

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN THE ARMY.

BY THE OLD SOLDIER.

THE death of a soldier of the 7th regiment of Hussars, while recently undergoing corporal punishment on Hounslow Heath, has been made the subject of judicial investigation in England; and the legislative wisdom of the British nation is now engaged in considering how far it may be possible, not wholly to abolish this revolting punishment, but to render it applicable only to particular offences, and in no instance to exceed a certain number of lashes—I believe fifty.

Schools are to be established, books procured, and other laudable means employed, with the object of improving the moral character of the soldier, and of repressing insubordination without the aid of corporal punishment.

Although intended for something better, as I shall presently shew, it has been my fortune to have borne arms in the service of my country, in the humble but honorable capacity of a private soldier; and it was due, more perhaps to good luck than my own good management, that I succeeded in escaping the terrors of the lash.

A wise woman, skilled in astrology, is said to have predicted at my birth, that if not spoiled in the course of training, I might be certain of finding myself one day either Lord Chancellor of England, or Primate of all Ireland. My fond parents lent a willing ear, and no expense was spared to prepare me for an office which, they imagined, would ennoble myself and enrich my kindred for many generations.

Man, they say, is the arbiter of his own destiny. In my case I believe it to be true; for, pitching Law, Latin, and Divinity to the d—l, off I scampered one fine summer's morning, and soon found myself, not Chancellor or Primate, but absolute master of a bright English shilling, and a costly bunch of ribbons dangling from my bonnet.

This event—must I declare it to the young ladies of Canada—happened seven-and-forty years ago. Flagellation was then, and for many years after, the only punishment known in the army. The occurrence of crime was not by any means more frequent, or marked with a higher degree of enormity than at the present day. Members of Courts Martial were not sworn

that rush of verse which this style admits of could not so easily be aimed at in any other. Indeed, this field is common now, and were it not so, the fact seems well understood, that he who attempts to write verse in these degenerate days, has a perfect license to deliver himself as best he may. The second Canto will be, like this, after the manner of Sir Walter Scott. The third will do Samuel Taylor Coleridge, as far as may be; and the fourth will be a downright sacrilegious attempt upon my Lord Byron. Should the gracious public, by which we are all the readers of *Maga.* Jr., require more, we pity their stomachs. That will finish the cakes and etc.