The Oregon Scout

JONES & CHANCEY..... Publishers.

UNION, OREGON.

GOVERNMENT CLOTHING STORES.

United States Soldiers Supplied at Cost Prices with Good Goods.

The largest clothing, boot and shoe store in this country is run by the United States, though they sell things down at cost prices, and there is no profit in it. Every army recruiting station is a branch store where supplies are dealt out. It is different from ordinary stores, in that the United States treasury furnishes the money that buys the boots, hats, blankets and clothes, and the money that buys from the United States also comes from the treasury. Besides his pay each soldier in the regular army has an allowance for clothing which varies from $178.85 to $228.49 for his five years' term. This is only from $35.77 to $45.69 a year. If the soldiers had to go around and buy their own clothing at ordinary rates they would not have a new coat more than once every other year, and they would have to sleep in their underclothes to keep warm.

So the United States has gone into the business of supplying their ordinary things to soldiers at the bottom price at which the contracts for them can be made. There is no rent, nor salesmen's salaries, nor insurance, nor profit to be paid by the government. As a result the prices at which clothing is sold to the soldiers are so low that many working men who are paid four times as much wages as the soldiers are not clad as well. The blue coats cost $3.38. They are made of good material, well cut, and are better fitting than the uniform of the average policeman, for which he pays several times what the soldier pays. His caps cost forty-nine cents. His stockings cost nine cents a pair, and they are better than the Bowery stores sell for a quarter, while the forty-nine cent caps are as good as any man could want. For his blue trousers the soldier pays $2. They are so cheap that he can buy half a dozen pairs with his month's pay, which is more than many young men who look down on soldiers can do.

The two bits of extravagance are the flannel shirts and the blankets. The shirts cost thirty-eight cents more than the trousers, but they are as good shirts as can be bought at any price, and they do not shrink into a woolly ball when they are washed. The blankets are sold for $4.28. It is easy enough to go to almost any dry goods shop and buy cheaper blankets than the soldiers have, but these blankets are wool and weigh six pounds. One pair of them is enough in cold weather, and they are warmer than several pairs of cheap blankets. The United States consider the health of their soldiers, and though they economize on the caps and trousers, they supply the best woolen shirts and blankets.

There are various kinds of shoes that sell from $1.76 to $3.04. Then there are heavy stockings that sell for more than the nine cents that summer stockings bring. There are underclothes for sale that are of such a good quality that the officers often wear them in preference to the underclothing that they can buy in the usual way.

The United States go further, and supply all the necessities of the soldiers at cost prices, and their cost rates are frequently lower than those at which a private storekeeper could buy, as the United States buy in large quantities and are sure pay. It also tends to increase a manufacturer's outside trade if he gets large garment contracts, and a big manufacturer with a large stock on hand can afford to sell to the United States at cost. If he sold at the same rate to private sellers they might cut retail rates, while the United States sell to nobody but soldiers.

When a recruit is sworn in the sergeant takes him into the clothing room and fits him up with a full outfit. The cost of it is taken from his pay, though at the rates at which the government sells it does not take him long to pay up. No one may buy clothing in this way from the government except soldiers, and it is a crime for any clothing to be given or sold to any one else. If the government were to sell to everybody at the same rate the business of the furnishing goods stores in the neighborhood of recruiting stations would be ruined.—New York Sun.

Slovenliness in Verse Making.

Men and women who seriously take up the business of verse writing should, in my opinion, declare to themselves that they will write nothing but perfect rhymes. They may not be able to turn off good poetry, judged by the highest standards; their verse may halt now and then, owing to a defective ear; the metaphors they use may be hackneyed; their rhetoric far fetched or milk and watery; their style a poor, pale imitation of that particular master whom, in their reading, they have most lived with and loved. All this may be, for reasons, beyond their power of remedy.

But one thing they can do, and should do always, namely, see to it that their rhymes are not false rhymes, or rhymes for the eye alone, but true ear rhymes, where there is an actual agreement and consonance of sound. Hardly any poetaster alive is incapable of knowing such a rhyme when he sees it or, by the mind's ear, hears it. A poem is, after all, and primarily, a musical production, hence any falling short of its musical demands injures the poem by just so much, and the rhyme at the end of the line is one of the most distinct and well known methods of securing this desired music.—Richard E. Burton in The Writer.

The Breezes of Cape Town.

Of all the desolate, unkempt looking places in the world the suburb of Cape Town we passed through under the shadow of the mountain is the most unkempt and desolate. It is not an acceptable side of the town, and no one lives here who can possibly avoid it, for here the celebrated southeaster round the "Cape Doctor," as the Anglo-Indians called it, blows the strongest, and the "Cape Doctor's" strongest is no joke.

Where it comes from no one quite knows, for it is a purely local wind, and it always seems possible to get behind it by going a few miles to the windward. Some people aver that it is brewed on top of the mountain and comes down just upon Cape Town itself and nowhere else. There are all sorts of queer things going on on top of this mountain, witness, for instance, the celebrated white tablecloth that hangs over it whenever a south wester is at work. But wherever it comes from it is an unmistakable reality, as you soon learn, for it whirls barrow loads of gravel in your face, or spins you around like a teetotum at the street corners.—Foreign Letter.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE.

WANDERING THROUGH PASSAGES UNDERGROUND.

Descent in the Passenger Shaft—Gloomy Passages and Narrow Tunnels—Mules as a Motive Power—The Miner and His Drill—The Blast.

The entrance to nearly all mines disappoints preconceived notions. One cannot say exactly what he expected, but he certainly expected something different from the reality. Here, for instance, there was no indication of the existence of the mine save in the presence of the breakers and the huge pile of culm. At a short distance from the breaker was a little shed about ten feet square, and yawning in this was the mouth of the passenger shaft. The other shaft, up which are hoisted the the cars loaded with coal, opens directly into the breaker.

As we gathered about the passenger shaft the car was hoisted several times, bringing up a number of miners and laborers, and all looked like imps from the infernal regions. Their bodies and clothing were black as jet from smoke and coal dust, and the only white one could see about them was the whites of their eyes. In their caps were extinguished torches, which still gave out a black and sullen smoke. Men we found them, talking freely of their lives and rather enjoying the curiosity they inspired. Their appearance, and the mouth of that black shaft leading down a sheer 300 feet into the bowels of the earth, led some of the party to conclude that they would enjoy a bird's eye view of Providence on the surface rather than tempt Providence under ground. So less than forty made the descent.

Each of us was given a little torch, and then we gathered about the shaft. The elevator is simply a platform like a freight elevator, with no railing at either side. Above it is a hood to keep off the water constantly dripping down the shaft from the seams in the rock. Ten at a time we crowded upon the elevator, the torches flaring up around us and filling our lungs with smoke. The signal was given, and every heart sank a little as the car rushed swiftly down.

Perhaps I reveal a woeful ignorance when I say that I expected to see as soon as I stepped from the car a vast rugged chamber, glittering with distant lights and alive with eager workers. I had read descriptions of mines and seen pictures of them, and yet this delusion clings to me. But in one instant vanished all these chimeras, and I beheld a narrow tunnel, so low that I involuntarily stooped my head, whether such a proceeding were necessary or not, and darker than midnight. On either side were walls of coal, glittering strangely as the rays of light fell upon them, and hewn into all sorts of irregular shapes and narrow recesses. But the roof or ceiling seemed as smooth and polished as marble. The vein of coal runs of almost uniform thickness, and the slate above and below forms a comparatively level floor and roof.

Along this narrow passage we wandered, the light from our flickering lamps making the darkness ahead the more impenetrable. At short intervals were chambers where the coal had been mined more extensively, but between all chambers pillars at least thirty feet in thickness were left to support the tremendous weight of the superincumbent rock. And in the chambers themselves were joists and beams of wood erected for the same purpose. One could scarcely realize that all these passageways and chambers were carefully laid out by engineers and surveyors, and that plans were drawn, marking all the turns and divergences as accurately as the map of a city.

But such was the case, and not a blow of the pickax is struck that is not foreseen, and so two passageways approach each other from opposite directions, and are finally united in one. At intervals are heavy, air tight doors of wood, which serve the purpose of breaking the currents of air, give a perfect circulation, and allow the steam fans to exhaust the fire damp that may have accumulated in any chamber, no matter how far distant. As these were closed behind us they gave a crash like thunder, every sound being magnified by the rocky walls. Finally, when we had gone hundreds of feet from the shaft, we began to see dim and twinkling lights in the distance, and to hear echoing cries, the crash of loaded cars rolling along the rail, and the clang of steel on the sullen rocks. Mules furnish the only motive power, and perhaps it is because of their well known stubbornness that they needed such vociferous direction that for minutes we would hear shouts and cries that were echoed until they seemed to come from a hundred lungs. Then we would range ourselves close along the walls and up would rumble and clatter and clash a loaded car, drawn by several straining mules and driven (or rather directed, for no reins were used), by a boy as black as the coal itself, his eyes glittering strangely in the light from the smoking lamp stuck in his hat band.

And finally we reached the miners themselves, for all the men we had previously seen were merely the laborers. Each miner had a chamber to himself, and into the walls he was viciously digging his drill. Of course his eyes get accustomed to the semi gloom, but to us it seemed as if he must work solely by the sense of feeling. The miner we surrounded told us that he was almost ready for a blast. While we waited a car rolled noisily up to a pile of broken coal, and a black and grimy laborer caught up a shovel and sent the lumps thundering into the car. Before it was filled the miner told us that his charge was ready and bade us go around the nearest corner. Fifty feet away we were halted, and then came an anxious pause, each one agitated somewhat, if the truth must be told. Then came a loud and reverberating roar, followed by the crash of tumbling rock. The earth shook beneath our feet, and from the slate roof, a foot above our heads, splinters of rock seemed to fall around us. Perhaps no one really expected the roof to fall and crush us, but there was a sigh of relief when the blast was over. We hurried back to the chamber with the smell of powder in our nostrils. A jagged hole was pierced in the coal, and as we looked through the smoke and dust, a blackened and demoniac face appeared at us from its depths. The blast had opened a passage directly through into the adjoining chamber, and the face was that of the good natured miner on the other side. The coal that the blast had loosened lay heaped in confusion by the opening. So shattered had it been by the explosion that it could easily be broken by a pickaxe into size convenient for handling. Nothing then remained but for the laborer to shovel it all, large and small lumps and even the dust, into a car, that was hoisted into the breaker.—"F. W. H." in Albany Argus.

INDIAN GHOST CHARMS.

Diseases Attributed to the Malignancy of Evil Spirits—Propitiating the Ghosts.

The dread of ghosts is common to all the aboriginal races of India, from whom it has been very generally adopted by their Aryan conquerors, and even by the lower classes of Mahometans. All ghosts are believed to be mischievous, and some of them bitterly malicious, and the only means employed to oppose their rancor is to build shrines for them, and to make them offerings of a fowl, a pig, or, on grand occasions, of a buffalo. Any severe illness, and more especially any epidemic disease, as smallpox or cholera, is attributed to the malignancy of certain of these spirits, who must be propitiated accordingly. The man tiger is, perhaps, the most dreaded of all these demon ghosts, for when a tiger has killed a man, the tiger is considered safe from harm, as the spirit of the man rides upon his head, and guides him clear of danger. Accordingly, it is believed that "the only sure mode of destroying a tiger who has killed many people is to begin by making offerings to the spirits of his victims, thereby depriving him of their valuable services."

The ghosts most propitiated are of those who have met a violent or untimely death, whether by design or by accident, including poison and disease. Even women who die in the child bed pang or wretches who are hanged for their crimes are believed to have the same powers of causing evil to the living as those who have been killed by tigers, or by lightning, or by any other violent cause. All these deified spirits are often distinguished by some term denoting the manner of their death; thus, the "Toddy Ghost," the ghost of a man who was killed by falling from a toddy (palm) tree; the "Tiger Ghost," the ghost of a man who was killed by a tiger; the "Lightning Ghost," the ghost of a man who was killed by lightning; the "Snake Ghost," and so on. The ghosts of women who die during pregnancy or in childbirth are supposed to be specially powerful and vindictive. Most of the deceased persons whose spirits are now worshiped were the ancestors of some of the aborigines, and as Gen. Cunningham, the head of the archæological survey of India, says, their worship is generally local, and confined to the limits occupied by the respective tribes to which they belonged.

The ceremonies observed in propitiating the ghosts consist mainly of the offerings of goats, fowls or pigs, as well as flowers and fruits, of the recitation of prayers, and of the singing of certain mantras, or charms, the last being the most important of all. These charms, which are always sung by men at the different shrines, are of two different kinds—the "Sabara charms" (Sabara being the name of one of the aboriginal tribes) and the "mystical incantations." The former are addressed to the deified ghosts of the dead, the performances being generally carried out in the country, or the place where the corpse was burned, and the latter are used for the purpose of compelling spirits to appear and receive the orders of the performer.—London Graphic.

Laying a Railroad Track.

The track of a railway is never done. It is always wearing out and always being replaced. Some of the early English engineers, not appreciating this, endeavored to lay down solid stone walls coped with stone cut to a smooth surface, on which they laid their rails. They called this "permanent way," as distinguished from the temporary track of rails and cross ties used by contractors in building the lines. But experience soon showed that the temporary track, if supported by a bed of broken stone, always kept itself drained and was always elastic, and remained in much better order than the more expensive so called "permanent way." When the increase in the weight of our rolling stock began to take place, dating from about 1870, iron rails were found to be wearing out very fast.

Some railway men declared that the railway system had reached its full development. But in this world the supply generally equals the demand. When a thing is very much wanted, it is sure to come, sooner or later. The process of making steel invented by, and named after, Henry Bessemer, of England, and perfected by A. L. Holley, of this country, gave us a steel rail which at the present time costs less than one of iron, and has a life of five or six times as long even under the heavy loads of today. We are now approaching very near the limit of what the rail will carry, while the joints are becoming less able to do their duty.—Thomas Curtis Clarke in Scribner's Magazine.

How to Prolong Life.

We all condemn the suicide, but we fail to see that the voluntary shortening of the natural term of existence is nothing else than slow suicide. Instead of fixing our minds on the infirmities which the old age of an ill spent life sometimes exhibits, and for that reason despising and decrying old age itself, it would be a far more noble and manly course to nourish the natural desire of life, and to strive, in all rightful ways, to lengthen it as much as possible. Especially is this advisable because the same course which tends to prolong life also tends to improve and strengthen it.

Activity, without overwork, healthful living, moderation, self control, the due exercise of all the faculties, the cultivation of the reason, the judgment and the will, the nurture of kindly feelings, and the practice of doing good—all things, in fact, which tends to build up a noble manhood—also prepare the way to a long life and a happy and blessed old age.—Home Journal.

Diseases Have Special Seasons.

While it appears from the records of English health officers that some diseases have special seasons in which they are most likely to prevail, it is not shown that occasional variations in temperature have much influence in the matter. Scarlet fever is at its minimum from January to May, and at its maximum in October and November. Diphtheria is more evenly distributed through the year, and is most dangerous a little later than scarlet fever. Measles and whooping cough seem to be somewhat aggravated by cold weather, but are most fatal in May and June. Hot weather is averse to smallpox and favorable to disorders of the bowels, particularly in children.—Public Opinion.

Correct Color for Canaries.

Any canary that allows itself to be born yellow is sadly unfashionable and even vulgar. The correct color for canaries to be born is either red or from red down to a light cinnamon color. Longbreed cinnamon fetch the highest prices. It is all a matter of cultivation, and not an easy matter, either, for the reddest parentage is disturbed by the constant hatching of yellow progeny. The dark green birds, that were fashion's last favorites, are of no more account than yellow ones now.—New York Sun.

FLOWERS IN FOLK LORE.

REGARDED AS BENEFICENT IN POPULAR LEGEND AND STORY.

World Wide Admiration of the Rose—Anemone, Amaranth and Asphodel—Buttercups and Daisies—The Forget-Me-Not. Tradition of the Lily—Modest Violet.

The Syrians regarded the rose as an emblem of immortality. Chinese plant it over graves, and in the Tyrol it is said to produce sleep. Germans call the rose of Jericho the Christmas rose, and it is supposed to divine the events of the year, if steeped in water, on Christmas eve. It is said in Persia that there is a certain charmed day in which the rose has a heart of gold. Another tradition relates that there is a silver table on a certain Mount Calassy, in India, and on this table lies a silver rose that contains two beautiful women who praise God without ceasing. In the center of the rose is the triangle—the residence of God.

It is said that if a white rose blooms in autumn an early death is prognosticated, while an autumn blooming red rose signifies marriage. The red rose, it is also said, will not bloom over a grave. Rose leaves are sometimes thrown on the fire for good luck, and a rose bush may be made to bloom in autumn by pruning it on St. John's day. Here, as well as in France and Italy, it is believed that rosy cheeks will come to the lass who buries a drop of her blood under a rose bush. In Posen, young women assure the fidelity of their lovers by carrying a rosebud in the breast. Rose leaves are chosen for divination in Thuringia, the maiden having several lovers scattering a leaf named after each one on the water; the leaf that sinks last is the true lover.

ANEMONE, AMARANTH, ASPHODEL.

The anemone was regarded as the symbol of sickness in ancient Egypt. It was fabled to have sprung from the tears wept by Venus over Adonis. The amaranth would, says Pliny, recover its color if sprinkled with water. It was a symbol of immortality, the word meaning "everlasting." The asphodel was its opposite, meaning "regret." The spirits of the dead were thought to subsist on this flower. The bachelor's button is so named because youths carried one in the pocket to divine their success in love. If the flower died, it was an ill omen. The flower basil is a test of purity. If it is put under the plate of an impure maiden in Voigtland, she will not touch it.

Our familiar buttercup was so named from an idea that its consumption increased the butter producing quality of the cow's milk. Cows never eat them, but they grow only in dry, rich pastures. The columbine was anciently called a "thankless flower," and was the emblem of forsaken lovers. The meek little daisy, opening its eye with the light of the planet Venus, has always been a favorite with the poets. Its star form caused it to be an object of superstition, and German maidens prognosticated their fortunes with it.

The forget-me-not is one of the flowers that in German lore guard treasures entombed in caverns. The Swiss regard with superstitious feeling the little edelweiss (our cat's foot or everlasting). Its Swiss name signifies noble purity.

LEGEND AND TRADITION.

The common marigold is named in French Soucis (care). In Breton legend, if touched by the bare foot of a pure hearted person on a certain morning, it gives power to understand the language of birds. The crocus signifies unrequited love. The poppy is a well known symbol of death. The snowdrop is sacred to the Virgin Mary. The primrose is an important flower in folk lore. The Germans name it "Schlussel blume," or key flower. It is fabled to open the way to treasures.

The lily is traditionally the emblem of Diana and Lilith, Adam's second wife. To the people of India and Egypt it typified fertillity, to the prophets it had a mysterious signification. It is potent against witchcraft in Germany, if gathered with prayer. Spanish superstition credits it with the power of restoring to the human shape any one who has been transformed to an animal. It is a remedy for venomous bites in England, and it was formerly thought that the number of flowers on the finest stem indicated the price of grain for the season.

The thistle, gathered in silence, was formerly a valued charm. It was sacred to Thor, and was one of the many plants that protected dwellings from lightning. In England, the milk thistle is "Our Lady's thistle," and the plant is well known as the national emblem of Scotland. Lastly, there is the modest violet, type of humility. Mohammedans are fond of it, as their founder revered it as a type of his religion. It was the badge of mediæval minstrels, and a golden violet was the prize in the poetical contests at Toulouse.—F. S. Bassett in Globe-Democrat.

The Bull and the Band.

The village of Strinesville has a new brass band. It played its first piece the other day, considerately going some distance out of the village to do it. That delicate consideration probably saved the life of a Strinesville small boy, but it killed Farmer Stauffer's valuable young Jersey bull. At the time the band went out to play the bull was feeding in its pasture, which was near the spot chosen by the band. While the band was getting its collective lip ready to compel a tune from its horns, the small boy referred to was taking a short cut through the pasture to reach the band. The bull took note of the small boy's presence, and proceeded at once to hasten his trip across the lot. The band had not seen the procession moving through the meadow, although the bull was mouthing his displeasure lustily as he ran, and the small boy was lifting up his voice in audible and penetrating tones. The bull was within three jumps of the boy when the band had got ready to play. The band played. At the first burst the bull stopped short, threw up his head and sniffed the air. The instruments blared again. The bull turned and rushed wildly toward the stone wall. The band threw its soul once more into its horns, and the bull sprang over the wall. He came down on his head on the other side and broke his neck.—Harrisburg (Pa.) Cor. New York Sun.

He Was Doubly Grateful.

A certain minister of our acquaintance was invited to dine with a member of his flock who, though well enough off in the goods of this world, lived sparingly in his greed for the dollars and cents. When dinner was served the host said: "I can't give you nothing but bacon and greens, parson; it's all I can afford these hard times. Will you ask a blessin'?" The minister responded: "Lord, make us truly thankful for what we are about to receive. We expected nothing but greens—and behold! here is bacon also. Make us truly thankful!"—Smithville (Ga.) News.

Sheep Herding in New Mexico.

At daybreak the flock gets up—each sheep opening himself to erectness, much after the fashion of a four bladed jackknife—and begins grazing. The shepherd has to unlimber himself then, also, and after breakfast his monotonous routine begins again. In winter he has an unmistakably tough time. Fearful storms and hungry beasts scatter his sheep to the four winds of heaven, and he has to hunt them up at all hours of day and night and bring them together again. Instead of the firm summer sward of New Mexico for tramping ground, he is up to his knees in mud, or to his waist in snow altogether too often for comfort. He lives in snow and sleet and razor edged winds. His flock is like a thousand babies just beginning to walk—that is, in the amount of care required. The shepherd has to take them to the best grazing place lest they starve to death. Sometimes they are caught in a snow so heavy that he has to go off and get a band of horses or cattle, drive them through the drifts and thus make a path through which the sheep may emerge to lower valleys. When the grass is too deeply covered he has to cut down pinon trees, upon whose piney needles the sheep browse greedliiy. When there are sick or exhausted sheep that lie down and will not budge, he has to take a grip in their wool, lift them to their feet and shove them along—perhaps carry them in his arms.

He was to keep the flock constantly changing base, that they may not stop twice on the same ground and thus breed disease. The general yearly range of a flock of sheep is within a radius of thirty miles, and up and down and across this area the shepherds keep shifting them. When there is snow on the ground the sheep drink no water; but the burros of the pack are not so conveniently constituted, and would die of thirst if the shepherds did not melt snow for them to drink. In the east sheep have to be "salted," but here in place of salt they eat alkali, and once a month the shepherds take them down to some water course, along whose banks they find abundance of this abominable stuff, which I believe would forever bankrupt the internal economy of any other animal.—New Mexico Cor. Globe-Democrat.

Not a Very Clear Idea.

A very pretty commentary upon the intelligent way in which much philanthropic work is done was afforded the other day by a vivacious lady who is often concerned in such labor. She was relating to a friend how much difficulty she and a few other pious souls had in raising a sum of money sufficient to send a female missionary to Constantinople.

"We did have to work so hard," she said pathetically. "People absolutely refused to be interested. We held fairs and made people buy things, and we had parlor concerts and actually forced our friends to take tickets, and we sewed and we begged subscriptions. But now we've got the money it is worth all our trouble to see the zeal of the young lady we are going to send out. Of course she won't introduce religion at first, until she's won their regard, but she's bought a Turkish grammar, and she is so eager to begin to civilize the Turks, and she has such clever ideas about how to go to work, too."

"But how will she go to work?" the friend inquired. "What will she teach them first?"

"Oh, all sorts of nice things," the other returned rapturously. "Things that tend to elevate. She'll teach them to—to—why, to eat with knives and forks and not to have harems and to sit on chairs."

Her friend asked no more questions.—Boston Courier.

A Prophecy of the Weather.

The weather seems to run in cycles of about seven years, that is, when we have a hot summer, it is always followed by a cold one, and it takes about seven years to reach another equally hot. It will be remembered by many that the summer of 1867 was very hot, and so dry that during August the grass crumbled under the feet when trod upon. The summer of 1868 was noted for its coolness, the thermometer very seldom getting above 85 degs., and we did not reach the top wave of thermality again until 1874, when it was extremely hot. The following summer was cold to a remarkable degree. From then on the summers grew gradually warmer until 1881, which was excessively hot and very dry, no rain falling for over nine weeks, and there were more sunstrokes that summer than there has been in all the summers since.

The summer of 1882 was quite cold, a few flakes of snow fell on the morning of July 4, followed by hail in the afternoon, and during the rest of the month and through the month of August the temperature was so low that overcoats were necessary for comfort, particularly at night. The summers since 1882 have grown warmer, and last summer was a moderately hot one, but unless all signs fail, the coming summer will be the climax of the cycle, and a hot, dry season may be expected.—Indiana Pharmacist.

Compressed Gas for Car Lighting.

It has been urged that the use of compressed gas for lighting cars is attended with the danger of the gas exploding in the event of a collision. The imaginary nature of this danger was shown by the recent accident on the Philadelphia and Reading, where an escape of compressed gas from a leaky hose simply burned for a few moments without any explosion.

Experience in Germany has been of a similar nature, and a recent collision near Birkenhead, Eng., between two trains lit with compressed gas was unaccompanied by any explosion. At the time of the collision between the Hoylake and Mersey tunnel trains the gas in the latter was alight. The gas cylinders of the smashed coaches were taken from the debris and tested to a pressure of 150 pounds per square inch, and they were found to be entirely uninjured beyond a few severe dents. The gas fittings of the remaining portions of both trains had not suffered in the least through the collision, and, with the exception of those in the smashed cars, not a single lamp glass was broken in either train.—Scientific American.

Courage of an Army.

Discipline, that well spring of victory, is recognized as one of the most potent means of raising the standard of courage in an army. It teaches men that their best reliance is in their own bravery; gives them confidence in each other; removes the fear that they may not be properly supported in emergencies; convinces them that they are part of an intelligent machine moving methodically, under perfect control and not guided by incompetency, and establishes that esprit de corps which goes so far toward making armies formidable in war. It was discipline which enabled the commander of the troops on board the English ship, when foundering, to form his men in line on deck, present arms, and go down with the vessel, while the band played "God Save the King."—Gen. Horace Porter in The Century.

The Matter of Slang.

"Miss Hauteur," said one of the pupils of an Indiana boarding school for young ladies to the principal, "we want to ask you a question before we recite."

"Certainly, my dears; ask as many as you wish."

"Would one of we girls ever be justified in using slang?"

"You certainly would not," replied Miss Hauteur with quiet firmness.

"We frequently hear educated and cultivated people employ it in their conversation," insisted the young lady.

"That may be only too true; but it is no excuse. We cannot fall into all the ways practiced by even the so called educated and cultivated. For my own part," continued the principal, as she sat up very straight on the edge of the chair and glanced at the text book she held in her hand, and again raising her eyes, "for my part I will allow the boreal blasts to whistle through my whiskers a very long time before I will indulge in the use of slang."—Chicago Tribune.

Stray Jokes.

When a man becomes firmly convinced that he is a genius it is then that the fringe slowly begins to form on the bottom of his trousers leg.—Scranton Truth.

The man who imagines that his existence is necessary to the movement of the world is generally buried in a pine coffin without trimmings.—Nebraska State Journal.

Thomas Nast, the caricaturist, was unable to lecture in Bismarck, as it was impossible to heat the hall in which the lecture was to be given. It must be a pretty cold day when Nast can't draw a house.—Norristown Herald.

Philadelphia has a parrot that prays. Send him as a missionary among the countless profane and fallen of his race.—Martha's Vineyard Herald.

"If you saw the man rifling your trousers," said the magistrate, to whom a citizen had complained of being robbed, "why didn't you grapple with him?" "Well, you see, your honor," said the citizen, "I was afraid of waking up my wife, an' she's the darndest coward about burglars you ever see."—The Epoch.

The occasional contributor dropped into the sanctum wearily. Seated at the desk was a beetle browed tramp printer. "Are you the male editor?" softly inquired the visiting contributor. "Nay," answered the apparition, poising a proof slip in his delicately discolored digits. "I am the calf editor. Do you wish to be elitist?"—Washington Critic.

There is a restaurant waiter in Lincoln who deserves to be honored. A patron said to him yesterday: "Waiter, pass me those molasses," and he replied, "How many?"—Lincoln (Neb.) Journal.

Two New York electricians have invented a flying machine. As both of the inventors are still alive, of course they have not yet practically tested their contrivance.—Norristown Herald.

The secret is out at last. The elevated railroad guards call out the stations in Volapuk.—New York Tribune.

A Lucky Trip.

"What have you been doing for a living lately?" asked a very tough looking citizen of a man who looked as if he might be a boon companion.

"Burglarizing."

"What was your last job?"

"I tackled the residence of a real estate agent last night."

"Have any luck?"

"Yes; first rate."

"What did you get?"

"I got away without buying a house and lot."—Merchant Traveler.

Out of the Frying Pan, Etc.

Husband (with a sigh of relief)—New Year's at last! Thank Heaven! No more presents to buy, no more bills to pay. No more "father, buy me this, or father, buy me that;" no more, "John, dear, can you let me have some money, there's lots to buy?" It is over. A few more days and I should have been bankrupt. But the crisis has passed, the night is gone, the morn is breaking, the——

Wife (entering the room)—John, dear, the coal bin is empty.—Boston Courier.

Smallest Flowering Plant.

The smallest known flowering plant, scarcely visible to the naked eye, is Wolffia microscopica, a waterweed of India. Two species of the same genus, the larger about one-twenty-fifth of an inch in diameter, grow in the eastern United States.—Arkansaw Traveler.