

MEASURING THE STARS.

What is Meant by First and Second Magnitude, and So On. The classification of the stars into orders of magnitude, depending on their apparent brightness, was undertaken a little hastily, with the result that many stars have been found which are brighter than stars of the first magnitude.

A star of the first magnitude is 2.5 times as bright as a star of the second magnitude; a star of the second magnitude is 2.5 times as bright as a star of the third magnitude, and so on.

Professor Ceraski has made measurements to determine the magnitude of the sun, reckoned in this way. By adopting different methods of measurements he reaches very accordant results, and it appears that our sun is a star of the -33.5 order of magnitude.

At the distance of a little over four light years - i. e., about 26,000 times its present distance - it would be a star of the first magnitude, so that, considered as a star, it is nothing out of the ordinary.

SAVING A CITY.

Duquesne's Method Was Unique, but It Pacified Madrid.

It was in the year 1808, after a battle in the Spanish revolution of that year, and the streets of Madrid were filled with angry crowds that were bent on destroying everything and every one.

"Give me a hundred muskets," he said, "and before nightfall I shall control all Madrid."

He must have been a man of rare personality to have been able to persuade the authorities in that dark hour to give him anything.

But he got the muskets and went out with them to wander through the city. While they played he sang - popular street songs or some old national air.

When these bored the listeners he mounted old boxes and told funny tales and got the populace amused and laughing.

By nightfall peace reigned in the city, and the mob broke up and went home to bed. The man's name was Felipe Duquesne, and he was only twenty-two years old when he cleverly achieved this result.

We are told a deal about heroic things in saving countries by long, terrible rides at night or by the sacrifice of oneself by dying in somebody's stead, but few of us hear of any one who saved a town by laughter.

Children in Korea.

With their short waists and full skirts a bunch of Korean girls look like old women. Very quaint are they and very wide awake as you see them squatted on the floor at a Sunday school or church gathering.

Breakfast Table Revelations.

To girls about to marry one would tender the advice that they study their intended victim at breakfast. If he is one feeding like forty, reject him as the direct descendant of Circe's herd of swine.

Missing Marks.

"I saw a stage Englishman in a play last night who didn't use the adjective 'bally.'"

Cause and Effect.

"I wonder why it is so damp and foggy in London?"

The School of Experience.

The average man never fully realizes the truth of the adage about a fool and his money until after he has bumped up against some other man's game.

A Mean Question.

"I have been to consult a beauty doctor about my complexion."

Fixing Up an Election.

A curious incident once occurred at Patton an election for parliament. Sir Mark Wood, who had been one of his members for several years, had as his colleague in the parliament of 1812 Sir William Congreve, the inventor of the famous "Congreve rocket."

Snow Ice Cream.

Snow ice cream - what a joy it used to be to the child heart! Mother used to make it when she had been importuned to "dis let us have one more cupful, mom."

Nicked Arteries.

A "nick" in an artery is sometimes more dangerous than its complete severing, for the coats of arteries are formed of muscular tissue, which contracts, and a slight cut at once expands into a round or oval hole, through which the hemorrhage continues unless the artery be tied.

A Question of Numbers.

Herbert Spencer did not agree with the scientists who favored the metric system. He said it is artificial and unsatisfactory, ten being divisible by only two numbers - two and five - and in one case the result is fifths.

Tracing It Back.

"Inquirer" says: "I am making a collection of the best examples of modern slang. What does 'double cross' mean?"

His Proposal.

"Can you wash clothes?" asked the timid young lover.

One Consolation.

"Beauty has vanished from earth," mourned Cholly Litebrane.

Easy Employment.

"I understand," said the letter carrier, "that some of those ancients did all their writing on rocks and bricks."

It Hit Him.

"Yes," observed the egg, "my theatrical venture was a great success. I was cast for the heavy villain and made a tremendous hit."

The Retort Fatherly.

"I want to marry your daughter. I love her," said the suitor.

No Trifles.

Gertie - I wish to show you that I don't stand on trifles.

The White Flag.

It is a great temptation to command a retreat to obtain breathing space when hard pressed by the enemy, and this is often done, although it is against the laws of war.

The old purpose of the white flag is to notify the enemy that their opponents wish to parley, and a commander has a perfect right to refuse such a request if he deems it necessary.

Floating Docks.

A floating dock may be likened to a box with neither ends nor lid. It is built of steel throughout, the largest type having a length of 850 feet and a width of 144 feet, while the walls are 66 feet in height.

Spiral Nebulae.

It is now an established fact that the majority of the nebulae known to astronomers are spiral nebulae. Their study is very important, and in particular a knowledge of these spectra is capable of furnishing valuable information.

Polish Peasant Girls.

Polish women have been known to fight on the battlefield and die in the cause of their country. And what seemed harder to some they have given up all their worldly goods in the same cause.

Train Times.

A passenger recently entered a railroad depot to take the 2:15 p. m. train. The clock in the waiting room was several minutes faster than the one in the office, and the passenger asked the porter which clock was correct.

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Tell Him No Fine Yarns.

"Men never bring to me about how much money they have."

Filling the Bill.

"I want to give a swell luncheon. What would you suggest as the first article on the menu?"

What concerneth every man is not whether he fall or succeed, but that he do his duty.

ORBITS OF THE PLANETS.

Why They Are Ellipses and Cannot Become Perfect Circles.

Every ellipse has two foci. Kepler's second law is, "The orbits of all of the planets are ellipses, the sun being in one common focus of them, all." All of the other foci are empty space.

That of the earth's orbit is now decreasing and, according to the French astronomer Leverrier, who took time to make elaborate mathematical researches in this part of astronomy, will continue to decrease during about 24,000 years, but will not vanish, making the earth's orbit an exact circle, and then will begin to increase.

The orbit of Venus now has the least eccentricity and is therefore nearer a true circle than any other orbit, but it cannot become a circle, one reason being the disturbance caused by the huge mass of the earth.

THE SILVER SWORD.

It Grows in Hawaii and is the Rarest Plant in the World.

The rarest plant in the world grows in Hawaii, a fact which is unknown to all but very few of the thousands of tourists annually visiting the paradise of the Pacific.

Its very name is odd and unusual, at once arousing the curiosity and the interest of the stranger who chances to hear it.

From the earliest times it has been appreciated and greatly admired by the native Hawaiians, who called it "ahinahina" (gray headed), because they had never before the coming of the white man seen silver and therefore could not apply to the plant the cognomen which so well describes it.

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Public Elopements.

The Bulgarian is perhaps the most simple minded and industrious peasant in Europe, and paradoxical as it may appear, his standard of morality is extremely high, although elopements are more numerous than in any other country.

The Black Watch.

In 1780 six companies of Highlanders were raised for the protection of Edinburgh, and the following year were consolidated into a regular regiment, the Highland regiment, and were numbered the Forty-second.

A Matter of Discretion.

"Father," asked the youthful seeker after wisdom, "why is it that you always speak of mother as your 'better half'?"

Right in Style.

Small Stella had always worn high shoes, but she had long desired a pair of slippers like those her older sister wore.

Fog.

"Talk about a London fog," said a Yankee just returning from England.

Too Much to Bear.

Friend - Why are you crying, Bobby? Bobby - Ma whipped me because my face was dirty and then washed it.

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Gift of the Gods.

A meat packer's wagon rattled over the cobblestones down First avenue. Oystherhead roared as he waved train, and B. Gallagher, who is said never to have read a book in his life, it was

Suddenly one of them darted out into the street, swung himself up on the passing wagon, seized a ham and jumped off - into the arms of a "white wing."

This agent of the city, after appropriating the ham, gave the boy a vigorous shaking and flung him toward the sidewalk.

He looked in every direction; then, doubtless thanking the gods for their gift, he wrapped the ham in a newspaper and he too disappeared down a side street - New York Post.

A Novel Craft.

In the harbor of Port Weller, the Ontario entrance of the Welland ship canal, says the Engineering News, the surveying staff uses a flat bottomed boat that can lift itself clear of the water.

Handy Question Marks.

Judge Bodkin's book of reminiscences contains a description of one of the editors under whom he served, John B. Gallagher, who is said never to have read a book in his life.

He had one curious delusion. He fancied that invested commas were a protection against a libel action, and, stranger still, an excuse for any eccentricities of style.

"No, no; it's a good enough word, but it's a little unusual there. Tell you what, we'll quote it."

Interplanetary Gases.

According to the Scientific American, some of the striking changes that take place in certain comets in their passage through space may be explained by their encountering stray masses of gas.

Death by Freezing.

It is not clearly understood how severe cold causes death, remarks the journal of the American Medical Association.

Animals With Pockets.

Did you ever think what a curious thing it is that some animals have pockets - great, roomy, fur lined vest pockets, big enough to carry a family of little ones about in?

Gold and Iron.

Iron and gold when melted together may be mixed in various proportions and hardened or crystallized.

An Epicure.

"My dear, did you make this pudding out of the cookery book?"

Heat Value of Woods.

Certain kinds of wood - hickory, oak, beech, birch, hard maple, ash, elm, locust, long leaf pine and cherry - have fairly high heat values, and only one cord of seasoned wood of these species is required to equal a ton of good coal.

Not Artistic Work.

Footlight - And was the performance artistic? Miss Sue Brette - No; the scenery and the leading lady were both badly painted.

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