

of 20 years the crown shall have not them."

The sale of estrays is said to have been a profitable perquisite at one time. "Estrays mean all kinds of animals except dogs, cats, bears and wolves, which may be found wandering on the king's highway. Such estrays must be proclaimed in a church and in two market towns close adjoining the place where they were found, and then if they have no claimants they become the property of the king or his grantee at the end of a year and a day."

Originally the queen consorts of England derived their revenue from certain rents exclusively appropriated to them out of demesne lands of the crown, and the contributors were required to pay for specific royal needs. Thus it was the duty of one taxpayer to pay for the queen's wool, another purchased oil for her lamp, a third bought attire for her head and feet, and so on through the long list of queenly requisites.

Queen gold was another form of tribute to his majesty's consort and "was derived from a percentage of all moneys paid to the king in respect of any privilege, grant, license, pardon or other royal favor."

THE SUPERANNUATION FIGHT ACROSS THE BORDER.

A petition for the passage of a law to retire superannuated civil service employees has recently been presented to the United States Congress, signed by about 16,000 employees in the executive department of the District of Columbia, and over 5,000 employees outside of Washington. The petition urges "a retirement law based on an equitable contributory plan, such law to provide for an adequate retiring allowance, based on average salary and length of service, and for the return of contributions with interest to persons leaving the service before reaching the age limit, or to their legal re-

presentatives in case of death." Opposition is expressed to civil pensions paid wholly out of public funds, because such a system results in an underpaid force and gives benefits to only a few at the expense of many.

The petition has the sanction of President Taft and his cabinet.

The need of a retirement plan has been brought particularly to public notice by the recent discharge for reasons of economy of a large number of aged employees, especially in the Treasury department. The hardship of those dismissed, who, it appears, have not provided for their old age, has received considerable comment in the newspapers. Secretary MacVeagh, speaking of the situation, said: "We must have a civil service retirement law, and I am convinced that the only feasible plan is that by which the civil servants shall themselves contribute something toward the retirement fund, the United States Treasury making up what deficiency may be needed."

In opposition to the contributory scheme, another petition is being circulated, favoring an out-and-out civil pension plan. The agitation for this idea is backed largely by the postal employees and is in direct charge of E. J. Cantwell, the paid secretary at Washington of the postal employees associations.

The Gillett bill, which embodies a contributory plan similar to the one suggested in the petition of the departmental employees, and which was favorably reported by the committee on reform in the civil service, was not reached in the closing hours of the last session, and consequently went over.

Minister—And how did Noah spend his time in the ark?

Small Boy—Fushin'.

Minister—A verra reasonable suggestion, my laddie.

Small Boy (guardedly)—But he wouldna catch muckle.

Minister (surprised)—What makes ye think that?

Small Boy (knowingly)—Because, ye see, he had only twa wir—r—ms.—The Sketch.