

BOUNDARY MARKS

Limits a Fiery Orator Once Gave the United States.

THE CANADIAN LINE FENCE.

Monuments That Cleave the Two Countries West From the Lake of the Woods—Irregularities in State and County Boundaries.

The fates of empires and of dynasties have been involved in the struggle for boundaries. The fiasco that the Rhine was the natural frontier of France ended in the downfall of the Bonapartes and the exaltation of the Hohenzollerns, thus rearing the neo-German empire upon the ruins of the upstart French empire.

In our own country the cry of "Fifty-four forty or fight!" held a threat of the mighty conflict that eventually proved irrepressible. And in our own day the dispute over the Venezuelan boundary nearly precipitated a war between the two greatest nations of the earth.

It was a startling figure of speech, that of the western orator who, mounting higher and higher to a climax of buncombe, described the United States as bounded on the east by the Atlantic ocean, on the north by the aurora borealis, on the west by the setting sun and on the south by the gates of hell. Still, it was only a figure of speech. Canada lies between us and the boreal aurora. The Latin American states to the south hardly deserve the infernal comparison. As to the oceans to the east and the west of us, they may be left to themselves. Not mine the task of determining what the wild waves are saying.

The Canadian boundary presents its idiosyncrasies and eccentricities. The eastern part of it follows naturally and spontaneously the regular water line formed by the great lakes and their outlets. Thence from the Lake of the Woods on the north of Minnesota a more direct course, man made and mechanical, is taken through the wilderness and over the mountains of the west to the Pacific coast. Nor has this course been suffered to remain a mere imaginary line. Man, having made it, has marked it well. Between the Lake of the Woods and the Red river cast iron pillars have been placed one mile apart alternately by the English and the American governments. These are hollow castings in pyramidal form eight feet high, with a base eight inches square, an octagonal flange one inch thick and a top four inches square surmounted by a solid cap.

Into these hollow posts are fitted well seasoned cedar joists, with spikes driven through holes made in the casting. The pillars are firmly imbedded in the ground. Inscriptions in raised letters face north and south. The north side reads, "Convention of London;" the other, "October 20, 1818." Beyond the Red river the boundary line is generally denoted by earth mounds and stone cairns 7 by 8 feet, though these are occasionally diversified by wooden posts of the same height as the iron pillars and painted red above ground. Through forests clearings have been made a rod wide. Where bodies of water are crossed monuments of stone rise several feet above high tide. Over the mountain shafts of granite supersede the pillars, mounds and cairns.

There are eccentricities in state lines as well as in those which limit the confines of the United States. Thus the line that separates Delaware from Pennsylvania (Newcastle and Chester counties respectively) suddenly curves upward and forms a semi-circle just above the ancient town of Newcastle.

The explanation may be found in history. At the time Delaware was set out there were few points of latitude and longitude definitely established in the colonies, so that boundaries were generally expressed not by latitude and longitude, but by reference to some known location. In the deed by which Delaware was transferred there was ceded all the land for twelve miles round Newcastle, together with certain other areas. In establishing the boundaries of the present state of Delaware this description was taken literally, and part of a circle, with the center at Newcastle, was surveyed upon a twelve mile radius.

No other state has an arc in its boundary line, but many of the counties of Kentucky and Tennessee do. Warren county, Tenn., is almost a complete circle. In many instances counties formerly circular have been expanded into irregular polygons.—William S. Walsh in New York Tribune.

The Diminutive.
At the age of three Janet was an enthusiastic student of entomology. One day she discovered a caterpillar for herself, a very tiny one. "Oh, come here," she called. "Here's a caterpillar, the cutest little thing! I believe it's a kittenpillar!"—Woman's Home Companion.

A Hard One.
"Of what famous novel are you reminded by the extra charge rich people are willing to pay for the privilege of riding on a special tier?"
"Gee, that's too continuous for me. What's the answer?"
"Vanity Fair, of course."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

We often hate for one little reason when there are a thousand why we should love.—Ellis.

MUMMERY IN THE COMMONS.

"Black Rod" and His Antics in the English Parliament.

Many an American visiting the British house of commons has heard with astonishment the cry "Black Rod is coming!" and wondered what was happening.

"Black Rod" is simply an indication of the persistency with which our oversea cousins cling to a bit of antique mummery. Whenever in the house this cry is uttered the sergeant-at-arms springs to his feet, closes the doors leading into the lobby and turns the key in the lock. Having thus dramatically insured the commons against an attack, the sergeant-at-arms takes his position in front of a small window, where he listens to three raps on the door. Sergeant-at-arms then politely asks what is wanted and learns that Black Rod has a message to be delivered to the speaker and the commons.

Then when the door is opened an old gentleman in black is seen to come slowly into the chamber. On his queer old coat are three black rows; he wears black silk stockings and trunks; a black coat is held under one arm, and a short black rod, with a gold button at the end, is in his other hand.

Black Rod is most ceremonious. He bows three times to the speaker and delivers his message, while the members of the commons put on their hats. Mr. Speaker and the commons are requested to enter the house of lords to listen to the king's assent to an act which has passed both houses of parliament.

Black Rod then bows to the speaker, walks backward step by step to the center of the house and repeats the salutation. At the door he pauses again and bows even lower.

Sergeant-at-arms swings his mace on his shoulder and follows Black Rod. Behind comes the speaker in his official robes. The members on the benches take off their hats and rise in their places. About half a dozen of them follow the speaker into the house of lords. The speaker raises his cocked hat thrice and salutes the lord chancellor. The message of royal assent is read and there is a further exchange of salutes.

The speaker returns to the house in solemn state, and the mace is laid on the table. The business of the commons is resumed without further interruption from the polite old gentleman in black.

This ceremony is, of course, a survival of the middle ages, when the house of commons found it necessary to protect itself against crown and lords. The door closed in the face of Black Rod, the negotiations at the wicket and the hats on the members' heads were signs of the jealousy with which the commons defended their legislative rights. The courtesies exchanged between Black Rod and the speaker implied the willingness of the two houses to confer peaceably together.—Harper's Weekly.

Corrected.
A sandwich man who paraded Wall street bore aloft the legend, "Eat your lunch at Stuffem's and Surprise your Pallet."

"There's something wrong with that sign," said a broker to a banker. "What is it?"

"He's got the last word spelt wrong," replied the other. "Pity sign painters can't learn how to spell or consult a dictionary. Hey, there, you with the Surprise! Your pallet's spelt wrong. Have it fixed up!"

The next day the same sandwich man shuffled along and, sure enough, he had reported the error. The last word of the sign had been carefully scraped out and in its place the word stood proudly forth with an extra "l," thus: "Eat your lunch at Stuffem's and Surprise your Pallet."—New York Press.

A Parisian Patriot.

There are other things in Paris beside architecture, heroes and history. At Duval's the wandering one can get a soup which is truly a triumph of genius, or he may sit at a little table and sip coffee "as black as night, as sweet as love and as hot as hades," the Frenchman's approved recipe. Duval, it may be remembered, refused to raise prices during the siege of Paris in 1870, giving freely of his stock as long as it lasted. Here was a true patriot who disdained to profit by the high cost of living and the misfortune of the patrons who had enriched him. He divided his loaf.—National Magazine.

A Thoughtful Office Boy.

The office boy, says a writer in the London Sketch, looked at the persistent lady artist, who calls six times a week, and said firmly:
"The editor's still engaged."
"Tell him that doesn't matter, I don't want to marry him."
"I haven't the heart to tell him, miss. He's had several disappointments today."

Prepared For the End.

Friend (of dying magnate)—Then you think the end is near?
Doctor—Yes. He has made out a list of the epigrams, good deeds and stories that he wishes to be attributed to him after his death.—Puck.

The Sign.

"I'm afraid Maud's second marriage is a failure."
"Did she say so?"
"No, but she's beginning to speak well of her first husband."—Boston Transcript.

"His expectation makes a blessing dear. Heaven were not heaven if we knew what it were."—Shelley.

Psychology of Store Planning.

The basement of a store was formerly regarded merely as a cellar, fit for storage, packing boxes, etc. Then came a merchant of the present day, gifted with an imagination to an unusual degree, who recognized—though perhaps, not in these terms—that the customer was guided by subconscious control and argued that the lack of effort in going downstairs would appeal to the subconsciousness and that the glimpse of displays seen at the foot of the stairs would lead customers to the basement, notwithstanding the low ceiling, the imperfect ventilation and the absence of daylight. This merchant has lived to see not only a daily attendance on a basement floor ten or a dozen times greater than that on the average floor above the first, but also to see his discovery copied by practically every store in the land. The real gist of his discovery was that subconscious control leads us to do the easy thing first—namely, go downstairs—without reckoning with the next problem, which was, of course, getting out of the basement.—Cassier's Magazine.

The Kangaroo's Defense.

In the kangaroo hunts of Australia capture is sufficiently easy, but sometimes the kangaroo makes an original defense.

If possible the kangaroo directs his flight toward a river. If he reaches it he enters, and, thanks to his great height, he is able to go on foot to a depth where the dogs are obliged to swim. There he plants himself on his two hind legs and his tail and, up to his shoulders in the water, awaits the arrival of the pack. With his forepaws he seizes by the head the first dog that approaches, and as he is more solidly balanced than his assailant he holds the dog's nose beneath the water as long as he can. Unless a second dog speedily comes to the rescue the first one is inevitably drowned. If a companion arrives and sets him free he is glad to regain the bank as quickly as possible. A strong and courageous old kangaroo will hold his own against twenty or thirty dogs, drowning some and frightening others, and the hunter is obliged to intervene with a bullet.—New York Press.

Straining the Keg.

Rufe Blevins, a giant woodchopper, whose good nature and ready wit made him a welcome addition to the store circle, entered the village grocery. The loafers moved a little closer together to make room for Rufe on a soap box, but he marched past the friendly circle, plumped an empty molasses keg down on the counter and drew a stained bill from his pocket, which he held out to the proprietor of the store. An expectant grin went round the circle, for Storekeeper Jones had the reputation of never wronging himself by overweighing or undercharging. The merchant adjusted his glasses and looked expectantly from the bill to the woodchopper.

"Notice you charged me for five gallons of molasses last time I had this four gallon keg filled," drawled Rufe. "I don't mind payin' for the extra gallon, Mr. Jones, but I do kinder hate to have a good keg strained to pieces."—Youth's Companion.

The Samurai's Servant.

Here is an interesting legend about an ofuda which appears as the badge of a family at Matsue. The story, as Hearn tells it, is that: "Once a servant of the family went to sea, in despite of his master's orders to remain in the house. When he came back the samurai flew into a rage and killed him. Then the murderer felt sorry and buried the body in the garden or bamboo patch. The day after the servant came back again and apologized for his absence at sea. You can guess the rest of the legend. When the grave was opened there was no dead body there—only an ofuda cut in two, as if by a sword slash."

Never Suffered From Bath.

There are quarters in London in which the uselessness of the bath is no novel proposition. A district nurse called at a house where there was a case of infectious disease.
"Have you a bath in the house?" asked the practical visitor.
"Yes, mum," was the reply; "but, thank God, we've never 'ad to use it."—London Chronicle.

Atmospheric Resistance.

The resistance of our atmosphere materially retards raindrops, hailstones, serollites and all other bodies which fall through it, and were it not for the resistance it presents every rainstorm would be disastrous to the human race, as each drop would fall with a velocity great enough to penetrate the full length of a full grown man's body.

Ambiguous.

When Bilkins was away from home on a long business trip he got a letter from his wife that still puzzles him. It ended thus:
"Baby is well and lots brighter than she used to be. Hoping that you are the same, I remain, your loving wife."—Everybody's Magazine.

An Observant Youth.

"Is that man a bill collector?" said the new clerk.
"He may be in some places," replied the messenger boy, "but not in this office."—Washington Star.

Unfortunately, Yes.

The trouble with the story which you tell is that it is almost sure to remind somebody of another which is just as old.—Chicago Record-Herald.

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