

THE PILLORY.

An English Writer's Reflections Upon Public Punishment.

Perhaps one of the few really democratic institutions ever created was the pillory. I do not say that it was a humane institution, though it was certainly more humane than our system of silent imprisonment. But being humane has nothing to do with being democratic. You may have humane and inhumane democracies, just as you may have humane and inhumane despots.

The point is that the pillory was a real appeal to the people. If it was cruel it was because the people were cruel or perhaps justly indignant. The people threw dead cats (the less humane people, I believe, threw live cats), but they could throw bouquets and crowns of laurel if they liked. Sometimes they did. The argument about the old public punishments cuts both ways. The publicity was an additional risk for the government as well as an additional risk for the prisoner, and this is specially true of the executions for treason. It was no small thing that half a million men might possibly treat as a martyr a man whom the king was treating as a murderer, that the prince had to concede to every obscure ruffian exactly what that ruffian probably wanted most—fame.—G. K. Chesterton in London News.

THE KANGAROO.

Its Hind Legs Are a Most Formidable Pair of Weapons.

The kangaroo seems poorly provided by nature with offensive weapons. His powers of biting are not formidable, and his fore paws are so weak as to seem almost rudimentary members of little use. His hind legs are muscular and strong, but are apparently of use only to assist flight from his enemies. On these hind legs is found, however, a most formidable weapon in the shape of a long claw as hard as steel and sharp as a chisel—terrible to dogs as the scythe chariots of the ancients were to their enemies. When run down the kangaroo, placing a tree behind him to protect his rear, will seize in his fore paws such indiscreet dogs as rush up to him and, holding them firmly, disembowel them with a sweep of his sickle-like claws.

Even the hunters themselves thus caught in the viselike grip of an "old man" kangaroo of the larger breeds have sometimes suffered in like manner and have now and then taken their own turn at being hunted as the enraged animals turned upon them and stacked their horses with blind ferocity.—St. James' Gazette.

The Colossus of Rhodes.

The gigantic Colossus of Rhodes was one of the seven wonders of the world. It was erected in honor of the sun by Charles of Lindus, a disciple of Lyppus, and was thrown down by an earthquake about 224 B. C.

The figure stood upon two moles, a leg extended on each side of the harbor. A winding staircase led to the top of the figure, from out of the eyes of which were visible the coast of Syria and the ships sailing on the coast of Egypt. The colossi were the peculiar characteristic of eastern art and were of common occurrence, many of them being over sixty feet in height. The most celebrated is the statue of Memnos, on the plain of Thebes, described by the historian Strabo.

A Skeleton in Every Closet.

The expression "There is a skeleton in every closet" is said to have its origin in the fact that a soldier once wrote to his mother, who complained of her unhappiness, to have some sewing done for him by some one who had no cares or troubles. At last the mother found a woman who seemed to have no troubles, but when she told her business the woman took her to a closet containing a skeleton and said: "Madam, I try to keep my troubles to myself, but every night I am compelled by my husband to kiss this skeleton, who was once his rival. Think you, then, I can be happy?"

Alphabetical Time.

An English firm, Higgins & Dodd, finding that there were twelve letters in their name, placed a great clock over their door with the letters on its face instead of numerals.

They waited anxiously for days, weeks, hoping for some return, but not a soul took notice of the clock. At last, amid excitement behind the office window, a man was seen to halt on the street and gaze at the clock, puzzled.

Slowly he came to the door, entered and drawled, "Say, is it half past Higgins or a quarter to Dodd?"—T. P.'s Weekly.

Her Bargain.

Wife—Oh, this is awful! These curtains I got at the bargain sale don't match our furniture. Hobby—Return 'em. Wife—I should say not—cheap as they got them? We must have some new furniture at once!—Cleveland Leader.

The Hero.

"So Higgins has written a historical novel?" "Yes," answered Miss Cayenne. "Who is the hero of the book?" "The man who has undertaken to publish it."—Washington Star.

To Save Space.

Jack—Hello, Tom, old man, got your new flat strung up yet? Tom—Not quite. Say, do you know where I can buy a folding toothbrush?—Boston Transcript.

When you have written a wrathful letter put it in the stove.—Lincoln.

Old Manx "Banknotes."

Speaking of the curious Manx banking lore of the past, the Liverpool Post says that a singular state of affairs was exhibited in "the island" at the close of the Napoleonic wars. Trade was brisk, money was more freely adventured, and all sorts of private persons began to issue notes. There was no occasion whatever to have sterling against them. All you had to do was to get some one to take them and pass them on. The fashion grew till even the humblest traders issued cards "promises to pay," the values most in circulation being 5 shillings, a shilling and even sixpence. Once an advocate from Castletown went to Peel to collect a judgment of £350 from the coroner of Glenfabla. This worthy paid him 2,704 card notes, many of them worthless. They took several hours to examine and count, and their transport was an item of extreme difficulty. Finally they were put into a big sack, half shaken to one end and half to the other, and the whole slung over the back of a horse. The lather of the horse, seaking through, spoiled nearly half the cards!

Clearing the Atmosphere.

In his capacity of dramatic critic Mr. J. Comyns Carr, the author, wrote a notice of the play "Charles I.," in which Irving played under the management of Mr. Bateman. His production deeply incensed the manager. In order perhaps to find the opportunity of informing the critic of his disapproval, the manager invited him to a supper at the Westminster club on the second or third night of the production. When he thought the fitting moment had arrived Mr. Bateman led the conversation to the point at issue and, emphatically banging the table with his fist, declared in the loudest tones that he did not produce his plays at the Lyceum theater to please Mr. Comyns Carr. There was a moment's awkward silence, which Mr. Carr confesses he did not feel quite able to break, but which was released by a wit of the company with the happy retort, "Well, dear boy, then you can't be surprised if they don't please him."

Sight Lost and Restored.

A farmer's wife who had had much trouble with her servants was accosted by one of them.

"I fear I shall not be able to work much longer. I think I am going blind."

"Why, how is that? You seem to get along pretty well with your work."

"Yes, but I can no longer see any meat on my plate at dinner."

The farmer's wife understood, and the next day the servants were served with very large and very thin pieces of meat.

"How nice!" the girl exclaimed. "My sight has come back. I can see better than ever."

"How is that, Bella?" asked the mistress.

"Why, at this moment," replied Bella. "I can see the plate through the meat."—London Scraps.

His Passport.

On one occasion Gustave Dore, the artist, lost his passport while on a tour in Switzerland. At Lucerne he asked to be allowed to speak to the mayor to whom he gave his name.

"You say that you are M. Gustave Dore, and I believe you," said the mayor, "but," and he produced a piece of paper and a pencil, "you can easily prove it."

Dore looked around him and saw some peasants selling potatoes in the street. With a few clever touches he reproduced the homely scene and, appending his name to the sketch, presented it to the mayor.

"Your passport is all right," remarked the official, "but you must allow me to keep it and to offer you in return one of the ordinary form."

Brutal Indifference.

"It seems since his marriage Jack Thornley has developed into a perfect brute."

"You surprise me! What has he done?"

"Why, the other night while his wife was regaling him with all the particulars of that choice Verfast scandal she noticed that he seemed very quiet. And what do you think? He was sound asleep!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Nearing the Limit.

An old lady was going down in the cage in a Cornish mine. She looked with apprehension at the rope, and asked the miner anxiously: "My man, are you sure this rope is quite safe?" "Well, mum," was the cheerful answer, "these ropes is guaranteed to last exactly six months, and this ain't due to be renewed till tomorrow."—Birmingham Mail.

The Real Trouble.

"I'm afraid," said the lady to a diminutive applicant, "that you are too small to act as nursemaid to my children."

"Oh, I'm not too small," replied the applicant. "I guess the trouble is your children are too large."—Chicago News.

The Press Agent Proposes.

"Your pulchritude is peerless. You are an astounding aggregation of feminine faultlessness. Be mine!"

"Sure!" responded the girl. "I never could resist that press agent language."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Return of the Prodigal.

"Who's that a-bollerin' down yander in the branch?"

"That's the prodigal son. The old man's a-wailin' thunder out o' him fer runnin' away!"—Atlanta Constitution.

There is no wisdom like frankness.—Beaconsfield.

The Cold Water Cure.

If you feel a cold coming on, drink a glass of cold water, not tea, and repeat at half hour intervals until relief is felt. If hot water is easier to take, it can be substituted for the cold, particularly in the morning and at night. Taking an abundance of liquid matters more than its temperature. It is there where the patients fall short. They will drink a glass or two of water, then declare they can take no more and, ceasing, decide water cannot drive out a cold. This water cure is not so modern as the most of us think it. In an old prescription book of a famous physician of more than a hundred years ago this curious remedy for a cold is found: "Let ye patient who feels a cold coming on eat of a fine, big salt herring just before going to bed. This will make ye patient drink plenty of water." If you have not strength of purpose to drink freely of water for the cold's sake, make yourself thirsty as best you can—only take all the water possible.—Philadelphia Press.

Hanged For Violating Smoke Law.

Curious and little known facts about the house fire were mentioned by E. H. Blake, addressing the surveyors' institution on warming and ventilation. Fires were at one time a great luxury, he said, and even the right to use the fire had been bequeathed. Thus the will of one Richard Byrnett (1516) read:

"I will yt sard Nell my wyfe shal have ye chamber she lyes in and lyberte at ye fyre in the house; all yese thyngs shal she have so long as she ys wido."

Coal, continued Mr. Blake, was first imported into London at the end of the thirteenth century, but the smoke produced by burning it in improperly constructed grates caused such a prejudice against it that in 1306 a law was passed making it a capital offense to burn coal in the city. The Tower records give details of a man's trial and execution for the offense.—London Graphic.

Not the Kind He Wanted.

Professed politicians who have reduced public office to an exact science find the independent voter a sad stumbling block, a fact which is amusingly disclosed by a story found in the life of the late George Monro Grant, the eminent Canadian educator and clergyman.

Toward the end of Sir John Macdonald's life he and Principal Grant, then the head of Queen's college, met at a dinner at the house of the premier's brother-in-law, Professor Williamson.

"How I wish," the premier said to the principal, "that you would be a steady friend of mine."

"My dear Sir John," the principal replied, "I have always supported you when you were right."

The premier's eyes twinkled, and he laid his hand upon the shoulder of the principal.

"My dear man," said he. "I have no use for that species of friendship!"

Greatness Not Free From Shams.

The transcendent power and fame with which great genius has at different periods endowed various men do not always insure them from after misery and shame. This was strikingly exemplified in the cases of the four greatest of military conquerors—Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar and Napoleon. The general judgment of mankind has conceded them the first place in the lines of action for which they were severally distinguished. Yet they all met with melancholy deaths. Two of them suffered for years the keenest humiliations which a total destruction of their hopes could bring. Two perished at the zenith of their power, just as they might have expected a long enjoyment of the fruits of their tremendous achievements.—Exchange.

The Greatest Wealth.

Is there any compensation in money for a starved, stunted, dwarfed mind? Can lands and houses, stocks and bonds, pay a man for living a narrow, ratty, sordid life? How much money would match the wealth of a trained mind, of unfolded possibilities? Is the capacity for the appreciation of the meaning of life, of the lessons of civilization, worth no more than one's bread and butter and roof? Can any one conceive of greater possessions than an intellect well trained and disciplined, than a broad, deep, full orbed mind responsive to all beauty, all good?—Orison Sweet Marden in Success Magazine.

Optimistic.

"My wife is a very optimistic woman."

"Indeed she is."

"Noticed it, have you?"

"Yes; when I was talking with her yesterday she said that if you ever died she would marry again because she felt sure that she could do better next time."—Houston Post.

Triumphs of Travel.

"Now he's bragging about how he did Venice."

"What do you mean?"

"Most tourists spend a week in Venice. He did it in a day."—Kansas City Journal.

No Excuse.

"Is that horse you bought a kicker?"

"A kicker?" answered Mr. Sirius Barker. "I am the fellow who paid twice his value and who is buying the feed. What has the horse got to kick about?"—Washington Star.

His Misfortune.

The Poet—Poets are born, not made. The Girl—I know. I wasn't blaming you.—Boston Transcript.

There are certain flowers the perfume of which, it is said, is produced by microbes.

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