

OUR POOR LITTLE EARTH.

A Mere Speck Compared With Some of the Monster Suns.

The main facts of astronomy are highly interesting. It is only dry text books that have made us turn away from them. Read a good popular astronomy and you will gain a dim, remote idea of infinity and eternity. Sometimes you think you see a big star, but you do not. You merely see the light from it which has been 2,500 years in reaching us.

Almost everybody knows that our earth is a third rate planet in our solar system. Jupiter would scarcely condescend to notice us. But they do not know that our sun itself sits below the salt. It would not be admitted to a congregation of important heavenly bodies. Canopus, the largest star that we see, is 10,000 times the size of our sun, and our solar center is hopelessly outclassed by Aldebaran, Rigel, Sirius, Betelgeuse and countless others.

Mark Twain put this fact very well in one of his stories, "Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven." When the captain arrived and announced that he was from the earth the recording angels could not remember ever having heard of such a place before. One finally recalled that it was a poor little planet belonging to a poor little solar system away down in a dark corner of the heavens.—New York World.

A BRIGHT IDEA.

Unusual Sagacity That Was Lauded by the Professor.

That the proverbial absentminded professor is sometimes ably abetted by his wife is illustrated by a story told of Professor Bansen. One evening about the usual hour for retiring he took it into his head to run over to the club just as he and maidan were returning from an evening call.

"But," said the lady, "I must have the front door locked before I retire."

This emergency staggered the professor, and as he looked bewildered at his wife the lady, seized with an inspiration, continued:

"I'll go in and lock the door and throw you the key from the window."

This program was carried out, and when he reached the club the professor related the incident to a friend as evidence of his wife's unusual sagacity.

The friend greeted the story with a roar of laughter.

"And why, my dear professor," he said, "did you not simply admit your wife, lock the door from the outside and come away?"

"True," ejaculated the learned man of science, "we never thought of that."

The climax of the incident was reached an hour later when, returning home, the professor discovered that the lady in her excitement had thrown out the wrong key.

How They Got Out.

Uncle Ephraim had two hogs, which he kept in a pen at the rear end of his little lot. They were of the "razor-back" variety, and, although they were fed bountifully with kitchen waste, it seemed impossible to put any fat on their attenuated frames. One morning when he went out to feed them they were not there. They had disappeared, leaving no clue to the manner in which they had made their escape.

"What's the matter, Uncle Eph?" inquired a neighbor, noticing the deep dejection with which the old man was looking down into the empty pen.

"My hawgs is done gone, sah," he answered.

"Stolen?"

"No, sah; I don't see no signs dat anybody tuck 'em."

"Did they climb out over the top?"

"No; dey couldn't a' done dat."

"How do you think they got away?"

"Well, sah," said Uncle Ephraim, "my 'pinion is dat dem hawgs kind o' raised themselves up an' sidge an' crope through a crack."—Youth's Companion.

Wonderful Memories.

We are told that Pascal never forgot anything he had seen, heard or thought. Avicenna could repeat by rote the entire Koran when he was ten years old, and Francis Suarez had the whole of St. Augustine in his memory. In three weeks Scaliger, the famous scholar, committed to memory every line of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." Another scholar, Justus Lipsius, offered to repeat the "Histories" of Tacitus without a mistake on forfeit of his life.

Writing For Money.

Fond Father—Yes, my boy at the varsity has written several articles for the magazines.

Friend—But he's not a professional writer, surely?

"What do you mean by 'professional'?"

"Why, he doesn't write for money?"

"Doesn't he? You ought to see some of his letters to me!"—Exchange.

Possibly True.

Mamma (to a friend who is lunching with her)—I don't know why it is, but I always eat more when we have company than when we're alone. Tommy (helping himself to the third piece of cake)—I know why it is; 'cause we have better things to eat.—Brooklyn Life.

Insult Upon Injury.

"And to make matters worse," complained the employee who had just been blown up by a premature explosion in a quarry, "when I claimed damages the foreman called me a blasted fool!"—Lippincott's.

Bind together your spare hours by the cords of some definite purpose.—William M. Taylor.

THE AGILE ESKIMO.

Habit Enables Him to Scale Ice Clad Heights With Ease.

"In all my experience I had never encountered a rougher, more difficult country in which to hunt than in Ellesmere Land," writes Harry Whitney in Quilling. "Ordinarily I should have believed these mountain slides, with walls of smooth rock sheathed with a crust of hard ice and snow, quite unscalable."

"In places they were almost perpendicular. Rarely did they offer a crevice to serve as foot or hand hold, and jutting points and firm set bowlders were too widely scattered to be of much help."

"In this his native land the Eskimo has a decided advantage over the white hunter. His lifetime of experience has taught him to scale these ice clad heights with a nimbleness and ease that are astounding. He is quite fearless, and even the mountain sheep is not his superior as a climber."

"As if by magic and with little apparent effort the two Eskimos flew up the slippery walls, far outstripping me. How they did it I shall never know. Now and again I was forced to cut steps in the ice or I should inevitably have lost my footing and been hurled downward several hundred feet to the rocks beneath."

"I was astonished even at my own progress, and when I paused to glance behind me I felt a momentary panic. But there was no turning back, and one look robbed me of any desire to try it."

"The Eskimo has no conception of distance. He is endowed with certain artistic instincts which enable him to draw a fairly good map of a coast line with which he is thoroughly familiar, but he cannot tell you how far it is from one point to another. Often when Eskimos told me a place we were bound for was very close at hand it developed that they were far from it. They they are never sure of and cannot indicate."

"The Eskimos have a white man 'stung to death' from every point of view. They not only can go to sleep promptly, but sleep soundly and well as they travel when circumstances permit. They get sustenance, too, by eating hard frozen walrus and seal meat or blubber. This I could never do, for it is so strong in flavor that it invariably nauseated me, though I did succeed very well with raw hare or deer's meat when I had it."

BLUNDERING REPORTERS.

Mistakes That Mangled the Speakers' Words and Feelings.

"Drunkenness is folly!" earnestly exclaimed Bishop Magee in the house of lords on a celebrated occasion. How horrified was the prelate to read in the papers next morning that he had given utterance to the very bacchanalian sentiment, "Drunkenness is jolly!"

Lord Salisbury was a master phrase-maker, but one of his best points was spoiled when a careless reporter turned his reference to "manacles and Manitoba" into the meaningless "manacles and men at the bar."

Sir William Harcourt was badly misquoted once. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" he exclaimed upon the platform, but a country paper had it: "Great Dinah! What a farce is this!"

Lack of knowledge of familiar quotations is a prolific source of misreporting. For instance, a speaker once made use of the well known lines from Milton's "L'Allegro":

But come, thou goddess, fair and free,
In heaven ye light Euphrosyne.

The country reporter deputed to "take him down" was in despair. He could not make head or tail of this mysterious utterance. But, following the sound as far as possible, he seized his pen and produced the following gem:

But come, thou goddess, fair and free,
In heaven she crept and froze her knee.

The speaker was taken down in more senses than one.—London Answers.

Knew Where He Was.

"When I was studying in Boston," said a musician, "they used to tell a tale about a man named Harper, an odd old character, who played a trombone in one of the small theaters there. One time they were rehearsing a new overture. Throughout the piece Harper was a little behind the rest of the men. Before they started it a second time the leader reproved Harper for not coming in more regularly with the other players. When they attempted it again Harper came in, as usual, two or three beats behind time. The leader stopped and, after letting loose a lot of profanity, demanded to know if the trombonist knew he was playing about half a dozen notes behind the others."

Harper nodded. "That's all right," said he. "I can catch up with the others any time I want to."—Philadelphia Telegraph.

His Great Loss.

"Well, Garge," exclaimed the farmer as he greeted one of his laborers one New Year's day, "and 'ow did 'ee get on last year?"

"Aye, maister," was the reply, "it wur a bad year for I. I did lose my missus, I did lose my canary, and I did lose my dog. And it wur a good dog too."—London News.

Self Protection.

"You didn't really need a wig," "I was driven to it. Now the barber won't try to sell me any tonics or hair restorer."—Louisville Courier Journal.

Never add the burden of yesterday's trouble to that of tomorrow. The one is past; the other may never come.

She Wasn't Afraid.

A crowd gathered on the street to watch a handsome fox terrier that was running about, nose in air. White froth was running from the dog's mouth.

"He's mad!" yelled a fat man.

The fox terrier stood in the center of the group with wide open eyes, either too mad or too frightened to move.

At this juncture the policeman arrived. A dozen voices began to tell him that the dog was mad; that it must be killed; that it had been snapping at the children; that it began to froth when it passed a pool of water, and how best to shoot.

A tall, quiet looking woman pushed through the crowd and started toward the dog. A dozen men yelled at her. Two or three men grabbed at her.

She picked the dog up and started out of the crowd. The policeman stopped her with:

"Madam, that dog is mad. He must be shot. Look at the foam coming out of his mouth."

"Foam!" she said contemptuously. "That's a cream puff he was eating."

—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Printing a Coin on Linen.

The print of a silver coin or medal may be made on silk or linen by dipping the fabric in a solution of nitrate of silver and stretching it over the face of the coin until the image is imprinted. The linen is sensitized by dipping it into a solution of nitrate of silver, made by dissolving sixty or eighty grains of nitrate of silver in one ounce of water. Wet the portion of the cloth which is to receive the impression in the solution and when nearly dry draw it over the face of the coin and tie it at the back. Expose to a weak light, and in a few minutes the raised design of the coin will appear on the linen. As soon as the print is dark enough remove and wash in clear water. When nearly dry iron it smooth with a warm iron, placing a piece of tissue paper over the print. In printing from the coin or medal it is advisable to paste a piece of paper on the reverse side, so that the silver will not come in contact with the sensitized fabric.

Student of Shakespeare.

The office boy sat in the corner busily engaged in reading a book. Strange to say, it was not "The Adventures of Bunco Jim," "Daisy Dean, the Demon Detective," nor even a thrilling narrative of more or less correct life on the plains. He was reading Shakespeare.

An expression of peace and joy was on his face that caused those who knew him to wonder if he had at last experienced a change of heart. His eyes sparkled, and his whole expression was one of happiness. Finally he turned to a worker at another desk.

"Say, Jim," he said, "I've got a question for you. Did you ever read Shakespeare?"

"Yep," was the reply.

"And d'yer know what he talks about?"

"Yep."

"Den maybe you can help me."

"What is it?"

"Well, I want to know which was de man, Romeo or Juliet?"—Youth's Companion.

Losing His Mind.

"Mother, guess you'd better send fer th' doctor," gasped Uncle Charlie Seaver as he sank into a chair and rocked back and forth, holding his gray head.

"Sakes alive! Ye haven't been and got the misery in yer head, have ye, Silas?" gasped his astonished wife, dropping a pin.

"I dunno what's the matter, but I've always had a hunch my mind 'd go some time. It's cum, I guess. I noticed th' trouble fust last week when I plumb forget to go up an' swear off th' \$100 assessment till it was too late. Then I neglected to go to th' school meetin' last night to fight agin the new commissioner. But, wuss and wuss, I didn't guess within eleven pound seven ounces of th' weight of Wal Weaver's big hog killed today. I guess my mind has gone all right. I'm about all in."

—Puck.

Tuning Forks.

The tuning fork was the invention of John Stone, royal trumpeter, in 1811. Though the pitch of forks varies slightly with changes of the temperature or by rust, they are the most accurate means of determining pitch. Tuning forks are capable of being made of any pitch within certain limits, but those commonly used are the notes A and C, giving the sounds represented by the second and third spaces in the treble staff.

An Incentive.

"Won't you try to love me?" he sighed.

"I have tried," she replied kindly, but firmly.

"My rich aunt has just died," he went on.

"In that case, dear, I will try again."

—Puck.

A Blunt Answer.

Mother (to her daughter)—You'd better accept Peter, my dear. He is a nice boy, though he may not be handsome. After all, good looks fade, don't they, papa? Father—Rather!—File-gende Blatter.

The Ways of Men.

Many a man who would be unable to find the family Bible if he hunted all day would have no difficulty in putting his hand on the corkscrew, even in the dark.—Chicago Record-Herald.

An Empty Dream.

Bobby—Say, sis, what's a "empty dream"? Doty—One you have when you've been sat to bed without any supper.—Cleveland Leader.

Liberty for the Wife.

The Grange may be called the liberator of the American farmer's wife, as it was the first organization that gave to woman the same privileges and rights as are enjoyed by man. In doing this it has not only turned on the radiant light of hope for her, but it has strengthened the union of both, has created deeper love for home, and given inspiration for better thoughts, nobler deeds, and higher aims for the future. Men need more of the refining influence of woman. There is nothing that so refines a man as a good woman, and no audience, association, or organization with woman eliminated can be so modest, so refined, or so complete as with woman in it.—National Grange.

William Yeckley, of DuBois, proprietor of the Central Hotel in that place, died Tuesday morning. Typhoid pneumonia was cause of his death. Hadonly been ill a few days.

New spring waists for ladies at Bing-Stoke Co.

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A Reluctant Candidate.

During a local election in a German town only one man appeared at the nomination desk.

"Whom do you nominate?" inquired the official.

"Myself," was the answer.

"Do you accept the nomination?"

"Well, no."

The officer laughed and said:

"Then we must try again. Whom do you nominate?"

"Myself."

"You accept the nomination?"

"No."

A subdued "Donnerwetter!" escaped the lips of the perplexed official, but he went on:

"For the third time, whom do you nominate?"

"Myself," came the invariable reply.

"Do you accept the nomination?"

The man rose up, and a smile of satisfaction spread over his face as he answered proudly:

"Having been three times solicited by my fellow citizens to accept the nomination, I can no longer decline to accede to their wishes." He then retired.

The Opal.

In judging an opal color is of the greatest importance. Red fire or red in combination with yellow, blue and green is the best. Blue by itself is quite valueless, and the green opal is not of great value unless the color is very vivid and the pattern very good. The color must be true—that is to say, it must not run in streaks or patches, alternating with a colorless or inferior quality. Pattern is an important factor, the several varieties being known as "pin fire" when the grain is very small, "harlequin" when the color is in small squares, the more regular the better, and the "flash fire," or "flash opal" when the color shows as a single flash or in very large pattern. Harlequin is the most common and is also popularly considered the most beautiful. When the squares of color are regular and show as distinct minute checks of red, yellow, blue and green it is considered magnificent. Some stones show better on edge than on top.—Exchange.

Kept Them Dancing.

A Washington official, speaking of blunders in the diplomatic service, told of a mistake committed by an American in Afghanistan. He said:

"This American entertained the shahzada for three days, giving him a very handsome suit of rooms in his house. The morning of the shahzada's arrival the American host visited him in his apartment and was amazed to see the royal guest and his entire staff hopping about the floor in the oddest way. They conversed politely and gravely; but, instead of walking, they hopped, taking great leaps of eight or nine feet. The host ventured to ask the reason of this hopping. The shahzada politely replied:

"You see, this carpet is green, with pink roses here and there. Green is a sacred color with us, so we are obliged to hop from rose to rose. It is good exercise, but rather fatiguing, I confess."

A Lively Office.

In his recollections in Blackwood's Magazine Sir Robert Anderson tells an amusing story of the days when he was employed at the home office. On his arrival one morning at the office he found a note from Sir James Ferguson's private secretary—his intimates called him "Creepie"—announcing that at 3 o'clock precisely an old hat, lately the property of the chief clerk, would be kicked off from the end of the corridor and requesting the favor of Sir Robert's presence. When Big Ben struck 3, Sir Robert heard Creepie's cheery voice ring out, "All on side; play!" They all turned out and the game began. On emerging from an unusually hot scrimmage Sir Robert became conscious of the presence of a stranger at his side, a timid little Frenchman, who meekly inquired, "Is ziss ze office for ze naturalization?" Sir Robert adds, "It was!"

Why He Cried.

The sympathetic neighbor asked: "Is your little brother ill this morning, Johnnie? I heard him crying in the most heartrending manner."

"No; not exactly," Johnnie explained, "but Willie pulled down a jug of molasses on himself in the pantry, and mother has been trying to comb his hair."—Exchange.

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