NOT OURS THE VOW.

BY BERNARD BARTON.

Not ours the vows of such as plight
Their troth in sunny weather,
While leaves are green and skies are bright,
To walk on flowers together.

But we have loved as those who tread
The thorny path of sorrow,
With clouds above, and cause to dread
Yet deeper gloom to-morrow.

That thorny path, those stormy skies,
Have drawn our spirits nearer,
And rendered us by sorrow's ties,
Each to the other dearer.

Love, born in hours of joy and mirth,
With mirth and joy may perish;
That to which darker hours gave birth
Still more and more we cherish.

It looks beyond the clouds of time,
And through death's shadowy portal
Made by adversity sublime;
By faith and hope immortal.

THE KAFFIR'S BEQUEST

BY HARRY W. FRENCH.

We were encamped for the night on the rugged hills above Dongola, looking down upon the distant Nile.

Some time before, while I was in South Africa, the largest diamond taken from the mines for years was stolen right before the open eyes of the officials.

Who took it? Some one who was in Africa at the time. Where did he go with it? To Europe, Asia or America, perhaps, or he may have remained in Africa. It was astonishing, but that was the sum and substance of the information which the officials possessed.

The gem was of fabulous value, and every possible effort was made to find it. Agents were sent to every point where it might be offered for sale, and large rewards were set upon its recovery.

Chancing to be at the mines at the time of the robbery, I imbibed, temporarily, a little of the intense excitement. It soon wore away, however, on a journey through the wilderness, where I was out of the way of hearing anything whatever concerning it; and before we encamped upon the rocks above Dongola, looking down upon the Nile, the whole event was so far forgotten that it would have required something decided to call it to mind at all.

So glorious was the night that it seemed a pity to sleep under a goat's-hair tent, but we were to start again early in the morning, and after watching the sun sink into the distant desert, and the moon rise out of the nearer Nile, I reluctantly drew the coarse curtain and closed my eyes.

Surely I had not been sleeping long. The moon was still over the Nile; but I woke with a start, wide awake in an instant, positive that something serious was in the wind, and thoroughly on the alert to find out what.

My shelter was only a small desert tent, and my bed—a mat upon the ground—was directly in the centre as a matter of invariable precaution; for many a robbery, and sometimes a murder, is committed on the desert and the Nile, by hands that are simply thrust under the tent-cloth from the outside.

A narrow line of moonlight, coming through a crack in the tent, gave me the position of the moon and light enough to be positive that no one was with me in the tent. Some one was somewhere close at hand, however, and intent upon mischief. I was as sure of it as though my eyes were resting upon him at that moment.

I lay intently listening, but all was still, except for the invariable noises of a night upon the Nile, and in proximity to a sleeping caravan. Here and there a scavenger was barking. An Arab was snoring not far away, and now and then a camel sighed.

I tried to convince myself that some dream had roused me, and against my best judgment was forcing myself asleep again when a faint grating in the sand outside the tent attracted my attention.

In an instant my ears and eyes were fixed upon the spot, and slowly, very slowly, I saw the tent-cloth move. It rose a little from the sand, and a darker object appeared in the narrow space below. It was not light enough to distinguish more, but I knew very well that a man was lying on the ground outside, peering under the cloth to discover my whereabouts.

"Ah, my dear fellow," I said to myself, "you see I know your tricks. I'm sorry to trouble you, but you'll have to come inside before you get at me," and I breathed heavily and regularly to assure him that I was asleep.

The tent-cloth fell again and I heard the sand grating once more as he rose to his feet. He was disappointed, poor fellow, and if he was only one of the host of cowardly sneak thieves of the Nile he would doubtless give it up and go away after disturbing my sleep all for nothing. If he was more than that, and thoroughly in earnest for any cause whatever, he would presently come creeping under the curtain at the door.

He proved to be very decidedly in earnest, and less of a coward than I supposed was to be found on the Nile. In no more time than it took him to walk to the entrance the curtain was cautiously drawn back for an instant. A stalwart figure stepped noiselessly into the tent and the curtain fell again.

One glimpse was all that I obtained, but that one was full of suggestion. He was no coward. He stood as erect as it was possible in my tent door; but he was a giant. He was forced to stoop to enter, and his huge black outline stood out, for an instant, against the sky. There were broad and heavy shoulders, a massive neck, and the arm which lifted the curtain was seamed and bulging with the muscles of Hercules.

One instant the moonlight had disclosed this much. The next he was in the tent with me, and all was dark. In that instant, however, two other incidents caught my eye. In his hand he held a gleaming South-African dirk, and as the light crossed his cheek I noticed a peculiarly savage curve to the lower jaw, ending abruptly under an ear where the large silver ear-ring was further in front than usual, owing to the fact that a former ring had been torn away at some time, taking the lobe of the ear with it.

It is always astonishing, when brought to notice, what an amount of thinking the mind can do in an emergency. Before the fellow had time to take a single step from the curtain I knew that he was a Kaffir; that he had no more to do with the region of the Nile than I; that he had come a long way for a purpose; that the purpose was to kill me—unless he was making a mistake in identity—and that we had met before. I could not think how or where, but as plainly as memory ever reproduced anything, it reproduced that savage jaw and lobeless ear somewhere in the bright sunshine. I also realized that he was much more than a match for me in strength; that I had no weapon which could be made to serve before he reached me; that I was on my back while he was on his feet; that my only chance was to do something unexpected that would take him off his guard, and that he had but five feet of space to cross before he reached me.

I almost closed my eyes lest he should be able to see that I was awake, breathed deep and loud, inviting him to be at ease and take his time, and narrowly watched the dim shadow stealthily moving toward me.

He stood beside me, paused for a moment, muttering a native prayer, then slowly bent over me. That was the last ceremony. I knew the end was near, but fought myself in vain for some suggestion of self-defense.

He sank upon one knee, and his broad shoulders came between me and the narrow line of moonlight. I heard him breathe with that hard, guttural rasp which with the half-civilized is always indicative of desperate earnestness. I even felt his breath against my face as he bent lower over it, piercing the shadows with eyes that glistened even in the darkness, to assure himself that there was no mistake.

Life may be short enough at some times, but a moment like that seems like eternity. There was light enough in the tent to see the shimmer of the polished blade he held, and I fixed my eyes upon it and watched it as I never watched anything before or since.

Slowly it went up, up, up, into the darkness. It could not go very high, for he was kneeling. It would fall like lightning when it turned, and he was planning carefully to accomplish his work without rousing a soul in the sleeping caravan.

The blade seemed to glow with a pale, electric light as it rose over me. There were faithful servants sleeping not fifteen feet away. Even at that moment, I heard one of them muttering in his dreams; but a cry for help would only cause that blade to fall the quicker.

Inch by inch I saw the blue sheen rising, and in imagination saw, too, the sullen set of that savage jaw with its lobeless ear, and the tightened muscles of the arm that held the knife.

He was moving slowly, for he proposed to be accurate and let that one blow do it all; another instant and it would be too late. I saw the blade give a little shiver in the air as though he were changing his grip. I knew that every faculty he possessed was centred in that arm and upon my throat, and quick as thought drew up my feet, caught him in the abdomen and gave one kick, for life or death, at the same instant throwing my head away from him.

With a savage yell the knife came down. I found it afterward, buried to the hilt in my sleeping-mat, just below my pillow. His aim was excellent, only that I did not chance to be there when it fell. At that moment, however, I was much more interested in the result of my life-saving experiment; for before the yell had died away a bright light flashed in my face. For an instant it dazzled me. The next I saw the blue black sky, the flashing stars and the clear, white moon, and realized that with the strength of a last extremity I had thrown the huge Kaffir off with such violence that he had taken the tent and all with him.

I sprang to my feet to take advantage of what I had gained. The tent lay in a pile a few feet away. Several sleepy Arabs were thrusting their heads out of their blankets; a camel opened his drowsy eyes and looked over his shoulder, wondering what had occurred to disturb his sleep, but the Kaffir was nowhere to be seen.

He could not possibly have gone far, but there was not a sign of him anywhere.

It would not do to try to sleep again while he was in the neighborhood, but while I revolved the curious situation in my mind, wondering who he was, where I had seen him, and what possible motive he could have for killing me, I directed an Arab who had gained his feet to help me straighten out my tent.

We took up the loose ropes that were dragged from the sand and began to pull.

Was it caught upon something? I stooped to investigate and started back. The unconscious body of the giant Kaffir was still rolled in the tent-cloth.

He was too powerful a man to allow us to run any risks, and before I investigated to see how badly he was hurt we bound him hand and foot.

He revived during the operation, but with the dogged resignation to the inexorable which is always so well developed in the barbarian, he realized that he was trapped and offered no resistance.

When he was well secured I sat down on the ground beside him and tried to talk, but he was sullen. Indeed, I was not sure that he understood what I said, for I spoke in Arabic, knowing very little of any South-African language.

At sunrise, however, when I placed a cup of coffee to his lips he looked up sullenly, and in excellent Arabic asked:

"Is it poisoned?"

I laughed, drank a little, and he drank the rest.

"You had better kill me," he muttered. "It is all you will ever get from me."

"I'm not sure that I care to take the trouble," I replied, "till I know why you tried to kill me. You do not know me, do you?"

A savage fire gleamed in his eyes for a moment, as he answered:

"You are Abd el Ardavan. Oh, yes, I know you."

"You evidently know my name," I replied, "but what do you know that should tempt you to kill me? Why, there are not Kaffirs enough in all Africa to injure a hair on the head of Abd el Ardavan. If you know me you must have known that, too."

Such a sentence does not bristle with conceit when spoken in Arabic as it does when put into English. It is an Oriental custom to blow one's own horn in that fashion, and there was a look of real honest admiration in the African's eyes as he replied:

"I heard it long ago, but I did not believe. Now I know that it is true."

I had a mind to cut the ropes and set him free for that compliment; but curiosity prevailed and I said again:

"Listen to me. If you will simply tell me why you wanted to kill me I will set you free and give you another chance."

"I have had my chance and failed," he muttered. "I shall never have another. Go on, and put an end to Gungerak."

"Gungerak! Gungerak!" I repeated, looking at that jaw and lobeless ear. Then suddenly it all came back to me; the face I had seen and all its surroundings. No wonder it had puzzled me, for I had only seen it once, and that for a moment. He was chief of a savage tribe of Kaffirs working in the diamond mines when I visited them.

"Well, you are a good way from home, Gungerak," I added. "If you mean to say that you came all this distance to murder me I don't wonder you are disappointed. I have not so much energy. It is more trouble than it is worth to try to punish you, and I am going to set you free. But before we part"—I was unbinding him—"you might at least have the generosity to tell me why you want to kill me."

He did not move, even when his limbs were free, but lay looking into my face.

"When they suspected that Gungerak stole the great diamond," he said, "and when they paid one half its value to Abd el Ardavan as the only man who dared to follow him and bring him back, should Gungerak not find cause to use the dirk?"

I laughed outright, and throwing myself upon the grass, exclaimed: "Gungerak, you are a fool! Somebody has been cheating you. I neither know nor care who stole the great diamond. I do not know that anyone is suspected. There is not wealth enough in all Africa to hire me to follow a thief a mile, unless he has stolen something from me. So get up, now, and go about your business; but mind you never disturb my sleep again, for it makes me ugly and I am apt to kick."

"By the head of your dearest child, is what you say the truth?" the savage chief asked, solemnly.

I was too curious to see what was coming to jest with him, and in true Oriental solemnity I took the Kaffir's most sacred oath, and swore that what I had told him was the truth.

"Then listen," he said, placing his powerful hand upon his abdomen, a little to the left. "The great diamond is here. For months I have carried it in my mouth." The Kaffir's invariable safety deposit is a curious vault which he forms almost at the root of his tongue. "Last night I swallowed it. I shall die, but the great diamond is here. Take it, when I am dead. It is my just punishment and your just reward."

I tried hard to save the man, but there were no ready means at hand, and he was so sure that he should die that I think he would have accomplished it at all events. I became very fond of him in the few days that he lived, and learned from him many an interesting secret.

It was a difficult task to bring myself to recover the diamond after he was dead, but I did it at last, and returned it to the officials of the mine.

It was many years ago, and to-day I fancy that some queen of wealth and beauty, adorning some grand palace of the Occident, when decked in her gorgeous array, outshines her rivals and dazzles her admirers with the lustre of that brilliant gem; the last bequest of the dying Kaffir, on the hillside above Dongola, looking down upon the distant Nile.—[Frank Leslie's.

He Never Stopped Counting.

Robert Simson, Professor of Mathematics at the University of Glasgow, was one of those odd geniuses who do so much for the amusement of humanity. It was one of his peculiarities always to count his steps when he stirred away from his bachelor quarters. Even if a friend accosted him, he did not lose his reckoning. To prevent such a catastrophe he kept repeating the number of the last step taken.

Once, while the Professor was on his way to some gathering, a gentleman, who knew him by sight, but was unaware of the habit above mentioned, stopped him. The worthy geometrician had just taken his five hundred and seventy-third step.

"I beg your pardon, Professor," said the gentleman; "one word with you, if you please."

"Most happy—573," was the answer.

"Oh, no," said the inquirer, surprised, but courteous; "merely one question."

"Well," added the Professor—"573."

"You are really too polite," said the stranger; "but knowing your acquaintance with the late Dr. B., and for the purpose of settling a dispute, I have taken the liberty of inquiring whether I am right in saying that he left £500 to each of his nieces."

"Precisely," replied the Professor—"573."

"And there were four nieces, were there not?"

"Exactly!—573."

The stranger stared at the Professor, as if he thought him mad, muttered sarcastically—"573!" made a hasty bow and passed on.

Professor Simson saw the man's mistake, or thought he did, and cried after him, taking another step at the same instant, "No, sir; only four—574."

"Poor fellow!" thought the inquirer, as he turned away, "he certainly has gone crazy."—[Tit-Bits.

"Raphia".

An uncommonly interesting and valuable material, familiar to the florists, though little known to others is "raphia," a fibre made from the inner bark of a Japanese tree, and used in long shreds for tying delicate plants. It comes in long plaits like horsehair, is a light brownish yellow in color, and when twisted makes a light, strong twine. Large quantities of raphia are imported for the use of florists and gardeners. It is found cheaper than manufactured twine, and, by reason of its pliancy and softness, is more suitable to the use to which it is put.

CONDENSED FOODS.

When Uncle Sam next goes to war, observes the *Washington Star*, the soldiers who fight under the starry flag will be supplied with coffee in a shape so highly condensed that one four-ounce package will serve as a month's ration for each man. The concentrated preparation will be given out perhaps as a dry powder, but more probably in the form of small lozenges, resembling cough drops in size and shape. These lozenges will be inclosed in tin boxes of 100, each of them weighing a gramme and representing one cup of coffee. For preparing the beverage no coffee pot will be required, it being necessary merely to put a coffee tablet into the cup and pour boiling water upon it, when the coffee is instantly made. Sugar and milk can be added to suit the taste. In France such coffee lozenges of comparatively large size have been recently introduced, being made bulky by the addition of sugar for sweetening, but everybody does not care for sugar, and, therefore, those which have lately begun to be manufactured in this country have been made plain.

The processes by which coffee is thus concentrated are very interesting. To begin with, the beans are roasted in an enormous oven and ground in a huge mill. Then they are put into a great vessel, which is nothing more nor less than a gigantic coffee pot, holding 240 pounds at a time. Hundreds of gallons of filtered water are pumped into the coffee pot, which acts on the "drip" principle, and the infusion is drawn off to an evaporating tank. A steam pump keeps the air exhausted from this tank so that the coffee is in vacuo, being heated meanwhile to a high temperature by steam pipes. The water it contains rapidly passes off and the coffee is of about the consistency of molasses when it is taken out. It is poured into trays of enameled ware, and these trays are placed on shelves in another evaporator. When the trays are removed a short time later the coffee is a dry solid, which is scraped off the trays, ground to powder and molded into lozenges.

There is no reason why the Government should not prepare coffee in this way on a large scale in the event of war at a very great saving. By the processes described one pound of the beans can be made to produce more than 100 cups.

Eggs are now sold on the market in a shape resembling sawdust. The chief centre for the manufacture of this product is St. Louis, where great quantities of eggs are bought up in summer, when the price of them goes down to almost nothing. They are broken into pans, the whites and yelks separated and evaporated to perfect dryness. Finally they are scraped from the pans and granulated by grinding, when they are ready for shipment in bulk. Bakers, confectioners and hotels use eggs in this form, which is an important saving at seasons when they are dear in the shell. It is without doubt a fact that most of the eggs sold in cities during the winter have been kept over from the previous summer by pickling them in brine or lime water, so that people should be thankful for a desiccated substitute. A manufactured product of a similar description, called "egg-albumen," is imported from abroad. It looks very much like a fine quality of glue, broken into small bits, golden yellow, transparent and decidedly pretty. The eggs of wild fowls of various species are largely employed in making it—the whites, that is to say, the yelks being utilized in Europe for tanning leather. This "egg-albumen" is used by bakers and for glazing prints. It costs fifty-five cents a pound.

Condensed jellies are becoming an important commercial article. They are made in the shape of little bricks, each weighing eight ounces, and with an inside wrapper of oiled paper.

When condensed milk was first introduced, thirty years ago, the idea was laughed at. The inventor carried the entire daily supply for New York city in a ten-quart pail, delivering it personally to patrons. He died worth $7,000,000, made out of the business, which has grown to be a gigantic industry. The processes employed are very simple, the fresh milk being put into a great copper tank with a steam jacket. While it is being heated sugar is added, and the mixture is then drawn off into a vacuum tank where evaporation is produced by heat. The vacuum tank will hold perhaps 9,000 quarts. It has a glass window at the top, through which the operator in charge looks from time to time. He can tell by the appearance of the milk when the time has arrived to shut off the steam, and this must be done at just the right moment else the batch will be spoiled. Next the condensed milk is drawn into forty-quart cans, which are set in very cold spring water, where they are made to revolve rapidly by a mechanical contrivance, in order that their contents may cool evenly.

When the water does not happen to be cold enouth ice is put in to bring it down to the proper temperature. Finally the tin cans of market size are filled with the milk by a machine which pours into each one exactly sixteen ounces automatically, one girl shoving the cans beneath the spout, while another removes them as fast as they are filled.

Another commercial article is condensed cider, which is made by evaporating the juice of apples. One gallon of it costing eighty cents, will furnish fifteen or twenty gallons of cider that is sufficiently strong for bottling by the addition of fifteen pounds of sugar and the requisite quantity of water. Peach, grape, cherry and apricot cider, similarly concentrated, are sold for $1 a gallon. Root beer is put up in the same manner, half a pint of it making enough to fill sixteen half-pint bottles.

During the last year 9,232 gallons of condensed lime juice were imported to the United States from Jamaica.

Compressed salt is even provided for horses and other beasts, a brick of it being put into a frame above the water trough, where the four-footed creature can lick it. It would be interesting to know what results would be obtained by rearing a human being, from infancy to adult age on condensed forms of aliment exclusively. If the normal digestive powers could not assimilate all that was offered, they might be given artificial assistance in the shape of that substance obtained from the stomachs of pigs which is called "pepsin," administered as is usual in compressed lozenges.

THE SAHARA.

Description of the World's Greatest Desert.

The Sahara is an immense zone of desert which commences on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, between the Canaries and Cape de Verde, and traverses the whole of North Africa, Arabia, and Persia, as far as Central Asia. The Mediterranean portion of it may be said roughly to extend between the 15th and 30th degrees of north latitude.

This was popularly supposed to have been a vast inland sea in very recent times, but the theory was supported by geographical facts wrongly interpreted. It has been abundantly proved by the researches of travelers and geologists that such a sea was neither the cause nor the origin of the Libyan Desert.

Rainless and sterile regions of this nature are not peculiar to North Africa, but occur in two belts which go round the world in either hemisphere, at about similar distances north and south of the equator. These correspond in locality to the great inland drainage areas from which no water can be discharged into the ocean, and which occupy about one-fifth of the total land surface of the globe.

The African Sahara is by no means a uniform plain, but forms several distinct basins containing a considerable extent of what may almost be called mountain land. The Hoggar mountains, in the center of the Sahara, are 7,000 feet high, and are covered during three months with snow. The general average may be taken at 1,500. The physical character of the region is very varied. In some places, such as Tiout, Touat, and other oases in or bordering on Morocco, there are well-watered valleys, with fine scenery and almost European vegetation, where the fruits of the North flourish side by side with the palm tree. In others there are rivers like the Uied Guir, an affluent of the Niger, which the French soldiers, who saw it in 1870, compared to the Loire. Again, as in the bed of the Uied Itir, there is a subterranean river which gives a sufficient supply of water to make a chain of rich and well-peopled oases equal in fertility to some of the finest portions of Algeria. The greater part of Sahara, however, is hard and undulating, cut up by dry water courses, such as the Igharghar, which descends to the Chott Melghigh, and almost entirely without animal or vegetable life.

About one-sixth of its extent consists of dunes of moving sand, a vast accumulation of detritus washed down from more northern and southern regions—perhaps during the glacial epoch—but with no indication of marine formation. These are difficult and even dangerous to traverse, but they are not entirely destitute of vegetation. Water is found at rare but well known intervals, and there is an abundance of salsolaceaus plants which serve as food for the camel. This sand is largely produced by wind action on the underlying rocks, and is not sterile in itself—it is only the want of water which makes it so. Wherever water does exist, or artesian wells are sunk, oases of great fertility never fail to follow.

Some parts of the Sahara are below the level of the sea, and here are formed what are called chotts or sebkhas, open depressions without any outlets, inundated by torrents from the southern slopes of the Atlas in winter and covered with a saline efflorescence in summer. This salt by no means proves the former existence of an inland sea. It is produced by the concentration of the natural salts, which exist in every variety of soil, washed down by winter rains, with which the unevaporated residue of water becomes saturated.

About Needles.

The needle is one of the most ancient implements or instruments of which we have any record. The old-time needles were unlike the present luxury, they having been made of wood, bronze, bone, etc., and without eyes, a circular depression at the blunt end having been so fastened as to enable it to carry the thread. Pliny describes the needles of bronze which were used by the ancient Greeks and Romans; and, since his day, similar instruments have been found in comparative abundance both at Herculaneum and Pompeii. The first account of the manufacture of "white iron," or steel needles, says that they were made at Nuremberg, in 1460; and, while the exact date is in doubt, they are said to have been made in Britain as early as 1545. The account further adds that the first needles manufactured in England were made by a Spanish African, who died without having taught anyone his art. During the reign of Elizabeth the industry was revived, and, strange to say, also by a foreigner—a native of India. The forerunner of the present great Redditch needle manufactory was established by Christopher Greening and a Mr. Damer, in 1650. Many successful attempts were made to bring out the "drilled eye" needle before it was finally introduced in 1826. Two years later the "burnishing machine," with which the eyes of needles are highly polished, was completed. In this machine which is very simple, the needles are all strung on a wire, which revolves rapidly, thereby imparting a beautiful finish to the eye.—[St. Louis Republic.

The Barefoot Cure.

The barefoot cure is evidently the coming craze in panaceas, says the Pittsburg Dispatch. We have had the rest cure, the athletic cure, the Delsarte cure, the faith cure, et al., and now the barefoot cure. Returning travellers from Germany and Austria are bringing the idea over with them, and as it is vastly less harmful than the cholera bacilli, which they might have brought, it is as well to be lenient with the lesser folly. The barefoot treatment is a phase of more than one process of cure. Under one authority it is carried on on a sunny beach, and the patients race through the hot sands bareheaded, barearmed, and with legs and feet bare to the knees. This is to give the sun and heat, with their health-giving properties, free access to the skin. According to another curist, to coin a word, it is a part of the hardening course, and though you begin walking barefooted over smooth turf, you advance by running through wet meadows, and later, meadows heavy with hoar frost, to the climax of being able to endure tramping in cold water. As most of the cures effected at present have outlived their novelty, at least we may expect to find this brand-new barefoot cure eagerly seized upon.

Hypnotic Power in Animals.

The power attributed to the snake and feline families of "charming" their victims seems to me past dispute. It is merely a sort of hypnotism. Livingstone tells us that when at one time seized by a tiger he felt neither terror nor pain; all his senses seemed to be benumbed. Bates in his "Naturalist on the Amazon" states that one day in the woods a small pet dog flew at a rattlesnake. The snake fixed its eyes on the dog, erected its tail and shook its rattle; it seemed in no haste to seize the dog, but as if waiting to put the dog into a more suitable condition for being seized.

As to the dog, it neither continued the attack nor retreated, could not or would not move when called, and was with difficulty dragged away by his master. I have seen one case of a snake charming a bird, but I had a better opportunity to study a cat charming a bird, and probably the process is much alike in both. The cat placed itself on the outside sill of my window, near to a pine tree. A bird presently lit on the pine tree, no doubt not observing the cat. The cat fixed its attention on the bird. The cat's eyes were widely opened and shone with a peculiar brightness; its head was raised and intent, the fur on its neck and about its face slowly stood up, as if electrified.

Except for this rising of the fur and a certain intensity of life in the whole attitude of the beast it was as still as if cut from stone. The bird quivered, trembled, looked fixedly at the cat, and finally, with a feeble shake of the wings, fell towards the cat, which bounded to seize it. A lady tells me that she "does not believe that cats can charm birds, because she has seen a cat trying to charm a parrot, and the bird, greatly alarmed, scolded loudly." This proves nothing, the parrot in general, or more probably that parrot, did not prove a good subject for the mesmeric power. I have seen people who cannot be hypnotized; they resent the effort, and nervous action becomes intensified.—[Science.

Fine Carperts.

Two of the finest carpets of their kind in the world are now to be seen at Fontainebleau, where they have been taken at the order of President Carnot. These carpets, one of which is thirty feet square, and the other eleven yards long and ten yards wide, were ordered by Napoleon III. at the Gobelin manufactory. The ground of the smaller is yellow and the inventory value was set down at $40,000. The larger, which has a black ground, was estimated at $50,000. The real value of the carpets, which were ten years in making, is supposed to be much greater than these sums.

"In my Summer outings," said a woman recently, "I always gather a fresh supply of the simple herbs. One finds them in most rural districts—catnip, pennyroyal, peppermint tansy and others. I provide small linen bags, each to hold a bunch of the herb. It seems to me that they are much fresher and more efficient than those one buys in the dressed form. The catnip is my sedative. When I am tired and nervous I drink a bowl of catnip tea, lie down with a warm cover over me, and often ward off a nervous headache in this soothed and perspiring sleep."

Physical Inferiority of the London Police.

A correspondent of the New York Tribune, in England, has been much struck by the physical inferiority of the London police. He writes:

"One's first impression of the London policeman is that he is an insignificant-looking fellow. In fact, one is likely to form this impression before reaching London, if he spends a few hours or a day or two in Liverpool. If anything, the policemen of Liverpool are physically less impressive than those of London. One wonders if such men as these are the result of a diet on the famous "roast beef of Old England." In comparison, the Broadway Squad of New York are literally "out of sight." A visit of several weeks in London will fail to reveal one bluecoat to vie in stalwartness with several hundred who can readily be seen on a single day in the metropolis of the New World. What these men do in an emergency requiring strength, bravery and endurance can only be imagined by the stranger."

Standards of Measurement.

The editor was taught by his governess that three barleycorns measured one inch, and at the mature age of six years he determined to test the accuracy of this statement. He had no difficulty in finding the barleycorns, but somehow no three grains that he picked up in the chickens' yard agreed with the formula. He never attempted the more scientific test which is thus described: "The length of a pendulum oscillating in a second in vacuo, at sea level, in the latitude of London, is 39.13929 inches, and from a knowledge of this fact the inch, foot and yard can easily be obtained should the official standards at any time be lost or mislaid." When, in 1834, the "standard" measure was destroyed by fire at the House of Parliament, an attempt was made to restore it by the pendulum test, but pendulums, like barleycorns, were found not to agree.—[Whitaker's Almanack.

An Ancient Copper Globe.

One of the most significant curios in New York is a copper globe in the Lenox Library. It is only four and a half inches in diameter, but it is believed to be the earliest globe to lay down the new discoveries by Columbus. It dates back to the first decade of the sixteenth century. The little it shows of this hemisphere is mostly wrong, and the few names would be recognized only by experts in matters geographical, but the globe is rightly esteemed one of the chief treasures of a rare collection.—[Boston Transcript.