THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD FIELDS.

Recent Discoveries in the Newly Developed District.

E. C. Poisson, a young Californian, who recently returned from a three years' experience in the South African gold fields, gives an interesting account of that part of the world. Mr. Poisson was mining in Southern California, when his attention was directed to some discoveries in South Africa, and he was one of the first to explore the new finds. Reaching there, he found himself in a strange land and among, to him, strange people. Johannesberg, the chief town of the new mining district is situated in the Transvaal and now contains a population of 25,000, although only in the third year of its existence. The population comprises Dutch and English, with large numbers of Kaffirs, who are the laborers and miners of the country. The mines are around the city, easily accessible, and are worked generally by shafts sunk on the "reefs," as the ledges are there called. The gold is found in a pure slate, without any combination, and is easily worked in proper stamp mills.

The claims allowed to be taken up are 150x400 feet, and there seems to be no limit to the number of "farms" which each one may claim. Upon a very elaborate map of the district in Mr. Poisson's possession there are thousands of designated claims, and the country is apparently taken up for miles in every direction. In this respect the South Africans seem not a whit behind the American prospector and miner. But the names given to the claims are jaw-breakers to new comers of American extraction, though no doubt they sound musical and harmonious enough to South African ears. Take such as these, selected at haphazard from a thousand others: Witwaterstrand, Lobengula, Klerksdorp, Witpoorie, Portschefstroom, or Zontpansberg. These are easily pronouncable compared with others, comprehensible only to the native Dutch.

There are now in operation in the district stamp mills aggregating one thousand stamps and before the year is out these will be increased fifty per cent. The first stamp mills erected were primitive and hardly equal to the crushing of the hard ore. Within twelve months, however, an American machinery firm, whose headquarters are in Chicago, sent out agents to such good purpose that nearly all the mills in course of construction, and many recently constructed, are all of the latest improved California pattern. Americans are quite scarce in the Transvaal, and experienced mine managers can command high salaries: so with competent miners, who must sooner or later be substituted for the Kaffirs who are now relied upon to do the work. Their labor is unsatisfactory, and in the end expensive. Mine promoters are very numerous, and Johannesberg's finest edifice is the Stock Exchange, where shares are dealt in, combinations made, and trusts will soon be organized. There are good mines and bad mines listed, and the wild-cat is just as prolific in South Africa as in Nevada or Colorado. Everybody in and about Johannesberg seems busy, and there is plenty of money in circulation. It reminds Mr. Poisson of the early days of California and Nevada, with the Kaffir element as a strange background.

Johannesburg draws its supplies at present from Cape Town, but the Delagoa Bay Railway, of which so much has been heard of late, threatens seriously to rival the English colony. From Cape Town the hunter of gold has had an easy time travelling to Kimberley, where are located the celebrated diamond fields, for it is all rail—650 miles. From Kimberley to Johannesberg is 298 miles, which must be travelled by stage, in a bullock cart, or on horseback. So extensive is the travel that seats in the coaches are secured weeks ahead. From Delagoa Bay the distance is much shorter, and it is a question which railroad will be completed first. From London to Cape Town is 5 950 miles, and the entire distance from London to the gold fields is completed within thirty-two days, nearly all the freight transportation is by bullock teams, necessarily slow, but not expensive.

The mines are at a high elevation, but the climate is temperate, and there is very little sickness, except what results from undue exposure. There is scarcely any snow in winter.

A Home on the Jersey Shore.

New York *Sun*: I was tramping along a Jersey highway in search of a farm-house where they took summer boarders, when an old farmer came along in his two-horse wagon and asked me to ride. As soon as he discovered what my errand was he exclaimed:

"Land-o goshen, but you've just hit the right man! I'll take you in myself. Got one of the resorterest resorts on the hull coast. You shall live on the fat of the land and gain a pound a day."

"What do you ask for board?"

"Well, that's according. Want much sweet?"

"No.

"Care about a carpet in your room?"

"No."

"Eat with the family?"

"Yes."

"Very big eater?"

"No."

"Willing to live on meat and taters and sich like, eh?"

"Yes."

"Any objections to working in the garden an hour or two before breakfast to get your appetite up?"

"Not the slightest."

"Help cut hay or stack wheat en a pinch?"

"Yes."

"Purty good at chopping wood?"

"That's my best hold."

"Kin ye milk?"

"I can."

"And when night comes you won't object to playing on shat guitar and singing?"

"No."

"Willing to pay for washing, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes."

"And for extra trouble if you git sick?"

"Yes. How much will you charge me a week for board?"

"Cash in advance?"

"Yes."

"Agree to stay all summer?"

"Yes."

"Wall, stranger, I'll have to ask the old woman. I've thought of everything I could, but she's a great thinker, and will probably think of lots of other things, sich as only changing the sheets once a week, washing yourself at the cistern, being satisfied with husk pillars, and so on. Come and see me to-morrow and we'll talk it all over, and if I don't beat any hotel on the shore you can take my hat. You'll know my place by the sign on the gate, 'Old-fashioned home.' Don't fail to close with me to-morrow, as we may be crowded this season."

WEATHER PROVERBS.

What the Little Birds Tell While Nestling and on the Wing.

That birds have long been guides to sailors and agriculturists every one who knows anything about popular weather prognostics is well aware. Not only have the flight and general action of birds been noted by all civilized nations, but among barbarous tribes in this and other lands the migratory habits of the feathered tribes have discounted the prognostics of government signal bureaus. Wind, rain and other atmospheric changes are predicted by those who narrowly watch the migration of birds, and sailors in particular, who are close observers of the heavens above, the atmosphere around them and the water beneath them base there prognostics on all the peculiar phases of land, water and sky and the elements of life which people them.

Among the birds which serve to guide the sailors to look out for squalls, the sailor expects wind when the cormorants fly landward. If the gulls soar to lofty heights, and, circling around, utter shrill cries, a storm is approaching. If the parrots whistle on shipboard it will rain. If they dress their feathers and are wakeful it will storm the next day. If the petrels gather under the stern of a ship bad weather will follow. The stormy petrel surely betokens stormy weather, and no sooner do they gather in numbers under wake of a ship than sailors prepare to meet an impending tempest.

Hunters are close observers of the habits of birds, and many prognostics are learned from the vocabulary of an experienced hunter, who will stay indoors in the morning when an amateur hunter will be tempted out by the clear sky, to come back in the rain, or who will find that a moderate temperature in the morning is no sure precursor of a warm day. Among the prognostics the hunter draws from birds a few will suffice:

If birds in the autumn grow tame,
The winter will be too cold for game.

Bats flying late in evening indicate fair weather, but if they speak flying it will rain on the following day. A solitary buzzard at a great altitude indicates rain, but if buzzards fly high together it will be fair weather. If chickens crow before sundown it will rain next day. If they go out in the rain it will rain all day. If they run to shelter it will not rain long. If they come off the roost at night rain will soon follow. The Zuni Indian hunters say when chimney swallows circle and call they speak of rain, and Indians predict a deep fall of snow when grouse drum at night. Hunters and fishermen have a saying that "there will be no rain the day the crane flies down the creek." One crow flying alone is a sign of foul weather, but if crows fly in pairs the weather will be fine. If crows make much noise and fly in a circle, rain is expected. If the cuckoo halloos in low land the weather will be fair. Domestic fowls look toward the sky before rain and go to roost in the daytime. If they stand on one leg the weather will be cold. If birds are fat and sleek in February it is a sign of more cold weather. If geese walk east and fly west it will be cold. An old proverb says: "When the hen crows, expect a storm within and without," and hunters say that the direction the loon flies in the morning will be the direction of wind the next day. Owls hooting in the day time indicates rain, but if at night the weather will be fair.

When the peacock loudly bawls
Soon we'll have both rain and squalls.

Pigeons return to their dovecotes unusually early before a rain. The habits of wild geese are watched and furnish many prognostics. The following is a popular verse:

Wild geese, wild geese, going to the sea,
Good weather it will be;
Wild geese, wild geese, going to the hill,
The weather it will spill.

In Kansas, when the wild geese fly to the southeast in the fall, the people expect a blizzard.

There are many prognostics of the season which have their origin in the migrations of birds, and in the peculiar formation and appearance of the goose bone, which is to-day looked upon by thousands of people as a sure prognostic of what the coming winter will be, and in Kentucky if the issue should be raised whether the signal service bureau or the goose bone should go, the Kentuckian would cling to the goose bone; in fact, Henri Watterson, if he had to choose between he star eyed goddess of reform and the goose bone, would not dare to offend Kentuckians by discarding the prophetic bone. The people of Kentucky say if the breast bone of a goose is red, or has many red spots, expect a cold and stormy winter, but if only a few spots are visible, the winter will be mild, and they furnish the following recipe so that it may be read intelligently, which instructions are as follows:

"To read the winter of any year take the breast bone of a goose hatched during the preceding spring. The bone is translucent, and it will be found to be colored and spotted. The dark color and heavy spots indicate cold. If the spots are of light shade and transparent, wet weather, rain or snow may be looked for."

When wild geese and wild ducks move south the weather will be warm, and birds migrate south much earlier if the winter will be early. A severe winter follows if crows fly south, but if they fly north it will be an open winter. No killing frost comes when the martins return to their old haunts; and the first song of the robin is the voice of spring. The swan is said to build its nest high during seasons when freshets visit localities where the swan broods, and those who cultivate lowlands note how the swan's nest is built. If it is built low there will be no unusual rains. There are many other prognostics derived from observing the habits of birds, of interest to the seaman and land lubber, and in concluding the popular prognostic of the farmer, drawn from watching the nest of the swallow, is given:

When the swallow's nest is high
The summer is very dry;
When the swallow buildeth low
You can safely build and sow.

—Kansas Farmer.

In a cable letter from "Member of Parliament," three distinct clouds on the European horizon, of great import to England, are pointed out. First, the Egyptian question, over which France is showing her teeth; second, the Armenian outrages, which, under the Berlin treaty, Russia may call upon England to stop; and third, the Delagoa railway concession, which opens up a very nice quarrel with the Portuguese Government.

PASSING NOTES.

An English Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals says that a practice prevails of extracting the milk teeth of four-year-old mares, with the object of making them look like five year-olds. For this, as well as for the practice of dehorning cattle and other cruelties, greed of gain is the temptation.

In the six Northern Counties of Wales the average attendance of the Episcopal Churches is 86,433 and of the Free Churches 320,078. In the Sunday Schools the difference is still greater, the average attendance being 25,083 and 135 552 respectively. These figures will be useful to those who are urging the disestablishment of the Episcopal Church in Wales.

At the "National Convention of French-Canadians" in New York on Tuesday last, M. Benjamin Lantier said, in the course of a debate on naturalization, that in Clinton county, N. Y., alone there were 25,000 French Canadians, very few of whom were not American citizens. Many of them, he said further, had fine positions, and did not desire to leave the country of their adoption, and during the last Administration 866 French Canadians held positions under the Federal Government.

On Saturday last Chicago virtually increased its population by over one-fifth. On that day the suburbs known as Hyde park, Lake Jefferson, Cicero, and Lake View, having an aggregate population of 200,000, voted in favour of annexation to the city; and with these additions, it is estimated, the population will be 1,100,000. The "Windy City's" bitter rival, St. Louis, is now left hopelessly in the rear, and there is nothing left for it but to put on sackcloth and ashes and humble itself before its successful competitor.

According to the "Railway Age" no less than eight railways in the United States, having a mileage of 2,690 miles and representing an apparent investment of $125,570,000, passed into the hands of receivers during the past six months. This exceeds the record for any similar period since the dirastrous year 1885 and it suggests the thought that the United States Senate might do more for American railways by endeavoring to check their unwise multiplication than by investigating the effects of the competition of Canadian lines.

A Russian Commission, composed of forty-five military and civil engineers, have agreed that Gen. Annenkoff's proposed railway across Siberia is practicable. He says it can be built in three years, and that when built it will place London within fifteen day's journey of Vladivostock, from which port Pekin can be reached in three days, while the journey round the globe can be completed in fifty-five days. Russia can then share with the United States and Canada the honor of cutting down the records for round-the-world tours.

The Montreal bakers are seeking relief from all-night work, their opinion being that bread can be made and baked as well in the daytime as at the midnight hour. No doubt the present practice resulted from the "hot roll" habit, from which we are now pretty well emancipated. People can breakfast now, comfortably and pleasantly, without rolls. The bakers need not, therefore, sit up all night to make them. No doubt the day work will ultimately be adopted, but it will be a good deal hotter business than sleeping in the tropical season.

We have heard a great deal of late of the schemes of an English syndicate of capitalists which is endeavoring to secure control of the brewing interests of America. We have also been told that another syndicate has its eye on the grocery business of this continent, and now it is announced that still another is after a large share in the gas trust, which has control of the lighting of several large American cities. If such reports as these continue to come over the wires, there will be some reason to believe that English capitalists want the earth. But why not, if there is so much capital in England seeking investment, form a syndicate to buy the United States holus bolus?

The extraordinary rush of English capital to the United States this year is attracting a great deal of attention. Hitherto Englishmen have made their investments in that country chiefly in the West, in agricultural properties and cattle ranches, but of late they have turned their attention largely to the New South, and, as our readers are aware, are besides actually striving to acquire control of entire American industries. One reason of this sudden desire for foreign investments is undoubtedly the conversion of the English national three per cents, the holders of which now find themselves obliged to accept two and three-quarters per cent. To very many holders of consols this means a serious loss of income, and it is not surprising, therefore, that they should look abroad for a better field for the investment of their capital.

One effect which the brutal murder of Dr. Cronin has had is to stir up an intense feeling in Chicago over the supineness in the past of the police authorities in suppressing crime and punishing criminals. Chicagoans seem resolved to change the state of affairs, which must be pretty bad when one of the local papers, the "Herald," can remark: "Burglars and murderers have held the day. Well known burglars have leaned against lamp posts, enjoying a freedom which they had forfeited long before. Officers of police have wielded power, and yet were themselves burglars. Officers of police have insolently charged on the robbed the robbery, on the dead the deed of blood." The community which has permitted such a disregard of law and order has simply been putting a premium on anarchy and murder of the worst kind.

Apologies.

It is not always necessary to make apologies to others for our misconduct. Some of it concerns only ourselves and must rest with our own consciences. But where a wrong has been done to another, or where the welfare of society for any reason demands it, let the apology be full and sincere. Oftener than we think for, it should consist of simple confession; but, where the other element of extenuation rightly comes in, let it never exceed its just boundaries. The willingness to admit the actual wrong or injury to the full extent that truth can demand is always the best apology, and often the only reparation that can be made; while the discipline thus afforded is an important part of self-culture and improvement.

"DOT WAS PISNESS."

How to Sell Left-Over Overcoats at More Than One Hundred Per Cent. Profit.

"Herman," said a Chicago merchant clothier, addressing his clerk, "haf you sole all of dose overgoats vat vas left over from last vinter?"

"No, sir; dere vas dree of dem left yet."

"Vell, ve must sell 'em right away. Pring me out one uf de goats, und I vill show you someding apout pisness. I vill dell you how ve vill sell dem oud, und you must learn de pisness, Herman. De vinter has gone, you know, und ve haf had dose goats in de store more as seex years."

An eight dollar overcoat was handed him by his clerk, and smoothing it out he took a buckskin money-purse from the showcase, and stuffing it full of paper dropped it into one of the pockets.

"Now, Herman, my poy," he continued, "vatch me sell dat goat. I haf sold over dirty-fife uf dem shust de same vay und I vant to deech you de pisness. Ven de nexd gustomer comes in de shop I vill sho de vay Rube Hoffanstein, mine broder in Detroit, sells his cloding und udder dings."

"A few minutes later a negro, in quest of a suitable pair of shoes, entered a store slowly. The proprietor advanced, smiling, and inquired: "What is it you wish?"

"Yer got any cheap shoes hyar?" asked the negro.

"Blenty uf dem, my frent, blendy—at any price you vant."

The negro stated that he wanted a pair of brogans, and soon his pedal extremities were encased in them at a bargain. As he was about to leave the proprietor called him back.

"I ain't gwine to buy nuffin else. I'se got all I want," said the negro sullenly.

"Dot may be so, my dear sir," replied the proprietor, "but I shust vants you to look at dis goat. It vas the pure Russian wool und dis dime last year you doan got de same goat for $25. Mine gracious, cloding vas gone down to nodding, und dere was no money in de pisness any longer. De consumption vas going round, und de doctors dell me it vas de vedder. More den nine beebles died round where I lif last week. Dink of dot! Mine frient, dot goat vas Russian vool, dick und heavy. Vy, Misder Jones, who owns de pank on Canal street, took dot goat home mid him yesterday und vore it all day; but it vas a leetle tight across de shoulder, und he prodght it pack shust a vile ago. Try it on, my dear sir. Mr. Jones vas a rich man, und he liked dot goat. How deep de bocket vas, but it vas a leetle dight across de shoulders."

The negro buttoned up the coat, thrust his hands into the pockets and felt the purse. A peaceful smile played over his face when his torch disclosed to his mind the contents of one of the pockets. But he choked down his joy, and inquired: "Who did you say wore this hyar coat?"

"Vy, Mister Jones vot owns the bank on Canal streed."

"What yer gwine ter ax fur it?"

"It vas marked dirty dollars, and vas sheap at dot, but you can buy him for twenty dollars to-day."

"Dat's pow'ful high price fur dis goat, but I'll take it."

"Herman, here, wrap up dis goat fur de shentleman und drow in a cravat; it will make him look nice mit the ladies."

"Nebber mind, I'll keep de coat on," replied the negro; and pulling out a roll of money he paid for it and left the store. While he was around the next corner mourning over the stuffed purse Haffenstein said to his cleark:

"Herman, fix up anudder von of dose goats de same way, und doan forget to dell dat Misder Jones, vot runs de pank on Canal streed, vore it yesterday."—[St. Paul Herald.

TO LAUGH ALL HIS DAYS.

A Strange Affliction Which Has Utterly Prostrated a Georgia Railroader.

Joseph Oscar Johnson was sent to Roff Home a few days ago, and his case is probably one of the most remarkable that ever went to that or any other hospital. He is a paralytic, and one side is entirely useless. The stroke came on him some two months ago. He is a locomotive engineer, and was able to make a good living. He had seen a good deal of the world, and generally saw the bright side of it. It was in the town of Clinton, S. C., that the stroke came on him. He was on run that carried him into that town. He was one day doing some work on his engine, and talking to some one standing near. At the moment he received the blow he was in the act of laughing, and, strange to say, the muscles and nerves of the face that are brought most into play in the act of laughing are the ones that are most affected, and over these he has no control whatever. He feels, of course, that there is little left for him to live for, being utterly helpless, and it is necessarily a sad thought to him. But he can not think of it nor tell of his troubles and the doubts and fears that torment him without laughing.

He has a wife and five children, and when this affliction came upon him he went to his father-in-law, who lives in Wilmington, N. C., and told him of his condition and of his inability to care further for his family, and telling him at the same time that for himself he did not wish to be a burden upon anyone, but would go somewhere and seek seclusion and calmly await the closing of what was henceforth to be a useless life. The recital of his parting with his wife was most pathetic and heartrending, yet with tears in his eyes and a heart full of agony he was forced to laugh as though he had been telling the most ludicrous incident.

He has wandered from one county to another, and has frequently gone for several days without a morsel to eat. Recently he spent a night in the woods in a violent rainstorm. His crippled leg refused to serve him longer, and he was compelled, without shelter, to take the violence of the storm. His thin clothing was wet to the skin; he suffered the pangs of hunger, and the recital of it all made him shudder all over, yet he laughed all the while he was telling it. It was a most pitiful sight. He says he dare not go to church lest he be accused of making sport of the services and be requested to leave the church. And as for a funeral it would be out of the question for him to attend one.

His case is a most pitiable one, and is the more so because he is only awaiting the only relief possible for him and one that he would hail with pleasure and almost prays for.

She scolds and frets,
She's full of pets,
She's rarely kind and tender;
The thorn of life
Is a fretful wife—
I wonder what will mend her?

Try Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. Ten to one, your wife is cross and fretful because she is sick and suffering, and cannot control her nervousness when things go wrong. Make a healthy woman of her and the chances are you will make a cheerful and pleasant one. "Favorite Prescription" is the only remedy for woman's peculiar ailments, sold by druggists, under a positive guarantee from the manufacturers, that it will give satisfaction in every case, or money will be refunded. See guarantee on bottle wrapper. Large bottles, $1. Six for $5.

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The rudder is a stern necessity to a ship.

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A whim is a fly that buzzes in the empty chambers of an exhausted brain.

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Mr. Parvenu—No, I don't like sea bathing. It always gets my hair so wet. Mrs. Quicklyrich—Why don't you leave it in the dressing-room.—[Burlington Free Press.

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