

Who is the Hero?

"All honor to him who shall win the prize,"
The world she has cried for a prize;
But to him who tries, and who fails and dies,
I give great honor and glory and tears.
Give glory and honor and pitiful tears
To all who fail in their deeds sublime,
Their ghosts are many in the van of years,
They were born with Time in advance of Time.

Oh, great is the hero who wins a name,
But greater many and many a time
Some pale-faced fellow who dies in shame,
And lets God finish the thought sublime.
And great is the man with a sword un-
drawn,
And good is the man who refrains from
winning,
But the man who fails and yet still fights
on,
Lo! he is the twin-born brother of mine.

HOW SHE SAVED THE CAPTAIN.

It certainly was very provoking, as John Bathurst said, "for an honest man to chop wood for weeks in the cold, and to give his own and his hired man's and his team's time to haul it up to the house, just to have it stolen by some sneak of a fellow, who was probably too lazy to work."

He talked about it several evenings at the postoffice where he went for his papers, taking care to let it be understood that he'd show the thief no mercy if he caught him.

When the neighbors dispersed on one of these evenings, and took their several ways home from the postoffice, one or two passed by a little cottage, at the gate of which stood a tall, soldierly-looking man. They nodded to him, as is the custom in the country, although they were not acquainted.

Sometimes before, he had come to the neighborhood and taken up his residence in the cottage, which, with a few acres of land, had been left to him by an old uncle of his. At that time they had learned that he was an Englishman, had formerly been a captain in the army. His wife and a little daughter had come with him, but neither the farmers nor their families had ever had any save the most formal intercourse with him.

Squire Saunders and two or three of the leading men had shown a disposition to be friendly with him, but although he had received their advances with civility, this was of a cold nature that he was left severely alone by the independent little community, which had no wish to be "looked down upon by any man, even if he had been a captain in the English army."

John Bathurst, especially, who had gone into the war a corporal and had come out a captain, felt aggrieved at the haughty bearing of the Englishman, who had once actually addressed him as "my good man," soon after his arrival at the cottage.

What Captain Gerald lived upon was a mystery which puzzled the neighbors. He seemed to have no connection with the outside world, with the exception of one correspondent, from whom came monthly letters with such regularity that it had long since been decided by loungers at the postoffice that the correspondent was a lawyer, and that the letter contained a remittance.

But for the last two months no letter had come. Evidently the captain had not expected any, for he had not gone to the postoffice, and, indeed, save for seeing him with his wife and little girl out for a daily walk, his neighbors would have forgotten him.

During the nutting season the newcomers always carried well-filled baskets home from the woods, the nuts peeping from under the red and yellow leaves with which the baskets were fancifully heaped. An irregular kind of thrift seemed to prevail at the cottage, for the apples in the little orchard had every one been picked with the elaborate care which betokens both inexperience and plenty of time.

The neighbors, who in passing had noticed the harvesting, had been greatly amused thereat. The potatoes, planted in the early spring by the old uncle, now months dead, were lifted tenderly from the earth and transported to the cellar with the concern of the miser for his gold. The corn was husked and stored away with the same solicitude, and the few vegetables which the well-tilled garden provided received the same tender care.

John Bathurst's mother who had been in Bloomingtown for a few days' visit to her daughter, came home just at night-fall about a fortnight after the first excitement of the wood-stealing.

"And you didn't meet John at the Corners?" her daughter-in-law had asked after greeting her.

"No; and I thought it very strange that Johnnie would not be ready to meet his mother, after she had been away for three days and two nights. I felt so certain that he'd be at the Corners that I made Montezuma go twice into the postoffice to make sure that he wasn't there."

And the old lady sat before the fire, still warmly wrapped in her heavy cloak and her serviceable, though unfashionable, furs, looking as if a trifle doubtful whether she had better remove them at all, after this slight upon the importance of her home-coming. She had always been accustomed to being treated with the utmost deference by her children, especially by "Johnnie," whom she most loved, but from whom she demanded unlimited homage.

"I don't see how John could have missed you, mother, unless he was over at Jacob Parsons'. They've found out who has been stealing the wood, and John and a lot of them have set a trap and are going to wait for him to-night. It must be that they're still talking it over, and that's the way John came to miss you," Mrs. Bathurst explained, with soothing manner.

"Humph! and who might the thief be, pray?" her mother asked, interested, but not quite appalled.

"Who would you suppose, mother?" "Really, I cannot think of any in the neighborhood either so poor or so mean to steal. Who is it?"

"Captain Gerald, the Englishman who—"

John's mother, and she said, frankly,—"I don't like that at all. I think Johnnie might take a more manly course. I don't like traps."

"Then after a pause, during which she had looked meditatively into the glowing hickory fire, she said, "Emly, if you have anything to do, don't wait any longer with me. When I am ready to lay aside my wrappings, I can do so in my own room."

"Very well, mother; I've had a fire made there for you, so I'll go and finish my pies before tea."

Once alone, the elder Mrs. Bathurst thought a while, then nodded with great determination and said to herself, "Yes, I will do it."

She rose and left the room, but instead of going to her own, she passed out of the house, and turned in the direction of Captain Gerald's. She walked briskly and independently across the snowy fields, an old lady who felt her resolution to be right, and who was going to put her foot down firmly upon traps of all kinds.

Although her heart was filled with kindness and generosity, her manner was severe when the English captain opened the door in response to her knock.

"Good evening, Captain Gerald."

"Good evening," responded the captain, as he stood peering out into the darkness, quite ignorant as to who his visitor was, and mystified as to what she could possibly want at such an unreasonable hour. "Will you come in, madam?"

"No, I think I'll not go in. I can say all I have to say right here, and not trouble your wife with my errand. I only came to tell you that if you are in need of wood, and are too poor to buy it, I'll give you all you choose to cut off that wood-lot over yonder. And I want to tell you that you had better not come to my son's wood pile to-night, for he and a lot of the neighbors are watching for you, and you'll certainly be caught. I don't approve of traps, so I came to warn you."

"What do you mean?" cried the captain, angrily. "What do mean by coming here and insulting me?"

"I mean only to do a friendly act. Don't come out to-night."

"How dare you say I stole your son's wood?" and what do those—those cads mean by talking about setting a trap for me?"

Captain Gerald had only drawn the door partially to when he stepped out upon the porch to speak to Mrs. Bathurst and his angry voice was heard by his wife, as she moved quietly about preparing the meagre supper. She came to the door, and asked, uneasily, "What is the matter, Henry?"

"Nothing—nothing, my dear; go in at once; you will get cold."

But Mrs. Gerald was not so easily disposed of. "You must not stand here, Henry, with your bare head. If this person has anything to say to you, let her come into the house. Come!" and she held the door wide open.

"Have you anything more to say, madam?" Captain Gerald asked. "If you have, you may as well enter. And he stood aside for his visitor to pass.

Although from the army, he was a man who submitted at once to any calamity rather than fight against it. That had always been his soldierly weakness; but this one time in his weakness lay his strength.

The three went in.

"What is it, Henry?" "This—wom—lady,—I believe she is Mrs. Bathurst,—has come to offer me a chance to cut wood upon some of her land—as she seems to think we are in need of fuel. She is very kind."

His wife's face brightened up.

"You are indeed very kind, Mrs. Bathurst. My husband has been terribly worried to know how we should keep warm this winter. We had no idea the cold would be so intense, or we would have been better provided for before the winter set in. It is our first year in the country. My husband and I often feel sadly alone and friendless, but your kind thoughtfulness makes me feel that after all we are not entirely without friends."

"Will you sit down?" drawing a chair before the fire, which tried to throw out the much-needed warmth, but owing to its scanty supply of material, failed most sadly.

"Henry," she continued, "how could you have been angry at an offer so kindly made?"

"I hope Mrs. Bathurst will pardon me if I have been rude," the captain hastened to say, with a beseeching glance at his caller, which she understood and answered with a nod; then retiring into the background, he left the conversation to his wife and their new acquaintance.

Between the two there seemed established a bond of friendship. To the younger woman it had been a day of unusual loneliness and discouragement, and the elder had come just at the moment when a simple act of kindness was very much to her.

She recognized, too, through the unconventional covering, such a sterling character that all reserve on her part soon vanished, and she gave way to an impulse to rest upon the self-reliant nature which seemed strong enough to support the troubles of others as well as her own.

And before she realized it, she was unburdening her heart of many of the perplexities which had weighed it down, and basking in the warm sympathy which flowed over her.

"Tell me whatever you wish to; I am an old woman, and I can, perhaps, advise and help you; anyhow I can sympathize with you."

Mrs. Gerald turned toward the speaker, wiped her eyes and said, with a smile which showed how bright and sunny her face could be, "Yes I begin to feel that we have made a mistake, and have lived too much within ourselves. But we were strangers, and felt that we had no claim upon any of you, and—"

"Oh, I know how you felt!" interrupted her visitor; "never mind trying to tell. Of course we are not English, and are not like the people you have been used to, still we feel ourselves—"

But never mind about that. Tell me your trouble, my dear," with an affectionate caress over the hand she had taken.

It had been a delicate, straight little hand, but it was hardening with the drudgery which it now willingly performed, and it appealed to the other

woman very strongly, as hands often do, in their revelation of character.

"Well, my husband decided to leave the army and come to America to live, I had some money invested very well, as we thought, which brought us enough to live upon very economically; but about three months ago the house which had failed, and we are now without a pound in the world, except we look upon our little home here as a small fortune."

"Most fortunately for us our winter's supply was provided by our good old relative who left us this place. We shall get through the winter without suffering—though we so miss our mutton and beef—and in the spring my husband will be able to plant again, and provide for another year."

"From our poultry we have an occasional meal and plenty of eggs, and really we should be very happy and comfortable if it were not for the cold. We have only such light fragments of wood as we can pick up about the place, and unfortunately for us, our uncle must have been a very orderly man."

"And you have been cold? It is a shame, with plenty going to waste all around you!" exclaimed the old lady.

"Oh! we did not mind for ourselves, but when our little Edna complained, it went to our hearts."

"Well, there'll be no further need of that. You are welcome to all the wood your husband will cut off my land. I live with my son but I still control my own property; not but what he would gladly take care of his old mother if she hadn't a cent in the world, still it is a very foolish thing to give up one's rights. I always do as I please in every thing."

But, returning to her hostess' story, "remember, my dear, you have at least one friend in this country, who will do anything in her power for you. I must go now, but to-morrow I am going to see you again. Good night."

"Good-night. But Mrs. Bathurst, you are not going alone. Henry you will see our friend home, will you not?"

"Certainly, my dear," answered Captain Gerald, who had been a silent listener to the conversation. He felt that he did not stand as high in the estimation of his callers as did his wife, and he felt, too, that once alone with her, he would have to give an account of himself, which might be rather embarrassing. Still he could not shirk the duty of offering his escort to one who had put herself to so much trouble to serve him.

He was not wrong in his conclusions, for they had hardly left the house before his companion began with, "I like your wife very much, Captain Gerald. You ought to be a very good man, with such a good woman. I'm glad she didn't suspect the real object of my visit."

"I can never thank you enough for saving her that blow. Poor thing! she has had enough to bear. She told you I threw up my commission and left the army, but she did not tell you that it was because I was such a cowardly fool that I could not keep from drinking and gambling whenever I got with a certain set of fellows, until I listened to her, and cut loose from them entirely."

"That was the reason. And even now, in spite of the good step and resolutions, I sometimes feel that I am a failure here, and there is nothing for me but gambling or suicide. There, you see you inspire us both to confide in you."

Mrs. Bathurst was touched and flattered by this second confidence.

During the evening, one neighbor after another dropped in at John Bathurst's, and sat talking around the fire in rather fragmentary style. Evidently their interest did not lie within-doors. They would break off in the midst of a sentence to listen or glance out of the window, and finally they all filed out into the clear moonlight, and scattered about in the pine grove, which made such black shadows on the snow.

Mother Bathurst looked from her window as they disappeared, and smilingly resumed her knitting. About eleven o'clock she heard them re-enter the house, and she descended to the sitting-room.

"Why, mother, not in bed yet?" asked her son.

"No; I wanted to see you after your evening's work," she replied, with a twinkle in her bright, black eyes.

"Well, there was no work done, unless you call it work to stand around in the cold and snow for a couple of hours," said he, rather sheepishly.

"Then you didn't catch your thief? Well, John, I caught your thief."

"Why, what do you mean, mother?" asked her son, rising from the hearth.

"I went over to Captain Gerald's and told him that if he needed wood he could cut all he wanted to on my wood lot by the swamp, but that he'd better not come to your wood-pile to-night, as you were waiting for him. While you eat your apples and nuts, boys, I'm going to tell you about my visit to the captain."

Mrs. Bathurst told her story so eloquently that the company was a very quiet one when she had finished. After a pause, her son said:

"Well, it's a pretty hard case. Of course I can't understand why a man should be too proud to come and ask a neighbor for the privilege of cutting his winter's wood—it's done every day—or why he didn't hunt up work."

"One thing," as he picked the last fragment of hickory nut from his shell, "we mustn't let him get discouraged and go back to his old habits or worse. I've plenty of light wood I can give him, and I suppose the rest of you have, too. But after this I expect he'll be pretty sensitive; so I guess we'd better let mother manage the business for us. You know, mother, you must make him feel that we are his friends. Anyhow we must see him along."

Then he sat thinking, and after looking around at his companions, said with a smile, "And since mother's wood isn't seasoned, suppose, boys, we contribute a few dry logs from my pile to-night?"

And once more Mother Bathurst watched them from the window. This time they passed out from the pine grove shadows, each with a generous log on his shoulder, and stole silently over the snow towards Captain Gerald's house.

"It is better to prevent than to punish his crime," she said. "A friendly warning is a good thing."

The old lady's face showed quiet triumph as she went up to her room, for she had saved the captain.

NAILED.

A Counterfeiter's Predicament Fatally Prolonged by His Wife.

A secret service detective relates the following: In the summer of 1864 complaints were made to our bureau that some one was "shoving" bogus shillings in the neighborhood of Green Bay. A good many hundred dollars worth of the currency was let loose all at once, and I was detailed to proceed to Wisconsin and work up the case. It was settled before I started that the "stuff" had been printed from plates made by an engraver known to us as "Slick Sam." His right name was, I believe, George Disston, and that he was then in state prison on a long sentence. It was pretty certain that the plates had fallen into the hands of some of his pals, and were being made use of in a lively manner. It was probable that the printing was being done in Chicago, and that an "agent" had struck Green Bay to unload.

Upon reaching the place mentioned I found that almost every branch of trade had suffered, and pretty soon I was able to show that most of the bogus money had been passed upon them during one week. Then they began to hunt up sales and remember buyers, and it was settled that the "shover" was an old gray-haired man named Newell, who lived on a farm a few miles away.

He had purchased dry goods, notions, hardware, drugs and almost everything else, paying in shillings which appeared most new. It was plain to me after getting thus far that he had bought his bogus money outright of some agent, or had sent to parties in some city for it. Had it been otherwise he would have sought to turn it into good money.

I swore out a warrant for him, took the cars to within four miles of his house and accomplished the rest of the way on foot. He lived in the woods, in a log house, and had but a few acres cleared. Evidence of poverty and shiftlessness could be found on every hand. I was quite certain that I saw him about the door of the house while I was yet some way off, but when I reached it the door was shut and no one was in sight.

However, after I had done some lively rapping, a muscular woman about thirty years old opened the door and inquired my business. I replied that I was an agent from Chicago and desired to see her husband. She invited me in, believing, as I meant her to believe, that I had come as the agent of the counterfeiters. She stated that her husband was off hunting, but would be home soon.

After we had talked for half an hour the woman's demeanor suddenly changed. What aroused her suspicions I can't say, but I saw that she looked on me with distrust. Thinking that the plain way was the best way, I told her who I was and my errand.

"So you are a detective, come to arrest my husband!" she called in a loud voice.

I sought to calm her and had instant success. She settled down in her chair and said she had been expecting it for weeks, and that her husband must make the best of the situation. She shed tears and seemed much affected, and as time passed and I wanted to go out and hunt up Newell she excused his continued absence and kept me seated on the piazza that he must soon show up. I had been there two hours when we heard a voice shouting for help.

While I ran out of doors she rushed into the other room. I passed a half-hour around the house to find the old man hanging head downward, hands on the ground and feet in a small window four or five feet up. After I had released him and taken him into custody I found that he had run into the house when he saw me approaching the house. When the wife raised her voice it was to warn him who I was and what brought me there.

He climbed out of the window to escape, but in his descent his trousers caught in a nail and held him fast. The wife was detaining me in order to give him a good start, but it turned out she was only prolonging his sufferings. He stood it until he could bear it no more, and then called out. The case against him was so strong that he made no defense, and received a sentence of six years.

THE GRAVE OF SUTTER.

The Burying-Ground at Litzitz—Discovery of Gold in California.

In a corner of the old Moravian burying-ground at Litzitz, eight miles from Lancaster, there is a stone which is always the first to catch the eye of the visitor. All the other graves are exactly like each other. Little parallelograms of earth about two feet by four and raised about eight inches above the general surface mark the resting-places of the dead. There are no winding walks nor open bits of lawn to soften the look of prime precision and economy of space which pervades the place. The graves are arranged in straight lines with painful accuracy and they are so close together that the dead can touch fraternal elbows at the resurrection.

The graves are precisely the same size, whether of man or woman, elder or infant, and on each lies a flat square slab of marble, about the size of a family Bible. One stone is just like another, except in the inscriptions and the distinctions time and weather and the moss have made. On many the names and pious texts and dates running far back toward the beginning of the last century are arranged in straight lines with inscriptions as illegible and formless as the features of the dead beneath.

There is no difficulty, however, in identifying the solitary grave in the corner. The mound above it is twice as big as any of the others and a large marble also covers it entirely. The inscription tells that he who sleeps here was "Born February 28, 1803, at Kanders Baden. Died June 18, 1880, at Washington, D. C. Requiescat in Pacem."

There is a long story of an eventful life between those two dates. The name inscribed above them is the name of Gen. John Augustus Sutter, whose millrace on the bank of the Sacramento was the source of all the mighty stream of gold

that has flowed from California. Once in possession of land now worth \$100,000,000 he lived the last sixteen years of his life dependent on an allowance from the state of California. He made millions and died a pensioner.

He was always a wanderer. Born in Baden in 1803, he graduated from the military college at Berne at the age of 20 and enlisted in the Swiss Guard of the French army, the successors of that famous band of mercenaries who were so faithfully butchered in the marble halls of Versailles thirty years before. After seven years' service he changed his colors and entered the Swiss army, where he served four years. Then he put off his uniform and shortly after came to this country. In 1838, with six companions, he went across the plains to Oregon and down the Columbia river to Vancouver whence he sailed for the Sandwich islands. Then he got an interest in a trading vessel, with which he sailed to Sitka and the Seal islands up toward Behring's sea. Turning southward after some profitable trading he arrived in the bay of San Francisco July 2, 1839. The appearance of the country pleased him and he decided to remain.

He made a settlement some distance up the Sacramento river, built a grist mill, a tannery and a fort, founded a colony and called it, for the sake of having an Alpine murmur in his ears, New Helvetia. His restless energy was still unsatisfied. He took a commission as captain in the Mexican service, and afterward served as a magistrate under the same government. He took no active part in the war against this country, and after the annexation he was Alcalde, Indian commissioner and member of the California constitutional convention.

In 1848 came the discovery that enriched the world and impoverished him. Marshall, a laborer digging out a new race to Sutter's mill, picked a curious lump of something yellow, which Sutter at once recognized as gold. The mill race was never finished. The laborer turned his pick to a more ambitious purpose and set out to dig himself a fortune. The miller bought himself a shovel and went forth to take toll of the yellow sand. The stream that was to turn the mill wheel became suddenly worth more than any grist that it could grind. The sequel is well known. The rushing tide of Argonauts overwhelmed the little colony of New Helvetia and washed away Sutter's imperfect title to his land.

He made a brave fight and a long one. He laid claim to thirty-three square leagues of land, including that on which the cities of Sacramento and Marysville now stand. After long delay the commissioner of public lands allowed the claim and after more delay the supreme court of the United States reversed the decision. Then Gen. Sutter carried his claim before Congress, to go through the tedious experience of most people who take claims there. He was still prosecuting it in 1871, when he happened to come to Litzitz to drink the wholesome waters of its spring. The quiet of the place and the peaceful life of its people appealed to the restless old man, who was beginning to get tired of his long battle, and he made his home there—"until I get my claim through," he said.

He was at Washington, still getting his claim through, when death overtook him, in 1880. His Moravian neighbors made room for him in a corner of their burying-ground, although, as he was not a member of their congregation, he could not be buried with the trombone. When a Moravian dies, at whatever hour of the day or night, a man mounts the tower of the quaint, squat church and blows a doleful signal on the trombone. The trombone player also marches at the head of the funeral procession, playing solemn music.

Men Who Live in Trees.

Dr. Louis Wolf, who made the sensational discovery recently that the Sakuru River afforded a more direct and more easily navigated route to Central Africa than the Congo, made another discovery in the course of the same journey which was quite as remarkable if not so important. On the banks of the Lonami River, far toward the centre of the Continent, he says he found whole villages that were built in the trees. The natives, partly to protect themselves from the river when in flood, and partly to make it more difficult for their enemies to surprise them, build their huts on the limbs of the trees where the thick foliage almost completely hides the structures from view. The inmates possess almost the agility of monkeys, and they climb up to or descend from their little houses with astonishing ease. It is believed they are the only Africans yet known who live in trees.

In Borneo some of the natives are said to live in trees, and Mr. Chalmers, in his book on New Guinea, tells of a number of tree houses that he visited on that island. These huts, which are built near the tops of very high trees, are used for lookout purposes, or as a place of refuge for woman and children in case of attack. They are perfect little huts with sloping roofs and platforms in front, to which extends the long ladder, by means of which the natives reach the huts. Mr. Gill describes one of these houses which was used as a residence. He says it was well built, but that it rocked uncomfortably in the wind.

How Fast Horses Are.

An interesting statement has recently been worked out, showing the distance a trotting horse goes at each second at various rates of speed. Maud S, when she covered a mile in 2:04, traveled 41 1/2 feet per second. At a 2:30 gait a horse travels 37 5/7 feet per second. At a 2:25 gait he travels 36 1/2 feet per second. At a 2:30 gait he travels 35 1-5 feet in the same time. At a 2:35 gait he travels 34 1-6 feet; at a 2:40 gait the distance traveled is 33 feet; at a 2:45 gait, 32 feet; at a 2:50 gait, 31 1-17 feet; at a 2:55 gait, 30 1-16 feet. When going a mile in three minutes he travels over 29 1/2 feet per second; at a 3:10 gait, 27 1/2 feet; at a 3:20 gait, 26 2-5 feet; at a 3:30 gait, 25 1-7 feet; at a 3:40 gait, 24 feet; at a 3:50 gait, 23 feet, and at a 4:00 gait, 22 feet per second.

The Shoes of Briton.

Shoes, from the ornamental rather than the useful point of view, are a part of that mode of dressing which now demands to be considered as a fine art. This art is one in which the Parisian excels, and of which the English are ignorant and incapable. Perhaps some two or three of our great milliners produce original ideas; the rest actually copy and reproduce Paris model after Paris model. But the English shoemaker is incapable of even so much as this.

He does not know how to begin to make a pretty shoe even with the model before him. His whole training stands in his way; he would have to be untaught and then taught again. This, to concede all that is due to him, may be simply because the demand on him in this respect is not large. Everybody wants pretty dresses, and dressmakers all over the kingdom have to study Paris models more or less. But the mass of English women want boots and shoes to walk in; while that is so, their bootmakers will continue to be capable only of making the thick soled, low heeled boot, which is absolutely necessary for country wear. His time is passed almost entirely in making these. It is impossible that the same worker can produce a pretty shoe. The two things are separate branches of work; and in this trade there are no Parisian premiers to take charge of the prettier parts of the work, as there are for all forms of millinery or dressmaking.

Hitherto, in fact, it has not been worth while for the bootmakers to imitate the Paris-made shoe, and hire workmen to carry out the imitation. I know there are one or two houses that claim to have done this, but their productions are still distinctly English, and it is evident that they have not thoroughly carried out the idea, now so commonly adopted with regard to millinery, of taking the French model and modifying it for English use. At present we have no choice; we must wear either the solid square boot of the English bootmaker or the smart boot brought direct from Paris.

A Big Country for Horses.

The number of horses in New South Wales is large in proportion to the number of inhabitants. At the close of 1885 the number was 344,592, being an increase of between 7,000 and 8,000 on the previous year. The number of horses returned as being fit for market during the present year is 16,930 draught, 16,827 light harness and 26,816 saddle. Of the number it was estimated that 6,804 were suited for the India and China markets. There were sent from five districts 757 horses, to be shipped from Sydney, and from five districts 639 horses to Melbourne for foreign countries. In forty-one districts, the horses are said to be improving, the principal reasons given being introduction of superior stud horses, breeding from good mares, more attention to the rule of breeding and better prices obtainable.

In thirteen districts the breed of horses is, so far as regards improvement, reported as stationary, and in five districts deteriorating, the reasons given being too much light blood introduced, breeding from weedy mares for racing purposes, and drought. In thirty-nine districts the horses are reported as being entirely free from disease. The losses in horses from drought, starvation, wire in chaff and other accidents, as reported, amounts to 5,102. The number of wild horses in the colony is estimated at 9,523, a decrease on the previous year of 472.

The Comet.

Professor Young observes that the comets are the most impressive and at the same time the least significant of the heavenly bodies. Since the beginning of the Christian era 600 comets have been recorded, those antedating the telescope being such as were visible to the naked eye. From three to six are usually discovered each year. Some of them are best known by the names of their discoverers, as Donati's comet or Encke's comet; but science knows them also by numbers and letters, as comet No. 1 of 1856, or comet A of 1856. The letter refers to the comet first discovered in the particular year, while the numeral refers to that which was first to go around the sun, so that comet No. 1 and comet A may not be the same. The bright or large comets do not appear with equal frequency in the different centuries. In the sixteenth century there were twenty-three such; in the seventeenth, twelve; in the eighteenth, in the nineteenth, thus far, twenty.

The orbits of many of the comets are in the form of a hyperbola, showing that they will never return. There are twenty-five or thirty whose orbits are elliptical, and the returns of which may be predicted and there are besides fifteen to twenty which are probably, but not certainly, elliptical. The planet Jupiter is believed to have been the cause of the most of these elliptical orbits, there being twelve or fourteen comets whose initial motion would have carried them indefinitely into space had they passed at sufficient distance from this great planet in going forth, but which cannot now escape from his attraction and must continue as attendants on the solar system. There seems to be a fair probability that a comet may strike the earth but if the nucleus is only the dust or powder which it appears no more serious effect need be expected than a magnificent display of shooting stars.

The Inventor of the Thimble.

I have heard with interest that the thimble of plain sewing was invented in 1684 by a gallant young Dutch goldsmith, of Amsterdam, who devised the "thumb bell"—for this was its original name—in order to protect his sweetheart's thumb tops when she was engaged with a needle and cotton. There are thumb thimbles still, and sailors I believe always wear them. The "thumb bell" has, as a rule, however, become a "finger bell," but in shape only little change has taken place in it since the loving Hans placed the first thimble on the thumb of his lady love.