

## WHAT IS THE FLAG?

ALL OVER THE EMPIRE ARE MISTAKES  
MADE IN ITS FLYING.

A Puzzling Question Satisfactorily Settled—The National Flag—When and How it should be Flown—Blunders in Flag Making—Flag Lore That is Intensely Interesting Just at the Present Juncture.

The flag of England, of Britain, is down all over the Empire, and yet in this flying there are many mistakes made. The Pall Gazette thinks so, and in a recent issue has an article which most interest all who fly the flag in Canada.

"What is the flag of England? Winds of the world declare," is the question with which Mr. Kipling starts one of his patriotic poems. If the winds that blow over London were asked to give their impression as to the answer, during these days of peace celebrations and coronation rejoicings, they would be rather puzzled to reply.

For the average Londoner, alike in St. James' and St. Giles', appears to be in hopeless bewilderment as to the national flag. He is not so sure which flag he ought to display. He is often at a loss as to how it ought to be made and how it ought to be hoisted. He flies the flag of other peoples under the mistaken impression that he is hanging out the British colors. He makes squinting signals that move the seafaring man who can read them to a quiet laugh at the ignorance of mere land-lubbers. It is strange that such things should happen in the capital of a race of sailors and travelers, for whom every flag should have a distinct and well known significance.

First of all, there is a widespread misuse of a purely personal flag, the Royal Standard, which many others were well-informed people suppose to be that of the nation. If Sir Gorges Myles were to quarter on his carriage panels the Lions of England, the Red Lion Rampant of Scotland, and the Irish Harp, everyone would think he had taken leave of his senses. When he flies the same heraldic device from the flagstaff on the roof of his stately mansion it is not regarded as an eccentricity on his part. But it is almost as bad as displaying the Royal Arms on his carriage or putting his servants into the royal liveries.

The Royal Standard is the King of England's banner. It denotes his actual presence as Sovereign where it is flown. Thus it is not hoisted even on a royal palace unless he is in residence. It is displayed from the flagstaff of the palace when he is reviewing his troops. It is run up by a warship as he comes on board. Even the ambassadors who represent him abroad do not fly his flag. It is purely personal, like the golden yellow standard marked with a broad black cross and decorated with eagles and imperial crowns, which in Germany denotes the Kaiser's presence, and which no German ever mistakes for the national flag. Our own Royal Standard should not be vulgarized in the present unmeaning fashion.

The national flag, the flag of the Kingdom and the Empire, is to give it its popular name—the Union Jack. There are various flags of which it forms only one part, which are used for special purposes. It is a common mistake to take these for the national flag.

Among these are, first, the White Ensign with the Union in its top corner near the flagstaff or halyard, and the great red cross on a white ground—the cross that marked the flag of England in crusading days and in the wars of the Middle Ages. This red cross is still the central device of the Union flag.

The White Ensign is the flag of our navy. In the same way the Red Ensign is the flag of our merchant marine. To fly the White or Red Ensign on a house is rather misleading. What one ought to fly is the Union Jack, more correctly called the Union flag, but then one must take care to get the real thing and hoist it right side up.

Most of the flags imported from abroad, and many of those made in England, blunder about the right combination of the three crosses. On both sides of the central red cross of St. George there is the same width of white bunting or silk, but the X-shaped red cross of St. Patrick has the white that shows on both sides of it of equal width. On the side nearest the halyards it is broad above the red cross and narrow below, and this arrangement is reversed on the other side of the flag, the explanation being that the red cross is here superposed unevenly on the white cross of St. Andrew, so that the Scottish emblem may not form a more even border to it. To neglect this difference alters the whole appearance of the flag. But those who thus blunder err in distinguished company.

When General Baden-Powell designed a poster some years ago for a military regiment he made St. Andrew's cross into a mere even white border for St. Patrick's. When Sir St. Robertson and the gallant little Garrison of Chitral improvised a Union Jack to fly over their beleaguered fort they made the same mistake. When after the relief it was pointed out to them that such a flag, being the same which ever way it was hoisted, could not be reversed as a signal of distress, Sir George replied that they never thought of its use for such a purpose being in any way necessary. Mr. Punch, who as a rule is scrupulously accurate in matters of detail, drew the Union Jack in the same incorrect fashion a couple of weeks ago. To come down to lesser folk, several firms of decorators are now circulating in London illustrated price lists, with the national flag thus misrepresented. It is a very common mistake to hoist the correct flag upside down, thus creating "in distress" want assistance." And it is also to be seen, on some London houses, flying with a broad white border. This is another

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special signal flag, "I want a pilot," flown by ships nearing home. By the way, Mr. Kipling, who one would think the last man to make such a slip, writes in "Sticks and Bones" of a coaster in distress flying the Union Jack reversed as a signal for help. Of course a merchantman in such a position reverses the Red Ensign.

As red, white, and blue are the colors in the Union Jack, there seems to be a vague impression in many quarters that any combination of these colors may be taken as a flag. The Union Jack, Red or White Ensign, pilot flag, or signal of distress, is not handy. Hence the display of so many foreign tri-colors, the familiar French flag, the Dutch flag with its two horizontal stripes, and occasionally the flag of the Russian merchant marine. This last is probably the result of the misguided energy of some amateur flag-maker, who sees three stripes of bunting together, white at the top, blue in the middle, and red at the bottom. No doubt some few of the French and Dutch flags are hoisted by foreign residents. But most of them are used merely because they are "red, white, and blue." There is no disposition to fly foreign flags as such in London. Otherwise, how are we to account for the absence of a flag once popular in schemes of decoration, the handkerchief "Dannebrog," the flag of our Queen's native land? And why is there such a marked absence of the showy red and white flag of our ally, Japan? In much traveling about London we have only seen one solitary specimen of this flag.

The Corner and the Bottle. The following little scene at an inquest upon the body of a murdered man is reported by a correspondent of the Anglo-Russian from Astrakhan: The coroner dictating to his clerk: "On the table was found a bottle—No; stop for a moment. We must ascertain its contents." The coroner, tasting the liquid, dictates: "The bottle contained English gin. Perhaps not; I am not sure; taste it yourself." The clerk, having done so, replies: "I think it is simply strong vodka." The coroner, tossing off another glass: "No, really. It tastes like gin." The clerk, tasting the liquor again, "I still think it is only vodka."

The bottle having gradually become empty, the coroner proceeded to dictate in a decisive tone: "Write: An empty bottle was found on the table, and all measures taken to ascertain what it contained were of no use."



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**Beliefs About the Rainbow.**  
In many countries the rainbow is spoken of as being a great bent pump or siphon tube, drawing water from the earth by mechanical means. In parts of Russia, in the Don country and also in Moscow and vicinity it is known by a name which is equivalent to "the bent water pipe." In nearly all the Slavonic dialects it is known by terms signifying "the cloud siphon," and in Hungary it is "the pump," "Noah's pump" and "God's pump." The Malayan natives call it by the same name that they do their banded water cobra (neebeta), only that they add "bobo" (meaning double headed), the equivalent in our language being the "double headed water-snake." They tell you that the bow is a real thing of life, that it drinks with its two mouths and that the water is transferred to the clouds through an opening in the upper side of the center of the great arch. In the province of Charkov, Russia, the rainbow is said to drain the wells, and to prevent this many are provided with heavy, tight fitting stone platforms. In the province of Saratov the boy is said to be under control of three angels, one of whom pumps the water, the second "feeds" the clouds and the third sends the rain.

**Man, Woman and Love.**  
In one of his books Max O'Rell, the witty Frenchman, gives the following advice:

"If you are bald, never make love to a woman taller than you. Looked at from below, you are all right. 'Never let your ladylove see you without a collar; no—not even the very wife of your bosom. A man's head without a collar is like a bouquet without a holder. 'Never marry a woman richer than you, one taller than you, or one older than you. Be always gently superior to your wife in fortune, in size and in age, so that in every possible way she may appeal to you for help or protection, either through your purse, your strength or your experience in life. Marry her at an age that will always enable you to play with her all the different characteristic parts of a husband—a chum, a lover, an adviser, a protector and just a tiny suspicion of a father."

**Stories of London Weather.**  
The Manchester Guardian tells a good story of the weather. The scene was a Strand omnibus. A leaden sky was overhead; the rain poured down uncompromisingly, mud was under foot. A red capped Parsee, who had been sitting near the dripping driver, got down as the conductor came up. "What sort of chap is that?" asked the driver. "Don't you know that?" answered the conductor. "Why, that's one of them Indians that worship the sun." "Worship the sun?" said the shivering driver. "I suppose 'e's come over 'ere to 'ave a rest."

This recalls the reply given on one occasion by an eastern potentate to Queen Victoria, who asked him whether or his people did not worship the sun. "Yes, your majesty," said the oriental, "and if you saw him you would worship him also."

**A Cheap Pleasure.**

Seedy Individual—I would like to get measured for a suit. Fashionable Tailor (suspiciously)—At about what price, sir? Seedy Individual—That makes no difference. Fashionable Tailor (as before)—We generally require a deposit from unknown parties. Seedy Individual (entirely)—I do not wish you to make the suit. It has been so long since I enjoyed this experience that I simply wish to get measured.

**Wifely Appreciation.**

"There's one thing I will say about Charley," said young Mrs. Torkins; "he has a lovely disposition even if he doesn't always display it at home." "How do you know?" "I heard some of his Wall street friends talking about him. They say he is a perfect lamb."

**Rest.**

When a razor refuses to take an edge, the barber stops fussing with it, lays it away, and in a little while, no one knows just how, the edge returns. If we treated our brains and our bodies that way instead of wearing them out on the grindstone, it would be a good deal more sensible.

**An Impression.**

"Now, I have an impression in my head," said the teacher. "Can any of you tell me what an impression is?" "Yes'm, I can," replied a little fellow at the foot of the class. "An impression is a dent in a soft spot."

**Painfully Honest.**

Prude—Well, why did you refuse me after you had taken him away from the girl he was engaged to?" "Flirt—Oh, I haven't quite reached the point when I will receive stolen goods."

The rack was one of the instruments of torture in the olden time. The music rack is usually used for the same purpose today.

## Winter

A DIRGE

The wintry we. extends his blast,  
And hail and rain does blaw;  
Or the stormy north sends driving  
forth  
The blinding sleet and snow;  
While tumbling brown, the barn  
comes down,  
And roars frae bank to brae;  
And bird and beast in covert rest,  
And pass the heartless day.

—Burns.

And on such a day as this,  
who wants to sit down to a  
breakfast of "ready to serve,  
eaten cold?"

Begin the day with a bowl  
of warm, nourishing, fat and  
heat making **Tillson's  
Oats.**

Pan-dried—No dust, no  
hulls, no specks, all the oat  
that's good to eat.

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