

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

Comments and Criticisms Based Upon the Happenings of the Day—Historical and News Notes.

Admiral Alexieff is pretty strong proof that opportunity does not always make the man.

Ireland's population increased 10,000 last year, so there need be no worry over the police supply.

Canned hash is a delicacy that has just been added to the regular army ration. All the comforts of home!

It is extremely probable that Panama will have no objection to turning over the malarial fever problem to Uncle Sam.

An Eastern clergyman argues that there are no female angels in heaven. Wonder where they go to when they leave the earth.

France's last potato crop was over 450,000,000 bushels. That's big enough to make the Irish emigrate, and to turn Patrick into Patrique.

Korea has formally recognized the Republic of Panama. It is doubtful if Korea will be able to recognize herself after the Orient war is over.

Congressman Powers predicts the disarmament of the nations of the world in the present century. The other powers are yet to be heard from.

A stranger was found in New York recently with thirteen fractures in his skull. But what was a stranger doing in New York with a flimsy skull like that?

The Empress Dowager of China has ordered fifty more automobiles. She evidently intends to get even with the people who have been starting all these rumors about her being dead.

One of the young war correspondents has discovered that exploding shells are likely to hurt the people whom they hit. This was the way they acted in this country forty years ago.

If the five Mrs. Joseph F. Smith all put their heads out of the window in house cleaning time and cry out to Joseph to beat it a little more on the other side, where does the polygamist idea get its strength?

It is noted by a Kansas paper that in a recent prairie fire a man and his team of horses were fatally burned. The horses were at once shot to put them out of their misery. The man had morphine pumped into him and was compelled to pass four horrible days divided between periods of stupefaction and periods of untold agony.

President Clark, of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, when paying his bill at a railway restaurant well beyond the arc circle, was greeted by the cashier with the familiar colloquialism, "How are all the folks?" The questioner, a young Swedish woman, had lived in America for several years, and had only just returned to her arctic home. Dr. Clarke says the artless little Americanism amid the snows of Sweden brightened the journey for many an hour.

The national House of Representatives has granted to Mr. Degetau, the resident commissioner from Porto Rico, the privileges of a Territorial delegate, which include a place on committees and the right to participate in debate and to introduce bills, but not to vote. He was last year admitted to a seat in the House, a privilege not originally granted him. The Hawaiian representative has long been a full-fledged delegate, since his government has a regular Territorial government. Few processes are more interesting than the successive steps by which the insular dependencies are becoming merged into the political organization of the republic.

The movement just inaugurated by some women's societies to observe throughout the country the birthdays of eminent women might appropriately be made a general one. It is one of the first steps taken toward proper recognition of the work done by women in forming and making our country and upholding its ideals. A well-known educator, a gentleman and a scholar, has recently been calling attention to the inadequate representation of women in the public schools. Whether the reason for this lies, as is claimed, in the fact that men are the authors of the histories, or is based on a deeper cause, the fact is certainly patent to everyone that public recognition of women's worth and work on a plane with that accorded to men has been scanty and meager.

A recent magazine article tells of the "Plain Heroes of Science." These were the men of the United States government survey, the explorers and map-makers employed in the early days of the gold excitement in Alaska. Though their time was their own they calmly laid out the gold fields in a community that was mad over gold and made no effort to share in the riches which was their own for the taking. The writer says the spectacle of the self-sacrificing rectitude of the government employes was an "illad of good government." True. But the spectacle is duplicated every day in every day life. Every day men and women choose between dollars and duty. Every day men and women choose goodness rather than gold. We say this is a materialistic age. So it is. It is also an altruistic age. Men and women everywhere are coming to understand that human life is of value in what it gives, not in what it gains. Oh, we have our money grabbers, plenty. But we have also a countless host of silent heroes who would rather be right than rich. To give oneself up to duty with a smile on one's face, to live and work for others—to absorb only to spend—this is becoming more and more the commonplace heroism of our day. What a pitiable figure does

he make, when his life is summed up, who has any other ideal.

President John Finley, of the College of the city of New York, estimates that the college graduate has one chance in forty of "succeeding in life," whereas the man who hasn't been to college has only one chance in 10,000. It is unfortunate that President Finley has not made clear what he means by the phrase "succeeding in life." Until that foundation is definitely fixed, any such figures as he presents can be nothing more than mere speculation. Success in life is relative. To no two minds does it mean the same. To no two conditions can it be alike applicable. The success of the farmer, for instance, who adds to his lands, rears his family in righteousness and passes his days in peace and content, far from the turmoil and triumphs of more swiftly-moving life, would not seem to the lawyer, the politician or the city merchant to be a success at all. The crossroads store keeper may be a success in life in his own estimation and that of his neighborhood, though his brother of the city, who thinks in chunks of millions, cannot help looking down upon him in scorn. There can be no material standard of success, for the reason that the outlook, the aspiration and the attainment of any man are his alone. No two can occupy the same viewpoint. No two can regard success from the same mind and heart. The school teacher, who ever gives, may cut a sorry figure in a biographical dictionary, beside the millionaire, who ever gets. But in the real building up of the intellect and morality and happiness of the world it is she who is the giant and he the pigmy. The poor underpaid preacher whose congregation is small because he preaches religion unadorned may in the common estimate be a failure. But who can foretell the harvest to come from the pregnant seed thus sown in good ground? Another generation may see a mighty church arise, that some rich man puts a gorgeous window in and calls his monument. Which is the more successful life—the one that builds a great window or the one that stimulates the spirit which makes a church? Possibly nine-tenths of us have no other serious purpose in life than to get the best living we can. We are absorbed in our own little affairs—our wants and enjoyments, ailments and ease, jealousies and envies and hatreds and loves. The greater the degree to which we satisfy our wants and triumphs over our enemies the greater our success—we think. But to gratify our wants is only to create new ones. Human longing is like a sea—the more we pour into it the more it spreads. The millionaire longs for more as eagerly as does the poor man. Content does not lie in the direction of acquisition or indulgence. Success in life consists in fitting oneself to one's environments, and one thing more—elevating the environment. Whether college education helps or hinders depends upon the man and the environment. Higher education would not help a digger of ditches or a mere grubber after money. But it is indispensable to men whose interests and pursuits extend beyond themselves. If education were what it ought to be—character development—it would make every man more successful in life. But unfortunately it is not always that.

TOO LARGE TO BE USEFUL.

Diamond Had to Be Broken Before It Could Be Marketed.

In Jewellers' circles great interest has been awakened by the announcement that cutting operations have been commenced on the great Jagersfontein Excelsior, the largest and finest diamond in the world. The stone was held for ten years before its owner could make satisfactory arrangements for its cutting, which has now been undertaken by a firm in Amsterdam, Holland. It was transported from London to Amsterdam under special police protection and a carpeted room, with a specially made safe, has been provided for its care during the process of cutting and polishing. The responsibility of handling and guarding so precious a stone may be gathered from the fact that its value may be almost anything. When discovered it was estimated to be worth \$1,000,000, but in its finished state it will command a fabulous price.

The story of the discovery of this wonderful gem is of no little interest. It was found on June 30, 1893, at Jagersfontein, in the Orange Free State, South Africa. The stone was picked up by a native while he was loading a truck and, although a white overseer was standing near him, he managed to secrete it and keep it on his person for some time. In this case, however, it did not appear that he proposed stealing the gem, but only wished to deliver it personally to the manager. This he did and as a bonus he received \$750 and a horse, saddle and bridle. The diamond weighed in the rough exactly 0.713 carats, or about 7 ounces avoirdupois. It is of a beautiful bluish-white color and shaped like the broken-off end of an icicle. The diamondiferous monster measures 3 inches in length, 1 1/2 inches in greatest and 1-3/8 inches in least breadth. The Excelsior has now been broken into sixteen pieces, the largest three of which are 158, 147 and 130 carats, respectively. These individual gems, in themselves of extraordinary size, will be, when fully cut and polished, among the finest in the world and the value of the original stone will thus be multiplied.—South Africa.

Snipe in an Irish Bog.

A young Englishman was being driven past a promising-looking Irish bog the other day and inquired of his jockey if there were any snipe in it. "Is it snipe, sorr?" was the reply. "Shure, if ye went in widout a gun they'd ate ye."

His Opportunity.

"He seems to have got rich suddenly."

"Yes. He happened to have a Russian historical romance ready just as the war broke out."

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