EDITORIALS

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

Looking for Easy Jobs.

AN aged colored man was recently arrested in Washington and pronounced insane after a medical examination. One of the chief proofs of his insanity was his stubborn insistence that the government owed him a living and that he was entitled by right to a position in one of the Federal Departments.

The occurrence furnishes a fit text for the pen of the humorist. Yet as a matter of fact is it not true that a very large number of white men who are young, vigorous and presumably capable of making a place for themselves in the world are likewise possessed of this particular form of lunacy? How many Senators and Congressmen, if they should speak out frankly, could furnish some interesting revelations regarding the extent and persistency of the importunity to which they have been subjected by people who were convinced that they ought to have a government job—and who frankly based their preference for this sort of employment on their belief that it was about the easiest that could be found anywhere?

There is, of course, nothing dishonorable in seeking a subordinate position under the government. In some branches of the public service, owing to the gradual introduction of the merit system, there is more chance than formerly for promotion based on fitness and capacity. But it is undoubtedly true that the belief that work for the government is usually "an easy job," inspires the bulk of the applicants who annoy members of both houses of Congress with their appeals. Yet is this the way to win genuine success? Is a task that is "easy" the kind which the average healthy young person should look for?

Men who have risen to eminence in trade, industry and professional life have not wasted their time in hunting up places where they would have little to do with comparatively small prospect of advancement. They have resolutely looked for openings which were accompanied by hard labor and plenty of it; and when they have secured such an opening they have usually proved that they had the right stuff in them by buckling down with energy to do their best.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Why "Little" Japan?

THERE is one illusion about Japan which seems to survive evidence and to work most serious political mischief. The Continental Powers, and Russia more especially, cannot get rid of the belief that the Island Empire, however brave or astute or lucky its children may be, is, after all, but a "little" State, which in a very short time must "bleed to death." It is not very easy to trace the origin of this belief, unless it be the habit of expecting great size in all Asiatic Empires, or of comparing the area of Japan with that of China, or of Russia itself. So compared, Japan is, of course, a little place, which looks on the maps almost insignificant. Compared, however, in a more sensible way, with the other Island Empire which has so long been one of the Great Powers of the world, Japan is by no means small. Its total area, without counting Formosa, is by twenty-seven thousand square miles greater than that of the British Isles, and as large a proportion of it is fertile and thickly populated. That population, again, is forty-four millions, or three millions greater than that of Britain, six millions greater than that of France, and almost equal to that of Austria-Hungary. If the word "little," again, refers to strength for war, that strength is in many respects superior to our own. We could probably destroy the Japanese fleet, but the Japanese fleet has destroyed that of Russia, and could, if allowance is made for position, maintain a contest with that of France or Germany which would not be absolutely hopeless.

As regards soldiers, Japan has a conscription, and the conscription obviously works. Within the last six months the country has sent out six armies, each nearly equal to either of the forces that contended at Waterloo. We thought we had done a great thing when we sent eighty thousand men to India in 1857, and an extraordinary one when we transported two hundred thousand men to South Africa in 1900. But Japan has transported more than four hundred thousand men across the sea, and defied the Russians at Lia Yang and Port Arthur with armies greater in the aggregate than that which Napoleon III. mobilized for the invasion of Germany. Of the quality of these forces it is unnecessary to speak. Sailors and soldiers alike are, in discipline, in speed of marching, and in endurance of fatigue, the equals of any that Europe has produced; while in their reckless contempt of death they display a special quality which, as great Russian officers admit, sometimes appals and demoralizes their own stubbornly brave men. Where in all this is the evidence of the "littleness' upon which their press declares to be a guarantee of their own ultimate victory?—London Spectator.

Love and Work.

IDEALISM as an interpretation of life, a vision of ultimate ends and conditions, has always won to itself the ardent, the poetic, and the high-minded—the great company of seekers after light and love in every generation, who rebel against the hardness and injustice of the world, hate its noise and brutality, its fierce competitions and its stolid indifference to the defeated. Even in the presence of the great purpose which runs through the visible order of things and the society in which men have arranged themselves, and which has come to light, as one of the most spiritual men of the day has said, just in time to save some of the best men and women from despair, it is hard for the sensitive and aspiring and tender-hearted to bear the sorrows of the world and to sit with a cheerful spirit while so many losses ravage the homes that are dear to them and despoil the best fortunes of men. There are hosts of men and women who go through life with a noble discontent in their hearts, a sense of loneliness and isolation in their souls; they are homesick for a world in which men help instead of smite, bind up instead of wound, are quick to recognize the good instead of eager to find the evil, stand ready in all crises to rebuild the fallen, are patient of spirit with the weak, love the sinner while they loathe the sin, are kindly in speech because kindly in thought, are indifferent to external conditions because conditions are the happenings of life while the soul is its great and enduring reality, are bound together in a vast conspiracy to cheer, to aid, to give heart and hope, to make the highways of life bloom with spontaneous kindness, and to make the lonely world a warm, hospitable, many-windowed home for all who pass this way on the journey of life. * * *

Men are made happy, not by the things which surround them nor by the things which they take to themselves, but by the noble putting forth of the soul in love and work; the two great activities which are never divorced in the harmonious and balanced life, the two languages in which every true Idealist makes confession of his faith and gives evidence of its reality. For love is the ultimate expression of faith, and without works faith is a vain shadow.—The Outlook.

Criminal Frequency of Railroad Wrecks.

THE frequency and frightful fatality of railroad accidents in this country must sooner or later bring about determined governmental action for the protection of the traveling public. There is not another country in the world where as unnecessarily large a proportion of railroad passengers lose life or limb.

The fact that so many American railroads are composed of but a single track is a partial explanation of this awful slaughter, but it does not account for everything. In England, where accidents of serious proportions are so comparatively few, railroad precautions for the safety of the public are prescribed, and supervised, by the Board of Trade, and the wholesomeness of this regulation was recognized by a bill which was introduced in Congress last winter, providing for a similar supervision of our roads by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The Interstate Commerce Commission is already a useful body, but it would be of larger use if this new power were given to it. The railroad influence blocked the bill just mentioned at the last session, but this fact should not deter the vigorous revival of the measure.—Pittsburg Press.

MINING ARSENIC.

A Virginia farmer, up among the foot-hills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, cleared a new field and pastured his cows there. Before long the animals sickened and one died. Thinking that perhaps the spring which bubbled from the rocks in apparent purity might be the cause, the farmer caused its waters to be analyzed. It was found that they contained arsenic in such quantities as to render them dangerous to man and beast. This discovery, says the Boston Herald, led to an industry, unique, not only in the United States, but in the western hemisphere; that is, the mining of arsenic ores and the manufacture of white arsenic, for the supply of which America has hitherto depended entirely upon foreign markets.

Arsenic is mined in Japan, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Germany and England. Its uses are many. As a poison it has been known from very early times. The peasant women of Austria consume large quantities of it, having faith in its virtues as a beautifier, and the men of the same region are addicted to its use in the mistaken belief that it increases their bodily strength and endurance.

Arsenic is a useful mineral. It is used in the manufacture of glass, white metal, Paris green and a great variety of paints; in printing calico, in making toilet soap, cosmetics and complexion powders; in the manufacture of fireworks and as a constituent of many alloys. For these and similar purposes between five and six thousand tons are imported into the United States every year. The average value of white arsenic may be placed at about fifty-five dollars a ton.

It was only about a year ago that the arsenic ore was discovered in Virginia; then the mountain top round the present mining town of Brinton was an almost unbroken wilderness. The story of its transformation into a busy industrial community is a good illustration of the pluck and indomitable will to which America owes its industrial supremacy. The mine is located at the summit of a mountain, three thousand feet above the sea-level. The physical difficulties that had to be overcome were enormous.

The ore body averages twenty-five to thirty per cent pure arsenic. It is found in fissure veins, cropping out at the surface and extending into the earth for an unknown distance. Twenty distinct veins have been discovered, outcropping for a distance of seven miles, so that the deposits are extensive enough to supply the world's demands for an indefinite period.

From the time when the ore enters the crushers until the finished product reaches the casks it is untouched by human hands. It is carried along from point to point by automatic arrangements through each process of manufacture. The impalpable dust and poisonous gases generated are so dangerous that the atmosphere of the plant has to be kept pure by artificial means. As a further precaution the works are provided with hot and cold baths, of which the men are required to make use as soon as their daily task is completed.

At the present time the output is three tons of white arsenic a day. When one stops to think of them, these figures contain some startling possibilities. The output for four days would furnish a fatal dose for every man, woman and child in the United States. In a few weeks the plant could turn out enough arsenic to wipe out the entire population of the globe.

Pat's Answer to the Sergeant.

An Irish soldier was crossing a barrack square with a pail, in which he was going to get some water. A sergeant, passing at the time, noticed that Pat had a very disreputable-looking pair of trousers on, and, wishing to make a report, stopped the man and asked:

"Where are you going?"

"To get some water."

"What! In those trousers?"

"No, sergeant, in the pail."

Queens' Names in Public Places.

Many English queens have chosen oak trees in Windsor forest whereon their names, with the dates of their choice, have been commemorated by means of brass plate. In different parts of the forest, with seats around them, are oaks bearing the names of Queen Elizabeth, Queen Caroline, Queen Charlotte and Queen Victoria.

Francis Newton Thorpe, author of several constitutional histories, has written "A Short Constitutional History of the United States," which Little, Brown & Co., Boston, will publish.

It is said that Gertrude Atherton's "Rulers of Kings" will not be published in Germany because "Tauchnitz dares not publishes it." It may not be the precise truth, but it is a fairly good story and a much better advertisement.

"The Wolverine," by Albert L. Lawrence, is a new romance of love and politics. It scenes are laid in Detroit just before Michigan became a State, when that Territory and the State of Ohio were nearly at open war over the boundary line.

Tudor Jenks, who was for many years on the editorial staff of "St Nicholas," has written the first volume in A. S. Barnes' new series of "Lives of Great Writers," under the title of "In the Days of Chaucer," to which Hamilton Wright Mabie has contributed an introduction.

Owen Kildare, who has sprung into wide fame in a very short time, has written a new book with the striking title, "The Good of the Wicked," a story of Bowery life in New York, which the Baker & Taylor Company, New York, will publish, together with "The Party Sketches," heretofore published serially.

Frederick S. Isham, author of "Black Friday," just published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company, is a native of Detroit. After he was graduated from the high school he devoted himself to travel abroad, setting down at the end of that migratory period to student life in Munich. Twelve months later Bohemian London became his next place of abode. For two years he attended the Royal Academy of Music in Hanover Square. From this fraternal and artistic atmosphere Mr. Isham came home to the busy life of newspaperdom. He served in various capacities on the Detroit Free Press and other papers. Mr. Isham's previous novels, "The Strollers" and "Under the Rose," were both extraordinarily successful and "Black Friday" seems destined to an equal popularity. The actual writing of the book was done in a villa overlooking the sea on the north coast of France.

Maarten Maartens, the author of "Dorothea," lately published by the Appletons, and of many other novels, related recently an anecdote of his boyhood days, when he was spending the summer at Barbizon, the home of Jean Francois Millet. The future novelist, who was about ten years old at the time, was sitting on a gate-post watching a dog fight. The participants were his landlord's dog and a neighbor's, in which the stranger was eventually killed. Young Maartens was so excited at the tragic outcome that he fell off his perch on top of the animals, just as the neighbor's wife rushed out of her house across the road, and accused the boy of killing her dog. The old woman saw the marks of the teeth on her dog's throat, and then glanced suspiciously at the little foreigner. "Come here, little boy," she called out, "and show me your teeth!" "But they didn't fit," Mr. Maartens hastens to explain when he tells the story.

It is only a few months since the veteran actor-manager, John Coleman, was buried. He died before the last proof-sheets of this book reached him. Its two volumes must have given him great satisfaction, had he lived to see them in print. Rarely is such a vast array of interesting narrative and unusual incident packed into the space Mr. Coleman gives to his life story. "Fifty Years of an Actor's Life" is one rapid succession of illuminating pictures of such people as the Kembles, the Keans, the Siddons, the Cushmans, Macready, Charles Dickens, Sir Robert Peel, the Queen even; Lady Blessington and Count D'Orsay, Disraeli, Louis Bonaparte, Edwin Forrest, the Terrys, Kate and Ellen, Henry Irving. A thorough-going Londoner, a man of high ideals for the stage, one whose name is inseparably connected with the Shakespeare memorials at Stratford-on-Avon, Mr. Coleman understood in the writing of his autobiography what would interest the most casual reader.

AMERICAN COLLEGE GIRL.

She Has Much More Freedom than Her European Sister.

The American woman's college is a thing wholly amazing in European eyes, according to this critic. No European educational institution would think of allowing to its inmates such a luxuriousness of surroundings as appears in the American girl's college room, the extreme simplicity of the food being the only thing common to both types of educational community.

To the uninitiated beholders, the American college girl's room, with flags and posters and sporting souvenirs and class symbols, with men's pictures on desks and dressing table, might be a college boy's.

On the other side of the ocean young women are supposed not to keep young men's portraits in their rooms, just as they are not supposed to meet on equal terms of comradeship the subjects of the aforesaid pictures. The absence of books in the room and the conspicuous presence of candy boxes and fruit baskets might also strike the European observer as peculiar.

All this corresponds with a radical difference in the life of woman students in America and in Europe. The European girl goes to her university purely for learning, and in the lower educational institutions it is the same. Study is the business of life, and only those fortunate ones who have friends and relatives to take them out occasionally and give them a good time ever get any fun.

In America the college is a school of life, with all sorts of activities besides study. The European college girl has to find out after she leaves college everything that her American sister learns while at college, though occasionally in old Europe a girl has a chance of getting out of her life perhaps more experience and at least the same amount of pleasure as the American girl does, although in a way entirely different; this is a girl who attends a university for men and enjoys in the old world, among hundreds of men, the perfect freedom of movement and the feeling of independence which characterize the happy life of the American college girl (happy in that she realizes by herself an ideal of free and intelligent life, without the inevitable strain which comes to the same life when lived by one girl among a crowd of men).

The chief characteristic of the American woman's college is well defined, the critic proceeds, by the historical words, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

To the college girl's happiness many elements are co-operating, among which, notably, are papa's checks and the advantages depending thereon, faculty rules forbidding a schedule of over so many hours a week or more than a certain number of courses for the semester; constant anxiety on the part of "Prex" and "M. D." lest the young buds of hope break down under the strain of study, and so forth.

This last appears particularly strange to the European mind. No one gives a thought there, it appears, to the effects of study on the health of the students. "We may moan, sigh or revolt," says the writer, "we may strike, protest or die in the attempt from the serene Olympus of the faculty the gods watch with calm, unruffled brow the struggle of the nonentities down in the halls of learning."—Outlook.

The Sense of Sight.

Like every other sense, that of sight improves by use under healthy conditions, and therefore the people who have the greatest exercise of their vision in the open air under the light of the sun have the best eyesight. Generally speaking, savage tribes possess the keenest eyesight, acquired through hunting. Natives of the Solomon Islands are very quick at perceiving distant objects, such as ships at sea, and will pick out birds concealed in dense foliage some sixty or seventy feet high. Shepherds and sailors are blessed with the gift of good sight.

Eskimos will detect a white fox in the snow a great distance away, while the Arabs of the deserts of Arabia have such extreme powers of vision that on the vast plains of the desert they will pick out objects invisible to the ordinary eye at ranges from one to ten miles distant. Among civilized peoples the Norwegians have better eyesight than most, if not all, others, as they more generally fulfill the necessary conditions. The reason why defective eyes are so much on the increase in this country and in Europe lies in too much study of books in early life and in badly lighted rooms.

Elephants Good Workers.

Any one who thinks the elephant a slow, clumsy beast would have cause to change his opinion on seeing him at work along the river of northern Siam. The rainy season, which begins in April, is the time when the teak logs, cut during the dry season in the forests about the upper waters of the Menam River, are floated down to Rahang, where they are caught and rafted to Bangkok. Instead of red-shirted, spike-shoed "river drivers" such as handle the logs in their downstream journey to the sawmills on the Penobscot and Kennebec in Maine, the "lumber-driving" of the Siamese rivers is done by barefooted, half-naked men on elephants, and the "bone" labor and much of the thinking involved in the operation are done by the elephants.—St. Nicholas.

If a woman has had trouble AND twins, the bright side must be under too many layers to be worth looking for.