

her usual haunt. One of her progeny some years after showed a similar liking for solitude; he was placed among several other horses (many of them he had known for years) on a small run intersected with bushy gullies, more or less rocky. He was soon missing, and search was made for him for some time without success; he was supposed to have come to grief in the bush; at length he was found, most unexpectedly, on a small patch of pasture between two rocky gullies thickly bushed; this spot was so difficult of access that a slight track had to be cut to get the horse back. Having been brought from a large station where he was bred and reared, he no longer enjoyed a great range by which he could place any long distance between his companions and himself; he displayed much tact and judgment in the way he secured the indulgence of hereditary habit, by discovering and reaching with difficulty an almost inaccessible solitude. One of the best and fleetest stock mares for the fast and hard work of "cutting out" was a beautiful creature notorious as an incorrigible kicker; she has most faithfully transmitted this vice to her offspring.

Fecularity in the formation of the hoof has been handed down to descent after descent by a grand old mare who had this blemish as a slight counterpoise perhaps to her many virtues.

A particular strain of Dorking fowls, which I have had for thirty years or so, always shows a restless desire for rambling, and that too under the difficulty of meeting with much persecution when straying beyond their ample range. This special family always exhibits what may be termed the gift of locality.

Ohinitahi, N.Z.

THOMAS H. POTTS

Moon-Stroke

THERE is a popular belief that it is dangerous to sleep in full moonshine, as it is supposed to produce some injurious effect called moon-stroke. I have little doubt that the popular belief is well founded as far as the injury to some of those who have slept out at night is concerned, especially in full moonshine; nevertheless the injury is not, I think, due to the moon, but to another cause, which I shall here attempt to explain. It has often been observed that when the moon is full, or near its full time, there are rarely any clouds about, and if there be clouds before the full moon rises they are soon dissipated, and therefore a perfectly clear sky, with a bright full moon, is frequently observed.

A clear sky admits of rapid radiation of heat from the surface of the earth, and any person exposed to such radiation is sure to be chilled by rapid loss of heat. There is reason to believe that, under the circumstances, paralysis of one side of the face is sometimes likely to occur from chill, as one side of the face is more likely to be exposed to rapid radiation, and consequent loss of its heat. This chill is more likely to occur when the sky is perfectly clear.

I have often slept in the open in India on a clear summer night, when there was no moon, and although the first part of the night may have been hot, yet, towards 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, the chill has been so great that I have often been awakened by an ache in my forehead, which I as often have counteracted by wrapping a handkerchief round my head and drawing the blanket over my face. As the chill is likely to be greatest on a very clear night, and the clearest nights are likely to be those on which there is a bright moonshine, it is very possible that neuralgia, paralysis, or other similar injury, caused by sleeping in the open, has been attributed to the moon, when the proximate cause may really have been the chill, and the moon only a remote cause acting by dissipating the clouds and haze (if it do so), and leaving a perfectly clear sky for the play of radiation into space.

E. BONAVIDA

Lucknow, August 26

The Memoirs of the Geological Survey

I DESIRE through the medium of your columns to call attention to the fact that most of the admirable memoirs of the Geological Survey appear to be out of print. A week or two ago I ordered a number of these publications and was informed that at least half of them are out of print. Prof. Ramsay's "Geology of North Wales" is in this category and the fact is stated in the printed list, but in a letter recently received from

"Cutting out" is drafting a beast out of a mob, following it through all its wild rushes, twistings, and turnings, through perhaps many hundreds of cattle, never leaving it till it is fairly drafted out. This work often taxes the skill and energy of stockman and his horse pretty severely.

the professor he informs me that the work is being reprinted, and is expected to be published about the middle of next year. Without, in the absence of information, desiring to attach blame to any one, I shall be glad to know the reason why works admittedly of the highest value should have been permitted to fall into such apparent neglect.

WM. HORSFALL

Manchester, October 9

OUR ASTRONOMICAL COLUMN

CHACORNAC'S VARIABLE NEBULA NEAR ζ TAURI.—On October 19, 1855, Chacornac remarked that a star of the eleventh magnitude, north-preceding ζ Tauri, was enveloped in nebulosity, which was sufficiently bright up to the end of January following to occasion surprise that it had not been previously detected. The star had been repeatedly observed in 1854.

Chacornac gives the position of the star upon which the nebula was projected for 1852° in R.A. 5h. 28m., 35'6" N.P.D. 68° 52'42". The form of the nebula was nearly rectangular, the longest side subtending an arc of 3½' and the shorter, one of 2½'. The star occurs in the zone observed at Markree, January 16, 1850, without mention of surrounding nebulosity.

On September 12, 1863, and January 25, 1865, D'Arrest observed the star with the Copenhagen refractor, on the last occasion "coelo valde eximio," without being able to detect any trace of the nebula. He estimated the star 11'12" m., and noticed another 13" m., about 40" preceding nearly on the parallel.

From Chacornac's position for 1852, it appears the star precedes ζ Tauri 12'5s., and is N. 4' 28". It may be recommended for examination during the approaching winter, particularly with telescopes of moderate dimensions, which in the case of another suspected variable nebula (Schönfeld, 1858) have been shown to possess decided advantage over the larger instruments.

OLBER'S SUPPOSED VARIABLE IN VIRGO.—Mr. Tebbutt of Windsor, N.S.W., communicates the results of some observations of this object and neighbouring stars, made in July and August of the present year. For 1876° he found:—

Star.	Magnitude.	R.A.			N.P.D.		
		h.	m.	s.	°	'	"
1	7	13	3	7.7	105	51	12
2	9½	13	5	17.6	105	51	15
3	8½	13	7	32.4	105	53	50
4	9	13	9	12.9	105	37	1

No. 3 is the supposed variable. See this column, 1876, April 13.

RELATIVE BRIGHTNESS OF URANUS AND JUPITER'S SATELLITES.—On the evening of June 5, 1872, M. Prosper Henry, at the Observatory of Paris, took advantage of the very close approach of Uranus to Jupiter (difference of declination only 1'2" at conjunction) to compare the light of the satellites of Jupiter with the former planet. He found the brightness of Uranus was equal to that of the third satellite, which was nearest to Uranus at the moment. If there existed any difference of light between the two others, it was to the advantage of Uranus, but in any case it was very small. The observations were made with the large Foucault telescope. So favourable an opportunity of making these comparisons may not occur again for a very long period.

BLANPAIN'S COMET, 1819.—A new reduction of the observations of this remarkable comet, taken at Paris, of which we have the particulars in detail, and recalculation of the elements thereupon, appears to lead to a somewhat longer period than was inferred by Encke, from the same observations as at first reduced. This somewhat longer period—a little over five years—would occasion a new approach of the comet to the planet Jupiter at the previous aphelion passage, and it is easy to see that the observations would allow of so close a proximity at this