# THE BULLY OF THE CAVENDISH

## BY W. W. JACOBS.

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(Illustrated by W. S. Stacey.)

"Talking of prizefighters, sir," said the night watchman, who had nearly danced himself over the edge of the wharf in illustrating one of Mr. Corbett's most trusted blows, and was now sitting down taking in sufficient air for three, "they ain't wot they used to be when I was a boy. They advertise in the papers for months and months about their fights, and when it does come off they do it with gloves, and they're all right agin a day or two arter.

"I saw a picter the other day o' one punching a bag wot couldn't punch back, for practice. Why, I remember as a young man Sinker Pitt, as used to 'ave the King's Arms 'ere in 'is old age; when 'e wanted practice 'is plan was to dress up in a soft 'at and black coat like a chapel minister or something, and go in a pub and contradict people—sailor men for choice. He'd ha' no more thought o' hitting a pore 'armless bag than I should ha' thought of hitting 'im.

"The strangest prizefighter I ever come acrost was one wot shipped with me on the Cavendish. He was the most eggstrordinary fighter I've ever seen or 'eard of, and 'e got to be such a nuisance afore 'e'd done with us that we could 'ardly call

"WHO IS THAT 'ANDSOME, GENTLEMANLY LOOKING YOUNG FELLER?"
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our souls our own. He shipped as an ordinary seaman—a unfair thing to do, as 'e was anything but ordinary, and 'ad no right to be there at all.

"We'd got one terror on board afore he come, and that was Bill Bone, one o' the biggest and strongest men I've ever seen down a ship's fo'c's'le, and that's saying a good deal. Built more like a bull than a man, 'e was, and when he was in his tantrums the best thing to do was to get out of 'is way or else get into your bunk and keep quiet. Oppersition used to send 'im crazy a'most, an' if 'e said a red shirt was a blue one, you 'ad to keep quiet. It didn't do to agree with 'im and call it blue even, cos if you did he'd call you a liar and punch you for telling lies.

"He was the only drawback to that ship. We 'ad a nice old man, good mates and good grub. You may know it was A 1 when I tell you that most of us 'ad been in 'er for several v'y ges.

"But Bill was a drawback, and no mistake. In the main he was a 'earty, good tempered sort o' shipmate as you'd wish to see, only, as I said afore, oppersition was a thing he could not and would not stand. It used to fly to his 'ead direckly.

"The v'y'ge I'm speaking of—we used to trade between Australia and London—Bill came aboard about an hour afore the ship sailed. The rest of us was already aboard and down below, some of us stowing our things away and the rest sitting down and telling each other lies about wot we'd been doing. Bill came lurching down the ladder, and Tom Baker put 'is 'and to 'im to steady 'im as he got to the bottom.

"'Who are you putting your 'ands on?' ses Bill, glaring at 'im.

"'Only 'olding you up, Bill,' ses Tom, smiling.

"'Oh,' ses Bill.

"He put 'is back up agin a bunk and pulled hisself together.

"''Olding of me—up—was you?' he ses; 'whaffor, if I might be so bold as to arsk?'

"'I thought your foot 'ad slipped, Bill, old man,' ses Tom; 'but I'm sorry if it 'adn't.'

"Bill looks at 'im agin, 'ard.

"'Sorry if my foot didn't slip?' he ses.

"'You know wot I mean, Bill,' ses Tom, smiling a uneasy smile.

"'Don't laugh at me,' roars Bill.

"'I wasn't laughing, Bill, old pal,' ses Tom.

"''E's called me a liar,' ses Bill, looking round at us; 'called me a liar. 'Old my coat, Charlie, and I'll split 'im in halves.'

"Charlie took the coat like a lamb, though he was Tom's pal, and Tom looked round to see whether he couldn't nip up the ladder and get away, but Bill was just in front of it. Then Tom found out that one of 'is bootlaces was undone and he knealt down to do it up, and this young ordinary

"'You keep a quiet tongue in your 'ed,' ses Joe, 'and speak when you're spoken to, my lad.'

"He was a ordinary seaman, mind, talking to A. B.'s like that. Men who'd been up aloft and doing their little bit when 'e was going about catching cold in 'is little petticuts. Still, if Bill could stand it, we supposed as we'd better.

"Bill stayed up on deck till we was under way, and 'is spirit seemed to be broke. He went about 'is work like a man wot was walking in 'is sleep, and when breakfast come 'e 'ardly tasted it.

"Joe made a splendid breakfast, and when he'd finished 'e went to Bill's bunk and chucked the things out all over the place and said 'e was going to 'ave it for himself. And Bill sat there and took it all quiet, and by and by he took 'is things up and put them in Joe's bunk without a word.

"It was the most peaceful fust day we 'ad ever 'ad down that fo'c's'le, Bill usually being in 'is tantrums the fust day or two at sea, and wanting to know why 'e'd been born. If you talked you was noisy and worriting, and if you didn't talk you was sulky; but this time 'e sat quite still and didn't interfere a bit. It was such a pleasant change that we all felt a bit grateful, and at teatime Tom Baker patted Joe on the back and said he was one o' the right old sort.

"'You've been in a scrape or two in your time, I know,' he ses, admiring like. 'I knew you was a bit of a one with your fists direckly I see you.'

"HE SEEMED TO THINK THE WHOLE FO'C'S'LE WAS FULL O' BILLS."
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"'Oh, 'ow's that?' asks Joe.

"'I could see by your nose,' ses Tom.

"You never know how to take people like that. The words 'ad 'ardly left Tom's lips afore the other ups with a basin of 'ot tea and heaves it all over 'im.

"'Take that, you insulting rascal,' he ses, as Tom jumped up spluttering and wiping 'is face with his coat. 'How dare you insult me?'

"'Get up,' ses Tom, dancing with rage. 'Get up; prizefighter or no prizefighter, I'll mark you.'

"'Sit down,' ses Bill, turning round.

"'I'm going to 'ave a go at 'im, Bill,' ses Tom; 'if you're afraid of 'im, I ain't.'

"'Sit down,' ses Bill, starting up. ''Ow dare you insult me like that?'

"'Like wot?' ses Tom, staring.

"'If I can't lick him you can't,' ses Bill; 'that's 'ow it is, mate.'

"'But I can try,' ses Tom.

"'All right,' ses Bill. 'Me fust, then if you lick me, you can 'ave a go at 'im. If you can't lick me, 'ow can you lick 'im?'

"'Sit down, both of you,' ses young Joe, drinking Bill's tea to make up for 'is own. 'And mind you, I'm cock o' this fo'c's'le, and don't you forget it. Sit down, both of you, afore I start on you.'

"They both sat down, but Tom wasn't quick enough to please Bill, and he got a wipe o' the

"THEN JOE OBJECTED TO US PLAYING CARDS FOR MONEY."
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seaman, Joe Simms by name, put his 'ead out of his bunk and ses, quiet like:

"'You ain't afraid of that thing, mate, are you?'

"'Wot?' screams Bill, starting.

"'Don't make such a noise when I'm speaking,' ses Joe; 'where's your manners, you great 'ulking rascal?'

"I thought Bill would ha' dropped with surprise at being spoke to like that. His face was purple all over and 'e stood staring at Joe as though 'e didn't know wot to make of 'im. And we stared, too, Joe being a smallish sort o' chap and not looking at all strong.

"'Go easy, mate,' whispers Tom; 'you don't know who you're talking to.'

"'Bosh,' ses Joe, 'he's no good. He's too fat and too silly to do any 'arm. He sha'n't 'urt you while I'm 'ere.'

"He just rolled out of 'is bunk and, standing in front of Bill, put 'is fists up at 'im and stared 'im straight in the eye.

"'You touch that man,' he ses, quietly, pointing to Tom, 'and I'll give you such a dressing down as you've never 'ad afore. Mark my words, now.'

"'I wasn't going to 'it him,' ses Bill, in a strange, mild voice.

"'You'd better not,' ses the young 'un, shaking his fist at 'im; 'you'd better not, my lad. If there's any fighting to be done in this fo'c's'le I'll do it. Mind that.'

"It's no good me saying we was staggered; becos staggered ain't no word for it. To see Bill put 'is hands in 'is pockets and try to whistle, and then sit down on a locker and scratch 'is head, was the most amazing thing I've ever seen. Presently 'e begins to sing under his breath.

"'Stop that 'umming,' ses Joe; 'when I want you to 'um, I'll tell you.'

"Bill left off 'umming, and then he gives a little cough behind the back of 'is 'and, and, arter fidgeting about with 'is feet, went up on deck again.

"''Strewth,' ses Tom, looking round at us, ''ave we shipped a bloomin', prizefighter?'

"'Wot did you call me?' ses Joe, looking at 'im.

"'Nothing, mate,' ses Tom, drawing back.

side o' the 'ead that made it ring for an hour afterward.

"That was the beginning of it, and instead of 'aving one master we found we'd got two, owing to the eggstrordinary way Bill had o' looking at things. He gave Joe best without even 'aving a try at him, and if anybody else wanted to 'ave a try, it was a insult to Bill. We couldn't make 'ed or tail of it, and all we could get out of Bill was that 'e had one time 'ad a turn-up with Joe Simms ashore, which he'd remember all 'is life. It must ha' been something of a turn, too, the way Bill used to try and curry favor with 'im.

"In about three days our life wasn't worth living, and the fo'c's'le was more like a Sunday school class than anything else. In the fust place Joe put down swearing. He wouldn't 'ave no bad langwidge, he said, and he didn't neither. If a man used a bad word Joe would pull 'im up the fust time, and the second he'd order Bill to 'it 'im, being afraid of 'urting 'im too much 'imself. 'Arf the men 'ad to leave off talking altogether when Joe was by, but the way they used to swear when he wasn't was something shocking. Harry Moore got clergyman's sore throat one arternoon through it.

"Then Joe objected to us playing cards for money, and we 'ad to arrange on the quiet that brace buttons was ha'-pennies and coat buttons pennies, and that lasted until one evening Tom Baker got up and danced and nearly went off 'is 'ead with joy through havin' won a few dozen. That was enough for Joe, and Bill by his orders took the cards and pitched 'em over the side.

"Sweet-'earting and that sort o' thing Joe couldn't bear, and Ned Davis put his foot into it finely one arternoon through not knowing. He was lying in 'is bunk smoking and thinking, and by and by he looked across at Bill, who was 'arf asleep, and 'e ses:

"'I wonder whether you'll see that little gal at Melbourne agin this trip, Bill.'

"Bill's eyes opened wide and he shook 'is fist at Ned, as Ned thought, playful-like.

"'All right, I'm a-looking at you, Bill,' 'e ses. 'I can see you.'

"'What gal is that, Ned?' ses Joe, who was in the next bunk to him, and I saw Bill's eyes screw up tight, and 'e suddenly fell fast asleep.

"'I don't know 'er name,' ses Ned, 'but she was very much struck on Bill; they used to go to the theayter together.'

"'Pretty gal?' ses Joe, leading 'im on.

"'Rather,' ses Ned. 'Trust Bill for that. 'e always gets the prettiest gal in the place—I've known as many as six and seven to'——

"'Wot!' screams Bill, waking up out of 'is sleep, and jumping out of 'is bunk.

"'Keep still, Bill, and don't interfere when I'm talking,' ses Joe, very sharp.

"''E's insulted me,' ses Bill; 'talking about gals when everybody knows I 'ate 'em worse than p'ison.'

"'Hold your tongue,' ses Joe. 'Now, Ned, what's this about this little gal? What's 'er name?'

"'It was only a little joke o' mine,' ses Ned, who saw 'e'd put 'is foot in it. 'Bill 'ates 'em worse than—worse than—p'ison.'

"'You're telling me a lie,' ses Joe, sternly. 'Who was it?'

"'It was only my fun, Joe,' ses Ned.

"'Oh, very well then. I'm going to 'ave a bit of fun now,' ses Joe. 'Bill!'

"'Yes,' ses Bill.

"'I won't 'it Ned myself for fear I shall do 'im a lasting injury,' ses Joe, 'so you just start on 'im and keep on till 'e tells all about your goings on with that gal.'

"'Hit 'im to make 'im tell about me?' ses Bill, staring 'is 'ardest.

"'You 'eard wot I said,' ses Joe; 'don't repeat my words. You are a married man, too; I've got sisters of my own, and I'm going to put this sort o' thing down. If you don't down 'im, I will.'

"Ned wasn't much of a fighter, and I 'alf expected to see 'im do a bolt up on deck and complain to the skipper. He did look like it for a moment, then he stood up, looking a bit white as Bill walked over to 'im, and the next moment 'is fist flew out, and afore we could turn round I'm blest if Bill wasn't on the floor. 'E got up as if 'e was dazed like, struck out wild at Ned and missed 'im, and the next moment was knocked down agin. We could 'ardly believe our eyes, and as for Ned, 'e looked as though 'e'd been doing miracles by mistake.

"When Bill got up the second time 'e was that shaky 'e could 'ardly stand, and Ned 'ad it all 'is own way, until at last 'e got Bill's 'ead under 'is arm and punched at it till they was both tired.

"'All right,' ses Bill, 'I've 'ad enough. I've met my master.'

"'Wot?' ses Joe, staring.

"'I've met my master,' ses Bill, going and sitting down. 'Ned 'as knocked me about crool.'

"Joe looked at 'im, speechless, and then, without saying another word, or 'aving a go at Ned himself, as we expected, 'e went up on deck, and Ned crossed over and sat down by Bill.

"'I 'ope I didn't hurt you, mate,' he ses, kindly.

"'Hurt me?' roars Bill. 'You! You 'urt me? You, you little bag o' bones. Wait till I get you ashore by yourself for five minits, Ned Davis, and then you'll know what 'urting means.'

"'I don't understand you, Bill,' ses Ned; 'you're a mystery, that's what you are; but I tell you plain when you go ashore you don't have me for a companion.'

"It was a mystery to all of us, and it got worse and worse as time went on. Bill didn't dare to call 'is soul his own, although Joe only hit 'im once the whole time, and then not very hard, and he excused 'is cowardice by telling us of a man Joe 'ad killed in a fight down in one o' them West End clubs.

"Wot with Joe's Sunday school ways and Bill backing 'em up, we was all pretty glad by the time we got to Melbourne. It was like getting out o' prison to get away from Joe for a little while. All but Bill, that is, and Joe took 'im to hear a dissolving views on John Bunyan. Bill said 'e'd be delighted to go, but the language he used about 'im on the quiet when he came back showed what 'e thought of it. I don't know who John Bunyan is, or wot he's done, but the things Bill said about 'im I wouldn't soil my tongue by repeating.

"Arter we'd been there two or three days we began to feel a'most sorry for Bill. Night arter night, when we was ashore, Joe would take 'im off and look arter 'im, and at last, partly for 'is sake, but more to see the fun, Tom Baker managed to think o' something to put things straight.

"'You stay aboard to-night, Bill,' he ses one morning, 'and you'll see something that 'ill startle you.'

"'Worse than you?' ses Bill, whose temper was getting worse and worse.

"'There'll be an end o' bullying, Joe,' ses Tom, taking 'im by the arm. 'We've arranged to give 'im a lesson as'll lay 'im up for a time.'

"'Oh,' ses Bill, looking 'ard at a boat wot was passing.

"'We've got Dodgy Pete coming to see us to-night,' ses Tom, in a whisper; 'there'll only be the second officer aboard, and he'll likely be asleep. Dodgy's one o' the best light-weights in Australia, and if 'e don't fix up Mister Joe, it'll be a pity.'

"'You're a fair treat, Tom,' ses Bill, turning round; 'that's what you are. A fair treat.'

"'I thought you'd be pleased, Bill,' ses Tom.

"'Pleased ain't no name for it, Tom,' answers Bill. 'You've took a load off my mind.'

"The fo'c's'le was pretty full that evening, every body giving each other a little grin on the quiet, and looking over to where Joe was sitting in 'is bunk putting a button or two on his coat. At about ha'-past six Dodgy comes aboard, and the fun begins to commence.

"He was a nasty, low-looking little chap, was Dodgy, very fly-looking and very conceited. I didn't like the look of 'im at all, and unbearable as Joe was, it didn't seem to be quite the sort o' thing to get a chap aboard to 'ammer a shipmate you couldn't 'ammer yourself.

"'Nasty, stuffy place you've got down 'ere,' ses Dodgy, who was smokin a big cigar; 'I can't think 'ow you can stick it.'

"'It ain't bad for a fo'c's'le,' ses Charlie.

"'An' what's that in that bunk over there?' ses Dodgy, pointing with 'is cigar at Joe.

"'Hush, be careful,' ses Tom, with a wink; 'that's a prizefighter.'

"'Oh,' ses Dodgy, grinning, 'I thought it was a monkey.'

"You might 'ave heard a pin drop, and there was a pleasant feeling went all over us at the thought of the little fight we was going to see all to ourselves, as Joe 'ays down the jacket he was stitching at and just puts 'is little 'ead over the side o' the bunk.

"'Bill,' he ses, yawning.

"'Well,' ses Bill, all on the grin like the rest of us.

"'Who is that 'andsome, gentlemanly looking young feller over there smoking a half crown cigar?' ses Joe.

"'That's a young gent wot's come down to 'ave a look round,' ses Tom, as Dodgy takes 'is cigar out of 'is mouth and look's round, puzzled.

"'Wot a terror 'e must be to the gals, with them lovely little peepers of 'is,' ses Joe, shaking 'is 'ead. 'Bill!'

"'Well,' ses Bill, agin, as Dodgy got up.

"'Take that lovely little gentleman and kick 'im up the fo'c's'le ladder,' ses Joe, taking up 'is jacket agin; 'and don't make too much noise over it, cos I've got a bit of a 'ead-ache, else I'd do it myself.'

"There was a laugh went all round then, and Tom Baker was near killing himself, and then I'm blessed if Bill didn't get up and begin taking off 'is coat.

"'Wot's the game?' ses Dodgy, staring.

"'I'm obeying orders,' ses Bill. 'Last time I was in London, Joe 'ere half killed me one time, and 'e made me promise to do as 'e told me for six months. I'm very sorry, mate, but I've got to kick you up that ladder.'

"'You kick me up?' ses Dodgy, with a nasty little laugh.

"'I can try, mate, can't I?' ses Bill, folding 'is things up very neat and putting 'em on a locker.

"'Old my cigar,' ses Dodgy, taking it out of 'is mouth and sticking it in Charlie's. 'I don't need to take my coat off to 'im.'

"'E altered 'is mind, though, when he saw Bill's chest and arms, and not only took off his coat, but his waistcoat too. Then, with a nasty look at Bill, 'e put up 'is fists and just pranced up to 'im.

"The fust blow Bill missed, and the next moment 'e got a tap on the jaw that nearly broke it, and that was followed up by one in the eye that sent 'im staggering up agin the side, and when 'e was there Dodgy's fists were rattling all round 'im.

"I believe it was that that brought Bill round, and the next moment Dodgy was on 'is back with a blow that nearly knocked his 'ead off. Charlie grabbed at Tom's watch and began to count, and after a little bit called out 'Time.' It was a silly thing to do, as it would 'ave stopped the fight then and there if it 'adn't been for Tom's presence of mind, saying it was two minutes slow. That gave Dodgy a chance, and he got up again and walked around Bill very careful, swearing 'ard at the small size of the fo'c's'le.

"He got in three or four at Bill afore you could wink a'most, and when Bill 'it back 'e wasn't there. That seemed to annoy Bill more than anything, and he suddenly flung out 'is arms, and grabbing 'old of 'im flung 'im right across the fo'c's'le to where, fortunately for 'im—Dodgy, I mean—Tom Baker was sitting.

"Charlie called 'Time' again, and we let 'em 'ave five minutes while we 'elped Tom to bed, and then wot 'e called the 'disgusting exhibishun' was resoomed. Bill 'ad dipped 'is face in a bucket and 'ad rubbed 'is great arms all over and was as fresh as a daisy. Dodgy looked a bit tottery, but 'e was game all through and very careful, and, try as Bill might, he didn't seem to be able to get 'old of 'im agin.

"In five minutes more, though, it was all over, Dodgy not being able to see plain—except to get out o' Bill's way—and hitting wild. He seemed to think the whole fo'c's'le was full o' Bills sitting on a locker and waiting to be punched, and the end of it was a knock-out blow from the real Bill which left 'im on the floor without a soul offering to pick 'im up.

"Bill 'elped 'im up at last and shook hands with 'im, and they rinsed their faces in the same bucket, and began to praise each other up. They sat there purring like a couple o' cats, until at last we 'eard a smothered voice coming from Joe Simms's bunk.

"'Is it all over?' he asks.

"'Yes,' ses somebody.

"'How is Bill?' ses Joe's voice again.

"'Look for yourself,' ses Tom.

"Joe sat up in 'is bunk then and looked out, and he no sooner saw Bill's face than he gave a loud cry and fell back agin, and, as true as I'm sitting here, fainted clean away. We was struck all of a 'eap, and then Bill picked up the bucket and threw some water over 'im, and by and by he comes round agin and in a dazed sort o' way puts his arms round Bill's neck and begins to cry.

"'Mighty Moses!' ses Dodgy Pete, jumping up, 'it's a woman!'

"'It's my wife!' ses Bill.

"We understood it all then, leastways the married ones among us did. She's shipped aboard partly to be with Bill and partly to keep an eye on 'im and Tom Baker's mistake about a prizefighter had just suited her book better than anything. How Bill was to get 'er home 'e couldn't think, but it 'appened the second officer had been peeping down the fo'c's'le, waiting for ever so long for a suitable opportunity to stop the fight, and the old man was so tickled about the way we'd all been done 'e gave 'er a passage back as stewardess to look arter the ship's cat."

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# PLAN TO ABOLISH CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

## France About Ready to Substitute Life Imprisonment

No problem has excited a wider degree of interest and of discussion during the last hundred years than that of capital punishment, which Empress Catherine the Great of Russia was the first of European sovereigns to abolish, prompted thereto by the French savants whose presence in her entourage relieved her court of the flavor of Oriental barbarism imparted thereto by men of the stamp of Potemkin and her other unsavory favorites. Nearly every personage of mark in the worlds of literature, art, science, law and statecraft has given utterance to expressions of opinion about the matter; and in France Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Béranger and St. Augustin have been among the most conspicuous champions of the abandonment of all penalties consisting of the taking of the life of human beings. Even Robespierre, who is on record as having consigned more men and women to the scaffold than any tyrant of modern times, and whose name will be forever associated in popular execration with that of the guillotine, professed himself strongly opposed to excutions. For the benefit of those who may hesitate to accord credence to this extraordinary assertion, I may cite the following extract from one of his speeches in the convention at Paris:

"When an enemy attempts my life, and I can only oppose my own individual strength to his, and am confronted by the alternative of either being killed myself or of killing him, then the law of natural defence justifies me in taking his life. But when the strength of all is united against a single person, and when there is no question of self-defence, what principle of justice is there that can furnish a pretext for putting him to death? What necessities are there to serve in the matter? A conqueror who puts captive enemies to death is a barbarian. A man who slays a youth whom he could easily disarm and punish if attacked or offended is a monster. A convicted prisoner is in the eyes of the community nothing else than a defeated and altogether powerless enemy. He is more feeble with regard to society than a child in the presence of a grown man. These death sentences, therefore, executed in the name of truth and of justice, with so much official ceremonial, are nothing more nor less than cowardly murders and crimes, perpetrated, not by individuals, but by entire nations, with a hypocritical pretence of legal form."

Fine words these, and worthy of a statesman of the most humane and enlightened principles! It is only a pity that Robespierre should have failed to put them into practice. Indeed, falling from his lips they sound almost like a Satanic satire. Yet they are in keeping with one of the earliest laws enacted by the Revolutionary government of which he was so conspicuous a member, and which runs as follows: "From this day the penalty of death shall be abolished in the French Republic." This decree, however, remained "without application," and a subsequent statute, bearing the date of 8th Nivose of the year X, declared that the penalty of death should be maintained.

Greece was the first of the civilized nations of Europe not merely to adopt but also apply the principles enunciated by Robespierre, and to follow the example of Catherine the Great of Russia in decreeing the abolition of capital punishment in 1862—that is to say, before the election of King George to the Hellenic throne. Rumania followed suit in October, 1864; Portugal in July, 1867; the Netherlands in September, 1870; Italy in June, 1889; Brazil, Venezuela and other South American republics, as well as that of San Marino and the majority of the cantons of Switzerland, in 1903, and Norway, in 1904. In the latter instance, however, an exception is made, not in favor, but at the expense, of the Ministers of State, who are alone liable to the penalty of death. This discrimination against them seems at first sight extraordinary. Yet on reflection it is only natural that an exception should be made where they are concerned. For whereas ordinary crimes and felonies for which the death penalty is usually inflicted in other countries are perpetrated against one, or at the most a few citizens, it is possible for cabinet ministers to commit offences against the state, which, by embroiling the nation in war, may entail the death of thousands, the loss of territory and all the horrors of foreign invasion. It is rightly felt that no imprisonment, however severe, would be adequate punishment for such a crime, especially if it partook of the nature of betrayal and of treason, and it is for this reason that the law abolishing capital punishment in Norway extends to every man, woman and child, excepting to the cabinet ministers of the King.

A word of explanation, too, is necessary with regard to Russia, where several hundreds of executions have been recorded during the last twelve months, despite the presence on the statute book of Empress Catherine's law doing away with the penalty of death. Its abolition is merely confined to ordinary criminal procedure, and that is why nihilists and revolutionists, especially those concerned in murderous outrages, are usually tried by court martial, the death penalty having been retained, as in all the other countries above mentioned, both in the army and navy. There is no difficulty about this, as for several decades the greater portion of Russia has been subjected to what is known as "the minor state of siege," which admits of the application of military law to political offences.

It is popularly believed that the death penalty has been abolished in Belgium. This is not the case, however. It still figures on the statute books of the Belgian kingdom, but King Leopold, since his accession to the throne, over forty years ago, has, in deference to a deathbed entreaty of his mother, invariably declined to put his signature to a warrant for the execution of condemned prisoners, and in consequence of this they cannot be put to death. In fact, no criminal has been subjected to capital punishment during his reign—that is to say, in Belgium. With regard to the Congo Free State, that, unfortunately, is another matter.

Among the civilized nations which still retain the death penalty are Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Spain and the United States. In Spain the garrote, so familiar to readers of American newspapers in connection with the history of Cuba's struggle for independence, is the method employed for taking the lives of convicted murderers. Hanging is adhered to by England and Austria, as well as by the majority of the states of the American Union, execution by electricity being restricted to only two states. In France the guillotine is now about to be definitely abolished by law, while in Germany the mediæval method of decapitation by means of the block and great two handed sword is still in vogue. Fortunately, the executions in Germany are private, for otherwise the spectacle which they present would convey the belief that in certain respects Germany had not yet emerged from the darkness of the Middle Ages. The grim function is generally carried out in the prison yard, the procession, which enters to the tolling of the prison bell, being headed by the stalwart and heavily bearded executioner, shouldering a gleaming axe as the insignia of office, wearing a scarlet hood and with bare arms, presenting, in fact, an appearance familiar to those who have seen paintings of the decapitation of great personages in mediæval history. His assistants are likewise bare armed, leather breeched and red shirted. The axe is, however, merely an emblem of office, for on a black draped table in the prison yard lie two or three swords of a peculiar make, perfectly straight, with long and heavy blades and black handles, large enough to admit of their being grasped by two sturdy hands. The wooden block is draped with red cloth. Against it the condemned prisoner is forced to kneel, with his neck resting upon it, one of the assistants holding his head by the hair, while the other two grasp him by the arm and leg. Then the executioner wields the sword, which whizzes through the air like a lightning flash, and the head is severed with a single blow.

In France there have been until now five stated crimes for which the death penalty has been imposed—namely, parricide, murder, poisoning, infanticide and the incendiarism of buildings occupied by human beings. During a period of fifteen years the number of convictions for crimes of this character amounted to 2,628. Yet, owing to the number of recommendations to mercy on the part of juries, which have permitted the court to impose imprisonment instead of death, and to the equally large number of death sentences commuted by the President of the republic, there have been throughout that time only sixty-eight persons consigned to the guillotine. In fact, executions have now become so few and far between that the government, deferring in the matter to popular sentiment in France, has determined to abolish capital punishment, the sanction of the legislature being already assured in advance. It is purposed to substitute for the death penalty perpetual imprisonment, the first six years of which are to be spent in solitary confinement. In the event of one of these life prisoners rendering himself guilty while in jail of some further crime of a serious character, such as an attack upon a prison official or the murder of a fellow convict, he may be kept in solitary confinement for life, but only after being further sentenced by the courts. Women convicted of murder and who are about to become mothers are not to be consigned to solitary imprisonment until after the birth of the child.

It remains to be seen what will be the effect of this reform instituted by the French government upon the statistics of crime. A consensus of opinion based upon the experience of the principal police authorities and prison governors in France is to the effect that murderers stand far more in dread of solitary cell confinement than of the guillotine. People accustomed to taking so lightly the lives of others and to risking their own on each occasion are rarely afraid of the scaffold. They know that it will be all over in a minute, and that it is preferable to a slow and lingering death resulting from some injury or disease. But they dread above everything else solitary confinement and imprisonment in cells without any one with whom to converse, and, above all, without any occupation. Sooner than this form of punishment, continued throughout a term of six long years, they prefer death, and under the circumstances it is anticipated that the new law will act as a deterrent of homicidal crimes. Whether this expectation is likely to be realized is a matter of pure speculation. For it is difficult to base any argument upon comparisons with other countries, where the entirely different temperament of the people has to be taken into consideration. Thus, crimes of violence are always more frequent in Southern climes, where the blood is hotter and the passions more unruly than in the more sober North. It has been pointed out, for instance, that in Italy the average number of murders in a single year is nearly four thousand—that is to say, nearly eleven a day—which is certainly a startling figure, and which many have been disposed to ascribe to the abolition of capital punishment. But prior to the latter the number of deaths by violence was even larger, a fact which the advocates of capital punishment find it convenient to forget. Moreover, the average is almost as large in Spain, where executions are more frequent than in any other country in Europe.

It may be questioned, indeed, whether the death penalty is ever really a deterrent of crime, especially in those civilized countries where the dictates of humanity and popular sentiment require the punishment to be inflicted with the least possible physical pain and delay. In the Orient, assuredly, it is without efficacy in that respect. The various creeds of the East have the effect of removing from the minds of their followers all fear of death, to many of whom it means the release from the sufferings and miseries of life here below and the enjoyment of pleasures not merely celestial, but material, such as the paradise of houris reserved for the hereafter of all true Moslems. That is why Oriental rulers have always considered it necessary to devise tortures of more or less ingeniously cruel character as efficacious punishments. In Persia, for instance, a man who would go cheerfully to the gallows is filled with dread at the idea of that particular penalty which consists in plunging him up to the neck in a pit filled with gypsum; and, whereas the Chinaman is relatively indifferent to mere decapitation, he loses his imperturbability when confronted with that terrible punishment which consists in being slowly and gradually sliced to pieces with a thousand cuts by the executioner before the final deathblow is inflicted.

These punishments are so abhorrent to civilized nations that they cannot be used as a deterrent from crime in European and American dependencies in the Orient, and, since the natives there have no fear of ordinary death, nothing remains but that solitary confinement which is already in vogue in Italy, and which France is now about to adopt for convicted murderers. In some respects it is more cruel than capital punishment, for while it preserves the body it destroys the mind.

EX-ATTACHE.

### CHINESE SUPERSTITIONS.

No country has so many marriage superstitions as China. The Chinese never marry within a hundred days after a death has occurred in the family of either bride or bridegroom. There seems to be no reason for this, but the Chinese say that trouble is sure to follow upon a marriage so solemnized. If a bride breaks the heel of her shoe while she is going from her father to her husband's house, it is ominous of unhappiness in her new relations.—Birmingham Post.

OTHER REFORMS ALSO.
The Fat Boy—I fear me there's more than reformed spelling in that message.
—Minneapolis Journal.

THANKSGIVING COMING.
—Lincoln (Neb.) News.

SAME OLD SITUATION.
The Democratic Donkey—Oh, you scoundrel! you opened a bar!!
G. O. P.—Aw, shut up! You opened a keg!
—Baltimore News.