

NOTES AND COMMENTS

The vicissitudes of war in South Africa and the vast expenditure involved in the prosecution of that contest, have diverted public attention in England and outside of it from a proposal which, under normal circumstances, would have rent asunder the upholders of the present Unionist Government. We refer to the Education bill now pending in the House of Commons. This measure aims to abolish those provisions which gave a non-sectarian character to the Forster Education Act of 1870, and for this reason is likely ultimately to offend and alienate those Nonconformists who, under the leadership of Joseph Chamberlain and John Bright, helped the Conservatives to defeat Mr. Gladstone's first Home Rule bill in June, 1886, and, subsequently, to gain three great victories at the ballot box.

So far as the new bill undertakes to deal with secondary and technical education, there is no doubt that the general purpose is an exemplary one; only in regard to methods and details is there any difference of opinion. What is revolutionary is the proposal with regard to the provisions for primary education. In England since 1870 the facilities for obtaining primary education have been afforded in two ways: first, by the so-called national or board schools, created under the Forster Act, organized and governed by school boards responsible to the Board of Education. These schools are maintained out of the rates, or local taxes, supplemented by an annual grant from Parliament. As regards religious instruction, the Forster Act provided, first, that whatever instruction of a religious kind should be given should be imparted at the beginning or end of the school meeting, and that an unbroken period of two hours in each meeting should be devoted to secular instruction; secondly, that a time table setting forth in detail the hours to be devoted to religious and secular instruction should be publicly displayed in each school room, and that parents should have the right to withdraw their children from any religious instruction or observance which they disapproved; thirdly, that in schools provided or managed by school boards no catechism or religious formula distinctive of any religious denomination should be taught.

These provisions have been accepted as satisfactory, not only by the great mass of Nonconformists, but also by all those persons who are indifferent in the matter of religion, or hold on public grounds that State education should be non-sectarian. On the other hand, a great majority of the members of the Church of England and almost all Roman Catholics have refused to send their children to the board schools, and have established for them by voluntary subscriptions denominational schools, where, in addition to secular instruction, they can receive religious teaching of the kind approved by their parents or guardians. To such an extent has the movement in favor of denominational schools been carried that about one-half of the children in England receiving primary instruction are credited to these institutions. Those who support them have long complained of the hardship resulting from their being compelled to contribute by their share of the rates or local taxes to the maintenance of the board schools, by which their children do not profit. In 1885 they succeeded in procuring the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of the Education Acts. A majority of this commission recommended that school boards should be empowered to subsidize voluntary schools, at the cost of local rates, but the Government of the day disavowed any intention of introducing a measure to that end. The present Government feels strong enough to pursue a different course, and, although the ultimate form which the bill will take is as yet undecided, there is but little doubt that the burden of maintaining the denominational schools will be placed wholly or in part upon the shoulders of the ratepayer.

Lady Philanthropist—"Have you any plans in view after your term expires, my poor fellow?" Convict—"A few, mum! I've got the plans uv four country post-offices and six private residences."

Cobwigger—"It was rather hard having your watch taken out of your pocket." Impeccable—"I should say so. It was stolen when I was on my way to pawn it."

About the ... House

OPTIMISM.

You may reap your harvest of wheat and tares,
You may gather your cockle and barley;
You may husband a harvest of joys and cares,
Laboring late and early;
The grain of gold
And the poppy bold
And the corn-flower blue for adorning;
But the fullest ears of the seven fat years
Will be gleaned by the gleaner next morning.

You may draw your nets, you may draw your line,
Fine silvery fish in plenty;
You may angle for honor, hook titles fine,
And of places and posts fill twenty.
The fish of weight
Swallow up your bait,
Your lures and your wiles not scorning;
But the lushest trout, there's no manner of doubt,
Will be caught by the fisher next morning.

You may think out thoughts that are witty and wise,
You may think some deep, some shallow;
You may store your brain with truth or with lies,
You may let your brain lie fallow.
Thought is good,
Be it understood;
But this fact on your mind must be borne in—
That the latest thought that mankind can be taught
Will be thought by some thinker next morning.

You may cling to this world of time and sense,
You may think of another rarely;
You may sigh, Ah, whither? and ask, Ah, whence?
And find life puzzling, fairly.
Yet life is sweet,
We still repeat,
On this dear old earth we were born in;
Good bettered to best, best changed into best,
When we wake to God's cloudless next morning.

FOOD FOR A GROWING CHILD.

A question of vital interest to the majority of mother to-day is what food is best calculated to meet the demands of growing childhood, as well as to supply the waste of its tissues. With the fast-growing child its demands for food oftentimes seem inconsistent, but in most instances it will be found that its system is really in need of a certain food substance, which can only be gotten by eating an excess of the unnecessary food in order to obtain it.

With active exercise of both mind and body, as with the rollicking school-boy, the demand for proper food is great. In most instances, and leaving it to the children's decision, "proper food" means pastries, etc. Instead of these building up and repairing the body, they serve to give more heat and energy to an already worn, tired-out nature. In order to get a clearer conception of the effect of such a diet, one has only to observe the stunted growth and pallid faces of the children of the very poor, who are fed on an almost exclusive diet of starch foods. It is cheaper and already prepared by the bakers. Therein lies its merit.

Appetites can become perverted as to the eating of sweet pastries the same as by any other habit. As our inheritance, we are always craving the sweets of life. The bitter are always cast aside.

The virtues of whole-wheat bread for the growing child are many. It supplies every need and want of the human body. It not only gives heat and energy, but is a constant repairer of waste tissue; while its mineral constituents convert cartilage into strong, healthy bone and teeth. Sandwiches of this bread, daintily put together with a thin slice of cold meat or some meat preparation, forms a most acceptable lunch, and if these are encased in the waxed paper used by bakers, and which can be purchased by them, they will keep moist and fresh for hours.

There are egg sandwiches, cheese sandwiches and others too numerous to mention, but those I have made mention of will be found best to meet the requirements of the child's system, and another consideration is the ease in their preparation. Do not forget to use butter on the bread quite as liberally as if no sandwich was to be made. A certain portion of fat is absolutely necessary to the body's development as well. Sweet, fresh butter, or cream, is the best form of fat, and a liberal use of these is quite sufficient for the body's needs.

In preparing the school luncheon do not forget to tuck in a bit of fruit of some kind. Sweet fruits contain much nourishment, it is well to remember, dates, figs, bananas and grapes containing the most.

Juicy fruits are rich in phosphates for the blood, and are easily digested as well. The excess of water which they contain forms a distilled drink, and as thirst-quenchers they prove a success. It is far better to supply the children with fruit for their luncheon than to give them a food that in time works evil effects in the system. The limited purse often feels that fruits are a too expensive drain on it, but a little wise reflection will show to the average mind

that money invested in fruits is wisely expended.

Nuts furnish another of nature's foods, and much nourishment is contained in them. Take the walnut, filbert, almond, cocoonut, and chestnut, for instance. These nuts are rich in nourishment, and can be used in a paste form—that is, crushed or ground—and mixed with a dressing of sweet cream and spread on bread that is to be made into sandwiches. Or the nuts can be cracked and opened, and a handful included in the daily lunch. There will be fully as much nourishment in these as in the bread itself.

Both fruit and nuts in their original form—that is, not made into jams or other substances in which adulteration can be practised—are far better. These cheap jams with which the market is flooded are most injurious in their effect on the human system. They should never be eaten. I have often observed children's liking for them as well as many of the productions of the delicatessen store, such as different forms of pickles, etc. Acids in the system produce disease. Not only does the eating of sour substances produce this, but sweet substances are also converted in the process of digestion into an acid. A thoughtful care in this respect is quite necessary to health. A stalk of celery or a bit of water-cress answers far better, and these can be eaten with impunity.

In concluding, I would say that, if a luncheon is daintily made up, it not only appeals to the eye, but through the eye to the stomach. There comes a desire to taste, and by this desire the gastric secretions are appealed to and the food is partaken of with genuine relish instead of a forced inclination.

A HINT TO PARENTS.

It was the eve of their only son's birthday, and the commuter had returned from the city laden with the usual assortment of toys. By skilful manoeuvring he had managed to smuggle his packages into the house without having their contents discovered by his inquisitive offspring.

Later in the evening, after the child had gone to bed, had asked for his last drink of water, and commenced to dream material for new questions, the mother and father unwrapped the toys and placed them on the table.

"Won't Willie be delighted!" exclaimed the mother.

"What! with those things!" said the father, scornfully. "Just wait until I fix them for him first."

Reaching for a papier-mache elephant he wrenched off its tail and one hind leg.

"Whatever made you do that?" exclaimed the wife, in bewilderment.

For answer he took up a "Moo-cow" and knocked off both its horns against the leg of the table.

"John," almost shrieked his wife, in accents of terror, "have you gone crazy?"

She was sure he had a moment later, for he proceeded with his work of destruction by tearing an arm off an expensive doll and then obliterating its features with his heel. Then she remembered having heard that one should always try to humor insane people, and she said, with a nervous laugh, "How strong you are, dear. Do you think you could tear a hole in this squeaking pig?"

He wrecked the rubber pig as desired, and then split the lid of a Jack-in-the-box. Just then he noticed his wife was trying to sneak out of the house to call the police.

"Wait a minute, my dear," he called. "Come and sit down here and I'll explain."

She returned tremulously, half afraid he might rend her as he had the toys.

"You perhaps remember," he began, "how Willie smashed his toys on Christmas, and then never looked at them again?"

"Certainly, dear."

"And you also remember that a few days later he found the head of an old doll you used to have, and has been trying to fix it and playing with it ever since?"

"I remember it all."

"Well, if we gave him these toys he would smash them all in the first half-day and throw them away, but now when he gets them already smashed he'll start to work to put them together again, and they will keep him interested and occupied until next Christmas."

While he was speaking a great light dawned on his wife, and coming to his side, she kissed him reverently on the brow. At last she knew why the world was beginning to recognize him as an eminent thinker.

SEASONABLE CONFECTIONS.

Luncheon Cake.—One and a half pounds of flour, half a pound of butter, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Mix and rub into these half a pound of sugar, half a pound of currants, half a pound of chopped and stone raisins, two eggs, and nearly a pint of milk. The two latter articles should not be added till just before the cake goes into the oven. Bake in a steady heat.

Orange Cake.—Beat three eggs and five ounces of sugar to a cream, add six ounces of pastry flour, in which a teaspoonful of baking powder is mixed, also the grated rind of one orange. Beat all well together, and bake in a quick oven for a quarter of an hour. When the cake is cold ice it as follows:—Squeeze the juice of a good-sized orange, and mix it smoothly with half a pound of icing sugar. Pour this over the cake and place in the oven, with the door open, to harden.

Walnut Cake.—Two ounces and a half of flour, four ounces of castor sugar, four ounces of butter, four ounces of peeled walnuts, four eggs, half a teaspoonful of baking powder and a few drops of vanilla essence. Beat the butter and sugar to a cream, then add the sifted and dried flour in which the baking powder has been well mixed. Chop the walnuts and add to the flour, etc.

Take the whites of eggs only, whip to a very stiff froth, and beat lightly into the batter. Pour into a greased cake tin and bake for an hour in a moderate oven. When the cake is half cooked scatter a few halved and nicely-peeled walnuts over the top.

CHOCOLATE PIE.

Did any of you ever eat a real good chocolate pie, one that would fairly melt in your mouth? I have, and, what is much better, I know how to make it, says W. E. S., in an exchange. It is very easily and quickly made, and is particularly good if one has unexpected company for dinner. First, line a deep pie pan with rich pie crust, and bake in a quick oven. If you wish you can make two or three crusts at a time and put them away for the morrow. After your crusts are baked, grate one half teacupful of chocolate, and put into a pan with one cupful of hot water, butter the size of an egg, one tablespoonful of vanilla, one cupful of sugar, the beaten yolks of two eggs, and two tablespoonfuls of cornstarch, dissolved in a little water; mix well, and cook on top of the stove until thick, stirring constantly. Pour into the pie-shell, and let cool; beat the whites of two eggs to a stiff froth, add two tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar, spread on top of the pie, and brown in the oven. If prepared correctly it will be thick and firm, like jelly when cool, and will not run when cut. The chocolate mixture can be used very nicely in tarts. If you do not like chocolate, use lemon, omitting the vanilla or cocoonut. I have tried them all and know they are good.

AS USUAL.

"John, are you going with me to the De Styles' party to-night?"
"No, my dear, I'm not."
"Why not, John, dear?"
"Because I've got to get up at seven o'clock to-morrow morning and work hard all day."
"But we won't stay late."
"That's what you promised last week when you inveigled me into going to the Crowders' and it was after three when we got home."
"But, John, you know I can't go without you."
"Why not?"
"Don't be idiotic, John."
"That's my endeavor, my dear."
"It's just like you to refuse, for no reason at all, to do anything to please me."
"Humph!"
"And you put your selfish pleasures before mine."
"Now, dear, that's hardly fair."
"And treat me with no consideration whatever."
"My dear, I—"
"And act the perfect brute, and—oh, oh, oh, why did I ever marry you?"
"Tut, tut, my dear. If you really have set your heart so upon going, I suppose I must go with you."
"There, John, I knew you could if you only wanted to."

INSISTED ON HIS RIGHTS.

Some parents still believe the old adage that sparing the rod spoils the child. A paper tells of one of this class who stode into the schoolhouse and confronted the teacher after the scholars had been dismissed for the day.

"I understand you whipped my boy this morning!" he began, angrily.

"Yes, sir, I did," the terrified teacher responded, "but I did not whip him severely."

"That's what I'm complaining about," rejoined the parent; "you didn't wallop him half enough. Now, look here, I am one of the largest tax-payers in this district, and my boy is entitled to as good a whackling as you give any other boy. If you slight him again you'll hear from me. Good afternoon, sir!"

QUEER WEATHER.

There, it's raining,
Dear me, suzz!
Queerest weather
Ever was.

Not five minutes
Since 'twas clear,
Clear as crystal,
Now, see here;

Raining fearful,
Look at that,
Right upon my
Sunday hat!

Mean, that things so
Change about
Every time I
Wear it out!
—George R. Brill.

ALL SIZES.

A lawyer was questioning a witness about some chickens that had disappeared from the back yard of an old negro, who accused several of his neighbors of stealing them. The examination of one witness is reported as follows:

"Were the chickens in the yard?"
"Yessar."
"Did you see them in the yard?"
"Yessar."
"Were they in a coop?"
"No, sar."
"Were they at large?"
"What, sar?"
"Were the chickens at large?"
"Well, sar, some er 'em was large, but mos' er 'em was li'l ones."

Austria and Germany are the only civilized countries where coal is cheaper at the pit-mouth than in England. It is a quarter dearer in America, one-third dearer in Belgium, half as dear again in France.

Blood Vessels of the Eye.

Purkinje discovered a very simple and highly entertaining experiment by means of which the retina, with all its veins and blood vessels standing out in relief against it, can be thrown into the air before one's eyes. It is called the aborescent figure, to its likeness to a many branched tree, and is produced in the following manner: In a dark room at night move a candle backward and forward before the eyes. After a few seconds the air will assume a reddish appearance, and running over it in all directions may be seen the veins and blood vessels in bold relief, while toward the center of the figure there rises up a dark trunk, from which the veins branch out on all sides.

The trunk is visible where the optic nerve enters the eye, and this experiment is chiefly interesting to the student as proving that the parts of the retina which actually receive and produce the sensation of light must lie behind the blood vessels, since these cast their shadow on to it and can be seen as clearly as any other object externally.

They Didn't Interfere.

Governor Bob Taylor of Tennessee had a heart as tender as a woman, and the way he pardoned out convicts was something awful. He was waited upon by a committee of the legislature, who very flatly and in no uncertain way told him that this "wholesale pardoning must stop."

"Gov'nor Bob" looked at the committee, tapped a bell, asked for his pardon clerk and when he came said:

"Make out pardons for every man in the penitentiary."

The clerk bowed and withdrew. Then the governor looked at the committee, who were staring as if they thought he was going mad.

"Gentlemen," he said finally, "I am governor of Tennessee, and if this committee or any other ever again seeks to interfere with my constitutional right to pardon I'll sign every one of those pardons which the clerk is making out. Good morning."

The House Was Shaky.

When John Quincy Adams was eighty years of age, he met in the streets of Boston an old friend, who shook his trembling hand and said, "Good morning, and how is John Quincy Adams today?"

"Thank you," was the ex-president's answer. "John Quincy Adams himself is well, sir; quite well, I thank you. But the house in which he lives at present is becoming dilapidated. It is tottering upon its foundation. Time and the seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its roof is pretty well worn out. Its walls are much shattered, and it trembles with every wind. The old tenement is becoming almost uninhabitable, and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon. But he himself is quite well, sir; quite well."

With that the venerable sixth president of the United States moved on with the aid of his staff.

Had His Whip.

The late Lord Queensberry's famous protest at the performance of Tennyson's "Promise of May" had a quaint sequel. A society journal, now deceased, made some scathing comments on the incident.

Lord Queensberry armed himself with a heavy whip and called at the office, asking to see the editor. He was conducted to the presence of an elderly woman, who regarded him severely through her spectacles.

Remembering the "Queensberry rules," he hid the horsewhip and merely remarked that he had called to talk the matter over.

His Obligation.

The Duc de Roquelaure was far, very far, from being handsome. One day he met in the street an ugly Auvergnat who had some petition or memorial to present at Versailles. He immediately introduced him to Louis XIV., remarking that he was under a special obligation to the gentleman. The king granted the favor asked and then inquired of the duke what was this pressing obligation. "But for him, your majesty, I should be the ugliest man in your dominions."

It Wasn't Lighted.

A mother was calling the attention of her little boy to the moon, which was to be seen clearly but pallidly in the early afternoon.

"Why, you can't see the moon in the daytime," replied the youngster.

"Ob, yes, you can. There it is over the trees."

The little fellow looked hard and had to admit the fact that he saw it, but he added, "Tain't lighted, anyhow."

The Parting of the Way.

He (who parts his hair in the middle) — I will never marry a woman who parts her hair on the side.

She (who parts her hair on the side) — And I can assure you that I will never marry a man who parts his hair in the middle. (Silence.)

He — We may as well part forever then.

Single Blessedness.

It is better to have loved and lost than to have married on \$50 a month. — Chicago Record-Herald.