The Weekly Kansas Chief.

SOL. MILLER, PUBLISHER AND PROPRIETOR. } DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF DONIPHAN COUNTY. Our Motto: "Talk for Home, Fight for Home, Patronize Home." { SUBSCRIPTION, $2.00 PER YEAR, IN ADVANCE.

VOLUME XXVI.—NUMBER 26. { TROY, KANSAS, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1882. { WHOLE NUMBER, 1,326.

Choice Poetry.

JOHN BROWN, OF OSAWATOMIE.

BY EDMUND C. STEDMAN, NOVEMBER, 1859.

John Brown in Kansas settled, like a steadfast Yankee farmer,
Brave and godly, with four sons, all stalwart men of might.
There he spoke aloud for Freedom, and the border-strife grew warmer,
Till the rangers fired his dwelling, in his absence, in the night;
And old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Came homeward in the morning, to find his house burned down.

Then he grasped his trusty rifle, and boldly fought for freedom,
Smote from border unto border the fierce invading band;
And he and his brave boys vowed, so might Heaven help and speed 'em,
They would save those grand old prairies from the curse that blights the land;
And old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Said, "Boys, the Lord will aid us," and he shoved his rammed down.

And the Lord did aid these men; and they labored day and even,
Saving Kansas from its peril, and their very lives seemed charmed,
Till the ruffians killed one son, in the blessed light of Heaven;
In cold blood the fellows slew him, as he journeyed all unarmed.
Then old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Shot a man, but shot his teeth, and frowned a terrible frown.

Then they seized another brave boy, not amid the heat of battle,
But in peace behind his plow-share, and they loaded him with chains,
And with pikes before their horses, even as they goad their cattle,
Drove him cruelly for their sport, and at last blew out his brains.
Then old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Raised his right hand up to Heaven, calling Heaven's vengeance down.

And he swore a fearful oath, by the name of the Almighty,
He would hunt this ravening evil that had scathed and torn him so;
He would seize it by the vitals, he would crush it day and night, he
Would so pursue its footsteps, so return it blow for blow,
That old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Should be a name to swear by, in backwoods or in town.

Then his beard became more grizzled, and his wild blue eye grew wilder,
And more sharply curved his hawk's nose, snuffing battle from afar;
And he and the two boys left, though the Kansas strife waxed mildly,
Grew more sullen, till was over the bloody Border War.
And old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Had gone crazy, as they reckoned, by his fearful glare and frown.

So he left the plains of Kansas and their bitter woes behind him,
Slipt off into Virginia, where the statesmen all are born,
Hired a farm by Harper's Ferry, and none knew where to find him,
Or whether he'd turned parson, or was jacketed and shorn
For old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Mad as he was, knew texts enough to wear a parson's gown.

He bought no plows and harrows, spades and shovels, or such trifles,
But quietly to his ranche there came by every train
Boxes full of pikes and pistols, and his well-beloved Sharp's rifles,
And eighteen other madmen joined their leader then again.
Says old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
"Boys, we've got an army large enough to march and whip the town!

"Take the town, and seize the muskets; free the negroes, and then arm them,
Carry the County and the State, aye, and all the potent South,
On their own heads be the slaughter, if their victims rise to harm them,
These Virginians who believed not, nor would heed the warning mouth."
Says old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown:

"The world shall see a Republic, or my name is not John Brown."

'Twas the sixteenth of October, on the evening of a Sunday,
"This good work," declared the captain, "shall be on a holy night!"
It was on a Sunday evening, and before the noon of Monday,
With two sons, and Captain Stephens, fifteen privates, black and white,
Captain Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Marched across the bridged Potomac, and knocked the sentry down.

Took the guarded armory building, and the muskets and the cannon;
Captured all the County Majors, and the Colonels, one by one;
Scared to death each gallant scion of Virginia they ran on,
And before the morning Monday, I say, the deed was done.
Mad old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
With his eighteen other crazy men, went in and took the town.

Very little noise and bluster, little smell of powder made it;
It was all done in the midnight, like the Emperor's coup d'etat.
"Cut the wires!" stop the railcars, hold the streets and bridges," said he,
Then declared the new Republic, with himself for guiding star,
This old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
And the bold two thousand citizens ran off and left the town.

Then was riding, and railroading, and expressing here and thither;
And the Martinsburg Sharpshooters, and the Charlestown Volunteers,
And the Shepherdstown and Winchester militia hastened whither
Old Brown was said to muster his ten thousand grenadiers.
General Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Behind whose rampant banner all the North was pouring down.

But at last, 'tis said, some persons escaped from old Brown's durance,
And the effervescent valor of the chivalry broke out,
When they learned that nineteen madmen had the marvelous assurance—
Only nineteen—thus to seize the place, and drive them straight about.
And old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Found an army come to take him, encamped around the town.

But to storm with all the forces we have mentioned was too risky,
So they hurried off to Richmond for the Government advice;
There them from their weeping matrons, fired their souls with Bourbon whisky,
Till they battered down Brown's castle with their ladders and machines,
And old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Received three bayonet stabs, and a cut on his brave old crown.

Tallyho! the Old Virginia gentry gather to the baying!
In they rushed and killed the game, shooting lustily away;
And woe to if they slew a rebel, those who came too late for slaying.
Not to lose a share of glory, fired their bullets in his clay.
And old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Saw his sons fall dead beside him, and between them laid him down.

How the compressors wore their laurels; how they hastened on the trial
How the prisoners was placed, half dying, on the Charlestown Court House floor;
How he spoke his grand oration in the scorn of all denial,
What the brave old madman told them—these are known the country o'er.
Hang old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,"
Said the Judge, "and all such rebels!" with his most judicial frown.

But, Virginians, don't do it! for I tell you that the flagon,
Filled with blood of old Brown's offspring, was first poured by Southern hands
And each drop from old Brown's life-veins, like the red gore of the dragon,
May spring up a vengeful Fury, hissing through your slave-worn lands.
And old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
May trouble you more than ever, when you've nailed his coffin down.

Select Story.

A STRANGE RELEASE.

In 1880, Charlie Page was in old Mexico, engaged in herding cattle. Not from the love of wild life, but because he could earn hard dollars, and later on because his heart had gone out to Zareta Hernandez, the daughter of old Hernandez on the Mexos.

That he loved the girl was no wonder, for she was a noted beauty even among the many beautiful Spanish women who lived in that section; but that he, poor Charlie Page, the American, should have won Zareta's love in return, when a score of the richest rancheros, both Mexican and Spanish, were literally at her feet, might have been thought strange.

Such, however, was the condition of affairs, and despite the objections of her family and the positive interference of some of her other lovers, the girl had become solemnly engaged to Charlie, and promised to marry Charlie in the fall.

And those who knew her best were satisfied that at this point opposition must cease, for if Page lived, Zareta would be his bride at the time agreed, or in her grave.

The match was consequently considered in the best light possible by Zareta's family, and Charlie allowed the fiery form of a future son-in-law.

As the old man said to put it:

"Ze boy is no ze Spaniard, an' not as I choose; but, Santa Maria! ze girl is ze Spaniard, an' she choose!"

That told the whole story. Zareta was a Spanish maid, and would do as she would do. Let those oppose who might dare.

The Rubicon once passed, matters moved on more smoothly, and nothing seemed to fret the course of true love except—there is always an except—the implacability and ugliness of one of the girl's discarded lovers, who would not consent to be cast aside after the manner of men, but raged and threatened, daily growing worse.

This man was Dion Combra, a half-breed, but a man of wealth—a person of furious and ungovernued temper, who swore the match should not go on.

Page occasionally met this scowler, but no words had passed between them until one evening, late in August, when he surprised his persistent rival delivering a passionate lecture to the mother of Zareta, a quiet little woman, who could only tremble before the profane rage of the half-breed.

Instantly conceiving the cause of the scene, Charlie sprang forward, and, thrusting himself before the other, he cried:

"Draw back, you hound! Why do you frighten a woman? I am here to answer for Zareta Hernandez, and her mother is my mother. Another insulting word, and I'll fling you into the river yonder!"

For an instant the half-crazed Combra stood speechless; then shrieking out an oath, he tore a knife from his bosom and flung himself upon the American, only to be met with a sudden blow, that hurled him senseless to the ground, while Page took the little mother and his sweetheart quickly from the scene.

Impressing Madam Hernandez with the necessity of secrecy with regard to this unpleasant transaction, the young lover himself forgot it for the next three hours, within the sweet shelter of two warm arms, and gazing into liquid eyes that were filled with yielding love; but the matter was suddenly brought to mind again, as he rode homeward through the misty moonlight, by the whiz of a knife, hurled from a chaparral by the roadside, and the sight of a dim figure leaping down the river bank toward a waiting boat.

With a sudden touch of the spur, the young man followed, but too late. The light skiff fled from the shore like a shadow.

"That coward!" muttered Charlie, as he drew rein at the water's edge; "he would have killed me in good old Spanish style—a knife in the dark. I must look out for this bravo. That cursed blade came close!"

From that time on, the American found it necessary to guard himself constantly, for the jealousy and hatred of the half-breed, now thoroughly aroused, was terrible; and his attempts upon the life of the other were so frequent that Page became at last convinced that the world was not wide enough for his enemy and himself, and he determined to go armed at all moments, and to preserve his own safety even at the expense of the life of Dion Combra.

A bond to keep the peace would have been as waste paper to the infuriated ranchero, and Page knew it. His only safety lay in eternal vigilance.

The days were drawing toward fall, and the coming of her wedding festival now filled the heart of Zareta; but in the midst of all, she saw and felt some tithe of the danger that threatened her lover, and it made her warm blood run cold.

Once she spoke to the young American of it, but he scoffed, and much as she loved him, the girl could not endure that, so she determined to say nothing, but watch.

Even though Charlie denied the danger, she felt assured of it. The fierce rush of passion in her own heart taught it better than it could her lover what Combra must feel.

"He'll kill my darling if he can!" Zareta whispered to herself. "I must guard him!"

Unknown to Page, she planned and contrived to protect him. At times, unseen by the girl, her own followed him to and fro, and frightened away any roadside lurkers; at other times, by various excuses, the maid met her lover in unexpected paths, and prevented his appearance near her own home; and yet again, by out side business, she managed to draw the bloodthirsty Combra away from the Mexos Valley for days at a time.

Still the danger continued, and both the American and his sweetheart knew it. The disappearance of the half-breed but put off the day of final reckoning, and Page never rode without his pistols. Notwithstanding all these fears and troubles, the lovers were much together, and the wedding day drew on apace. And even as it approached, the dread of the murderous Combra increased.

Overcome by love and fear, Zareta had begged her promised husband not to ride after dark, and he had given his word. For this reason his visits to the ranch of old Hernandez were now made in the afternoon, and as the sun touched the crowns of the far-away mountains, he each day bade his Spanish sweetheart good-bye, and rode three miles across the country to his own home, where he remained out of sight until morning.

Man-like, the young American chafed at being thus separated from his queen of his heart, and locked within adobe walls from sundown to sunrise; but with clinging caresses and tearful eyes poor Zareta begged it should be so.

"Only until our marriage, my beloved. When we are one, irrevocably, then this wolf will leave us. Then once more you will be free."

"Free as the winds," cried Page. "But suppose the persecution continues?"

"Then," said the girl, with the dark blood flaming in her cheek, "then, when I am your wife, you may kill him."

"It's agreed," said Charlie. "I will say no more of this Combra until after our wedding, but if he then chooses to trouble you, and threatens me, let him have a care."

It was at last Sunday, and the ceremony was to be on Tuesday. Twice during the last week, even in the day time, Page had been followed by Indians through the timber—red-skins hired by his implacable enemy; and on this very morning, an old friend of Zareta's sent him word, at his ranch, not to venture forth that day at all, or if he did, to remain at the house of his ladylove until the wedding ceremony.

The brow of the young man grew dark, as this message was communicated to him.

"Hide from that dog! Never! By heaven, I'll ride as I will, and where I will, and let any man beware how he seeks to detain me! I am my own master!"

The vow was, perhaps, a rash one, but Page buckled a pair of heavy pistols at his belt, threw his repeating rifle across his saddle-bow, and put spurs to his horse with all the determination of a soldier.

He was thoroughly aroused, and had his rival appeared, a duel to the death would have most certainly ensued.

But the journey to Hernandez's ranch was without incident, and a week and day with his love seemed to cool the anger of the man, so that when, an hour before sundown, he bade Zareta good-bye, and turned his horse homeward, he had almost forgotten the danger of which he had that morning been warned.

The road or trail ran westward, and after traversing the highland for a couple of miles, descended to the bottoms of the Mexos.

The young lover had ridden as far as this point, dreaming, and it was not until the hoarse bellow of cattle all around him attracted his attention, that he aroused himself from his reverie. Then, however, he looked sharply about, and struck spurs to his horse.

"By heavens! A strange herd! I wonder how they came here? It will be well to move on. Some of those steers have ugly eyes and horns."

And indeed they had. The cattle were strays, a half hundred or more, and frightened. When in that state they are often dangerous, and will sometimes attack even mounted men.

Page knew this, and rode both rapidly and carefully across the bottom land toward the ford, ready at any moment to make a run for it if the bellowing cattle should choose to attack him.

He was almost at the river's edge, a bit of chaparral alone separated him from the flowing water, when suddenly, with a hoarse cry, he reined his steed sharply back upon his haunches, and clutched wildly at his pistol-holster, then as suddenly was dragged from his saddle to the ground, half strangled by a tightening lariat about his throat, and the same instant his bloodthirsty enemy, Don Combra, knelt above him, knife in hand.

With swift and nervous strength, he bound the half stunned American, and then dragged him toward the river's brink.

"Carramba!" hissed the furious half-breed, glaring into the eyes of his victim, "ze end has come! You would not mind ze warning, ze debil gets you now! See! I will eat ze t'roat an' tie stones to ze heels an' drown!"

The man's words rang dully in the ears of his captive, but the gleam of his eyes and knife, and the gurgle of the river close at hand, told Page his fate.

To cry out were worse than useless. If he must die, let it be like a man.

The madman drew closer to him, unwinding from his waist the scarlet scarf which he wore.

"Red on ze heels, red on ze t'roat, eh!" he said, grinning horribly. "Ze lady love will not marry so soon!"

He had tied poor Charlie's feet, and was now engaged in wrapping a large stone in his red scarf; his knife was between his teeth.

"Pray, dog!" he snarled. "Ze end has come!"

He waved one end of his scarf belt above his head.

There was a sudden angry roar, a deep bellow, a rush of hoofs, a gleam of white horns, a wild cry, a cloud of dust—and as Page turned, he saw the place where his would-be-murderer had been, empty!

A wild steer had transfixed him, and swept headlong with him into the river. The American was saved!

The wedding took place on time, but the fate of Dion Combra is known to but one man in the Mexos country.

ONE THOUSAND GRAINS ON AN EAR OF CORN.—In a grocery of the West End, we found an ear of corn, a few days since, as described below: Length, 11 inches; 18 rows of grain, containing 69 grains each, making in all 1,080 grains; weighing, when shelled off, 19 ounces; measuring 11 picks; circumference at middle of the ear before shelling, 8¼ inches; the grains measured five-eighths of an inch in length; circumference of the cob at middle, 4¾ inches, weighing 4¾ ounces. Came from Butler County, Ohio.—*Cin. Com.*

J. DONALD CAMERON is still a native of Pennsylvania. This is probably owing to the fact that the people had no voice in the matter.—*Atlanta Con.*

Miscellaneous.

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS.

Sunday, December 4, 1639.

BY WALTER H. SMITH.

[The earliest observation of the transit of Venus is recorded below. In 1639, Jeremiah Horrox, a lad of great abilities, residing in a village near Liverpool, England, calculated the elements of a transit, and watched the planet across the sun. His aids were simplicity itself, being, in fact, nothing more than a piece of paper and a hole in a shutter. Staunchly Puritanical, with the characteristic spirit of that age, he refused to forego his attendance at divine worship, the day being Sunday. In his correspondence declaring afterward to astronomers that he could furnish but an imperfect relation of the occurrence, most part of the day having been occupied with events of greater importance.]

Blest, calm and peaceful Sabbath day,
How brightly shone thy rising sun,
When Horrox sought that first survey,
And seeking, won.

He gladly marks thy cloudless sky,
Thy lengthy sunrise shadows fall,
But no dark planet meets his eye—
The church-bells call.

To worship God he goes away,
With pious thoughts let science burn—
Shall we who knowledge love to-day,
This lesson spurn?

Not so. Although we have grown cold
In hearts that feel there lingers still
Some remnants of this faith of old,
So firm of will.

Firm! Transit intervals are long,
The next for other eyes reserved,
If now the sky with clouds should throng
It unobserved.

Vain fear: his toil at last repaid,
He reaps the harvest of his care;
He seeks his room, and sees the shade,
The dark spot there!

With rapid pulse his heart beats high,
Swift o'er his mind endless pass;
Thus Galileo swept the sky
With magic glass.

Sublime the triumph was; his sight
Would never more the scene behold;
But sons of science hailed delight
His action bold.

Aspiring spirit, frail of breath,
(Earth's richest buds are nipped by frost)
For Horrox died an early death
To science lost.

PLANETS FOR DECEMBER.

Venus will be evening star until the 6th, and morning star the rest of the month. There will be no hesitation in determining which of the planets leads the list, for the movements of Venus are more important than those of all other planets combined, or, indeed, of any other celestial body, even the sun. Venus is now at, exceeding in proportions our present august visitor. On the 6th, the grand epoch occurs, for then the planet reaches her inferior conjunction, making a transit over the sun's face. No intelligent person who realizes its importance will fail to do as much towards the celebration of the event as he believes the planets are worth, with the aid of a piece of smoked glass, at some time during the passage. It is the simplest sight imaginable—a tiny black dot, making its way over the sun, but the solution of the great problem of the sun's distance may hinge on the seemingly unimportant occurrence. Venus will appear on the sun's disk like a little black pea, and the wedding day drew on apace. And even as it approached, the dread of the murderous Combra increased.

Mars is morning star until the 18th, and evening star the rest of the month. On the 18th, at two o'clock in the morning, he comes into opposition with the sun, the most interesting epoch in his course to terrestrial observers. The giant planet, the earth and the sun are then in a straight line, with the earth in the centre. He is then at his nearest point to us, and appears in his brightest phase, a superbly brilliant star, outshining every other star in the heavens, excepting Venus. At opposition, he will rise at sunset, and continue to be visible the entire night. He has found many admirers, during November, from those who best enjoy the pleasure early for a sight of the comet, as he looked graciously down from the zenith upon the intruder on the solar domains. A sad fate would overtake the comet, if it should approach too near the planet, as it recedes from sight, for its orbit would be drawn into a close ellipse, and it would be a prisoner within the solar system, until it broke up into meteors. Jupiter will be in fine condition for observation during the whole winter, casting a shadow in a darkened room, and revealing his moons in an opera or spy-glass. Telescopists will find rich material in the reappearance of the great red spot, in the exquisite coloring of the belts that diversify his disc, and in the incessant changes taking place among his satellites, as they overtake, pass, meet, hide and recede from each other in endless mazes. As soon as the transit is passed, the star of imperial Jove will be in the ascendant, rising in the east as soon as the sun has set, and reigning supreme in somnolent nights. The right ascension of Jupiter is 5h. 55m., his declination is 23° 3' north, his diameter is 45.2", and his place is in Gemini.

Jupiter rises now about a quarter before 6 o'clock in the evening; at the end of the month, he sets at twenty-one minutes after 6 o'clock in the morning.

Saturn is evening star during the month. He pursues his quiet course as a beaming star, shining with a soft radiance, and still retains his position near the Pleiades. He moves so slowly that he is nearly two years and a half in passing through a constellation, so that it is easy to follow his track. In the telescope, he is magnificent beyond description, as he lies softly cradled in his wide-open rings, surrounded by his moons. Our sun is visible as a dot in the Milky Way to the inhabitants of other worlds clustering around other suns, but the pride of our system, the ringed-planet Saturn, is never seen from any other system outside our own. The right ascension of Saturn is 3h. 12m., his declination is 15° 48' north, his diameter is 19", and his place is in Taurus.

Saturn sets at half-past 5 o'clock in the morning; at the end of the month, at 23 minutes past 3 o'clock.

Neptune is evening star during the month, and is still in the close vicinity of Saturn, making his transit fourteen minutes earlier.

Neptune sets about a quarter past 5 o'clock; at the end of the month, he sets about 11 minutes after 3 o'clock.

Uranus is morning star during the month, and reaches his quadrature, or half-way house, on the western side of the sun, on the 15th, at 1 o'clock in the morning. His right ascension is 11h. 35m., his declination is 3° 28' north, his diameter is 3.6," and his place is in the constellation Virgo.

Uranus rises about half an hour after midnight; at the end of the month, about a quarter before 11 o'clock in the evening.

Mars is evening star until the 10th, and morning star the rest of the month. On the 10th, he is in conjunction with the sun, and commences the long path that leads to his opposition, in January, 1884; for the earth has to travel twice around her orbit and then travel fifty days more to come into line between the sun and Mars. Therefore, it is 687 days from one opposition to the next. On the 5th, the day before the transit, Mars is in close conjunction with Venus, passing 6' south, but the planets are too near the sun to be visible.

Mars sets at 37 minutes past 4 o'clock in the evening; at the end of the month, he rises a few minutes after 7 o'clock in the morning.

Mercury is morning star until the 16th, and evening star the rest of the month. He is a busy member of the brotherhood. On the 9th, he is in conjunction with Venus, passing 1° 12' south. On the 14th, at midnight, he is in conjunction with Venus, passing 3° south. On the 16th, at midnight, he is in superior conjunction with the sun, passing his eastern side, and becoming evening star.

Mercury rises at half-past 6 o'clock in the morning; at the end of the month, he sets at 10 minutes past 5 o'clock in the evening.

THE MOON.

The December moon fulls on the 24th, at 57 minutes past 10 o'clock in the morning. The moon is in conjunction with Venus, on the 9th, and with Mercury and Mars on the 10th, showing how closely the three planets cluster together on the western side, and close to the sun. The new moon of the 10th is in conjunction with Neptune and Saturn on the 21st, and with Jupiter on the 23d, the day before the full. Planet and moon will be at their nearest point about half-past 9 o'clock in the evening. Jupiter passing 2° 30' north.

Thus, December presents an exceptionally beautiful programme for planetary students. Venus leads off with a grand transit and inferior conjunction. Jupiter comes next, in reaching the most interesting point of his course, opposition with the sun, when the eastern sky seems to glow as he comes above the horizon. Saturn pursues the even tenor of his way high up among the stars. Mars shows a throb of life as he arrives at conjunction with the sun, and gives a promise of sometime reaching opposition, when his moon will come into view. Mercury is busy enough to deserve the title of messenger of the gods. The conjunctions of Venus, Mercury and Mars with the sun and with each other show how near they are to the great luminary, and how nearly their tracks touch upon each other.

One more our neighbor, the moon, tries to prove that she is not a member of the dead-world brotherhood, to which she has been ruthlessly consigned. Mr. Trouvelot adds his weighty authority to the theory that there are evidences of movement on the lunar disc. This keen-eyed, reliable observer has seen lunar landscapes take their distinctness, as if light clouds were floating over them, and two of the great craters illumined with a rare vapor, slightly tinged with purple. Here are indications of an atmosphere of some kind, thus conflicting with established belief. But the astronomical mind is receptive, and willing to accept anything new and strange, on sufficient proof.—*Providence Journal.*

THE COMET OF 1882.

How it Evidently Took Fire from the Sun, and as Evidently is Not Encke's Comet of 1812.

The Rio *News*, of October 24, publishes in full a letter of Professor Gould, of the Observatory at Cordoba, in the Argentine Confederacy, on the comet of 1882, which has been summarily referred to in our cable despatches from Europe. Professor Gould, after distinguishing himself at Harvard, married a daughter of the late Josiah Quincy, Jr., of Boston, and accepted the position which he filled for a quarter of a century past at the head of the astronomical service of the Argentine Government. Of the comet which he has just observed, with all his usual care and scientific accuracy, he thus writes to the Argentine Minister of Justice and Public Instruction, Dr. Wilde:

NATIONAL ARGENTINE OBSERVATORY, }
CORDOBA, September 30, 1882. }

The relative positions of the earth, the sun and the comet have been such that ordinary methods are of no avail for the determination of its orbit, so that this has necessitated an amount of labor three or four times as great as it otherwise would have been, giving at the same time a special interest to the present apparition. The sun and the comet were both almost on the plane of the equator where the same has its intersection with the ecliptic; part of the series of observations were effected previous to the perihelion, and the rest subsequently to the same; in the beginning, it could not be known whether it would be visible to us, but when it was twice in the same direct line with the earth and sun, had passed in the first instance before or behind the same, or not, the ascendant is quite close to the equinoctial line; finally, it has continued its apparent course with the same route on approaching and withdrawing from the sun. The course of the comet has been so favorable for the purpose of observations on all the favorable days since the 9th inst., both during the day and at daybreak. The development of the matter going to form the tail has been observed; careful drawings of the position and magnitude of the same have been taken, and the orbit has been repeatedly estimated, more exact knowledge of the position and form of the same being from time to time obtained. The astronomer, Mr. Francis Wiggin, assistant at the observatory, after repeated trials, has succeeded in arriving at estimates which can not be very far from the truth.

Now that its orbit is known, the similitude supposed to exist between this comet and that of 1808 has disappeared, and it may be said that it can not be identified with any that have been previously observed. What is specially notable about it is its limited perihelion distance, which, being so small as that of the comets of 1843 and 1880, not even as that of 1680, is nevertheless notable. It is evident that the great brilliancy of the comet subsequent to its access to the sun is due to its incandescence through the great heat it has borne.

Generally speaking, comets only shine through the reflected light of the sun, but to this one there appears to have been added another intrinsic brilliancy, its very body having attained a white color.

The tail, which has measured, during the week, a length of from 15° to 20°, and a width of about 1°, was prolonged at one edge to a distance of from 12° to 15° more, and by a streak of bright light giving it the appearance of having lost nine-tenths of its tail, leaving what remained thereof twice as wide as it otherwise would have seemed.

On Sunday, the 17th inst., it approached the sun with an extreme apparent velocity, passing once before and again behind, but always in the same, so that on the day following it was visible at a distance of 5° or 6° from the solar disk, on the same side it had arrived on.

Hence, instead of being visible after sunset, as it seemed probable in the beginning that it would be, it has always remained visible before sunrise, and it even affords us a magnificent spectacle towards the rising of the sun, during the last hours of the night.

Queries have been addressed to me from various sources as to the identity of this comet with that of 1812.

In that year, there appeared a relatively small comet, which, however, was visible to the naked eye, with a tail measuring 2° that was seen during a few days. Its orbit was studied by Encke, the astronomer, who discovered that its period must be between 70 and 81 years. His calculations have been repeated by several astronomers, of late years, always with the same results, being the uncertainty of the period can not exceed one or two years, the reapparition of this comet is shortly expected, and the parts of the heavens in which it must be sought for have been carefully determined under various hypotheses.

For the last few months, a systematic investigation has been established here respecting those regions of the Southern hemisphere in which its appearance is possible, and it is my intention that this investigation shall proceed.

The position of the present comet, however, is so remote from that which could be occupied under any supposition by that of 1812, that no calculations of any nature have been requisite in order to demonstrate the utter impossibility of their being identical.

At present, the comet is receding at once from the earth and from the sun; it is probable, notwithstanding, that it will continue as an object of observation for ten or twenty days longer. It appears to move an earlier hour every day, moving at the same time towards the south.

I have the honor of saluting Y. E. very attentively, whom may God preserve many years.

B. A. GOULD.

An Enormous Sun Spot.

Mr. Brashner, writing to the Pittsburg *Chronicle*, on Thursday last, thus describes the great spot which has lately made its appearance on the sun: "I had noticed," he says, "the spot coming on to the sun's edge, on Monday, and concluded that it would attain enormous proportions. In the telescope, it was an object of singular beauty. Yesterday morning, I examined it closely, and I think in all my life I never saw so many beautiful feathery bridges and arms stretching out from the penumbral borders of the spot across and into the great dark nuclei. Every one of them was more or less curved the same way, showing clearly the direction of the cyclonic storm. The penumbra was very much broken up, and the many beautiful cavities taken by its extended arms and bridges make up one of the most interesting spots on record. Its size is simply enormous. I projected the sun's image so as to give a disc of 25 millimetres diameter. The spot then measured four millimetres. This would give it nearly one-sixteenth of the sun's diameter, which we will call 880,000 miles. Then one-sixteenth of this would give 55,000 miles as the diameter of the spot. As it was an irregular square, we could safely estimate the spot to contain, I should say, 2,000,000 square miles. There are a number of smaller spots on the sun, but none so interesting as this one."

A WASHINGTON glazier asks the Garfield Board of Audit to assist him in securing a Governmental appointment, as one of the bullets fired at the late President lodged in his glass and putty-box, and shattered its contents.

A STILL DAY IN AUTUMN.

I love to wander through the woodlands hoary,
In the soft gloom of an Autumnal day,
When Summer gathers up her robes of glory,
And like a dream of beauty, glides away.

How through each loved, familiar path she lingers,
Serenely smiling through the golden mist,
Tinting the wild grape with her dewy fingers,
Till the cool emerald turns to amethyst;

Kindling the faint stars of the hazel, shining
To light the gloom of Autumn's mouldering halls;
With hoary plumes the clematis entwining,
Where o'er the rock her withered garland falls.

Warm lights are on the sleepy uplands waning,
Beneath dark clouds along the horizon rolled,
Till the slant sunbeams, through their fringes raining,
Bathe all the hills in melancholy gold.

The moist wind breathes of crisped leaves and flowers
In the damp hollows of the woodland sown,
Mingling the freshness of Autumnal showers
With spicy airs from cedar alleys blown.

Beside the brook, and on the cumbered meadow,
Where yellow fern-tufts fleck the faded ground,
With folded lids beneath their palmy shadow,
The gentian nods, in dewy slumbers bound.

Upon those soft-fringed lids the bee sits brooding,
Like a fond lover loth to say farewell;
Or, with shut wings, through silken folds intruding,
Creeps near her heart, his drowsy tale to tell.

The little birds upon the hillside lonely,
Flit noiselessly along from spray to spray,
Silent as a sweet, wandering thought, that only
Shows its bright wings, and softly glides away.

The acanthus flowers, in the warm sunlight dreaming,
Forget to breathe their fullness of delight;
And through the tranced wood soft airs are straying,
Still as the dew-fall of a Summer night.

So, in my heart a sweet, unwonted feeling
Stirs, like the wind in Ocean's hollow shell,
Through all its secret chambers sadly stealing,
Yet finds no words its mystic charm to tell.

BUTLER'S LAW PRACTICE.

His Enormous Business and His Business Methods.

Carlyle says that great men are too often unknown, or, what is worse, misknown. It cannot be said of Gen. Butler, that he is unknown, yet, doubtless, many honest thinkers have good cause to assume that when the classic Scotchman voiced this sentiment, he had before him a prototype not differing materially in many essentials from the subject of this sketch. That General Butler has shown himself to be a deserving subject for the hero worship of the Carlyle school, no one conversant with his life can doubt. Those who are not wanting those who would not halt with a Cromwell, a Napoleon, but would successfully measure his strength with a Bismarck or a Gladstone. A descendant, as Parton tersely puts it, of "fighting stock," blood of Anglo-Saxon and Scotch-Irish, a mixture affording promise of a mitigated Andrew Jackson or a combative Benjamin Franklin, it is not wonderful that this phenomenon of an American is known by not a few of the general public. To discuss Gen. Butler as a politician and statesman, however, is not the purpose of the writer, as the facts bearing thereon have many times been exhausted, and the knights of the quill, in search of refreshing paragraphs, have drawn nothing from accurate memory, but everything from their fantastic imaginations. But to speak briefly of his life and labors as a lawyer, counselor and advocate, is the aim of this incomplete review. It has been well said that "The history of the world is but the biography of great men," the name of Boston, and perhaps appropriately be added the particular assumption that the history of the American bar would be fairly presented through the biography of its great lawyers. If one were called upon to give a truthful pen-picture of the Massachusetts Bar, covering the period of General Butler's active service, it would be difficult to attempt the biography the outline, perspective and finish would be far from complete. His position at the American Bar reflects the greatest credit upon the judicial history of the Commonwealth.

Second to no practitioner in the country, if to any in the world, his long-continued prominence in the war, in Congress and the political contests of the State, has drawn much from his pre-eminence in his profession, so that but few, compared with the many, know of him other than as a great criminal lawyer. While remarkable for his successful career in the defense of important criminal trials, his strength in other fields of the law has been equally well tested, and as one moves through the city nearly every State in the Union, capital, like criminals, has sought him as counsel and advocate, and today no corporation with an uncertain issue is at rest when it is whispered that a retainer has been deposited to the General's credit by the opposing suitor at the bar. To an impartial critic, the question of the labor of the General, the judgment is early entered that a busier, a more devoted, self-sacrificing worker, young or old, than General Butler does not exist. From early till late, and even when the hands of the clock trespass hard on the coming morning, is he engaged in delivering a brief, or formulating a defense for the issues of the following day.

A visit to the law office at No. 16 Pemberton Square, when Gen. Butler is in the city, will disclose a large company waiting in a comfortable ante room, the presence of the great lawyer. Here, in the ordinary pressure of business, may be seen daily from one to a dozen or a score persons, representing all classes of society; cases representing the claims of the bondholding banker and those of the common bricklayer, the rich widow, the slandered dressmaker and the Lowell factory maid. So democratic is the management and etiquette of this great legal centre, that the capitalist and the laborer, the maimed soldier and sailor, the wealthy employer and indigent employee, are received with equal politeness and attention. The office, which occupies the centre first floor of the building, is divided into six apartments, four of which are occupied by the two young attorneys associated with the general, the latter being sumptuously supplied with all the essentials of a well-regulated, working law office. Libraries, rich with English and American texts, and works of general and special reference; shelves freighted with State and United States reports, iron depositories, containing the important briefs and documentary evidence, meet the eye of the occasional visitor, while those more intimately interested are attracted by the pictures of the General and the yacht America, which, with other works of art, are suspended from the walls.

The remaining divisions are the waiting-room, opening into the office of the private Secretary and the general's private study. The former is richly carpeted and comfortably seated. Here, as in the departments mentioned, are noticeable the framed features of old associates at the bar and in public life, like Webster and Sumner, and also well executed pictures of some famous sheep-covered decisions of the State courts. Of the persons who have waited for hours for the arrival of the General, but few have passed the threshold of the private office. Disappointment, at the entrance of which is seated the official attendant, with brass buttons and navy blue, is felted and fortified in a manner harmonizing with the highest standard of taste. The carpeting is of the finest Turkish texture. The upholstery, of velvet plush, is especially inviting. Parian marble and Grecian statuary have a place here, while the delicate tinted walls are fairly concealed by the choicest of modern schools. Those familiar with the mansions at Lowell and Washington recognize there the hand of Gen. Butler, and the native love of the lawyer for the beautiful in nature and art. Though the sanflower is absent, the taste displayed in the furnishing is truly æsthetic. In a large bronze vase, supported on a massive base, and surrounded by papers, official and private, immediately in front of the general as he sits at his desk, is ever present a bouquet of fragrant buds and flowers, while the button-hole nosegay, with which every member of the bar is familiar, is the general's constant companion, winter and summer. No less essential to the equipment of the office are the distinctive geranium beds in the adjacent court-yard. The choice little library of English and American classics at the right of the entrance betrays the General's miscellaneous taste in literature, as does the beautifully carved model of the America, his love for old friends and the wonders of the sea. In fact, the perfect arrangement and orderly atmosphere of the whole office bespeaks systematic executive management, which, in a measure, must account for the celerity and accuracy with which business is here dispatched.

With the division of these apartments is the departmental method adopted in classifying the office work. Next to the General, his private secretary, Thomas E. Major, is probably the busiest man in Pemberton Square, if not in Boston. This gentleman, than whom there are few more rapid or accurate phonographers, attends to all the General's correspondence, and in addition to his duties as confidential and private secretary, it is frequently incumbent upon him to know the details of the business of the office. A thousand and one questions, many of which are as puzzling and perplexing as they are impertinent, must be answered. Says one: "Can you tell me if Gen. Butler will get me a pension? I am an old soldier, and was with him in the Gulf. Have been trying to get Government support for the past ten years. I can't afford to hire another lawyer, and I have come to my old commander. I was told he didn't charge for getting pensions." Another says: "My husband sir, is sick and cannot work. He works for Mr. ——, and because he is sick he cannot work his time, he can't get his pay. They refuse to pay me, and I come to Gen. Butler for justice. I haven't got any money, but I know he will help me." Again: "I have been accused of stealing, which slander has injured my reputation. I am innocent, but I have no means to defend myself against a rich corporation. I have been told that General Butler takes the part of the poor against the injustice of the rich corporations, and I hope he will assist me. I will surely pay him if I am ever able." The fourth may be some horny-handed son of Erin, who, having a feeling common to many of his kind that everybody is down on the poor Irish, forthwith seeks No. 16 Pemberton Square. "Is Gen. Butler in? (with the last syllable obscure and the n long). I mane Bin. I want Bin to tell me fwhat moight be the law of the United Sthates. The New Yark and New England Railroad run over me and broke me back, and divil the cint will they pay me." If a question is asked us to the real cause of the alleged injury or the accident, the reply is: "And shure Bin got nearly $50,000 from the Grand Trunk for a fellah with one leg off, and if he would take my case, yees can make a fortune and so yees kin." And so these statements are repeated from day to day, yet, notwithstanding the unpleasantness of the position, the principle of the management is to patiently hear all, and secure justice whenever it is possible, no matter whether the case is accompanied by a heavy retainer or by barely enough to defray the service of a common writ. In the practice of the law there is no doubt more free service given at No. 16 Pemberton Square, than in any other office in the country. In all his numerous pension cases, Gen. Butler