

LOVELY WOMAN CURBED

Wherein the "Age of Chivalry" Was Very Unchivalrous.

MUZZLES FOR SCOLDING WIVES.

In This Enlightened Land and Age We Encourage Lovely Woman's Chatter, but In the Dark Days of Old England Female Loquacity Was Cruelly Repressed.

The emancipation of women from the oppression of men and from the thralldom of conventionality being just now a favorite theme with debaters, dramatists and dressmakers, the occasion may be an appropriate one, says The Strand Magazine, for the purpose of recalling an article of headgear which was frequently worn by the fair sex in the "good old times."

The particular headdress of which we are about to treat, although produced in many ingenious fashions, was never popular with the ladies, and we do not desire in these progressive and enlightened days to reintroduce such unbecoming and inconvenient wearing apparel, but to show the advance that has been made in our social life and in the relations between the sexes since the age of the pillory and the ducking stool and to draw attention to a phase of the past with which many at the present day may not be familiar.

A few generations back our forefathers were wont to inflict upon women certain punishments, which sadly exhibited their lack of gallantry and propriety.

Among the most curious of these punishments was that of the brank, or the scold's bridle. This curious and cruel instrument of torture was employed by borough physicians and petty provincial tyrants for the purpose of curbing women of an ailment of the tongue to which they were said to be subject.

The brank, or scold's bridle, or gossip's bridle, as the instrument has been variously called, was in vogue in England from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, as is amply shown by the many allusions to its application which appear in corporation and municipal records, and in some counties the specimens of the implement still existing are sufficiently numerous to testify to its prevalence. In Cheshire alone no fewer than 13 examples are extant, and Lancashire and Staffordshire each contain five or six. In Derbyshire there is but one.

The Derbyshire brank is a remarkably good example. It consists of a hoop of iron hinged on either side and fastened

in the helmet portion, and by an arrangement of cogs and the perforated rods at the back the mask in front was raised so as to completely obscure the upper part of the face. The victim could then be buffeted without knowing who her tormenters were.

The last time the scold's bridle was publicly used in England was at Congleton, in Cheshire, in 1824; but, in the words of an eminent statesman, "many things have happened since then," and it would create no small sensation if at the present time we were to meet a fine de siècle lady, led through the streets by a burly policeman, wearing one of these uncouth implements, because, forsooth, she had ventured to raise her voice in defense of her rights or had spoken too plainly to an overbearing and tyrannical husband.

An Insinuation.



Miss Sears—I have just been elected a Daughter of the Revolution.
Ethel Knox—You weren't a participant, were you?—Scribner's Magazine.

JOE MEETS A FEMALE.

SHE IS MOUNTED ON A SPOTTED HORSE AND ISN'T PARTICULAR.

But When He Scorns Her Love She Turns on Him, and Jumpin' Joe Is Kept in Considerable Suspense For a Time—A Narrow Escape.

I was gradooly closin in on the patriotic young town of Jubilee, whar I was billed to exhibit my grand aggregashun of famly remedies and reptile intelligence, when I was overtook by a female ridin a spotted hoss. As she drawed up alongside of my outfit I stopped my motive power, laid down the lines, and placin my hand on my trooly unselfish heart I bowed humbly to her



"SHE SHOUTS AT ME IN FASCINASHUNS AND MADNESS," sez:

"I was brung up this way from innercent childhood, and I can't help it."

"Critter!" she replied arter lookin me over, "I hain't s'archin fur nuthin extra."

"In the way of a claim?" I inquires in my perlitest manner.

"No, in the way of a husband. I've lost my ole man by the hand of the fell de stroyer."

"We know not what an hour may bring forth, marm. We cumeth up as a sunflower, and the vigilance committee cuts us down—that is to say, it generally leaves us hangin to a limb. Kin I be so bold as to take it?"

"My ole man died in his bed," she interrupts in a proud way, "and I'm left with a claim to work and nine children to kear fur. I'm 'lowin myself jest two hours to find another critter."

"And ye would take up with me if nuthin better offered?"

"Mebbe I would, though ye look over-ripe."

"Thank ye, marm, thank ye very kindly, but my ole woman weepeth and wipeth her eyes fur me on our farm in Missouri. However, bein as my mishun in this yere Cherokee strip ar' to add to the happiness of mankind, and bein as"—

"Why didn't ye say so at fust?" she shouts at me in madness.

"You must excuse me, marm, but"—

"But I won't!" she yells. "Critter, ye hev incouraged a pore and desolated widder woman to hope whar thar was nuthin to hope fur, and that's a crime in this yere land which can't be overlooked. I'll see ye later!"

She sot off on a gallop fur Jubilee, and I got my purchases in order and slowly followed arter. I was communin with "THE LAW MUST BE UPHELD."

My thoughts and lettin the wind blow whar it listed when I observed a crowd cumin out from town to greet the conkerin hero. Some was on foot, and some was on mews, and they was so enthooslastic that I could hear 'em holler fur liberty or death a mile away. I stopped my hoss and prepared to deliver my usual address, but a great surprise and disapp'ntment awaited me. When the crowd reached me, it was headed by the woman I hev spoken of, and I had but to look upon the faces of the men to see that

my grand exhibishun would be postponed on account of the weather.

"Critter," said the leader of the cavalcade as they surrounded me, "this yere widder woman ar' my sister, the only sister I hev on the face of this arth."

I bowed low before him, but didn't utter no remarks. Thar's a time fur talkin in Cherokee and a time to keep shet.

"She sez you skorned her luv."

"Dod rot him, he did!" added the widder.

"Feller citizens," sez I as I looks the crowd in the face, "kin I go sweepin threwh the kentry on the wings of the hurrycane and leave nuthin but the ashes of despair behind?"

"As to which?" sez the leader.

"As to hevvin a wife in Missouri and marryin another every 40 rods as I journey along with my grand aggregashun!"

"But the varmint held out false hopes!" yelled the woman.

"Durn his hide,

"GOODBY TO MY EDDE— but he acted so CATED HOG," purty that I figured he was my mutton!"

"Critter, the law must be upheld in Cherokee if we hev to wade in blood!" sez the leader as he motions fur the crowd to bring me along to a tree.

"But how hev I broken the law?" I demands.

"Deludin a widder woman. If she had reached town ten minits sooner, she'd hev got Bill McGhee fur a husband. He was on the marry and was took by a woman who can't hold a candle to my pore sister. Deludin hain't ekal to murder, but it desaves hangin jest the same."

They kindly 'lowed me three minits in which to bid goodby to my eddeicated hog, five legged wolf, jumpin frog and exhibishun grasshopper, and then they drawed me up. I was hangin atwixt the heavens and the arth when one man in the crowd called out that he was willin to marry the widder then and thar if they would spar my life. The widder sized him up and esid it was a go, and I was lowered to the ground. When I reilvered sunthin of my sanguine speerits, the leader steps for'ds and sez:

"Critter, we hain't goin to hang ye fur deludin a widder woman, bein as the same has secoured the wishes of her heart, but we've got to pull ye up fur the sake of them nine children of hers. They was waitin and weepin and cryin fur a father, and you wouldn't be a father to 'em. The law is fur the children and agin ye, and up ye goes!"

Arter I had bin purty properly hung a feller calls out that he had jest rid by the widder's claim and seen her children playin in a mud puddle instead of waitin and weepin, and the rope was slacked away, and I returned to the sinfulness of this vain world. I was hopin that the crowd had becum weary of well doin when the leader sez to me:

"Critter, whence that hog of yours?"

"He's an eddeicated hog," sez I, "and one of the feecheurs of my grand aggregashun."

"That's agin the law sum more!" he yells to the crowd. "While our pore children ar' sobbin and grievin fur the benefits of eddecashun this reptile goes and eddecates a hog to be above 'em and to skorn 'em as worms of the dust. Pull him up agin!"

And I was cheerfully hauled up till my toes war off the ground, and they was goin to make the rope fast when a feller man sings out that the hog got his eddecashun in Kansas and couldn't help but bring it along with him. As nobody could dispute him, they let me down agin, and as I lay thar on the arth tryin to woo back my accustomed enthoosiasm of soul the boss of the convenshun tenderly sez:

"Ye orter be hung fur deludin the people with a jumpin frog and fur cagin up a grasshopper and deprivin a wolf of his liberty, sayin nuthin of yer panoramy, which are only painted canvas and not the genuoine article, but mebbe ye'll see the error of yer ways and becum a better man. Git on to yer wagon and strike a gait."

And as I turned my back on the town of Jubilee and follered my eddeicated hog to'rd the settin sun I could not help but reflect that man which is born of woman is sinful and vain when he plans to lay up treasure on this onreliable arth.

AUSTIN KEENE.

His Color Was Against Him.

"I understand that the angels have left a baby brother at your house," said Uncle Charley.

"I dunno," replied little Ben doubtfully. "He's red enough to have come from the other place."—Brooklyn Life.

A Handle For the Resurrection.

It is said that when the body of a Mohammedan is prepared for burial a clasp lock is left on the top of his cranium, whereby the angel of the resurrection can lift him out of the grave.

THE LAW MUST BE UPHELD.

HELD.



THE DERBYSHIRE BRANK.

behind. An iron band passes over the head from back to front, where there is an opening to admit the nose of the individual whose misfortune it was to wear it. On the left side of the hoop a chain is attached, whereby the victim was led through the streets or tethered to a post or wall. On the front of the bridle are the initials, "T. C." and the date, 1688, the year of the great rebellion.

One of the most celebrated branks is that preserved at Walton-on-Thames, which is dated 1633 and is inscribed with the characteristic couplet:

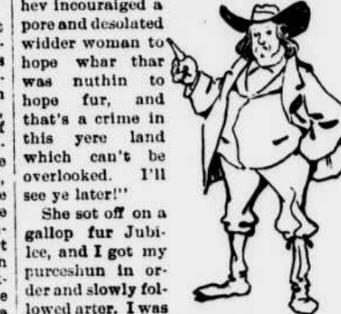
Chester presents Walton with a bridle
To curb women's tongues that talk too idly.

As several very early examples of scold's bridle exist in Scotland the opinion obtains that, like the maiden or guillotine, this article of punishment may have been of Scotch origin and then have gradually made its way southward. A brank of a common type came to light in 1848 from behind the oak paneling in the ancient house of the earls of Moray, in Edinburgh. One that may be seen at Leicester is somewhat simple in construction, and to the back of it a chain about a foot in length is attached.

A very curious specimen is preserved at Newcastle, to which reference has been frequently made, and one of the most curious allusions to it occurs in Gardiner's "England's Grievance Discovered In Relation to the Coal Trade," printed in 1655, where, on page 110, it states that John Willis of Ipswich, when in Newcastle, saw a woman named Ann Biddestone led through the streets by an officer of the corporation, wearing a brank upon her head, the tongue piece so forced into her mouth as to cause it to bleed. He adds, "This is the punishment which the magistrates do inflict upon chiding and scolding women." John Willis also affirms that he has seen drunkards punished by being driven through the streets of the same town inclosed in a beer barrel. This uncomfortable vestment was known as the "new fashioned cloak."

Among the many curious objects brought together by that eminent antiquary, Elias Ashmole, and preserved at Oxford is a brank of the less cruel type, in which the tongue plate has been rounded at the end to prevent the tongue from being injured. In this specimen the leading chain is fastened to the front of the instrument immediately over the nose aperture.

An instrument which may also be grouped with the branks is to be found at Worcester and in form resembles a helmet. When in use, the head was inserted



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