Smith, a mason. Frank Prenatt, employed in the power house.

GIRLS WHO LEAVE HOME.

Written for The State by W. D. Woods.

The readers of The State, or rather that portion of them who have paid the writer the compliment of reading his articles, which have appeared from time to time in its columns need hardly be reminded of his position on the subject of education. There is, however, one thing in connection with the question to which he begs to enter a protest, although it is done with a considerable degree of reluctance.

It is possible, of course, that this evil, and the word is used advisedly, may not owe its origin to our system of education, but to a change of public sentiment, which has found development outside of higher education. Then, too, the fact must be recognized that in all human affairs, it matters not how good the general tendency is, there must be some evil; but while giving full acknowledgment to this truth, every effort should be made to keep the evil incident thereto to the lowest possible point.

The evil to which allusion is made is the craze that has found lodgment in the mind of almost every girl that just as soon as she leaves the college or high school she must find some kind of employment, despite the fact that in the large majority of cases it involves leaving her home and being thrown with strangers. Any system of education or of public sentiment that instills a feeling of this kind into the mind of a girl, that she must be independent and make her own way in the world, is radically and inexcusably wrong.

There are, of course, many cases where this seeking for employment is painfully necessary, and where this is the case a girl should be encouraged and rendered every assistance; but where this condition does not exist, she is both unjust to herself and her parents when she voluntarily leaves them just at the time when they will derive so much pleasure from her presence in the house. She has been sorely missed during the four years she has spent at college, but this separation was cheerfully borne by her parents, for they could look forward to the time when she would finish her education and once more be with them to brighten their home. Independence and the desire to make one's own way in the world, is both natural and commendable, but there is such a thing as carrying even a good impulse too far, and there is something radically wrong in any system of home or school training that implants the idea in the mind of a girl that she should not be dependent on her father, even when he is abundantly able to provide for her wants.

Even if it be granted that she can have more social enjoyment in the town or city than in the country home of her parents, this furnishes no sufficient excuse for her to leave her parents when her presence and help affords them such unalloyed happiness. It often happens that the mother, getting on in years, is worn out with toil and care. She has given all her strength and time to the raising and training of her children, and to her it is an inexpressible pleasure when her daughter insists on assuming some of her duties and responsibilities, and enables her to enjoy a well-earned rest.

A number of years ago it was the writer's good fortune to be a frequent visitor at a home where the condition above mentioned existed. The mother's health was not good and the oldest daughter had simply relieved her of all household cares, not even allowing the younger children to trouble her with any of their troubles. This daughter was accomplished, well educated, a very fine musician and could easily have secured a position to teach. This she would have liked to do, but she felt that her first duty was at home, and the discharge of this sacred duty will ever be the sweetest and tenderest recollection of her life, for when she was called on to see that mother pass away she was sustained and soothed by the consciousness that she had done all that lay in her power to make her mother's last years pass in peace and happiness.

One of the greatest and noblest men—Robert E. Lee—who has ever lived on this earth, made duty the watchword of his whole life, and no sacrifice or danger ever restrained him from doing what he conceived to be right. The path of duty often calls us to walk in ways that humanly speaking are the very reverse of the ones we would choose, but then there should ever be present the thought that after all the strongest happiness comes from the consciousness of having done our utmost to promote the happiness of those who are dear to us. Fortunate, indeed, is the daughter who, when she looks for the last time on the face of her mother, with her tired hands folded across her bosom, can feel that she never brought tears to the now closed eyes or pangs of sorrow to the unselfish heart, which has forever ceased to beat.

If she can feel thus then she has a peace and joy that will be her greatest solace as long as life endures, for whatever, for weal or woe, the future has in store for her, this is something that no earthly power can take away.

A girl when she first leaves college and enters, as it were, upon the threshold of her life, stands in great need of her mother's counsel and protection, and it is a misfortune when stress of circumstances deprives her of this safeguard. If there be one thing on earth that comes as a gift from Heaven it is the love of a mother for her child. No pen can portray it; no plummet can sound its depths, for it is as deep and wide as a fathomless sea, to which no measurement can be given.

The writer trusts that he may be pardoned for giving one more illustration of the sacrifice of inclination to duty, the facts of which are just as related.

A good many years ago there existed an engagement between two young people, but there was, in the estimation of the young lady at least, an insuperable barrier in the way of its immediate consummation, that obstacle being an invalid mother, for whose care the daughter considered herself responsible. After the lapse of a good many years the mother passed away and a short time after her death the daughter married the gentleman to whom she had been so long attached. They were both getting along in years then, but can anyone doubt that that loving daughter found great happiness in the few years of her married life? It is very easy to believe that in this short time there came to her enough of earthly happiness to compensate for her long years of sacrifice to a sacred duty.

It has always been a source of wonder to the writer that some truly great writer has never made a special point of trying at least to portray mother's love for a child, following out that love from its birth, and when it first draws sustenance from her bosom, through the years of its mental and physical development. So far as the writer's knowledge extends this is for the novelist an unexplored mine, waiting for the touch of a master hand to bring its jewels into the light of today.

Baltimore, Feb. 21.—It was thought that not a life was lost in the fire here, but a charred body supposed to be that of a colored man has been found in the water at Bowley's wharf. The body is so badly burned as to be unrecognizable.

SUEZ A DREARY DITCH.

Canal Cleft Through Region Bare of All Save Biblical Richness.

W. E. Curtis in Chicago Record-Herald.

Afloat on the Red sea, Jan. 18.—Every vessel passing through the Suez canal is compelled to take a pilot, because skippers of ordinary vessels cannot be trusted to navigate the narrow channel, for the slightest deviation may cause damage that will cost thousands of dollars to repair. Each year, however, navigation is rendered easier by the widening of the channel and by the excavation of additional sidings or basins where vessels can pass. From the moment the pilot goes on the bridge he takes charge of the movements of the ship and is responsible for whatever may happen, regulating the speed according to tonnage and draught.

Vessels cannot pass in motion. When they meet the one which arrives first at the signal station is compelled to stop and tie up in the basin until the other goes by. These basins are found at intervals of a few miles, and at every basin is a "gare" or station in charge of a signal officer, who corresponds to a train dispatcher on one of our railroads, and the block system is used to regulate the movement of vessels. Formerly no traffic was allowed at night, but now it is carried on without interruption by the aid of electric lights on the shore and searchlights on the vessels.

The canal looks exactly what it is—a big ditch on a desert of sand on which foxes, jackals, hyenas and occasionally lions are seen by the watchmen in the signal towers. At some places the banks of earth on either side are so high that passengers on the steamer cannot see over them, but for most of the journey you have a wide sweep on both sides back to the mountains that rise from the desert, and at a certain point for a mile or two Mount Sinai is visible 37 miles to the southeast, and is pointed out to you by the captain or the deck steward. Naked Arab boys run along the banks crying for baksheesh and easily keep abreast of the creeping vessel, grabbing at pennies which passengers throw them from the deck. Half the coins roll down in the water, which is exasperating to the youngsters. They do not like to stop and dive for them while there is a chance of getting more, but I imagine they mark the spots and come back to recover lost baksheesh when they have left the vessel.

There are only two towns of any account on the canal. One is Ismalia, a half way point, with a population of 4,000. It is the only monument in honor of the Khedive Ismail, who did the most and spent the most to carry out the enterprise, and lost his throne thereby. It is rather a pretty town, abundantly irrigated, and hence has lovely gardens and groves of palms and other trees. Here reside most of the engineers and other officers of the canal, because it is preferable to Port Said. There is a hospital for sick employees, a club for the benefit of the officers, and several good houses, including one erected especially for the entertainment of M. de Lesseps, when he should be pleased to use it. Beyond Ismalia, as before, are occasional oases in the desert—groves of palms and luxuriant gardens surrounding the stations of the canal officials, for wherever you can turn water on that lonely desert everything will grow with a wild luxuriance. It seems as if the earth suddenly released germinating power that had been accumulating during centuries of suppresion.

The chief interest is found in the town of Suez, because it is the crossing place of the great caravans of camels that furnish transportation betwen the two continents of Asia and Africa, and travel regularly between Cairo, Damascus and Bagdad; also because biblical historians believe that here the waters of the Red sea opened 3,500 years ago and allowed 3,000,000 of the children of Israel to cross over upon dry bottom. It requires a considerable concession to the imagination and a strength of faith that a majority of mankind do not possess to accept this theory, but no one knows to the contrary, and experience has taught me never to doubt the faith of interesting stories. If you do, you deprive yourself and others of much pleasure. It is like analyzing the attraction of a pretty woman, or separating her features into lots, classifying them and measuring them by the Venus de Milo.

On the other side of the Red sea, which, by the way, is not red, but blue—as blue as the sky in June—you can see the purple peaks of the Sinaitic range, and a few miles from the shore, which you can reach in three hours by donkey, one of these remarkable oases that are frequently found in the desert. This particular one is called the Wells of Moses. There is a comfortless hotel kept by an Arab, where beds and refreshment can be obtained, but it is better to start early in the morning, so as to get back the same day, and take a luncheon in a basket from Suez. The trip can be easily made while the vessel is coaling.

The children of Israel, according to the Bible, wandered three days in the wilderness of Shur and found no water, and when they came to Marah they could not drink the waters, for they were bitter, and the people murmured against Moses, saying: "What shall we drink?" and he cried unto the Lord and the Lord showed him a tree which he cast into the waters and the waters were made sweet. And they came to Elim, where there were 12 wells of water, and three score and ten palm trees, and they encamped there by the waters. And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. That beautiful scene, one of the most dramatic in the whole Bible, is believed to have taken place here, for these wells are the wells of Elim and three and ten palm trees still shelter a collection of a dozen or more springs. The village is peopled by naked Arabs, sinewy, springy, enduring fellows, whose flesh shines like polished mahogany, and who must resemble the young men of Israel when they started on the journey that was not finished for 40 years.

It is difficult to understand why and how they happened to be wandering about so long down here. If you will look at the map you will see that Suez is almost on a line with Cairo, and it was the most natural rendezvous of the tribes, who were scattered all along the Nile from Memphis, which is just above Cairo, to Thebes, which is just below Luxor. The account in the Bible is condensed, and we are compelled to take a good deal of these traditions on faith, but, as I have already suggested, it is worth while to do so.

The Red sea is 1,200 miles long, and its greatest width is 200 miles. It is about the shape of a sausage, and tapers at both ends. On one side is Arabia, the most mysterious and primitive of all countries, and on the other side are Egypt, Nubia and the Soudan. At the north end what is known as the Sinaitic peninsula projects southward and divides the sea into two arms, and near the point of the peninsula is Tor, the landing place for Sinai. Opposite Tor is Jebel Ez-Zeit, which means "the mountain of oil," where petroleum was discovered some years ago and created great excitement. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been expended in sinking wells and building docks, warehouses and refineries, but have all been abandoned, because, for some reason, the manufacturers could not compete with the Standard Oil company or the Russian factories on the Black and Caspian seas.

People think that there is a good deal more wealth in Arabia than we know of. It was once of greater importance than now, and in ancient days produced considerable gold and other metals, but now it ships little but dates, wool and coffee, and even these are gradually falling off. Mocha coffee is produced at the extreme end of the Arabian peninsula, in a province called Yemen, and derives its name from the little port it is shipped from. But the people have no enterprise, the coffee orchards have been injured by insects and blight, and the trees have not been renewed. This is acounted for by bad government. As everywhere else in the dominions of the sultan of Turkey, for Arabia is nominally a part of the Ottoman empire, the officials receive no salaries, and live off blackmail. Hence, whenever a citizen gets a little ahead, when he shows signs of prosperity, he immediately becomes an object of plunder and persecution by the tax gatherer and by every other representative of the government. There is no incentive for the coffee growers to extend their orchards or to increase their product.

One does not realize, until he comes face to face with the fact, that Arabia is nearly half as large as the United States. Its area is almost as great as that of India, and is nearly equal to that of our States east of the Mississippi river. The population is unknown, because there has never been a census, but it is suposed to be between seven and twelve millions. The distance from north to south is more than a thousand miles, and from east to west it varies from 500 to 800. Yet in all this enormous territory there is no centralized authority. The interior is governed by petty sheiks, each being absolute over the members of his own tribe. Along a coast line of nearly 2,500 miles are only six ports, where the sultan of Turkey maintains pasha governors and garrisons to protect the collectors of customs, who are required to pay him a certain amount of tribute every year, and they wring it out of the people any way they can.

The relationship between the government at Constantinople and the Bedouins of Arabia is very slender, and is due solely to the cohesive power of the Mohammedan religion. There is no law in Arabia but the Koran; there are no courts but the priests; there are no mails, no postoffices, no postage stamps, and a person who wants to communicate with a distant fried must send his letter by a messenger, which is expensive, or by a caravan, which is the common way. There is no telegraph line, no newspaper, no railroad, and, strange to say, not a river in all that vast area except a few shallow, rocky beds, which during the spring bring down water from the melting snow on the mountain tops to the sea, but for nine months in the year are as dry as a crematory.

The captain tells me that they produce a curious phenomenon. The coast of the Red sea is lined with coral banks, built by those mysterious and wonderful little masons who, like some men that I know of, hate fresh water, and wherever the spring floods fall into the sea there is always a wide break in the coral reef.

The mountains of Arabia reach an altitude of 10,000 feet, and in spots where borings have been made the sand is more than 600 feet deep. It is the prevailing impression that Arabia is a vast expanse of desert, but that is a mistake. There are wide strips of barren sand, which are irreclaimable for cultivation only because they cannot be reached by water, but two-thirds of the country is capable of cultivation, and, lying at an altitude of 3,000 feet above the sea, might produce cotton, sugar and other semi-tropical staples in unlimited quantities. Although there are no streams plenty of water can be had for irrigation purposes by digging 20 or 30 feet, and the introduction of windmills would simplify the pumping problem. On the coast it is intensely hot, and the humidity of the atmosphere during the summer season makes life almost unendurable, but in the interior, upon the table lands along the mountain slopes and in the valleys, the mercury seldom rises above 85 degrees, even in mid-summer. While the direct rays of the sun are intense, it is cool in the shade, and at night the mercury often falls below 50.

More than two-thirds of the population are Bedouin nomads, without permanent places of abode, who live in tents made of camel's hair, just like the patriarchs of old. They have enormous flocks of sheep and goats, and herds of catle and camels. The follow the grass and move from place to place with all their possessions. There are, however, several prosperous cities of considerable population and commerce. Trade is conducted by camel caravans, which cross the desert regularly, and transport enormous quantities of dates, wool and other merchandise.

William E. Curtis.

A School for Grown-Ups.

Gastonia (N. C.) Gazette.

The Statesville Landmark refers to the pluck of a boy 17 years old and of a man twice that age who recently buckled down to books at Buie's Creek academy without knowing how to read. The boy didn't know his letters, the man began in the first reader. Yes, that is plucky in a sense. Not that the task is so great, but that the nerve to get one's consent to undertake it at those ages is so rare. But it ought not to be rare. The task is not great, not difficult of accomplishment. Little children who live with books and picture blocks learn to read before they are six years of age, learn without special teaching; with some direct and regular instruction they would learn sooner. We do not believe that there is in the State an illiterate grown man of ordinary intelligence and industry that could not learn to read in six weeks, write in ten weeks, and get a good beginning in arithmetic in a few more weeks, if he would only give these things attention and regular study. Why hasn't somebody started a school for grown men who cannot read and write? The gap between the man who cannot read and the man who can—how great and how wide it is! What storehouses of richness and vast and fertile fields are shut away from him who cannot read. Beyond the Alps lies Italy—and the Alps in this case are not impassable. The gap is wide but not difficult to him who tries, and the prize is so worth the winning! The man who cannot thinks the way is hard; the man who can knows it is not. The grown man who cannot read and write—somebody show him, somebody help him. Here's missionary work for one, and priceless happiness for two.

SPECULATORS IN TROUBLE.

Have Been Starting War Rumors in Italy for Money Purposes.

Rome, Feb. 21.—Rumors of warlike preparations by Italy having been circulated a semi-official communication has emanated from the government which is in substance as follows:

Stories of alleged armaments and of the movements of warships and troops for service abroad are entirely false.

Indications exist that this false news is connected with stock exchange speculations and those responsible have been brought before the law courts to be punished according to law with imprisonment of from three to thirty months.

The communication evidently alludes to the insistence by a portion of the press that Italy will be antagonistic to Austria in the Balkans and to the predictions of international complications thus causing a fall in Italian bonds and a rise in the exchange on gold.

Dr. Jameson's Success.

Cape Town, Feb. 21.—Dr. Jameson has succeeded in completing a cabinet.