

AN ENGLISH BILLION.

FEW APPRECIATE THE REAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD.

An English Writer Endeavors to Give a Few Illustrations in Order to Convey to the Reader a Comprehensive of the Emancipation of an Expression.

It would be curious to know how many of your readers have brought fully home to their inner consciousness the real significance of that little word "billion," which we have so often seen used in your columns.

Let us briefly take a glance at it as a measure of time, distance and weight. As a measure of time I would take one second as the unit and carry myself in thought through the lapse of ages back to the first day of the year 1 of our era.

Imagine two such walls running parallel to each other and forming, as it were, a long street. We must then keep on extending these walls for miles, nay, hundreds of miles, and still we shall be far short of the required number.

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Or in lieu of this arrangement we may place them flat upon the ground, forming one continuous line like a long golden chain with every link in close contact.

If we can further imagine all those rows of links laid closely side by side and every one in contact with its neighbor, we shall have formed a golden band around the globe just 53 feet 6 inches wide and this will represent over 1,000,000,000,000 of coins.

For a measure of height let us take a much smaller unit as our measuring rod. The sheets of paper on which The Times is printed, if laid out flat and firmly pressed together as in a well bound book, would represent a measure of about one-third of an inch in thickness.

The most amusing spot in town during inauguration week is the great reception room of the Arlington. You may look around and see more celebrities than you have fingers to count them on, but the sight of the great and mighty is not nearly so amusing as that of the large number of lesser people who want to keep them in sight.

"Where is X—Y—Z?" asked one of the former class of a very great man's friend. "He's up stairs. Do you want to see him?" amiably replied the other.

Let us pause to look at the neat plowed edges of the book before us. See how closely lie those thin flakes of paper; how many there are in the mere width of a span, and then turn our eyes in imagination upward to our mighty column of accumulated sheets.

Those who have taken the trouble to follow me thus far will, I think, agree with me that 1,000,000,000,000 is a fearful thing, and that few can appreciate its real value.

"This is my youngest boy, Mr. Cynicus," said the distinguished novelist. "They say he is very like me."

"Does he go to school?" "Yes. He can read quite well, but as yet he can't write."

CROSS TO HIS MOTHER.

He Wouldn't Make a Good Husband, She Concluded.

When I was 19 years of age, I must confess I was very fond of a nice young man who had come to see me for over a year, and we both looked forward to a happy wedding in the near future.

He stopped at an alley; then in we went to a very poor but respectable rear house. He opened the door, and a very lovely poor little woman stood in the room.

Then out he stepped as pleasant as ever to where I was sitting. "I guess we will start," said I. "Your time is your own," he said, not thinking that I had understood and seen.

Things made to look like guns are sold for as low a figure as \$25, but I want no such "gas pipes" at my shoulder. As the cheap watch keeps time in a fashion, so does the cheap gun perform.

If I had a fair young son, full of promise and with a few ounces of gray matter scattered through his intellect—if I took pride in the boy and dreamed of future presidential candidature or high position in church or state for him—just about the last place on the Lord's earth where I'd want to see him stand would be before, behind or alongside of one of those infernal machines known as a cheap gun.

Keeping Him in Sight. The most amusing spot in town during inauguration week is the great reception room of the Arlington.

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How One Girl Was Remembered. One of the older teachers at Mount Holyoke college remembers Miss Mary Wilkins, who was among the pupils for a year when she first came.

"I can't recall very much about her," she said in answer to eager questioning from some of the undergraduates. "She sat at my table, and it was her work as a freshman to remove the platters before dessert. She was very handy about that."

"Think," says the girl who tells this story, "of the wonderful Miss Wilkins borne in mind for nearly 20 years only for her handy way of taking a platter off the table."—New York Times.

Two Explanations of Dimples. According to an old legend the baby's dimples mark the spots where angels' fingers touched the child in bearing it from heaven to earth, but unromantic doctors have a different explanation.

WHY HE HATED THE BEAST.

An Extraordinary Request Which Excited the Curiosity of a Country Housewife.

"I never look at that old clock on the mantelpiece," observed my friend Mrs. W. as we sat in her parlor one evening last week, "that it does not call to my mind an amusing incident connected with my trip to the northern part of this state last summer."

"I was stopping," she went on, "in a quaint little village at the only hotel in the place. Every evening upon retiring I heard voices in an adjoining room. My curiosity naturally prompted me to listen. The conversation was usually of a commonplace order, but what really attracted my attention was this strange request nightly repeated:

"Now, Jovilla, put that infernal beast out of the way and cover him up!" It was a man's voice, gruff, though, I fancied, kindly. This peculiar request was invariably met with some such response as this:

"Oh, Tom, shame upon you! What would dear mother say if she knew how you treated her present?"

"The voice this time was distinctly feminine and rather shrill and complaining. Of course I was fairly consumed with curiosity. What manner of beast was this which the poor woman was thus obliged to 'put out of the way and cover up'?"

"Mr. Tom," I said to him one morning, "pray excuse my apparent rudeness and curiosity, but won't you tell me about that beast you keep in your room and why you wish to have it covered up every evening before you retire?"

"Jovilla, she's my wife, and she sets great store by her ma, which, between you and me at that theregapest, I don't. So 'long 'bout last Christmas the old woman give us a clock. It wasn't much to look at, but it had the awfulest tick you ever heard. Loud and solemnlike it was, and it made me that nervous I couldn't get no sleep of nights."

"'Now, Jovilla,'" says I, "'you'll have to put that tickin' beast—I always calls it a beast—out of the way or muzzle it or su'thin, or I'll smash it with a hammer, I will.'" So Jovilla she took it and wrapped it up in her flannel petticoat.

"'But may I never touch another drop of cider if the cursed thing didn't tick louder than ever. That kinder made me mad, and I told her that if I heard that tickin' ag'in I'd stop it for good."

"'So, you see, neighbor, Jovilla fixes it every night before she goes to bed so's it kin't make no noise. She just puts it in the washtub, throws a big fur robe over it, shoves it in the closet and shuts the door."

"'An' that neighbor,'" observed my rural acquaintance, "'is what I mean by coverin' up the beast.'"—New York Herald.

A Luxurious Shanty. If the intelligent foreigner who comes to New York includes Shantytown in his round of observation, it must surprise him to see what a difference exists between the rude huts of that district and the cabins of the very poor in Great Britain and France.

The Curious of Louis XVI. It has often been wondered what had become of the crucifix used by the Abbe Edgeworth at the execution of Louis XVI. Our Paris correspondent says it is now in the possession of the parish priest of St. Medard de Guisnoire, to whom it was given by one of his flock.

George—Why so gloomy? John—I am desperately in love with a Boston girl, and she said something last night that fills me with alternate hope and despair, because I don't know what she meant. She never sounds the "r," and she always gives "n" the broad sound.

George—Well? John—Well, I don't know whether she was talking about her heart or her hat. —New York Weekly.

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