

Science.

THE EXPECTED COMET OF 1856.

From an article published by an eminent astronomer, M. Babinet, member of l'Académie des Sciences, the French journals give us some interesting details relative to a Comet, which in all probability will appear somewhere about the year 1856. This is one of the largest comets described by European or Chinese observers. Its periodical course is about three hundred years. It was seen in the years 104, 392, 683, 975, again in 1264, and the last time in 1556—always described as shining with an extraordinary brilliancy. Astronomers had agreed in announcing its return 1848; but it has hitherto failed to appear, and according to the quaint expression of M. Babinet, up to this moment is living on its brilliant reputation! All the Observatories were at first in despair regarding the fate of this beautiful star, and Sir John Herschell himself had put crape upon his telescope, when a wise calculator of Middlebourg, M. Bomme, had the good fortune to reassure the learned world that it was not lost to us, as had been feared, but only retarded in its motion. Anxious as all others had been at the non-arrival of this rare and renowned visitor, M. Bomme, aided by the preparatory labors of M. Hind, with a patience and devotedness truly German, went over the calculations, and made a new estimate of the separate and combined action of all the planets upon this comet of three hundred years. The result of this severe labor gives its arrival in August, 1858, with an uncertainty of two years, more or less—so that between 1856 and 1860 we may hope to see that great luminary which in 1556 caused Charles 5th to abdicate. Already dejected by reverses, the result of the siege of Metz—the defeat of Renty—the humiliations of the treaty of Passaw—the combination of all these calamities drew from that monarch the despairing cry, "fortune abandons the old!" The appearance of the flaming meteor just at that time seemed, to his superstitious sense, a direct message from Heaven. Not that he thought it was directed towards him as a man so much as to his station as a sovereign, and he abdicated the throne to save his life. It is well known how short a time he survived in his monastic reticacy. Perhaps he might have lived longer had his superstition taken that better turn by which in retaining power, he had directed his ambition towards a more noble end. We know of no better use for comets than to point such a moral; and even theologians seldom find a higher interpretation of the celestial phenomena.—*Boston Transcript.*

The Farm.

THE FIRST ROBIN OF SPRING.

I am Robin the First of the kingdom of song,
And my throne is the bough of the old
cherry tree,
The zephyrs of spring bear my mandates
along,
And the gentle and good are all subject to
me.
Glad, glad is the home near whose precincts I
stay,
A grant to abide I repay with delight;
My matin shall cheer it at the close of the
day
And my vesper-hymn bless it at coming of
night.
As when in the gay bowers of Eden 'twas
sung,
I sing to the world my melodious strain,
And the heart that is sad the earth's discords
among,
May turn, with my notes, back to Eden
again.
I am Robin the First of the kingdom of song,
My sceptre the power of melody sweet,
The summer's glad months my rule shall
prolong,
And its flowery trophies be laid at my feet.

From the New England Farmer.

Farming Implements and Machines.

Mr. Editor:—I have noticed for the last twelve years, that one of the greatest drawbacks to improved farming is a want of good implements and machines. Even those farmers who go in for improvements, and are

known as friends to "new things," and are opposed to this "old foggyism," many of them are sadly in want of good tools to carry on farming with. This arises more from a careless indifference and a want of knowledge of what good tools are worth over poor, inferior ones, than it does from other causes. I say now what I have often said before, that I have seen more "slack farming" in the last ten years directly from this cause alone than from all other causes put together. Poor tools and indifferent implements beget careless habits in farmers, whereas improved farming implements give new life, energy and activity, and enable the farmer to go on and strive to do his work in the best manner. There is a class of farmers, when they find out the real difference between good tools and bad ones, will immediately lay aside the old ones, and take the new ones. There is still another class of farmers who are well convinced of the importance of having good tools, because they have seen the good effects of them in their neighbor's fields. And yet they go on, from year to year, using the same tools, and why, simply because they love their money better than they do good tools. So the consequence is, they keep their money, or spend it for something else, and let the tools go.

For the last six or eight years I have used two of Prouty's plows, the old Sod C pattern, and No. 5, self-sharpening. Both of these plows do good work, as well as many of their new patterns, which they now make. Ruggles, Nourse, Mason & Co. also make a variety of good plows of different patterns, which are in extensive use, some of which are hard to beat. There are also many other good plow-makers in the country. What the farmers want is to get a good plow or plows of some kind that will do good work. The "subsoil plow" is another implement which should be used much more than it is by farmers. All soils, in the course of a six years' cultivation, will be more or less benefited by subsoiling.

The best harrow that I have ever used is "Geddes' Hinge Harrow," with thirty teeth. This harrow works well, cuts the ground up fine, and as it is made in the triangle form, it works much easier than the square harrow with the same number of teeth, and it is not as liable to clog up. A single yoke of cattle can draw the harrow on any soil with ease, as it does not lug like the old catch harrows.

The "horse rake" is another important farm implement, and one of the greatest labor-saving machines in use on the farm. It is astonishing now to see how many farmers still rake hay by hand, preferring, as it would seem, to pay a dollar or more a day for hand raker, in preference to seven or eight dollars for a horse rake, which will pay for itself twice over in one season to any farmer who has got twenty-five or thirty tons of hay to get. In all smooth meadows, and those with few stones, we prefer the "revolving rake," as it rakes easier, and rakes the hay cleaner from dirt and leaves than the spring-tooth rake. Another good implement is the large glean-rake, with thirty teeth. This rake is made on purpose to rake after the cart; as it is made light and stiff, one hand can do more work, and easier, than two or even three hands in a windy time, with only the common hand rake.

In this manner I might go on, naming the different varieties of improved farming implements which are in use by many farmers. But it is not necessary to name them separately, as all thorough farmers will be ready to adopt them when wanted. I might name the "corn sheller" as a great saving of labor; all farmers raise more or less corn, and to shell out a bushel in four or five minutes, is a saving of time. The one I have used for six or seven years is "Bural's Iron Sheller," this machine separates the corn from the cobs, letting the corn into the half-bushel, while the cobs are pushed out of a hole in the side. How any farmer, after using one of these shellers for an hour or two, can go back and set down on a shovel, or astride of an old frying-pan handle, to shell corn, is more than I can imagine. And yet there are many farmers to our knowledge who go on in this way now, and probably will for a long time to come. That they have not much idea of improvement is true; what they may come to hereafter, I cannot say. But one thing is certain, that if they can make any improvement at all, they must begin at some periods in their lives. When farmers learn to make use of all the means in their reach for farm improvements,

we then shall see something worthy of their name and station.

Yours, &c.,

L. DURAND.

Derby, Conn., April 19, 1853.

Importance of Educating the Farmer.

It is calculated that the division of the occupations of men in the United States is nearly in the following proportions:—

Number engaged in Internal Navigation,	33,076
" " Ocean,	56,021
" " the learned profession,	65,255
" " Commerce,	119,607
" " Manufactures,	791,749
" " Agriculture.	3,719,951

Thus it will be seen that those who are engaged in agriculture, are three and a half times greater in number than those in all the other divisions. The agriculturists consequently have the physical and numerical power and can at any time control every government in the United States, and give tone to public opinion. But do they? No, indeed; for however powerful they may be in number, they are weak in influence, and this arises from want of proper education. The sixty-five thousand, two hundred and fifty-five, engaged in the learned professions, are intellectually stronger than the three millions, seven hundred and nineteen thousand, nine hundred and fifty-one, engaged in agriculture, and therefore rule them. If it were not so, seven-eighths of the offices in the country would not be held by lawyers and doctors; nor would all the colleges and high schools be endowed principally for the benefit of the learned professions.

Farmers, when will you arouse yourselves to the dignity and importance of your calling, and educate yourselves to that height of intelligence which will make you the rulers instead of the ruled of the other professions? There is surely nothing to prevent this if you will only be true to yourselves. Look at the millions annually thrown away upon the horrid barbarities of war, or the preparations for it, and the honors that are awarded to those engaged in shedding a brother's blood, and compare these with the pitiful and downright contemptible sums which are grudgingly doled out for your benefit. Every occupation in the country seems to be bountifully provided for, save that of the farmer, and surely no one is to blame for this but yourselves; for if you choose, you need only to speak to your servants, your rulers, and a reform might be had at once. Ponder these things well, then, and in the Legislatures assembled this winter, speak out and demand equal benefits with the most favored of the other professions.—*American Agriculturist.*

Farmers' Wives.

We gladly give room to the following extract, and doubt not but that the sentiments therein expressed will agree with those of our readers generally:—

The farmers of this country occupy a position of honor and usefulness. They are the source of a nation's wealth and prosperity, and by their vote and influence can, at any moment, decide its destiny. Farmers' wives occupy a position of corresponding importance in our own country's history; they are and have been the mothers of the men whom our nation delights to honor, whose voice of wisdom and warning is heard in our nation's councils. Lebanon shorn of its stately cedars, would be her sad emblem, were our land bereaved of our patriotic and heroic men whose early youth was associated with rural scenes, with woods and streams, and the bird voices that fill the air with melody. But the sweet voice that stilled the cry of infancy, the kind hand that led them to the altar of prayer; the counsels that conducted them in the paths of wisdom, the influence that developed their moral nature—those were the pledges and presages of their future greatness. The wives of our farmers, whose thrift and industry have secured for their husbands a competency, whose intelligence is the light of the social circle, and whose piety is the guardian of domestic peace, are emphatically "the mothers of our men." A failure in the country—with all the opportunities of success, away from all the moral contaminations of a crowded city, amid the free refreshing winds, among all that is pure and poetic in nature, amid all that is suggestive of truth and beauty, and all that is bountiful and beautiful in agricultural pursuits and success—rightly to train up children, should awaken the voice of

instructive warning. There may have been no failure in accumulating wealth, none in making home beautiful and tasteful to the eye; but the failure has been where it is most fatal, in training the heart and directing the footsteps of childhood. There may have been lavish expenditure to gratify fashion and perverted taste, but little care to develop the intellect and train the heart. There may have been great expense to teach children to sing, to play and dance well, but none to make them useful, virtuous and happy. Hence the failure, and the need of warning. There is a tendency in these days of wealth and luxury among our farmers, to imitate the ostentation of fashionable city life. We wage no war against refinement. We are not averse to the elegancies of life; but to train up our daughters only to shine in the parlor, to play the guitar and speak correctly the French accent, and our sons to despise the honest toil of the husbandman, to feel that they must aspire to a profession, if they would become men; this is a sin not to pass unrebuked. Our fathers, who laid the foundation of our nation's greatness, were the humble tillers of the soil; and many who have plowed the field and sowed the seed, have risen to guide the affairs of state, to hold converse with the muse, or to sweep with a Milton's hand the harp strings. Our mothers, whose names and heroic deeds are immortal, cultivated the domestic virtues, plied the loom and the needle, and made the garments of the men whose names are associated with the heroism of the past. We must look still to farmers' wives, who are blessed with children, for the men of strong frames, of iron nerves and heroic hearts, to accomplish our nation's destiny. Let them not be recreant to their high trust. If they fall, to whom shall we look for the men, and the women, that shall be worthy to steady the ark of God, and train the coming generation for usefulness in the blessedness in heaven.—*Anonymous.*

The good effects of Gardening.

"Gardening is a civilizing and improving occupation in itself; its influences are all beneficial; it usually makes people more industrious, and more amiable. Persuade a careless, indolent man to take an interest in his garden, and his reformation has begun. Let an idle woman honestly watch over her own flower-beds, and she will naturally become more active. There is always work to be done in a garden, some little job to be added to yesterday's task without which it is incomplete; books may be closed with a mark where one left off, needlework may be thrown aside and resumed again; a sketch may be left half finished, a piece of music half practiced; even attention to household matters may relax in some measure for a while; but regularity and method are constantly required, are absolutely indispensable, to the well-being of a garden. The occupation itself is so engaging, that one commences readily, and the interest increases so naturally, that no great share of perseverance is needed to continue the employment, and thus labor becomes a pleasure, and the dangerous habit of idleness is checked. Of all faults of character, there is not one, perhaps, depending so entirely upon habit as indolence; and nowhere can one learn a lesson of order and diligence more prettily and more pleasantly than from a flower-garden.

"But another common instance of the good effect of gardening may be mentioned:—it naturally inclines one to be open-handed. The bountiful returns which are bestowed, year after year, upon our feeble labors, shame us into liberality. Among all the misers who have lived on earth, probably few have been gardeners. Some cross-grained churl may set out, perhaps, with a determination to be niggardly with the fruits and flowers of his portion; but gradually his feelings soften, his views change, and before he has housed the fruits of many summers, he sees that these good things are but the free gifts of Providence to himself, and he learns at last that it is a pleasure, as well as a duty, to give. This head of cabbage shall be sent to a poor neighbor; that basket of refreshing fruit is reserved for the sick; he has pretty nosegays for his female friends; he has apples or peaches for little people; nay, perhaps in the course of years he at length achieves the highest act of generosity—he bestows on some friendly rival a portion of his rarest seed, a shoot from his most precious root! Such deeds are done by gardeners."—*Miss Cooper's "Rural Hours."*