

TOMBSTONE SENTIMENTS.

People Usually Resort to Rhymes to Express Their Grief for the Dead. It is very unlikely that verses will be inscribed on the tombstones of the people who read this copy of the Sun. That fashion went out of style many years ago, and the beauty of poetry is now supplanted by the beauties of carving and statuary. To find interesting obituary verse one must now hunt up the old stones in the cemeteries and pick out with difficulty the almost obliterated letters. There are many such stones in Trinity churchyard, and thousands of people each week puzzle over the melancholy specimens of obituary verse inscribed on them. The hand of time has rubbed out many and others are fast fading away, so that hardly more than half are decipherable. These are of all moods—hopeful, humorous, monitory, despairing, angry, humorous and religious. One over David Evans, who died in 1737, is very terse. It says: Short was his life, Great was his pain, Much was his loss, Great was his gain.

COCK-FIGHTING.

How the Chicken Disputes of Our Forefathers Were Conducted. With all the antiquarian knowledge of the present day, we doubt whether one man in a thousand could give a tolerably accurate description of the cock-fights of his forefathers. How cock-fighting is conducted at present we do not pretend to know; but ancient "cocking" hath its literature, and besides, the written word, there is considerable tradition concerning it, which some of us are old enough to have received from the very mouths of our parents. The first and most important point in cock-fighting was the weight of the birds. In most agreements for a cock-fight—"articles for a cock-match"—was the technical phrase—it was stipulated that no cock should weigh less than three pounds six ounces, or more than four pounds eight ounces. When the cocks of each side had been weighed, the next thing was to pair them. This was done by matching all the cocks on either side whose weights came within one ounce of each other. The lightest pair of cocks were always made to fight first, and then those gradually heavier, until the heaviest pair fought last. This venerable rule held in use since the days of King Charles II. Although the combs of the birds were always cut, they had to appear "with a fair hackle, not too near, short, or out, nor with any other fraud." The spurs were usually of silver, at least in the great matches. At the time appointed for the cock-fight to begin, the "masters of the match" took their seats opposite to each other, on either side of the cock-pit, accompanied by two officials termed the "setters-to." Then the two "feeders" appeared, each carrying a cock. After due examination, the birds were made over to the setters-to, and they handed them to the masters of the match, who started the fun by putting the cocks upon the mat on the floor of the cock-pit. The next part of the business the cocks managed for themselves. The "noble sport" now began in earnest, and sometimes two good birds would fight until one cock had killed the other or thrashed him to helplessness. But not uncommonly, after a sharp round, both cocks would suspend hostilities to gain breath, and withdrawing to a little distance, each would watch the other in the hope of catching him in a careless or listless moment. For a short time this rather added to the excitement of the spectators; but human patience soon became exhausted when two cocks stood solemnly eyeing each other. Now the limit of time for cocks to ogle without fighting was fixed at the interval during which an official, called "the teller of the law," could count forty. When this limit was passed, human science was brought to the assistance of the birds. The setters-to then caught them, and carrying them to the middle of the pit, "delivered them on their legs, beak to beak." If either of them had been blinded in the previous battle, their heads were to be made to touch each other. If one cock refused to fight, he was tried ten times, and he had to refuse to fight as many times before he was considered beaten. It sometimes happened that the cock who would fight, died from his wounds before his adversary had refused ten times, and in that case the craven bird was considered to have won the battle. The law further provided rules in case both cocks refused to fight, as well as in other cases which it is hardly necessary that we should enumerate; but they were nearly all based on the principle that "the teller of the law" should count forty, twenty or ten, according to circumstances, between the intervals of the fights. It will be readily understood, from this description, that a great part of a cock-fight was occupied by the setters-to squatting opposite to each other in the middle of the pit and "delivering the cocks on their legs, beak to beak."

LABOUCHERE'S TRAVELS.

An Entertaining Description of a Ride in a French Railway Carriage. In my run to Trouville they so ordered things that I tumbled into a compartment in which there were a lot of ailing people, who had the corners at the windows, and were so able to keep them open or shut, as they pleased. They did the latter, and the heat was stifling. My olfactory nerves were as much tortured as if I were a prisoner in a chemist's shop. A bourgeois next me was holding either to his nose and dashing it up his nostrils. He was in the door-corner of my right, with his back to the engine. The minute car which he took about his small comforts made me long to be among the Kalmucks or Red Indians. He first, after he had sniffed his ether for about ten minutes, rummaged in his dressing-case for a flannel cap, which he drew on his head and down to his eyebrows; then he laid on a newspaper spread on his knees some vials and lumps of sugar, after which he removed his boots and slipped his feet into list shoes. The lumps of sugar were to be saturated with pharmaceutical drops from vials and swallowed. A lady on my other side, who was neither young nor old, had a migraine or nervous headache. She doffed her bonnet, and, folding a handkerchief, bound it tightly around her forehead. Then, with a spray-producing apparatus, she damped her head frequently with camphorated and alcoholized water. A second lady, who was elderly and the mother of the one beside me, had a swollen cheek, to which she applied wadding saturated with a liquid containing chloroform. Her husband sucked peppermint lozenges to comfort his stomach, and asked over and over again whether Trouseau's cholera drops were not forgotten. Her and his relations, to defend their ears against *connaiss d'air*, plunged them with oil wool. A *femme de chambre* had in charge a whinnying lap-dog, which, after we started, she took out of a basket, into which it was stuffed again as we drew near to a halting-place. The brute was out of health. As I am not Zola, I shall not attempt to describe its symptoms.—London Truth.

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