

THE LASH.

In the United States some attention has of late been attracted toward the question of corporal punishment; this has arisen on account of the frequency of brutal crimes. It is doubtful whether, with their democratic ideas, the American people would allow the introduction of flogging as a criminal punishment; the question as to its necessity is hardly disputable. In England the punishment of the lash has been the only efficient deterrent; as soon as brutal crimes are found to be of frequent occurrence, it is a fact that a dose of the lash soon remedies the state of affairs; it is the only punishment that has put a stop to garroting, and there are very few to be found who object to the infliction of the lash upon criminals.

In the United States when a criminal is sentenced for some peculiarly atrocious crime, it is strange that a morbid sympathy is created in the minds of some persons whose minds must be peculiarly constituted, and the criminal is wept over, petitions for pardon are numerous signed, and the condemned one is presented with floral offerings and feasted upon good things. That this is common is easily seen by the reports in the daily press of the murder cases; it appears much more sensible that Lynch-law should prevail than that these brutal criminals should be thus fêted. On the principle that a partially unjust law is better than no law, it is much more desirable that one innocent man should suffer than that ninety-nine guilty ones should be thus exalted and glorified as heroes or martyrs. Making a claim to be philanthropists, some persons continue to protest against the use of the lash, and these philanthropists' sympathies seem to grow deeper and greater in exact proportion to the diabolical brutality of the crime; but when the punishment is found to be so efficient, their whinings will not be of much avail.

There are some who may claim that feelings of revenge should not be allowed to exist; this is quite true, but that they do exist is not so true. In nearly all cases there elapses quite a lengthy period of time from the commission of the crime to the sentencing of the culprit, and the punishment is given with dispassionate judgment commensurate with the enormity of the offence. Sometimes, in cases of murder, the position and standing of the murdered one make the crime seem much greater, but as murder is usually punished by hanging, the use of the lash in such cases is not necessary. It is necessary where the offense is committed against those who are peculiarly defenceless, such as women or children, and in some cases in which the chances of detection are small, or in which the effect is to condemn the one assaulted to a living death. The moral effect of the lash is great, and culprits dread it more than penal servitude. A case in point is thus related by the *New York Journal of Commerce* :—

"A few days since one of the most brazen-faced ruffians who ever stood up in a British court suddenly whited, and uttered a scream on hearing the terms of the judge's sentence, and was taken away in a fainting condition. He had no defense. The evidence against him was conclusive. He was sure of conviction and of a severe sentence, and he knew it. But he was not prepared for one part of the punishment prescribed by Justice Stephen. He screamed and almost fainted, not in view of the twenty years of penal servitude, but because the judge ordered, as a fitting prelude, thirty lashes. This man had robbed and attempted to murder by drugging, and then throwing from a railway carriage, a travelling companion, in whose confidence he had ingratiated himself. It was a premeditated crime of the most heinous kind. It would have ended in murder but for the inability of the assassin to eject his victim from the car before the train stopped. The ruffian then escaped with his booty, but was followed by the half-stupefied, badly-injured man, who staggered upon the platform and gave an alarm which led to the capture of the assailant. This strange affair took place in a car of the London underground line, of which the two men were the only occupants. Justice Stephen, in passing sentence, said it was the 'most cowardly and brutal outrage that had ever been brought under his notice.' He marked his sense of horror, as well as made the sentence a wholesome caution to all other like-minded desperadoes by prefixing the thirty lashes to the twenty years' imprisonment. The prisoner would not have flinched from the incarceration, but he winced terribly under the judgment of the cat, as if he already felt the nine-tails raising wales on his bare back."

This surely must have a great effect upon all to whom the facts become known, and must be considered a great preventative of crime.

THE F. F.'S.

(From *The Queen*.)

No. II.

Yet sometimes the F. F.'s are condescending and exceedingly sociable. My lady is the handsome widow of a City knight, but her title sounds as well as another's; and no one looks behind the word into the designation of the patent. Her daughters are supremely proud of the distinction which marks off their mother as one of the F. F.'s by Act of Parliament and the Queen's grace; and you will be made free of the fact that they have been nursed on the bosom of one who has the right to call herself Lady Fourstars, before you have got

well through the fish or have begun a conversation with your left-hand neighbour, the "warm" "snug" tailor from a provincial town, where bad debts are few and the spirit of competition is not. Perhaps, if you are one of those sinful creatures who a little resent patronage and dislike condescension about as much as insolence, you wish that your new friends—those undeniable F. F.'s—would not be quite so sweet, not quite so amiable. You detect in their voices the ring with which fine ladies greet the Mollies and Bettys of their parish when they go to see them in their cottages, with no more idea of those cottages being houses, and therefore castles, than if they were visiting the horses in the stables or the fowls in their coop. And this same kind of things is passed on to you. It would be no more understood that you have your own reserves, your own disinclination to strange friendships and unrepresented associations, than that Betty should object to be caught at the wash-tub with her house all in disorder, or that Molly would rather the great ladies did not come about her place to find her Joe sitting by the fire, or snoring on the floor, unwashed, not at work, and drunk. You are one of the second set, and the F. F.'s are—well, the F. F.'s are what they are. Your place, then, is to be thankful for what you get: to pick up your crumbs with placid content; and to think the F. F.'s lovely for their condescension and affability.

Sometimes again, they come into the circle as an invading and hostile army; and if they can offer a sufficient bribe to the innkeeper, so as to make it worth his while, they trample you all to the ground and remain masters and mistresses of the situation. F. F.'s of this kind are never by any chance satisfied with their first portions; nor will they allow any person to have anything whatsoever better than themselves, or retain what they may desire. They find fault with their places at the table, and make it a *sine quâ non*—if they are to stay—that the whole arrangements shall be recast to admit of their special grouping according to their fancy. If the head of the table has been taken as it generally is, by right and seniority, they demand that the *doyen* of the house shall be removed lower down, and that the chief F. F. of the party shall be exalted in his stead. They demand also that all the table shall be disorganised to enable them to remain in a compact body. If the *doyen* is good-tempered and indifferent to small matters—kind-hearted, glad to do the host a service, and anxious to avoid disturbance—he and his vacate their places; and behold the superior F. F. on her throne, and so far happy in her victory. Do they cast longing eyes at a certain room—a room with a pleasant balcony and a charming view, already tenanted by someone else? They go to the landlord with a fresh ultimatum, and positively must have that one special chamber, else,—phew! they will all vanish to-morrow like a puff of smoke! There is nothing for it but to dispossess the present tenant, with a dozen apologies and regrets. Duty is sometimes hard, and landlords have awfully disagreeable things to do. It all comes to the same thing in the end, however. Apology, regret, explanation, self-excuse—the whole roll call counts for nothing more than so many flourishes about the central sentence: "The F. F.'s want your room, and you must give it to them." Have they peeped through your open door and seen a chair or a table, a glass or a wardrobe, that they covet? Without warning and silently, the piece of furniture is removed, and you have to make shift without any at all, or with an inferior substitute received in return. Perhaps you hear that yours has gone to be mended, or what not. To this you pay no great heed. You know that the F. F.'s were your Mordecai, and that you have had to suffer in consequence; and you either leave the hotel in a pet, or follow the example of the "altruistic" *doyen* and give up your rights for the sake of your landlord and his "good-let."

These F. F.'s hold themselves rigidly apart from the rest of the company. They have their own jokes, their own talk, their private allusions, their unshared fun. They look at the exiles and laugh among themselves as whispers make the round of the close-set block. Some jest, connected with that lady's cap or this one's gown—that gentleman's voice or the other's beard or hair—sends the whole party into polite convulsions, from the cause of which the company in general are shut out. But by degrees the point of their wit becomes blunted by too exclusive sharpening on one worn-out old hone. They use up their subjects and run aground in a manner that betrays itself to all the world. Then they cast wistful looks down the table where the exiles talk and laugh with constant supplies of fresh material poured like oil on to the fire of their minds; and perhaps some among the superior creatures think that exclusiveness and F. F.ism may be bought a little too dearly, and that human nature counts for something if, in the code of values, being of the F. F.'s counts for more. That young girl who turned her back straight on her natural comrade in the first days of their invasion, now looks wonderfully inclined to speak to her and "make friends." The exile is the prettier of the two, the better dressed, and incomparably the better bred; but then she is not an F. F., she is only a banished Peri; so of what good are her sweetness, her prettiness, her fresh little girlish frocks, her nice kind ways, her amiability altogether? Her mother has been all the world over and can tell you long and strangely interesting stories of China and Japan, of roughing it here and queening it there. Her father has a voice that would have made his fortune on the stage had he chosen to take up Mario's dropped mantle. But to what good? They are not F. F.'s; they have not a coronet about them, nor a title, nor even great wealth. They are