

Bavarian cattle dealer had been kicked by a horse, with the result that he completely lost the use of his voice.

A year later he was riding a doomed horse to the knacker's yard, when the animal, which clearly had plenty of life left in him, began to kick and plunge in a dangerous manner. The man, we are told, lost his head completely in wild excitement, and after a few minutes began to talk, completely regaining his speech, to the boundless astonishment of his friends.

THE THIMBLE'S ORIGIN

THE modern thimble dates from 1684, when the goldsmith Nicholas Renchoten of Amsterdam sent one as a birthday present to a lady, with the dedication: "To Mevrouw Renslaer, I present this little object, which I have invented and executed as a protective covering for her industrious fingers."

The invention proved such a success that all who saw it tried to obtain similar ones and the goldsmith had enough to do to supply them. An Englishman named John Lotting took one specimen home with him and copied it by thousands. At first thimbles were rather costly and only well-to-do people could afford them, but afterward when made of pewter and other common metals by machinery they became very cheap. Their use was a great relief to all who had much sewing to do, and blessings were invoked on the inventor.

"The Dutch "finger-hat," as it was called became in England the "thumb-bell," from its bell-like shape. It was originally worn on the thumb to receive the thrust of the needle when forced through the cloth, and not, as at present, to force it through. Some of the thimbles worn in the far East are very costly. Wealthy Chinese ladies have thimbles carved out of mother-of-pearl, and sometimes the top is formed of a single precious stone. Thimbles with an agate or onyx mounted in gold are often seen, as well as thimbles incrustated with rubies. The Queen of Siam is possessed of a thimble in the form of a lotus bud, with her name exquisitely worked in tiny diamonds round the margin.

