

COSTLY DEFINITIONS.

Some Words That Have Cost Pretty Big Fortunes.

There are words in the English vocabulary—simple words, of the meaning of which one would be excused for thinking there could be no two interpretations—which have, nevertheless, been defined at law at the cost of hundreds of thousands of pounds.

One can hardly conceive how much harmers-sounding words as 'cruelty,' 'domestic,' 'liken,' 'accident,' 'hotel,' could lead to protracted litigation, but the fact remains that in company with some hundred modestly euphonious fellow-words, they have cost huge fortunes to unfortunate litigants whose cases turned upon the legal definition of the words.

We all remember the long discussion over the poor little word 'place,' as used in the famous Gaming Act. For a legal definition of this word, the parties to the various actions which were resultant from it have paid an aggregate sum of more than £20,000; and yet it is doubtful whether the existing definition would long be upheld if anyone with adequate funds dared to contend against it.

In the matrimonial suit of Russell v. Russell the word 'cruelty' led to prodigious litigation and consequent expense. Some contended that 'cruelty' must be inflicted upon the body to fill the requirements of the Act, and others said that in some circumstances it could be inflicted upon the mind; that there was mental illness and suffering more acute than physical illness and suffering; and so the word 'cruelty' was fought up and up till it reached the House of Lords.

Since the time when the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was instituted the word 'domestic' has put fortunes into lawyers' pockets. Under the rule it is an offence to ill-treat a 'domestic animal,' and the word 'domestic' exculpates anyone ill-using an animal other than 'domestic.' Hence, there has been endless legal discussions upon the question of what is a 'domestic animal.'

Under the Wills Act, all words 'apparent' in testamentary documents are held to be part of the will; and this has led to much litigation, costing thousands of pounds. What is 'apparent'? If you make a will and you erase some words they are 'apparent' only if they can be read without unusual difficulty.

What is an accident? A mishap it would be [unreasonable to expect, our lay mind suggests. But it took a court of law something like a fortnight to decide whether a bee-sting was an accident. A man died from the effects of a bee-sting, and his wife claimed heavy insurance. But the insurance company declined to pay on the grounds that a bee-sting was not an accident in the true sense of the word.

'Outward bound' is an expression which like 'homeward bound,' has led to long discussion in Admiralty action. When is a vessel 'outward bound'? When she has thrown off her moorings and started her machinery, or when she has left the dock, or the port, or the mouth of the river, or wha? It she is outward bound when she has been boarded by her crew and passengers, and shipped her cargo, and started down the river, would she be 'outward bound' if she intended to stop at the mouth

FRIENDS PREVAILED

A Nervous Toronto Woman Walked the Floor During the Night for Hours at a Time—She Makes a Statement.

TORONTO, ONT.—"I was troubled with nervousness. It was impossible for me to keep still and if the spells came over me during the night I had to get up and walk the floor for hours at a time. My blood was very poor and I was subject to bilious attacks. My feet would swell and I was not able to do my own housework. I treated with two of the best physicians here but only received relief for a time. I became discouraged. One day a friend called and advised me to try Hood's Sarsaparilla. I laughed at the advice but I was prevailed upon and procured one bottle. Before I used it all I began to feel better. I took several bottles and also several boxes of Hood's Pills. Now I can eat and drink heartily and sleep soundly. Hood's Sarsaparilla has entirely cured me and also strengthened me so that I now do all my own work. I cheerfully recommend Hood's Sarsaparilla to all sufferers from nervousness, weakness or general debility." MRS. H. F. PARM, Degraass Street.

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of the river to coal or take another hand or passenger aboard? No. She is 'outward bound' only when she has actually started from her dock, and is proceeding on her journey, with no intention of stopping before her first port of call. She is not 'outward bound' until all the passengers, coal and cargo, etc., she intended to carry are aboard.

'Dreaden china' has caused a great deal of hair-splitting recently. So has 'liken,' 'fancy bread,' or 'Swiss bread,' while the word 'necessaries' is thrashed out again and again every week in county courts. 'Cattle,' 'burglar,' 'gambling,' 'hotel,' 'income,' 'land,' are a few more words the legal meanings of which have been decided at the cost of tens of thousands of pounds.

To illustrate the exquisite fineness with which the law makes its distinctions, we may add that it is a tradesman's assistant accepted a shilling from a customer on behalf of his employer and put it in his pocket for his own use he would be guilty of embezzlement. But if he accepted the shilling, dropped it into the till, and then put it into his pocket for his own use, he would be guilty of the lesser offence of larceny.—Tid Bits.

JOHN BULL BANKRUPT.

The British Government Was Once Unable to Pay Its Debts.

'John Bull bankrupt' sounds strange to-day, and the chancellor can afford to smile at the idea as he reckons up the nation's balance sheet for 1899; but it was not always so. Once indeed—102 years ago—the Bank of England virtually declared the British government bankrupt!

It came about in this way; Five years before the eighteenth century closed France declared war against Great Britain and Holland, and there was a great drain on the gold of the country. The most anxious man in Britain was Pitt, the Minister of finance, whose resources were strained to the utmost.

For months Pitt had only obtained accommodation from the Bank of England by bringing great and constant pressure to bear upon that institution, but nobody was more astonished than Pitt when the 'Old Lady of Threadneedle street' took it into her head to threaten England with bankruptcy.

A year or two before the bank had refused the paper of a private banking firm, and compelled it thereby to stop payment the next day for a million sterling, and in the universal sensation and confusion which overwhelmed the financial world a hundred country banks suspended payment. Then the government stepped in and saved the situation.

But now the government itself was in peril. The treasury had sent bills to the bank for payment amounting to over £200,000, and there not being sufficient gold in the country the bank resolved on a coup d'etat to save the situation.

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The court of chartered money changers met in Threadneedle street, and resolved that the bills should not be discharged unless money was sent down for the purpose. The meaning of such a resolution, as those versed in the way of financiers will not need to be told, was nothing more or less than that the government could not meet its liabilities.

Pitt trembled when the news was brought to him, and everybody, from the king on the throne to the man in the street, talked of this and nothing else. How, people asked of one another, could the government get along without money?

The bank, of course, had promised to pay gold for its notes when demanded, and by refusing to do so it had broken its promise. But for the government to have pressed the bank would have intensified the trouble a hundredfold, as the government owed the bank an enormous debt.

The king and the ministers were summoned to town on Sunday morning; a privy council was held at Whitehall and a meeting of ministers in Downing street, both of which the king attended. There was only one course by which the country could be saved, and, daring as it was, it had to be taken.

The government threw itself between the bank and its creditors, and commanded the bank to withhold all cash from the public until parliament had met and come to some decision. The prohibition was ordered to remain in force for six months after parliament met, and during that period small bank notes were issued, and were generally accepted as cash everywhere.

Matters in this way righted themselves, and the wheels of government went round again.

NEW CANAL IN GERMANY.

The Great Waterway That is to run East and West Through the Country.

The Germans attribute their rapid commercial progress in part to the advanced development of their internal means of communication by rail, river and canal. They are not able, for instance, to mine coal quite so cheaply as it is done in England, but they can carry their product to the iron mines for smelting purposes on the State railroads, at so small a figure that it equals matters, and they accordingly manufacture pig iron as cheaply as is done in England. They are now at work at what is known as the Midland Canal, which is to run east and west, cutting through the territory between the Elbe and Rhine, permitting not only the direct passage of ships from one to the other without unloading, but also allowing Rhine boats to carry cargoes gathered in the harbors of the North Sea to places far inland. The canal will also connect with other canal systems penetrating to the Oler and Vistula, so that all parts of the country may be reached by water direct from the North Sea. Side canals are run to Osnabruck Hildersheim, Paine, Brunswick, Magdeburg, and perhaps to Nienburg. The cost of the work is estimated at \$35,550,000.

Nature has traced the course of this canal, and the work presents so few difficulties that it is hard to understand why it has not been built before, considering the importance of the region between the Ems, Weser and Elbe as a means of internal communication. The Dortmund Canal, already in operation, will be a part of the system. The canal will be dug from Bevergern, on the Dortmund Canal, to the Ems, will reach the Weser at Minden the Leine near Hanover, and will finally join the Elbe at Heinrichsburg, a little below Magdeburg. This stretch of canal will be about 200 miles long. The region is very flat, and over half the canal will be at an altitude of about 150 feet and seventy miles at an elevation of 175 feet. There will be only six locks. The canal will be 110 feet wide at the surface, 60 feet wide at the bottom, and 10 feet deep.

As the great ditch will run through a region of extensive marshes, the canal will be of much importance not only for commerce but also as a regulator of the drainage and water supply. In the eastern part of its course the iron industries are highly developed. It is also expected that large quantities of fertilizers will be transported by the canal for the improvement of the poor, sandy soil in this part of the low German plain, and it is thought the result will be a considerable increase in the density of population.

Canalization is of much importance in a country like Germany, and the results thus far obtained have more than justified the expenditure. Emperor William recently said that the empire's future is on the water, and he has done much to encourage canal building. Last month he approved the plans for the projected ship canal between Stettin and Berlin, by means of which vessels of heavy tonnage will be able to load and discharge cargoes direct at Berlin.

Human eye Faster Than the Pen.

'You read a thousand miles,' is the calculation of a clever individual fond of details. The eyes of the average busy man in reading alone, travel 1,000 miles which is equivalent to an 'ocular trip' a third of the distance across our continent. Even the busiest man probably travels with his eyes nineteen miles of type yearly, and



THAT SNOWY WHITENESS

to which all housewives aspire can be secured most surely, most easily, and most economically by the use of "SURPRISE" Soap. It takes all the dirt out of the fabrics, and leaves them white as snow—clean, sweet and free from streaks or discolorations. A large cake costs but 5 cents. Remember the name—"SURPRISE".

there are doubtless many readers who travel six time the distance. If you read a yellow backed novel your eyes have traversed from a mile to a mile and a half of type. The busiest pen cannot keep up with this pace. With ordinary use, your pen has not travelled over two miles during an average lifetime. Perhaps a Kipling or a Zola, if he live to be 60 or thereabouts, has journeyed 120 miles with his pen; that is, he has not travelled as far as from New York to Albany.

What her Heart Said.

Miss Mabella St. Percy: 'Mamma, dearest, I have something to tell you.' Mamma (anxiously): 'Yes darling.' 'Yes, mamma. Mr. Moneybags proposed to me last night.' 'And what did my little girl say?' 'I didn't give him a definite answer, mamma I wanted to talk to you about it first.'

'And what does your heart say, dear?' 'Oh, mamma, it says—it says— Oh, mamma, it is really true that Mr. Moneybags will have £10,000 a year at his father's death?' 'Quite true, my child, and—and—the old gentleman is very feeble.' 'And I should be sole mistress of Moneybags Hall, in Scotland?' 'Yes, darling, and a beautiful house at Brighton.'

'And I should probably go to town for the London season?' 'I have no doubt of it, my dear daughter. And—and—I don't want to influence you in the least, my child. No one shall say that my child was not left to follow the leadings of her own heart in the choice of a husband; but—you have heard about the Moneybags diamonds?' 'Yes, mamma.' 'They are superb! I have seen most of them when Mr. Moneybags' mother was alive, and they are all his own.'

'Oh, mamma!' 'And now what does my dear child's heart say?' 'Oh, mamma it says—yes!' 'My own dear child! I have always wanted to see you married to the man of your choice, to the man you loved and honored. Bless you, my darling, and may you be as happy as you deserve.'

What the Doctor Might do.

'You will have to be very careful for a long time,' said the doctor. 'I suppose so,' replied the patient. 'If you expect to entirely recover from this you must obey my instructions implicitly.' 'Then I shall have to ask you to make them very explicit.' The doctor bowed gravely, and that far-away look came into his eyes that denotes in a doctor an occasion of great moment, when his vast learning is to be brought to bear on a serious problem.

'You mustn't smoke,' he said. 'Great mackerel!' cried the patient. 'You mustn't drink.' 'Whew!' 'You mustn't over exert yourself at any kind of work or exercise.' 'Not so bad.' 'You mustn't be out in the evening.' 'Now, look here, doc?' 'You mustn't eat rich food.' 'I won't.' 'You mustn't have any excitement.' 'All right.' 'No cards or billiards, or—' 'Oh, doc, go easy.' 'You mustn't—' 'I say doc!' interrupted the patient. 'Well?' 'Aren't you making unnecessary work for yourself?' 'How do you mean?' 'Wouldn't be easier for you to specify what I can do?' However, this isn't the only doctor who has seemed to begin at the wrong end.

The Wrong Scent.

At a recent missionary meeting a young minister named Gibbs was called upon to give an address.

Mr. Gibbs' style is remarkably flowery, but those 'purple patches' with which he frequently adorns his speeches are highly distasteful to the Rev. Mr. Wilson, a plain practical old preacher, who happened on the present occasion to be sitting on the platform. 'Methinks bretherer,' exclaimed Mr. Gibbs, in the course of his oration, during which he had surveyed mankind from

China to Peru—Methinks I can hear the clash of the cymbals in the great procession of Juggernaut; I can scent the spicy breezes of Ceylon wafted—

'No, Mr. Gibbs,' interrupted Mr. Wilson, very solemnly; 'it's the broken gasp you can smell—the man hasn't mended it yet!' Mr. Gibbs' speech came to an abrupt conclusion amid the laughter of the audience.

An Imported Snake Story.

American inventors of snake stories must look to their laurel; the educated Bengali has entered into competition, and judging from the sample given in good faith by a native paper at Calcutta, he will be hard to beat. Some time back the lovely daughter of wealthy Z-mindar was bitten by a cobra and died in the course of a few hours.

As her remains were being conveyed to the Ganges for sepulture a passing patriarch of revered mind proposed that he should be allowed to experiment with re-uscitation. As he bore a high reputation as a professor of occult science the scrawling relatives heartily consented. The sage then obtained three crows, and after praying very energetically threw the shells on the ground. Instantly one disappeared and the spectators were wondering what had become of it when a huge cobra burst out of the adjacent jungle, bearing the missing crows in its forehead. It must have been a humble sort of reptile, for when ordered by the sage to suck the wound on the diseased lady it at once complied, and then died to save further trouble. Within an hour its human victim had quite recovered and went on merrily with her husband and relatives, none the worse for her little adventure.

'Such was the marvelous treatment,' says the narrator, 'of the peasant Moulou Bux, professor of the occult science, which, with the spread of the so-called Western civilization, had almost died out of the land.'

V Nice Little Wait.

'I am looking for Mr. Adam, the book-keeper,' said the caller, a portly, dignified gentleman of majestic appearance. 'He is not in,' replied the young man on the three-legged stool. 'He's—' 'I see he's not in,' interrupted the visitor. This is about the hour he has been in the habit usually of coming in, isn't it?' 'Yes sir, but—' 'Thanks, I'll wait.' He sat down, picked up a newspaper, slowly unfolded it, and proceeded with leisurely dignity to read. The young man on the three-legged stool wrote away in silence. Thus passed half an hour. The caller grew restive. 'By the way,' he said, how—er long will it be before Mr Adam comes in?' 'I don't know,' said the young man on the stool. 'He went out about three weeks ago to another firm.'

A Much Maligned Beverage.

'Death in the tea-pot.' Well cheap teas—stewed in brand of steeped—cause the saying. Good teas properly drawn, are a wholesome, as well as palatable drink; but they must be good, as, for instance, Tolly's Elephant Brand Indo-Ceylon Tea.

The average woman's a firm believer in home rule.

The cipher might be cited as an example of some for nothing.

Life is spent in learning to live, and, having learned, to die.

The loafers idea of happiness is nothing to do and lots of time to do it in.

What this country needs is a few converted heathen to do a little missionary work in our large cities.

Tell a man that you have a good joke on him, and he is confirmed in the opinion he has always entertained that you have no sense.

When a woman can't explain a thing she can always explain why she can't explain it.

When a young man gives his steady a two-dollar present, and she honestly believes it cost eight or nine dollars, that settles it; she loves him.

After a girl can play two or three pieces on the piano her mother begins to sniff with disdain every time she reads praise of Paderewski.

Every woman has had at some time a scheme for buying pigs or chickens and turning them over to some colored person living in the suburbs, to be raised on shares. And as soon as a woman buys a pig corn goes up and pork down.