UNITED STATES.

e University of Chicago has ht a $415,000 estate.

ley, Ill., schools are closed on unt of an epidemic of smallpox.

ports show that the national ruptcy law finds general ap-al.

Santos-Dumont will conduct his experiments in the United es next spring.

rick Sullivan, of Jennings, shot his wife, his grand-child, hi...s.lf dead.

allpox is spreading in Illinois. e Chicago school fund has a de- of $2,000,000.

Nicholas Van, of Goshen, N.Y., ears old, is to marry again, hav- buried twelve wives.

nes Eads, a well-to-do farmer anheim, N.Y., committed sui- because he had lost a lawsuit.

treaty between the United es and Denmark for the sale of Danish West Indies will be sign-

e Women's Medical College of the ago North-western University close because women doctors are success.

total attendance at the Pan- ican Exposition was 8,520,048. is number 5,306,859 were free 3,213,189 paid admissions.

hur Bartel, the 15-year-old son n Bartel, of Long Island City, mitted suicide because his father n't let him go out to play.

e authorities at Litchfield, are convinced that Mr. and Milton Gorton, who were found d to death in their home Wed- night, were murdered.

Charles L. Kloss, a Congrega- l pastor at Webster Grove, St. s, has caused a sensation there g getting in an interview that n should propose marriage.

Kansas City, Mo., Rev. James eath has been expelled from the ist ministry for getting a di- from one woman to marry her.

immigration from Italy, Ar- a, Syria, and Greece has grown per cent. in three years, and from Ireland has been decreas- or seven years.

ry Renner, a 22-year-old actress so enamored of a fellow-per- er, and committed suicide by lowing carbolic acid in full view large audience in a Washington tre.

inese merchants in the United have presented a petition to Chinese Court, complaining ost the exclusion act and the in- ities to which immigrants are ected.

GENERAL.

bonic plague has appeared at Tom.

an bai is arranging to have elec- railways.

is asserted that Russia was back e recent Boxer movement.

ed tax in Italy will be reduced.

dera is ravaging the Java Is- s.

pan has begun the erection of less telegraph stations along the ad coast.

ering blindness, Dr. Halseinger, dent of the Vienna Tribunal, mitted suicide.

hundred people were drowned e Mobrich down, Safi, Moroc- by the bursting of a waterspout the town.

Dyslowski, a Polish engineer, covered a gas called electroid. is said to cure consumption, ma, and neuralgia.

French scientist has discovered a od of extracting from ordinary lignum oil a liquid unfreezable degree below Zero.

NEW MALARIA PARASITE.

Discovery of Germ Which Causes Fever.

London despatch says:—Sur- Major Ross, who is well know connection with the researches in Africa to discover the origin of aria, announces that Dr. Dutton made a most important discovery ather a parasite, a new parasite h causes fever, in human beings scembling that parasite which es in South Africa.

e of the family, but quite a

BEWARE OF BOASTING.

We Had Better Underrate Than Overrate Ourselves.

(Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada in the year One Thousand Nine Hundred and One, by William Rally, of Toronto, at the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.)

A despatch from Washington says: Rev. Dr. Talmage preached from the following text:—I. Kings xx., 11 "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

Harness is the obsolete word for armor. It means harness for the man, not harness for the beast; harness for the battle, not harness for the plow. The ancient armor consisted of helmet for the head, breastplate and shield for the heart, greaves for the feet. The text makes a comparison between a man enlisting for some war and a veteran returning, the one putting on the armor and the other putting it off.

Benhadad, the king of Syria, thought he could easily overcome the king of Israel. Indeed, the Syrian was so sure of the victory that he spread an antebellum banquet. With thirty-two kings he was celebrating what they were going to do. There were in all thirty-three kings at the carousal, and their condition is described in the Bible, not as convivial or stimulated exaltation, but drunk. Their gilded and bannered pavilions were surrounded by high mettled horses, neighing and champing and hitched to chariots such as kings ride in. Benhadad sends officers over to the king of Israel demanding the surrender of the city, saying, "Thou shalt deliver me thy silver and thy gold and thy wives and thy children," and afterward sends other officers, saying the palace of the king will be searched and everything Benhadad wants he will take without asking. Then the king of Israel called a council of war, and word is sent back to Benhadad that his unreasonable demand will be resisted. Then Benhadad sends another message to the king of Israel, a message full of arrogance and bravado, practically saying: "We will destroy you utterly. I will grind Samaria into the dust; but there will not be dust enough to make a handful for each of my troops." Then the king of Israel replied to Benhadad, practically saying: "Let me see you do what you say.

YOU ROYAL BRAGGART,

you might better have postponed your banquet until after the battle, instead of spreading it before the battle. You huzza too soon. Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

An avalanche of courage and righteousness, the Israelitish army came down on Benhadad and his host. It was a hand to hand fight, each Israelite hewing down a Syrian. Benhadad, on horseback, gets away with some of the cavalry, but is only saved from a worse defeat, in which 100,000 Syrian infantry were slaughtered in one day. Now we see the sarcasm and the epigrammatic power of the message of my text sent by the king of Israel to Benhadad. Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

First, I find encouragement in this subject for the aged who have got through the work and struggle of earthly life. My venerable friends, if you had at twenty-five years of age full appreciation of what you would have to go through in the thirties and the forties and the fifties of your lifetime you would have been appalled. Fortunately the bereavements, the temptations, the persecutions, the hardships, were curtained from your sight. With more or less fortitude you passed through the cries of pain and sadness and disappointment and fatigue and still live to recount the divine help that sustained you. At twenty or thirty years of your age at the tap of the drum you put on the harness. Now, at sixty or seventy or eighty, you are peacefully putting it off. You would not want to try the battle of life over again. So many of just your temperament and with as good a starting and as fine a parentage and seemingly with as much equipoise of character as you had have made complete shipwreck that you would not want again to run the risks. Though you can look back and see many mistakes, the next time you might make

WORSE MISTAKES.

Instead of being depressed over the fact that you are being counted out or omitted in the great undertakings of the church and the world, rejoice that you have a right to hang up your helmet and sheathe your sword and free your hands from the gauntlets and your feet from the boots of mail.

Again, I learn from Benhadad's behavior the unwisdom of boasting of what one is going to do. Two messages had he sent to the king of Israel, both messages full of insolence and braggadocio. With brimming beaker in hand he is talking with the royal group about what he will do with the spoils of the victory he is going to achieve that afternoon. He takes it for granted that Samaria will surrender. He gives command for the capture of some of the inhabitants, saying, "Whether they be come out for peace take them alive, or whether they be come out for war take them alive." But behold the fugitive king in frightened retreat before sundown! Better not tell boastingly what you are going to do. Wait until it is done. You do well to lay out your plans, but there are so many mistakes and disappointments in life that you may not be able to carry out your plans and there is no need of invoking the world's derision and caricature.

Notice also that by left I take it for granted that you must put on the harness, else how can you take it off? Life is a battle—a thirty years', a forty years' or a sixty years' war. Helmet you must have, for the battleaxes of scepticism and agnosticism are aimed at your head. Every possible effort will be made to make you think wrong. The young man who gets his head filled with young notions about God, about Christ, about the soul, about the great beyond, is already captured.

PUT ON THE HELMET,

the latchet well adjusted under the chin. Think right, and you will act right. Yes, breastplate for the heart. That is the most important part to be defended. That decides what you love and what you hate, what you hope for and what you despise. That decides earthly happiness and eternal destiny. Keep the heart pure, and the life will be pure. Have the heart corrupt, and your actions will be corrupt. Oh, that all of us might have a new heart covered with a divinely wrought breastplate! Yes, greaves for the feet. So many dangerous roads are we compelled to walk. So many people tread on sharp prongs of temptation and go lame and limping all the rest of their days. Iron mailed shoe for the foot.

We hold our breath in horror as once in a while we hear of some one, either by accident or suicide, going over Niagara Falls, but the tides the depths, the awful surges of intemperance are every hour of every day rushing scores of immortals down into unfathomed abysm. Suicides by the hundreds of thousands! Suicides by the million. Beware of the cup out of which Benhadad drank personal and national demolition!

Yes, you must have full armor. There are temptations to an impure life all the time multiplying and intensifying. Read in private and discussed afterward by the refined and elegant in parlors are books, poisoned from lid to lid with impurities. Loose characters in the novel applauded by rhetorical pens and proprieties of life caricatured as prudery and infidelity of behavior put in a way to excite sympathy and half approval. My wonder is not that so many go astray, buy my wonder is that ten times as many are not debauched. There are influences at work, which, if unarrested, will turn our cities into Sodoms and Gomorrahs ready for the hail and fire and brimstone of God's indignation.

Yes, you must have full armor for there are all the temptations to

GAMING PRACTICES,

either in gambling halls or in the money market, buying wheat they never paid for and selling what they can never deliver, first borrowing what they cannot return, and stealing what they cannot borrow. All hours of the day and all hours of the night are vast sums of money passing fraudulently, for gambling in all cases is fraud, whether it be a twenty-five cent prize package or a crash in Northern Pacific, which made Lombard street and the bourse aghast and shook the nations with financial earthquake.

Oh, yes, you need the harness on until God tells you to take it off. In olden times it was leathern armor or chain armor or ribbed armor, fashioned in ancient foundry, but no one can give you the outfit you need except God, who is master of this world and the infernal world, from which ascend the mightiest hostilities. Lay hold of God. Nothing but the arm of Omnipotence is strong enough for the tempted.

Also see in my subject the folly of underestimating the enemy. That was Benhadad's fatal mistake. He could whip them before sundown. He wanted less than half a day to capture Samaria and make the king of Israel capitulate. But what he thought was so easy turned out to be the impossible. Better overestimate than underestimate the other side. We who are trying to make the world what it ought to be contend not with homunculi. We wrestle not with striplings. We have a whole army of antagonists trying to halt the King of God and overthrow the cause of righteousness. If we secure the victory it will be a struggle as fierce as when Darius and Alexander grappled each other at Arbella, as when Joan of Arc rode triumphant at Orleans, as when the Russians met the Swedes at Poltava, as when Marlborough commanded the allied armies at Blenheim. Those were fights for earthly crowns and dominions but the fight that now goes on between all the allied armies of Heaven and all the allied armies of hell is to settle whether

GOD OR SATAN

is to have possession of this planet.

Oh, ye soldiers of Jesus Christ, when the war of life is over and the victors rest in the soldiers' home on the heavenly heights perhaps there may be in the city of the sun a tower of spiritual armor such as increased the warriors for Christ in earthly combat! Some day we may be in that armory and hear the heroes talk of how they fought the good fight of faith and see them with the scars of wounds forever healed and look at the weapons of offence and defence with which they became more than conquerors. In that tower of Heaven as the weapons of the spiritual conflict are examined St. Paul may point out to us the armor with which he advised the Ephesians to equip themselves and say: "That is the shield of faith. That is the helmet of salvation. That is the girdle of truth. That is the breastplate of righteousness. Those are the mail shoes in which they were shod with the preparation of the gospel." There and then you may recount the contrast between the day when you enlisted in Christian conflict and the day when you closed it in earthly farewell and heavenly salutation, and the text, which has so much meaning for us now, will have more meaning for us then—"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

FRENCH GOLD.

The Secret of Its Accumulation is a Mystery.

Despite the recent national deficit, evidences of French wealth and prosperity are so manifest that one is constrained to ask whence they come. The public fortune of France is estimated at the enormous total of £9,880,000,000. The riches of England are easily explained by her commerce, but France has no such pretensions, yet in thirty years the French nation paid off the enormous German indemnity, supported the terrible Panama drain, conquered Madagascar and Tonkin, organized them as colonies, floated successive Russian loans, lent gold to England, and is ready for another Russian loan—the last was subscribed seven times—so soon as the thrifty M. de Witte thinks Russian finances need a stimulus of French gold. Moreover, France is apparently equally ready to guarantee a large part of the Chinese indemnity. French gold is seeking investment in every direction; there is plenty of it everywhere, so much, in fact, that many foreign eyes are turned upon it with interest, while the secret of its accumulation is a mystery to many.

As a rule foreigners in seeking the principal sources of French wealth fail to look in the right direction. The fortune of the country in the unknown France, the "France of the Français" (not in the Nationalist party's sense), in that France where a foreigner rarely penetrates—the France jealously closed to the outsider; the France which contains the bone and the sinew of the nation as well as its gold—where wealth is slowly accumulated, carefully hoarded, and safely invested, when not kept in the woollen stocking, that faithful banker so popular with simple-minded French people. Handed down from generation to generation, the golden ball has kept rolling, increasing as the years glide by. Quite unsuspected, the modest apartment of the bourgeois is the abode of wealth.

THE S. S. LESSON.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON JAN. 19.

Text of the Lesson, Acts ii, 37-47. Golden Text, Acts ii., 47.

37. "Men and brethren what shall we do?" This was the cry of those who, having heard the gospel preached by Peter, were by the Spirit convinced of their sin, the sin of rejecting Christ. Compare the cry of Saul and of the jailer in chapters ix, 6; xvi, 30, when they, too, were convinced of sin. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, as the Lord Jesus said, "When He is come, He will convince the world of sin, because they believe not on Me" (John xvi. 8, 9). Peter in the power of the Spirit, or the Spirit through Peter, had preached Christ from Joel ii, Ps. xvi and cx. It might be said that he gave a Bible reading from or an exposition of those passages from the Old Testament.

38. There was only one thing for them to do, and that was to receive Him whom they had rejected and confess it by being baptized in His name, and they would thus receive forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. They had thought that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor and a deceiver, but they must change their mind about Him (that is repentance) and receive and honor Him as Israel's Messiah, the Christ of God, the only Saviour of sinners. See how Peter, by the Spirit, makes prominent the remission of sins, as Jesus had commanded in Luke xxiv, 47. The gospel that does not proclaim the forgiveness of sins is not the gospel of God concerning Jesus Christ, nor an other gospel concerning which Paul says, "Let the preacher be accused" (Gal. i, 8, 9; II Cor. xi, 4).

39. Our Lord had said, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in nowise cast out" (John vi, 37), and He had prayed for the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and He had said to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke xxiii, 34, 43). So Peter encouraged these whom he had accused of killing Christ (verse 23) to turn to Him that they might obtain his forgiveness. The call is to every one, however far off and dead in sin, to come, for Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed (I Tim. i, 15; Rom. ix, 33; x, 11).

40. As the Spirit gave him utterance he set before them the grace of God in Christ Jesus, urging them to come out from the unbelieving and show themselves for Christ. He did not expect that all who heard would believe, for he had been taught by the Lord Jesus that, while some seed would fall on good ground, some would also fall on the hard beaten ground, some on rocky and some on thorny soil.

1. Three thousand, or about that number, received Christ by receiving the truth concerning or by believing the testimony that Peter gave of Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah, who by the sacrifice of Himself made atonement for sin, who, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. i, 3), and sent the Holy Spirit, who now brought these truths home to their hearts. Faith cometh by hearing the word of God, not by any enticing words of man's wisdom (Rom. x, 17; I Cor. i, 17; ii, 4), and as the word of God is declared the spirit of God works. Unless God works nothing is accomplished, for even Christ could do nothing of Himself (John v, 30; viii, 28).

42, 43. This great gathering was, no doubt, one of the "greater works" of which Christ had spoken (John xiv, 12), and they proved their sincerity by continuing steadfastly in the doctrine, in fellowship and in prayer (John viii, 31). This was a genuine work of the Holy Spirit, a work of God in the name of the Lord Jesus, and through one of the weakest of earthen vessels. There was nothing of man in it. The wonders and signs were "the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark xvi, 20). The great resurrection chapter concludes with the exhortation to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I. Cor. xv. 58), and it is our privilege to say with John, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ" (I. John, i, 3). "Patient continuance in well doing" (Rom. ii, 7) is a very good summary of the believer's daily life.

44, 45. "And all that believed were together and had all things common." In this first gathering of the redeemed from among the Jews out of all nations (verse 5) the Spirit seems to have so fully controlled them that they manifested the spirit of their Lord and Master, in so loving each other that they counted nothing their own, but wrought and lived that they might have to give to him that needeth (Eph. iv, 28). The leaven, always suggestive of evil (Lev. xxiii, 16, 17), soon began to work and to appear, and all sought their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. And many turned away and loved this present world or sought pre-eminence in the church instead of honoring Christ as pre-eminent in all things (Phil. ii, 21; II. Tim. i, 15; iv, 10; III. John 9; Col. i, 18).

46. "Continuing daily with one accord." Whether in the temple or at home, there was true fellowship and gladness and singleness of heart. They were servants of Christ indeed, doing the will of God from the heart, acceptable to God and approved of men (Eph. vi, 6; Rom. xiv, 18). This was not their manner of life one day in the week only, but every day by the grace of God. They were filled with and constantly manifesting these features of the kingdom—righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. xiv, 17) and God was glorified in them before the people.

47. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." In the revised version the word "church" is omitted. In chapters v. 14; xi, 24, it is said that the believers were "added to the Lord." The church is the body of Christ which began with these thousands of Jews and is still on its way toward completion, taking in all who will come from all nations. The Lord Himself is adding to Himself all who truly come to Him, but tares and wheat will grow together till the harvest, and only then shall it be seen who are the Lord's additions and who are man's. He Himself said, "Every plant which My Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up" (Matt. xv, 13). May all who read be indeed "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified" (Isa. lxv, 3), and greatly used by Him to bear much fruit to His glory.

CHEAP MEALS.

Soup, Bread and Pudding for Hungry Children.

Special interest attaches to the latest venture of the London Vegetarian Association, says a London despatch. What child among the 70,000 who are said to go foodless to school need be hungry or ill-nourished when in catch-phrase of the L. V. A. "three courses for a penny"—soup, bread and pudding—can be served to these little ones. During the last three weeks this experiment has been actually put into practice. Down Bethnal-green way behind the museum is an old chapel without a pastor, which serves between a quarter past twelve and half-past one as a dining-room when the poor children of the neighborhood may come, accompanied if they like, by elder brothers and sisters, or by parents. Every one of these boys and girls—and so far there has been an average attendance of 160 to 200 a day—represents a penny paid either by parents or by teachers through the help of some charity.

A kitchen has been fitted up with plant sufficient for an army of some 2,000 little ones. Huge asbestos lined cans are also provided in which soup and puddings may be kept hot whilst being conveyed to outlying schools. The actual food consumed by the children is covered by the penny, and all the association asks for is money sufficient to cover the cost of labor and rent. At present, of course, the scheme is in its infancy; but everything, in view of the severe weather which usually follows Christmas, when the children suffer terribly, is ready for a rapid development commensurate with the plant; and it is probable that by next winter other depots will have to be opened in equally poor districts. It is intended to vary the food as much as possible, so that vegetarianism may commend itself. Soup is served one day with bread, followed by cake; pease pudding and potatoes another, haricots another; but there is no mistaking the fact that the most popular is the plum pudding day.

MERELY HER POLICY.

He—"I certainly had reason to think you cared for me—you were so nice to me."

She—"But I make it a point to be nice to every man, no matter how stupid he is."

OLD ENGLISH ENGINES.

Been on the Rails Many Years and Still Effective.

The famous "No. 1" Great Northern engine recently completed its four millionth mile. It was built in 1870. It is still regularly employed on express passenger work, says the London Daily Mail.

Turning these facts over in his mind a Daily Mail representative was led to reflect that, after all, perhaps there might be something good to be said for the much abused British locomotive and he set out on a voyage of investigation which embraced, first of all, the Company's locomotive works at King's Cross.

"Oh, yes," replied the superintendent in answer to a query, "we have a number of engines of this class running over our system. Handling passenger trains? Certainly, and excellent time they keep. American locomotives? We don't trust our passenger trains to them. We keep them for 'minerals' and similar work. Good engines? Well, they may be; we really haven't been running them long enough to form a decided opinion."

The editor of the Locomotive Magazine was more explicit. "The British-built engine," he said, "like the British-built bridge and the British-constructed permanent way, is designed to stay. There are plenty of engines running to-day on British railways—aye, and on continental ones, too,—that were constructed 20, 30, 40 and even more years ago and which are still perfectly reliable in every way.

"American builders can show nothing even remotely akin to this. The 'life' of a Yankee 'loco' may be as short as ten years. It would certainly be considered aged at 20. And I should imagine that there are not above a score of 20-year-old locomotives in the whole United States that are regularly engaged in the passenger service of any of the first-class lines. The American engineer does not even pretend to build his locomotive to 'stay.'"

Further inquiry revealed the fact that the "No. 1" alluded to above is not the oldest locomotive running passenger trains in Great Britain. This honor is claimed for an engine built by Messrs. Bury, Curtis & Kennedy, of Liverpool, in 1845, which is still in use on the Waterford and Tramore Railway, in the south east of Ireland.

The railway on which it runs is almost as remarkable in its way as the engine. It is only seven and a quarter miles long, and is entirely separated from every other railway, its Waterford terminus being over a mile distant from any other stations of that town. There are no intermediate stations, sidings or passing places, and as the platforms at the two terminal stations are both on the west side of the railway, the carriages are only provided with doors on one side.

Another British-built engine which dates from 1845, is still running on the Chemin du Fer Nord of France. It was built by Messrs. Robert Stevenson & Co., and was fitted with coupled driving wheels.

2,000,000 ARE ILLITERATE.

Facts Gleaned From the United States Census.

Although there are over fifteen million pupils enrolled in the common schools of the United States, nearly one in every five of the total population of the country—and nearly seventeen million pupils of all ages securing instruction in one kind of school or another, the extent of our illiterate adult population is disagreeably large, says the New York World. The census report on the subject just issued states the total number of males of voting age at 21,329,819, and reports 2,326,215 of them to be illiterates. In other words, considerably over ten per cent. of the men entitled to vote—unless, as in Massachusetts and Mississippi, they are barred by educational qualifications—are unable to read and write. It is a startling reflection that large as this mass of illiterate adults of voting age is it is not as large as it was twenty or even ten years ago, and is getting smaller all the time. As compared with many European countries it is an extremely small percentage of our whole population.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

Never quit certainty for hope.

Losers are always in the wrong.

A good companion makes good company.

Better go about than fall into the ditch.

For a flying enemy make a silver bridge.

The disease a man dreads most he dies of.

Plow, or not plow, you must pay your rent.

When a friend asketh there is no to-morrow.

The submitting to one wrong brings on another.

Fools make fashions and wise men follow them.

BANK NOTE PRINTING.

Amongst the many interesting departments in the Bank of England is the one devoted to printing. There every day some 60,000 Bank of England notes of varying value from the popular "fiver" to the rare £1,000," are printed off on the bank's machines, to say nothing of the many thousands of postal orders as well. Four machines print the latter, each turning out 1,200 sheets an hour, and the paper is of such size that ten postal orders are on each sheet. Half a dozen machines print the bank notes, and are usually fully at work. Each machine works the notes off at the rate of 3,000 per hour, and a good day's work is 25,000.

LIFE ON A TORPEDO BOAT

THE TARS LEAD A DOG'S LIFE YET THEY LIKE IT.

The Crew Suffer Much From Cold in Winter and From Heavy Weather.

At any time or season life on board the torpedo boat or her bigger sister the destroyer is a particularly happy one, but in winter it becomes so hard and painful that Dr. Johnson could he be resuscitated, would assuredly declare, with renewed emphasis, that no man with contrivance enough to get into jail would be found in a torpedo craft, says the London Daily Mail. From the lightness of the hull the crew suffer much from cold, as there is only a thin sheet of metal between them and the cold water. But the severest trial of all is heavy weather, which may be said to be normal in British waters in the winter.

It used to be thought that torpedo boats and destroyers were only fair weather craft, but now all navies send these vessels to sea in winter. In the British navy three flotillas, each of eight destroyers, are constantly cruising all the year round.

Let us pay a visit to such a craft. On deck is the officer of the watch, shivering behind the canvas screen which gives him some small protection from the weather. The boat is tearing through the waves at a speed of somewhere about twenty knots, and the spray and wind cut like whips. The motion of the boat is impossible to describe. Pitching violently now with her bows buried deep in the hollows of the heaving sea, now with her stern emergent and her propellers racing frantically; at the same time rolling like a drunken man. So lively and distressing is the movement that few, indeed of the salts who do not succumb to the horrors of seasickness. To be seasick on board a comfortable liner is one thing; to be seasick in a destroyer is quite another, and the most refined torture that can be imagined. There is no space or accommodation for incapacitated men, and the crew is calculated on the narrowest limits, so that if many are on the sick list the vessel will have to return to harbor.

DIFFICULT MEAN.

And when weary and wet the men from the deck turn in at the end of their watch, let them expect no immediate degree of comfort. They may be well pleased if it is possible to cook a meal, and for days together they may have to subsist on cold meat. When the boat is rolling and pitching it takes two to eat any sort of meal. One holds a ham from which the other cuts slices and hurriedly devours them. It is an almost savage state of existence, though not perhaps worse than that of our soldiers on the veldt.

The men on board wear "lammy" suits, as they are called in the navy, of woollen material at night, and they find it very hard to keep dry. The little craft lies low in the water, which manages to deliver a very large amount of moisture below, through ventilators and leaky hatches.

From the general conditions it might be supposed that service on these craft was dreaded and avoided in the navy. No mistake could be greater. Dog's life though it has glories and delights of its own. There is less discipline of the routine kind, and it may be more efficiency. Bugles are not always sounding to do this and that; smoking is less restricted than in the warship, and there is no need to be clean; indeed, cleanliness in a torpedo boat is almost impossible. In a word, the life is what the blue jacket calls a piratical one. The officers are young and keen with a sense of exhilaration at the thought that they are positively encouraged to run risks—for if they do not run risks in peace they will certainly never run them in war. And so, vibrating, heeling, pitching, with her men clinging for bare life to stanchions as the deck tilts to perpendicular, the gallant little craft, with her more gallant crew, scuds through the night and fog and sleet and foam, guarding our British seas, and prepared for any devilry.

FAST THE FIRST YOUTH.

The swan is said to be excellent eating when young; but as it is one of the longest lived of all creatures, it is well to learn if possible how old your bird is before you cook it.

A gentleman in Lincolnshire, England, sent a dead swan to the Athenæum Club, addressed to the Secretary. A special dinner was to occur that week, and the committee without question turned the bird over to the cook.

At dinner the swan, resting on a great silver dish, was a delight to the eye; but when it came to carving and eating the bird, no knife seemed sharp enough to cut it, and of course eating it was out of the question.

A few days later the donor met the secretary and said, "I hope you got the swan all right."

"Yes, it was a nice joke you played on us," returned the secretary.

"Joke? What do you mean?"

"Why, we had the thing boiled for thirteen hours, and even then we might as well have tried to cut through the Rock of Gibraltar."

"You don't mean to say you had the thing cooked!"

"Why, of course."

"Why, alive! I sent it to be stuffed and preserved as a curiosity in the club. That swan has been in my family for two hundred and eighty years. It was one of the identical birds fed by the children of Charles I.—you've seen the picture of it. My ancestor held the post of master of the swans and keeper of the King's cygnets. Well, I have no doubt it was a bit tough."

By 1940 the population of London will require 420 million gallons of water a day. Only 30 millions a day can be taken from the Thames.