

OUR SHIPS AT SEA.

How many of us have ships at sea,
Freighted with wishes and hopes and fears,
Tossing about on the waves, while we
Linger and wait on the shore for years,
Gazing afar through the distance dim
And sighing, will ever our ships come in?
We sent them away with laughter and song,
The decks were white and the sails were
new,
The fragrant breezes bore them along,
The sea was calm and the skies were blue,
And we thought as we watched them sail
away
Of the joy they would bring us some future
day.

Long have we watched beside the shore
To catch the gleam of a coming sail,
But we only hear the breakers' roar,
Or the sweeping night wind's dismal wail,
Till our cheeks grow pale, and our eyes grow
dim,
And we sadly sigh, will they ever come?

Oh! poor sad heart, with its burden of cares,
Its aims defeated, its worthless life
That has garnered only the thorns and the
tares,
That is seared and torn in the pitiful strife,
Afar on the Heavenly golden shore
Thy ships are anchored forever more.
—Florence Grover.

THE PASHA OF DAMASCUS.

No country produces so many examples as Turkey of men rising from the lowest station to the highest and greatest. Manners, customs and laws considerably favor these sudden changes of fortune. But all of these examples in the Turkish history none surprises more than the promotion of the Pasha Muhamed el Admi to the governorship of Damascus.

Muhamed and Murad were the sons of a rich merchant in Constantinople, who died when his children had scarcely passed their boyhood, leaving them in possession of considerable fortune. Murad continued the business of his father, and by prudence and industry soon increased his hereditary portion, while Muhamed, in company of idlers and flatterers, spent his share in the most reckless manner, by indulging in all kinds of excesses. It was no wonder that this extravagant life totally ruined Muhamed in a few years, and that when his fortune was gone his gay companions likewise departed. Even his own brother closed his door against him, declaring that he, not having heeded his warnings, did not deserve compassion.

Although this is no uncommon fate of spendthrifts, still the conduct of his former associates, and especially the hard-heartedness of his brother, produced a deep impression upon the good natured heart of this unhappy youth. But being gifted with inflexible power of mind, he did not lose courage, but determined to bear his well-merited fate with manly firmness.

As at first no other means of subsistence offered itself, he was forced to live on the alms he received from the believers at the mosques.

It happened at this time that the Sultan visited one of the chief mosques. He was surrounded by all the high dignitaries of the State, dressed in the most costly and magnificent garments. Near him walked two courtiers having large sums of money, which he, according to custom, distributed among the multitude. Every piece of money was wrapped up in paper; but mixed with these packets were others containing small round pieces of glass, on which the Sultan had written some useful morals or proverbs composed by himself. These lines generally praised poverty, and ridiculed the foolish actions of the overbearing rich. You may well imagine that the mass of people following the monarch were more greedy of the money than of the proverb.

Muhamed was among the mass. He observed attentively all the movements of the monarch; and when the latter took out of the bags handfuls of gold and silver and strewed it among the multitude, he eagerly grasped at one of the small packets, and then pushing his way through the crowd, hastened to a solitary spot and opened it. How great was his disappointment when instead of the expected gold he found round pieces of glass. He was on the point of throwing it away, when his eyes caught the following words—"Ability and courage have opened the road to distinction to many." Muhamed smiled, considered the words, and having taken a resolution, carefully placed both paper and glass in his turban and hastened away, well knowing how to act.

There are traders in Constantinople who lend all kinds of dresses, from the most costly, studded with diamonds and other precious stones, to the simple garment of the Dervish. The call for this peculiar trade rests in the fact that many men, raised from abject poverty to high office, are in immediate need of clothes suitable to their new station. From the same reason these traders furnish these upstarts with homes, servants, and other necessary requisites, which they lend for stipulated weekly payments. To one of these traders Muhamed directed his steps, and possessing a dignified figure, noble features and engaging manners, he through a fictitious tale, persuaded the usurer to provide him with magnificent clothes, fine horses and a richly-dressed bodyguard. Within a few hours, the poor beggar was changed into an illustrious pasha, who moved the admiration of the people.

The new pasha had undertaken to pay for this expensive outfit in the course of a week. He had no money, but certainly an inventive head, that through the costly turban seemed to have received a double amount of sense and wit. Followed by his body-guard, he galloped to the house of his brother, and remaining in the court, sent one of his servants to him with the message to him that Muhamed, his brother, demanded to see him. Murad was on the point of returning some angry words, when just in time he caught sight of the splendid group in his court-yard. He hastened out of the house to meet his brother, and to give him a friendly welcome.

Muhamed, without discounting, thus addressed his brother:
"Murad, the Sultan, our master, has appointed me Pasha of Damascus, but to properly equip myself for this new dignity, I require a considerable amount of money. Lend it to me, and I will thankfully repay you as a brother and a pasha."

"May the Lord increase our most gracious master's glory!" replied his delighted brother. "In you Providence raises our family to a never-dreamed of greatness. Wonderful are the ways of Allah—immeasurable the fountain of his grace! With pleasure I now offer you,

Muhamed, my entire fortune—take from it as much as you want. May Allah always take you under his protection."

During the night Muhamed prepared for his departure. He furnished himself with a body-guard of fifty men, and engaged a few Tartar couriers. On the day following he sent his treasurer to his brother for twenty thousand ducats, paid the trader for his outfit, crossed the Bosphorus, and traveled straightway to Damascus.

Muhamed was no common impostor, who only hunts after monetary results; but he had calculated everything beforehand. His liberality, his commanding person and his noble bearing, in a country where sudden promotion is of daily occurrence, convinced every one, and particularly his followers, that he was really appointed Pasha of Damascus. At first, he traveled quietly to avoid publicity, but the further he went from Stambul, and the nearer he approached the boundaries of his province, the more openly he showed himself in his new dignity, the more liberally he distributed presents and alms in the towns through which he passed. Everywhere he was received with due respect and laden with presents. When he arrived within three days' march of Damascus he halted and camped. He then dictated letters to the most eminent emirs in Damascus, announcing to them that in consequence of treachery the Grand Vizier had fallen into disgrace and had been strangled, and that his son, the Pasha of Damascus, as an accomplice of his father, had to await the same punishment; and that he, Muhamed, appeared as newly-appointed Governor, to execute the sentence of the Sultan, and he commanded the emirs to imprison the criminal, and to well-guard him till his arrival.

Before, however, dispatching these instructions he sent a letter to the Governor of Damascus, secretly informing him that his father had been executed, and that the same fate awaited him when the new Pasha arrived. The consequence of this well-calculated communication was the immediate flight of the poor Governor, who was by no means a favorite of the people. His fear of death was so great that he left everything behind him, even his wives and treasures.

After the emirs had received the dispatches, they called a council, and decided upon the steps to be taken for the execution of the received commands. While doing so there appeared a second message with a letter of similar contents. Fearing delay and resistance would only endanger themselves, they quickly collected all their partisans, and ordered the inhabitants to take the old Pasha prisoner, and with due respect receive the approaching one. Some, therefore, hastened to the palace of the disgraced Governor, beset all exits, and as they met with no resistance, searched the entire place—but in vain. The furious populace loudly blamed the carelessness of the emirs, and no doubt would have broken out into a rebellion that would have led to the pillaging of the city, had not at the very moment from the opposite part of the city, cries of rejoicing been heard which saluted the entering Pasha.

The new Governor, surrounded by a splendid suite, proceeded without stopping to the palace, strewing on his way money among the people. "The emirs were ready to receive him."

"Where is the guilty one?" demanded Muhamed, fixing his piercing eyes upon the assembly.

His severe commanding tone created a general consternation. A long silence ensued. At last one of the emirs took courage and said:

"Your Highness will graciously pardon us. The condemned probably received secret communications from Constantinople, in consequence he has fled from Damascus, for when we searched the palace he was gone."

"Fled!" cried the amazed Muhamed, with thundering voice, "Miserable slaves! Know ye that my commands are laws of the Sultan, my most gracious master. Away from my presence! Soon you will receive the punishment that falls upon those who like you disregard the authority of His Highness."

This threat spread fear and consternation among the emirs. The new Pasha had, through his liberality, already won the common people, and resistance was, therefore, out of question. Muhamed, however, had the emirs called back one by one, received them most graciously and presented them with a part of the treasures of his predecessor. In this manner he changed the common fear into general joy. This energetic deportment of the new Governor produced the still more favorable result, that the terrified emirs dared not inquire for the firm of the Sultan, by which Muhamed was appointed Pasha of Damascus; but they were satisfied that the former Pasha remained unpunished.

In the meantime Muhamed, who possessed quite as much intellect as energy, commenced his office by lessening the burdens of the people, by abolishing abuses which had crept in during the administration of his predecessors, by giving excellent laws, and taking under his particular protection agriculture, commerce and science. After having in this manner won the general confidence of the better classes, he insured himself the affection of the multitude by his great liberality to the poor. Toward the old Governor's relations and friends he acted in the most magnanimous spirit, and to those of the emirs who had held office under that poor fellow, he presented honors and riches.

At the time when this happened the communication between the capital and the provinces was very deficient, and this was the cause why a considerable time elapsed before the Sultan heard of these extraordinary occurrences at Damascus, and it was only through the exiled pasha himself who had fled from Damascus through the Desert to Bagdad that the affair came under his notice. Arrived there well disguised the poor pasha, unable to find any other means of subsistence, was forced to beg at the mosques. Shortly after, however, he found employment at a confectioner's.

The Turk is accustomed to such unexpected changes of fortune. The sudden advancement, as well as the abrupt downfall from the summit of greatness, he bears with calmness. I might say indifference; and our unfortunate Governor was no exception to the rule. He lived, quietly submitting to his hard fate, in obscurity and poverty for several months, without having even

the courage to lip the name of his father, the Grand Vizier, or to show himself in public places. At last it happened that an official of the Porte, who had formerly lived at Damascus, with great astonishment saw him in the shop of a confectioner, and addressed him as follows:
"Is it possible! Your Highness! I believe—I certainly think I speak to the Pasha of Damascus. Is it not so?"
"You err, sir," replied the terrified man, with visible embarrassment. "I am a poor workingman, an assistant of the confectioner."

"Are you? Well—I really cannot—no, no, I cannot believe it. I know you so well! Are you not the son of the Grand Vizier, my most gracious master? What would your noble father say if he saw you in this disguise?"

"In the name of Allah! whispered the troubled pasha, "have you been a friend of my father's? Then, I implore you by his dear ashes, do not betray me."
"Ashes!—betray! What does your Highness mean? Your father is alive and as well as I am. Only this morning I have received a letter from his own hand."

A few more words disclosed the whole affair. The son of the Grand Vizier, highly rejoicing, went to the house of the official to change his clothes for some more becoming to his dignity, and then both started without delay to Constantinople to pray the Sultan for justice. They first went to the Grand Vizier, who could not believe the whole affair, though he heard it from the lips of his own son, and even the Sultan would not believe it when it came to his ears. Still, if it were true, he solemnly vowed that the shameless impostor should feel the whole weight of his anger, and he forthwith dispatched an officer with four hundred janissaries to Damascus to take the daring fellow prisoner, and to transport him to Constantinople.

The eight months' government of Damascus by Muhamed had been exceedingly beneficial to the inhabitants of that province, who looked upon him as a father, and it was to be expected that his removal would create considerable dissatisfaction. When the officer of the Sultan appeared before Muhamed, and handed him the letter of his master, the former kissed it in all humility, pressed it as a sign of his submission on his forehead, and requested only a few hours' delay to prepare for his journey. During these intervals he commended the emirs to his presence, informed them of his recall, and took an affectionate leave of them. Scarcely, however, had the soldiers left town when all the emirs and principal inhabitants of the town met together and resolved to humbly petition the Sultan to give them no other pasha but Muhamed, to whom they and all the people of the province were deeply indebted. This petition was handed to a messenger, who was charged to carry it in five days to Constantinople. As this letter appeared to many not urgent enough, a second was immediately drawn up, in which the services of Muhamed were detailed, and in which were clearly expressed the determination that the province would not freely submit to any other pasha. As soon as Muhamed arrived at Constantinople he was immediately led into the presence of the Sultan.

"In the name of Allah, speak man!" demanded the Grand Signor. "Who are you that you have so little feared the anger of your Lord?"
"One of the pashas of your Imperial Highness," replied the undaunted Muhamed, respectfully.

"By the beard of the Prophet!" cried the Sultan, with increasing anger, "who has appointed you pasha, and who has signed the firman of this promotion, miserable impostor?"
"Your Imperial Highness, the sovereign of the believers," quietly replied Muhamed.

"This is too much!" said the Sultan. "Show the firman, or I will have you strangled instantly, you arch rogue."

"Here it is, your Highness," replied Muhamed, and he drew from his breast a piece of paper, in which was wrapped the piece of glass, and which he laid respectfully at the feet of the Sultan.

Impatiently the Sultan picked it up, and looked with searching eye upon the writing, which he easily recognized as his own. Then he remained silent for some time, lost in thought, while the Grand Vizier, standing near him, expected a fresh burst of anger, and Muhamed, hoping for pardon, bent his knees. At that moment the letters arrived from Damascus, which, as extraordinarily important, were without delay handed to the sovereign.

After the Sultan had carefully read the letters he spoke as follows:
"Grand Vizier, Allah is merciful! Should I punish this fellow I should cause discontent, and perhaps insurrection in a province of my Empire. Therefore, I will rather give your son the administration of another province. You, Muhamed, I will appoint Pasha of Damascus; yet remember that I only pardon you and confirm your appointment, because you have shown a kind heart toward my people! Go!"

"Praised be the mercy of our Lord and Sultan!" cried the happy Muhamed, and amid the rejoicings of the multitude he left the palace.
He afterward governed Damascus with great success and wisdom for twenty-five years.

EMPEROR AND SOLDIER.—Among several unpublished anecdotes of the Emperor Nicholas, related by a Russian contemporary is the following: One day the Emperor, who was one of the strictest and most inflexible disciplinarians, met, in a street of St. Petersburg, a drunken dragoon, who was riding in a droschky. In a great rage the Emperor stopped the droschky, and angrily asked the soldier what he was doing. The imminence of his danger partially sobered the latter. He rose in his carriage, drew his sword, and, saluting the Emperor, said: "I'm taking a drunken soldier to the guard-room, your Majesty." The Emperor Nicholas smiled, gave the soldier a five-ruble piece, and told the coachman to drive him not to the guard-room, but home.

Sunday school teacher, examining on Book of Kings:—"Now, can any child tell me why Elijah ordered water to be put on the bullocks and altar?" Small boy, aged nine and a half: "Please, sir, to make the gravy with."
A North Carolina man has an interesting family of twenty-seven daughters. He hasn't had a front gate in ten years.

English vs. American Ways.

The social monopolists of London are a sharp class of ingatherers. To say that an intellectuality which is prodigal of its riches in an easily discarded element in the creme de la creme of what is known as the upper life, would not be true. To be learned and to possess a recognized speciality of one's own; is the ambition of each member of the lofty solitariness of London. But to exhibit its attainment or accomplishment during the evening gathering is considered in as bad taste as it would be to illustrate one's linen shirt front with a title that is honored by a succession of inheritances that everybody who is anybody, knows all about and always has known it. An ultra-fashionable London circle, if it be strictly devoted to conveniences, both in its conduct and conversations, almost invariably resolves itself into a dense incarnation of the commonplace.

To look in upon one of those notable London crushes during the season, is to find that they are largely made up of persons who confide in their acquaintances between "claret cups" that they accepted this particular invitation against their wishes, while, in fact, to be seen in these same crowds is the keenest delight of which he is capable. The crude colors and the gaudy and not too valuable ornaments, remind one of what a milliner's bewildered dreams of the Elysian fields must be.

The ungraceful posing and heavy movements of the English matron who has long been a habitual frequenter of the London ball and party, the reception and dinner, are only tolerable to artistic eyes, because they are natural and unconscious under the circumstances.

Ill-satisfied as the cultivated artistic eye may be after an inspection of the average English woman's full dress attire, nobody can deny that the simpler dresses which the same lady wears at home, are usually far prettier than the morning and every-day costume of the American. There is no impropriety in mentioning that the pompos garments of the fashionable women of London are imposing. It is just the adjective to select when writing or speaking of her evening toilettes. Published descriptions of the English woman's fashionable array strongly suggests grandeur, lavishness of expenditure, and the inherited richness in all the accessories of her clothing, that cannot fail to be astonishing to the unfamiliar beholder; but when the American is privileged to look upon the almost sacred creatures and their attire, he is astonished and disappointed at the flimsiness of texture and whimsicalities of style in the garments of the great. Indeed, he is almost pained at the absence of an "eternal fitness of things." His simple republican mind has linked and wedded elegance and superior artistic pomps with lofty rank and impressive titles, simpleton that he was!

In America to mention that a lady was seen adorned with velvets, laces and diamonds, conveys a clear and trustworthy picture of brilliants that are not only genuine, but can be seen without the aid of a magnifying glass. To the intelligence of the Londoner no such unexaggerated fact would even be suspected. He is not credulous to believe that the laces were genuine, nor the velvet silk clear through all its fibers. He is taught by experience.

But, then—pray be observant—of another contrast between the London house-furnisher and the New Yorker. The latter too often produces effects without substantial back-grounds, but the Londoner's drawing-room, and, indeed all his receiving rooms, are both substantial and beautiful. Seof or smile, as Americans may do, at the lack of the English lady's personal taste, her household is charmingly artistic and substantially comfortable. She knows how to combine use and beauty with a far clearer sense than we do. Of course the venerable family is undoubtedly in this letter. They have, doubtless, gone to the continent and taken their furniture along with them. During two seasons spent in London, it is yet to be the fate or fortune of the writer to see a single piece of new furniture in any gentleman's house. It has even come to be a painful apprehension in the mind of the writer every time he passes a cabinet-shop window, lest its proprietor, in a depressed state of mind, which one of his unborn grandchildren shall take his place long after he is dead, and receive compensation for the products of his skill. Who is there ever to purchase the new cabinets, dressing-tables and reception chairs that one sometimes sees in vans traveling along the streets of London, now that "the English public has been educated in the laws of beauty and a belief in brass fenders, corner cupboards and blue china."

There is a tone of mellowness which one feels, but which is difficult to describe in almost all those English apartments which visitors enter. Time has embroidered certain subtle charms into many things which are beyond the reach of purchase money, and there is a certain generosity extended towards smaller articles of beauty than is less common on this side of the ocean. Individual comfort and convenience are secured by our people at any cost, but the rich English girl's bed-room, though in compliment called a chamber, is often furnished with an iron bedstead and unpolished floor, with one or two not too soft or too pretty rugs upon it, also a dressing table, that is not an adornment, while her papa will purchase a bit of china for the cabinet down stairs, at a cost of fifty guineas, and a rare old print, or a list of Flemish tapestry for the library at treble that sum.

This plainness in one part of the establishment and a richness in our public rooms is not intended as a deception, as it would be in America. It is simply a matter of taste or choice. With us the china, the tapestry and the choice print would not be purchased until all the house was provided with the utmost comfort, and yet we are called a people of shams by many of our English cousins. They are fond of the results of their riches in one way, as we are in another, and neither should undertake to adjust the habits of the other. If they are fond of grave and silent assemblages, and suspect themselves of enjoying such occasions, all that the writer desires to say about them is simply to mention their solemnities and their jewels, just as other travelers allude to the Tower of London and the crown diamonds, that is all.

The English are as generous in their hospitalities as are the Americans; but

unlike most of our ladies, the English woman not only has an appetite, both at home and at parties, but she does not make it a reason for blushing or secretiveness. The reason that English receptions and parties appear to be stupid to us is simply because it is unfashionable for English people to carry their ordinary vivacity, enthusiasm and humor, or even an appreciation of humor, into society. A capability of standing still and being silent, or of dancing and not conversing of anything that can be remembered, and of having a good appetite always about one, is all that is expected of a guest. To be distinguished in the world is gratifying to your hostess; but fortunately you are not expected to look, act or converse as if you were anybody in particular while you are in company, except when you are at dinner, as was before intimated, and even then you are not called upon to extend your listening powers or your conversation beyond the nearest person on your right and left, and within this circle your conversation must not be so decidedly interesting and significant as to disturb the digestive processes of the most delicate. In America, because a person does not know anything, it is no reason why he should hold his tongue! In England it is. Happy England.—London Corr. of the N. Y. Home Journal.

Standing Armies of Europe.

There can be little question that the present prostrate condition of Continental trade is in a great measure due to the enormous burdens laid on the people by the military policy of their leaders. How heavy these burdens are some details taken from a report lately issued by the Hungarian Minister will show. According to this report (the object of which is to exhibit the relative weakness of the Austro-Hungarian forces, and advocate an addition to them), the military strength of Russia consists of 3,046,800 men, of whom 600,000 belong to the reserve and 2,446,800 to the standing army. The regular army of France comprises 1,689,000 soldiers of all arms, the territorial army, 1,208,000; total, 2,897,000; to be increased in 1892 by the addition of 300,000 reserve men to 2,273,000. The German power, of all classes, is represented by 2,004,300 men, of whom 1,076,200 belong to the standing army, 307,200 to the landwehr, and 620,900 to the reserve. Italy has an army of 698,000, and a militia of 310,000. In 1882, when the reserve will number 1,016,300, her total strength will reach 2,024,200. Austro-Hungary possesses a standing army of 800,000, a landwehr of 293,318, and a reserve of 95,000 men; total, 1,193,318. The grand total of all these forces amounts to 16,471,918, the standing armies alone numbering 7,925,000. But it must not be understood that all the latter are now under arms; at least half of them are on a furlough. They form the first line, and all would, of course, be at once called out in the event of a general war. It is nevertheless true that the great military powers have at their disposal 16,000,000 men who have learned, or are now learning, the soldier's art, and are bound to re-entire the ranks when required. The mind refuses to grasp the full significance of these portentous figures, but it may safely be affirmed that so long as these bloated armaments are suffered to exist Europe can count neither on lasting commercial prosperity nor on a long continuance of peace.—[Geneva Corr. Manchester Examiner.

A POLYPHONIC EAR.—There is something to be said as to the difference in the way in which the highly-gifted musician and the ordinary listener hear music. It is more or less a waste of energy to write music in many parts, all of which are made melodious at some sacrifice of the harmonic effect, when not more than, perhaps, one in a hundred listeners is capable of hearing more than one melody at a time. We think that it is not the power of writing counterpoint that has died out so much as the will to write it. There can be no doubt that the unpopularity of counterpoint is mainly due to the fact that the ordinary listener is unable to hear in it what the highly-gifted musician hears. The many simultaneous melodies are quite lost on the ordinary listener. It is only in the case of the greatest composers, whose principal melodies and harmonies do not suffer by their attention to the counterpoint, that works of this class attain any popularity. Until the acquirement of the power of hearing many simultaneous melodies is placed within the reach of the ordinary listener by a suitable and widespread education specially directed to this purpose, it is useless to look for a popular interest in counterpoint which shall encourage the composer to produce it. There is a question how far it is possible for a person not naturally gifted with the polyphonic ear to acquire it in perfection. But there can be no doubt that systems of education are possible which will do much toward advance in this direction; and that the direct cultivation of polyphonic hearing and reading is the shortest cut toward the formation of the true musician.—[Nature.

HUSBAND AND WIFE.—The Catholic Columbian thinks that "a great deal of the misery and unhappiness that exists in families might be averted, in whole or in part, if the husband and wife would only try to understand each other and show a little more forbearance to each other's faults. Incompatibility of temperament is only another name for stubbornness, and will ever exist when the parties insist on misinterpreting each other's deficiencies. Where this mutual understanding exists, everything moves along smoothly. If a mistake is made, it is passed over without comment, and does not become the cause of bickerings and dissention; if a hasty word is spoken its effects are laughed away and forgotten as soon as uttered. In this way much trouble is avoided that the contrary course would inevitably bring about. Home should ever be the abode of peace and contentment, and there can never be a necessity for a contrary state of things, as there can be no justification thereof.

A mad turtle can neither fly, sing, gallop, cry or go blackberrying, and yet, if they are let alone they will get along just as well as the young man who tries to be funny at a lawn party.

A young lady ate half a wedding cake and then tried to do an of her future husband. Now she says that she would rather die than marry the man she saw in that dream.

A Billion Dissected.

It would be curious to know how many readers have brought fully home to their inner consciousness, the real significance of that little word "billion" which we have seen so glibly used. There are, doubtless, many thousands who cannot appreciate its true worth even when reduced to fragments for more easy assimilation. Its arithmetical symbol is simple and without much pretension; there are no large figures—just a modest 1 followed by a dozen cyphers, and that is all.

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, remembering that in all those years we have 365 days, and in every day just 86,400 seconds of time. Hence, in returning in thought back again to this year of grace, 1880, one might have supposed that a billion of seconds had long since elapsed; but this is not so; we have not even passed one-sixteenth of that number in all these long eventful years, for it takes just 31,687 years, 17 days, 22 hours, 45 minutes and 5 seconds of time.

It is no easy matter to bring under the cognizance of the human eye a billion objects of any kind. Let us try in imagination to arrange this number for inspection, and for the purpose I would select a sovereign as a familiar object. Let us put one on the ground and pile upon it as many as will reach twenty feet in height, then let us place numbers of similar columns in close contact, forming a straight line, and making a sort of wall twenty feet high, showing only the thin edges of the coin. 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. And it is not until we have extended our imaginary street to a distance of 2386½ miles that we shall have presented for inspection our one billion of coins.

Or in lieu of this arrangement we may place them flat upon the ground, forming one continuous line like a golden chain, with every link in close contact. But to do this we must pass over land and sea, mountain and valley, desert and plain, crossing the equator, and returning around the Southern hemisphere through the trackless ocean, retrace our way again across the equator, then still on and on, until we again arrive at our starting point, and when we have thus passed a golden chain around the huge bulk of the earth, we shall be but at the beginning of our task. We must drag this imaginary chain no less than 763 times around the globe. If we can further imagine these 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 52 feet 6 inches wide, and this will represent our one billion of coins. Such a chain if laid in a straight line would extend a fraction over 18,328,445 miles, the weight of which if estimated at one quarter of an ounce to each sovereign, would be 6,975,447 tons, and would require for their transportation no less than 2,335 ships, each with a full cargo of 3000 tons. Even then there would be a residue of 447 tons, representing 64,081,029 sovereigns.

For a measure of height let us take a much smaller unit as our measuring rod. The thin sheets of paper on which these lines are printed, if laid out flat and firmly pressed together, as in a well-bound book, would represent a measure of about the 1-333d of an inch in thickness. Let us see how high a dense pile formed by a billion of these thin paper leaves would reach. We must, in imagination, pile them vertically upward, by degrees reaching to the height of our tallest spires; and passing these, the pile must grow higher and higher, topping the Alps and Andes, and the highest peaks of the Himalayas, and shooting up from thence through the fleecy clouds, pass beyond the confines of our attenuated atmosphere, and leap up into the blue ether of which the universe is filled, standing proudly far beyond the reach of all terrestrial things; still pile on your thousands and millions of thin leaves, for we are only beginning to rear the mighty mass. Add millions on millions of sheets, and thousands upon thousands on these, and still the number will lack its due amount. Let us pause to look at the neat ploughed 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 upwards to our mighty column of accumulated sheets. It now contains its appointed number, and over one billion of sheets of the Times superimposed upon each other, and pressed into a compact mass, has reached an altitude of 47,348 miles!

Those who have taken the trouble to follow me thus far will, I think, agree with me that a billion is a fearful thing, and that a few can appreciate its real value. As for quadrillions and trillions, they are simply words, mere words, wholly incapable of adequately impressing themselves on the human intellect.

In a circus in Paris, Ill., a suddenly crazed young lady ran into the ring, embraced the clown, and declared that he must become her husband. The audience said that it was the first original joke they had heard in a circus ring for more than twenty years.

And now sixteen or seventeen new stars and comets have been discovered. If this thing isn't stopped pretty soon, the young couple who succeeded in finding that particular star by half past ten won't be able to get home before midnight. Give the children a rest.

A ten-year-old boy, boasting of his father's accomplishments, put it thus: "My father can do almost anything. He's a Notary Public, and he's an apothecary, and can pull teeth; he's a horse doctor, and can mend wagons and things, and can play the fiddle; he's a jackass at all trades."

"Is there an opening here for an intellectual writer?" asked a seedy, red-nosed individual of an editor. "Yes, my friend," replied the man of quills, "a considerable carpenter, foreseeing your visit, left an opening for you; turn the knob to the right."