EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

Are Advantages Disadvantageous.

ARE wealth and ancestry handicaps which so heavily weight an aspirant for success and honor that when he wins in spite of them, he is entitled to extra credit? Frankly, we do not believe it. The number of those of obscure origin who attain conspicuous success in life is very much greater than the number of those born to the advantages of wealth and a distinguished ancestry who do this, for precisely the reason that white sheep yield more wool than black sheep—there are a great many more of them. It should also be remembered that to maintain a high level of intellectuality and general capacity is much less conspicuous than to rise from the obscurity of poverty and illiteracy to a place of influence and honor.

To say that wealth and a distinguished ancestry are a handicap to one who wishes to be in the highest degree useful in life is no more true than it would be to say the same of a good constitution or a system free from hereditary taint. To say that they diminish the incentive to struggle with and overcome obstacles is true enough, since one who starts with great advantages does not have so far to lift himself and need not do as much hard work in hand-over-hand climbing. That in many instances the sons of rich and even great men show degeneracy and relapse into obscurity is unquestionably true, but it would not be difficult to show that poverty, an illiterate ancestry, and the lack of incentive to self-improvement hold millions annually at the bottom round of the social ladder, because they are incomparably better fitted to stay there than to ascend. Heredity counts for a great deal, and it is a safe generalization that the better a man's ancestry the better his chances of developing a high, well-directed, and sustained ambition. That this is not an inflexible law of nature is a cause for congratulation. If it were, society would gradually stratify into castes. As it is, the fact that some are steadily sinking from the top to the bottom while more are as steadily, and much more rapidly, rising from the bottom to the top, and that between the bottom and the top is the great mass of solid, common-place, right-minded citizenship to which the highest and the lowest strata contribute with every generation, establishes the existence and operation of a law not founded on a sentimental concept of the disadvantage of advantages nor of the advantage of disadvantages.—New York Times.

Schools Slur Study of English.

ENGLISH is one of the most pliable and adaptable of tongues. It has plundered all languages of their riches. It has the greatest of all literatures, save that of Greece, and it has the advantage over Grecian literature of being concerned with modern life and being a living speech. English, probably, will become one day the universal language.

Until very lately our pedagogues seemed to have overlooked English as a medium of education. Earlier scholastic curricula made Latin and Greek the main forces in the higher education. The college boy of twenty years ago was stuffed with Cicero and Virgil, Demosthenes and Homer. . . .

Then came the scientific movement in the schools. Laboratory work was declared to be the great educational method. Physics, chemistry and political economy took the place of Latin and Greek. The humanities fell into disrepute and almost into desuetude. The old college graduate felt almost ashamed of his classics in the presence of the supercilious young man that had been brought up on physical science.

But physical science, it is now admitted, is not sufficient for liberal education. A writer in the Popular Science Monthly confesses that there is undoubtedly too much narrowness, and too little general culture, an outward and visible sign of which is the bad Latin published by many of the younger men in the form of zoological names. Experience proves that language and literature are necessary studies to produce clear and exact thinking and its correlative, clear and exact expression.

Why not, then, make English supply the necessary humanitarian element in education? English has been slurred hitherto in the schools, for the student was supposed to pick it up casually. The result was that the average student in the scientific courses did not pick it up at all and left college with but scant knowledge of the English tongue and literature.

If English were a prescribed study in all schools and colleges and were taught thoroughly the common speech of the land would soon improve and the diction of our writers would become correct and more elegant. We lack pride in our language and conscientiousness in the use of it. It is time some literary mission work were done.—San Francisco Bulletin.

The Panama Canal.

THE treaty signed by Secretary Hay and Dr. Herran, the Colombian Minister, is a long step taken toward the construction of the Panama Canal by the United States. A special session of the Colombian Congress will be held in the spring to consider the treaty, and the option of the French company, which will undoubtedly be extended.

The canal will cost the United States: (1) $40,000,000 to be paid to the French company, the present value of its charter and construction work as computed by the Walker commission; (2) $10,000,000 down and $250,000 per year after ten years to the Colombian Government for the concession, including the Panama Railroad; and (3) the further expenditure of $145,000,000 on the canal is authorized by the act of 1902; more may be needed. The lease from Colombia runs 100 years and is renewable by the United States. And by an arrangement with Great Britain most creditable to the common sense of her statesmen the United States will have exclusive control of the canal strip, subject to arrangement with Colombia.

Of the 46.5 miles of the canal one-half will lie at sea level, and this portion is nearly completed. Thirteen miles more will run in a lake created in the valley of the Chagres by a dam at Bohio, which will impound half a cubic mile of water. The remaining ten miles, the famous "Culebra cut" across the backbone of the continent, presents the greatest difficulty. It will probably be passed by a section about seventy feet above the sea. And the sides of the cut will tower more than 300 feet even above that level. The canal will be nowhere less than 120 feet wide at the bottom and usually considerably more. The locks planned by the French company were to be 738 feet long, but the rapid increase in the size of ocean craft may dictate a greater length. The minimum depth of ten metres (32.8 feet) planned by French engineers may also be increased.

These facts convey some impression of the magnitude of the undertaking. Its total cost will be more than twice that of the Suez Canal, more than five times that of the Kiel Canal in Germany. From an engineering viewpoint it will be one of the wonders of the world; its usefulness to trade will be vast and rapid in growth.—New York World.

A Woman's Happiest Day.

WHAT is the happiest day in a woman's life? Three hundred New York club women met recently to find out. One woman plumped for the day and moment when the carriage arrived to take her on her honeymoon, "because she was leaving all her old clothes behind her, although she would probably want them again in a month or so." Another speaker declared boldly that the happiest day of a woman's life was when she struck a real bargain. In support of this she instanced the woman who, on hearing that a bank had lowered its interest to 3 per cent, scraped together all the money she could lay hands on, and deposited it forthwith. The demoralizing effect of feminine clubs was seen in the contention of a third orator, who argued that no woman was so happy as when she had read her first paper at a woman's club meeting, and had seen an account of it in the papers the next day. A fourth said the happiest day never came, because it was always in anticipation; and a fifth declared it wasn't a day at all, but a moonlight night. On the whole, a man is more puzzled than ever as to how to trim his sails.—London Chronicle.

DESIGN FOR MOVING SIDEWALKS TO RELIEVE CONGESTION IN CHICAGO STREETS.

Moving sidewalks are the latest proposal to relieve the congestion in the "down-town" part of Chicago. The Multiple Speed and Traction Company, of Chicago, which owns the patents and which proposes to solve the problem, suggests the building in a subway of three parallel moving platforms, one going at the rate of three miles, another at the rate of six miles, and the third at the rate of nine miles an hour. The fast moving platform is furnished with seats and the passengers can step from one to the other walk without being jolted. It is calculated that a triplex sidewalk of this kind will be capable of transporting 63,000 persons an hour.

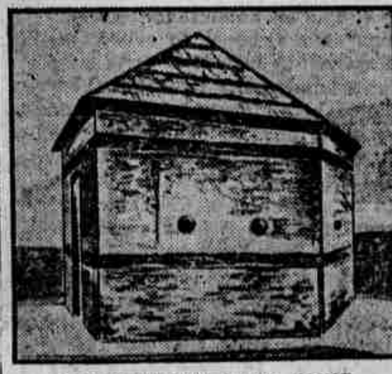
A REVOLUTIONARY RELIC.

Famous Block House of Old Fort Pitt Threatened with Destruction.

Unless the patriotic societies which are at present striving for its preservation win what seems at present an almost hopeless fight, the famous block house of old Fort Pitt will soon be torn from the spot it has occupied for almost a century and a half, and Pittsburg will lose its one relic of prerevolutionary days—the only notable historic building of any period, indeed, remaining in the city.

The block house was built as an outpost of old Fort Pitt, from which Pittsburg received its name, and which covered the ground previously occupied by Fort Duquesne. It is precious for its associations not only to the city and State in which it rests, but to the whole nation. It stands on the point of land where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers flow together to form the Ohio.

This point, famous in history as "the Forks of the Ohio," was the spot for the possession of which the first blood was spilled in the French and Indian wars, and remained a strategic point of the greatest importance all through the long struggle of the Latin and Anglican races for the mastery of North America. The land surrounding the block house property has now been bought by the Pennsylvania Railroad, which proposes to lay tracks and make extensive improvements all through that section. If its plans are carried out the block house will fall a victim to the march of progress.



OLD FORT PITT BLOCK HOUSE.

The Pittsburg Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which owns the block house and the nine acres of ground in which it stands, aided by the American Historic and Scenic Preservation Society of New York city, is now preparing for the final battle which shall decide whether or not Pittsburg may keep for itself this monument of so many momentous events in the history of our country. In their struggle the daughters have the sympathy and support of that city's most intelligent and influential citizens.

The importance of "the Forks of the Ohio" as a military basis was recognized first by Washington, when, a young man of 21, he was sent by Gov. Dinwiddie, of Virginia, to the commander of the French forces who had invaded the region of the Ohio river "to know his reasons for invading the British dominions while a solid peace subsisted." It took Washington nine days to reach the "lonely spot where the rapid Allegheny met, nearly at right angles, the deep, silent Monongahela."

"I spent some time," writes Washington, "in viewing both rivers. The land in the fork has the absolute command of both. The flat, well-timbered land all around the point lies very convenient for building."

So in imagination Washington built a fort and a city where the block house and Pittsburg now stand. When the French had declared their intention of taking possession of the Ohio, the first thing Washington called to the attention of Gov. Dinwiddie was the necessity of building a fort at the "Forks," securing this important position. Dinwiddie at once dispatched an officer with a small party of men to start the desired fortification, and gave Washington his commission as lieutenant colonel and a body of 150 men in order that he might take command at the "Fork," finish the fort already begun there and hold the territory against the enemy.

Before Washington could carry out these plans, however, the French, led by Contrecoeur, came down from Venango and captured it from the little band of English then in possession. Contrecoeur completed the fortification of the post, and for the governor of New France named it Duquesne.

Throughout the remainder of the war the efforts of the English were directed, above all, to the capture of Fort Duquesne. It was in marching against it that Braddock met with his defeat and death, and it was his heroic behavior during the terrible retreat from the Point that first brought Washington prominently before the notice of the colonies and won him his first laurels as a commander. Three years later Washington again led English troops against the French at Fort Duquesne, this time successfully. The French set fire to the fortifications and escaped down the river by the light of the flames. The immortal William Pitt ordered the rebuilding of the fort immediately, and from him it received its name. The recapture of Fort Duquesne had given the English undisputed possession of the Ohio and brought the French and Indian wars to a close.

Of Ancient Origin.

Men address their friend and comrade, the dog, in their own language; but for every other domestic animal they have a special language, and it is a notable fact that each of these languages can be traced back either to the first settlers of the country in which it is now used or to some country at the other end of the globe.

Almost all Europeans, when they wish to stop a horse, say "Ho!" or "Whoa!" In like manner the old Greeks and Romans said "Oh!" and the Hindoos, as far back as three thousand years ago, said "You," which is a Sanscrit word and means "Stop!" An English milkmaid, when she starts to milk a cow, says "Soh!" and in Sanscrit the word "Sah" is the imperative of the verb "to keep still." English shepherds, when they call their flocks, cry "Caday!" and in the old Anglo-Danish tongue "Cade" signified "lambs." Finally, farmers call a calf "bos" or "bossy," and "bos" is the Latin name for an ox. These farmers, however, use even a more extraordinary word, for they cry "cobos" to their cattle when they wish them to lie down, and this word is composed of "bos" and of the Sanscrit "gou," which means "stretch yourself out at full length."

Absence of Smoke in Berlin.

According to consular reports, Berlin, although a busy manufacturing city, is one of the cleanest and best kept in Europe. The smokeless condition of the Berlin atmosphere is ascribed to three facts—the preponderant use of coke and briquettes, which are practically smokeless; the skilful scientific construction of boiler furnaces and chimneys, and, finally, the high standard of skill that is taught and enforced among firemen who stoke furnaces with coal for steam and manufacturing purposes. Before a man can assume such a charge he must be taught the theory and practice of economical, scientific firing, by which the coal is distributed in such a manner and quantity over the grate surface as to secure the most perfect combustion of its volatile elements. The Silesian coal used in Berlin in most large steam plants and factories is rich in bitumen, and would rank below many of the bituminous coals of the United States, and yet the long, dense, trailing clouds of smoke so familiar a sight in many American cities are rarely seen in that section of Germany, where the indiscriminate shovelling of raw bituminous coal into the steam and other furnaces is considered an ignorant and wasteful proceeding.

Artemus Ward's Difficulty.

The author of "Meditations of an Autograph Collector" tells the following story of two men who were widely known forty years ago, but for quite different talents:

The student of American history does not need to be told that the great glory of Gen. John A. Dix was the memorable order, in the dawning days of the Rebellion, which made him forever famous: "If any one attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot!"

That utterance gave an electric shock to the loyal heart of the nation. Artemus Ward, in pretended concern, made the general merry when he said, in his modest, hesitating way, "But—general—suppose he hadn't any spot?"

An eccentric man is one who praises his neighbors—but he is never considered so by the aforesaid neighbors.

WORLD'S HIGHEST MINE.

Sulphur Deposit in a Mountain 17,520 Feet Above the Sea Level.

The highest mine in the world is in the crater of Popocatepetl, Mexico, which was recently sold by its former owner, Gen. Ochoa, to an American syndicate for a sum said to be $5,000,000. The mine contains immense quantities of sulphur, and the supply is supposed to be practically inexhaustible.

Popocatepetl is 10,520 feet above the level of the sea, and the crater containing the sulphur has a circumference of half a mile and a depth of 250 feet. Not all of this volcanic mountain belongs to the syndicate, as Gen. Ochoa's grant from the Mexican government only included the bare, rocky surface of the mountain areas covered by eternal snow fields. No part of the mountain on which a tree, a blade of grass or a shrub finds lodgment ever belonged to Gen. Ochoa, and consequently could not have been transferred.

In the securing of the sulphur Gen. Ochoa employed Indian laborers. These were lowered into the crater by means of large baskets which were regulated by a windlass. When the baskets were filled with the sulphur they were raised and emptied, and in this primitive fashion the mining operations have been conducted for years. So rich, however, is the crater in sulphur that Gen. Ochoa has become immensely wealthy. It is estimated that a ton of sulphur accumulates in the crater every day. The mineral is brought from the depths of the earth by the ebullitions which are almost constantly going on. It is expected that the syndicate will apply modern methods in extracting the mineral.

VOLCANO OF POPOCATEPETL.

A HIGH-PRICED DINNER.

Owner of a Dog that Did Not Eat It Must Pay for Repast.

The Paris newspapers have lately printed the account of a strange lawsuit which the Green Bag reports for its American readers. The complainant in the case testified that he was dining on the terrace in front of a restaurant, enjoying the air as well as the food. He had just begun to eat his soup, which he found too hot for his palate. While waiting for the soup to cool, he took from his pocket a roll of bills which he had received in payment of a bill.

In counting the money he accidentally dropped a hundred-franc bank note into his soup. He took it out of his plate with a fork, and sent the soup away. The bank note was saturated with the greasy liquid, and he laid it down on the table cloth to dry.

He was partaking of the second course, when a sudden gust of wind blew the note off the table. He ran after it, but a dog, which, although it wore a collar, and therefore in all probability had a home, yet showed every sign of hunger, seized it. The taste of the soup on the paper made it palatable, and the dog swallowed the note in an instant.

The complainant used all his persuasive power in an effort to get the dog to come near him. "Good doggy! Come here!" he coaxed.

The animal, pleased with the taste of the soup, was finally lured near enough for the complainant to read the name engraved on the collar. When he had made a note of the name and address of the owner of the dog, he dismissed him with a Scotch blessing.

Then he sought his lawyer, and brought suit against the owner of the dog for the restitution of the hundred francs.

The court decided that the owner of the dog must pay, holding that since the dog was property, the owner must be held responsible for any act committed by the animal.

No Delay.

Mamma, on hearing that her sister had received a new little girl, said to Lillian, her little daughter:

"Lillian, auntie has a new baby, and now mamma is the baby's aunt, Papa is the baby's uncle, and you are her little cousin."

"Well," said Lillian, wonderingly, "wasn't that arranged quick!"—Little Chronicle.

Place for a Learned Man.

Managing Editor—What is your specialty?

Applicant (haughtily)—I have just graduated from college.

"Well, you might accept the position of editor-in-chief until some of your knowledge wears off."—Life.

A writer without ambition is almost as bad as a poet with an idea.

Call a man a donkey and it's up to him to kick.

WOODEN LEGS AND REAL ONES.

Modern Inventions Counterfeit Nature Almost Perfectly.

In the case of a man who had been awarded $3,000 for the loss of a leg by a railroad and who had appealed the case, deeming the compensation too small, a Chicago judge has decided that artificial limbs should be accepted as part recompense for the loss of real ones. During the trial, on appeal, witnesses were introduced by the railroad who testified that though supplied with artificial legs they could get around as lively as persons with real ones, could dance and ride the bicycle. To this testimony the appellant strongly objected, whereupon the court handed down this ruling:

"Art and invention have done much to mitigate the inconveniences occasioned by the loss of limbs and to restore the power of locomotion and the earning capacity which otherwise might be greatly lessened or lost, and evidence tending to show facts of that nature is competent for the consideration of the jury."

During recent years the progress made by artificial limb makers has been wonderful. An interesting story is told in this connection of a man who was lost in a blizzard in the wilds of the Dakotas. When he was finally picked up he was so badly frozen it was thought he would die, but by careful nursing a part of the man was saved—that is, his trunk and his head, both in a damaged condition. It so happened he had some money and was able to piece himself out.

After he was sufficiently recovered from his injuries he was brought to Chicago and taken to an artificial limb maker, who was told to go to work on the foundation and see what he could build. In the first place he put on two artificial legs, and the man could walk.

The next job was to furnish the man with two arms, and this was done after much work, and the battered trunk, dressed in the latest fashion, began to look like a human being once more. The man was still minus both his ears and his nose and one eye, while his hair had all fallen out. The artificial limb maker said he could fix the ears and nose all right, and he went to work and made a pair of ears for his man, fitted them on and then took up the task of a nose. This was the most difficult of all, but finally a very neat celluloid proboscis was made, which was held in place with spectacles. The man next got a wig and a glass eye and went out a new man in the real sense of the word.

Wonders are certainly performed in the way of making artificial limbs. Time was when the peg leg was the only thing known, and the man who lost one of his lower limbs had to go stumping through life with a wooden peg. Now he takes $100 and goes and gets him a new leg, and one that is about as serviceable as a flesh and blood one, not subject to corns, rheumatism, and the other ailments to which flesh is heir.

It is only about a century ago that the first artificial leg was made, and it was considered one of the wonders of the world. It was called the Anglesea leg, from the fact that it was made for the marquis of that name. This first limb was wonderfully and fearfully made, as heavy as lead and as clumsy as an iron leg. Since that time great improvements are made, until to-day a man with an artificial leg can walk, run, jump, hop, skip and do nearly everything that the man with flesh and blood legs is able to accomplish.

EASY FOR PITCHERS NOW.

They Have a Snap Compared with Stars of Bygone Days.

Baseball pitchers in these days think they are performing wonders if they officiate in two games a week. If they were asked to go in the box more than twice they would imagine they were being worked to death.

Looking back, however, to the days when John Clarkson, Tim Keefe, Charley Radbourne, Ed Crane, Charley Sweeney and other famous boxmen were in their prime one cannot help feeling that the star pitchers of modern times are enjoying a comparative snap. When Radbourne was a member of the crack Providence team in the National League he was called on to pitch every day. The box was only fifty feet from the plate, to be sure, but "Old Rad" had the best fadeaway in America before him day after day. He had marvelous speed when he wanted to use it, a wonderful slow ball, great curves and a head filled to overflowing with gray matter. Day after day "Rad" pitched, winning constantly and soon creating a furore in the baseball world. Providence, as a result, won the National League championship in 1884, and Radbourne was famous all over the land.

In 1894, when the New Yorks were making a great bid for the pennant, which was won that year by the Baltimores, Manager Ward during the last month of the campaign induced Amos Rusie and Jouett Meekin to pitch every other day. Both were giants in build and depended chiefly upon speed. They pitched phenomenal ball, and within another week added to the schedule they would have landed the pennant in the metropolis. As it was though the New Yorks came second. Rusie and Meekin practically won the series for the famous Temple Cup by their fine work in the points. But that was the last year either showed the form which had brought him to the front rank of pitchers.

As late as 1900 McGinnity, the "Iron Man," consented to pitch every day for the Brooklyns toward the close of the season, for Hanlon thought he had a chance of winning the pennant. McGinnity did not appear to be affected by the extra work, but on the contrary appeared to relish it, as he received a bonus for the job. But even since then the "Iron Man" has not been the same in point of effectiveness.

Managers of top-notch reputation have profited by these incidents in baseball history. They want to preserve their valuable pitchers as long as possible, so they readily consent to the two games a week proposition and proceed to hire half a dozen boxmen.

We'll Forget.

We'll forget the winter—its wrath and wrong—
When the sun comes out and the days are long,
When the blooms bend down
With the bees in brown,
And the wind to the river sings its song
And the blooms fall thick where the daisies throng!
—Atlanta Constitution.

Before you let a boy sit in front of an electric fan, tie his fingers.