

men as amongst sailors, either individually or generally, the excavator being usually content with a ring round his finger, or his initials in very rude characters, though if the operator is an artist, or aspires to that position, an anchor or a heart may be attempted. Gunpowder is the substance most frequently used by these people as a pigment, the resulting stain being a bluish black, and very permanent.

It is a surprising fact, that among that portion of the population who obtain a livelihood by helping themselves to goods belonging to others, tattooing is a very common practice. For the sake of their own safety, we should suppose such men would carefully avoid marking their bodies in any way that would help their identification; but criminal statistics show us that the contrary is the fact, and that they often perversely disfigure themselves by tattooed pictures which remain on them during life. Immediately on the conviction of any person, a full description of marks upon any part of his body, however minute, is duly entered in a "Register;" so that should the delinquent at any future time be "wanted," an accurate and graphic portrait of him can be circulated throughout the country; and cases are not rare where, although height, complexion, whiskers, hair, and general appearance might cause suspicion to fall upon a man without being sufficient evidence on which to arrest him, "tattoo mark on right arm—small anchor, with F. G. below," or some other equally decisive symbol has settled the matter, and led to the apprehension of the party.

Undoubtedly, the most interesting case of tattooing which has engaged the attention of the public in modern times, is that arising out of the trial of the claimant of the Titchborne estates. With the merits of that case we have not at present to deal; but the importance attached to these marks has caused public attention to be drawn to this subject in a much stronger degree than is usual. Most men have been at some period or other of their lives—perhaps most frequently at school—witnesses of, or participants in, some case of juvenile tattooing; but how few think of the important bearing these marks may have on the after-life of the person so operated upon!—*Cassell's*.

UG.

Before Britannia ruled the waves Britons were slaves more frequently than not. The feudal lords kept them to fill vile offices; so they were little better off than the clerk of modern days. Their subjugation did not improve them, and a general heaviness was the characteristic of the ordinary Briton. Ug was an ordinary Briton—very ordinary; and though he is the hero of this story, it cannot be said of his features that any one was finely turned, except indeed his nose, and that was finely turned—up. His hair was black and matted; Nature had given him a great shock, and it consequently fell in disorder about his shoulders and down his back.*

This natural fell, or rather fall, permitted only the lower part of his face to be seen, and that, as has been hinted, was not much to look at; but the rest of his person, from its magnitude, was as much as the eye could conveniently take in at one time. From heel to head he measured eight spans of a thief's hand, and it took four wolves' skins to cover him according to the statute bathing regulations of Alfred (lib. 1. cap. 4. 3 yds.). He could shake a man to death; and for this and other such qualities Surgard the Dane, whose villain he was, instead of relegating him to the scullery, kept him to scour the woods, to protect the deer from wolf and poacher, and keep the game alive generally. Deep in the forest lived he, but judging by his simple exterior, few would have imagined how deep. He had built his hut in a part almost inaccessible. Broken ground and impenetrable barriers of brambles and thick undergrowth hedged it round and about in every direction. Within these barriers was a wood of closely planted firs, whose dense crests interwove in a pall, beneath which all was black and noiseless as death. There no birds sang, and save lichens and fungi nothing grew. In his hut by day and in ranging the solitary forest-paths by night he lived in perpetual gloom. So Surgard believed, and was content. But not twenty paces from his hut lay a circular space a hundred yards in diameter, softly carpeted with yielding sward and sweet thyme, and it lay open to the blue heavens. In the centre stood a colossal oak: dead. Hundreds of years before, the Druids had worshipped beneath its spreading arms, and they said it was as old as the island. It was thought that Ug still held the ancient faith of his race, and lived here to be near his sacred oak. Certain it was he guarded it with more than a beadle's tenderness. He trained sweet honeysuckles about its enormous bole; he plucked ungainly weeds from the space about it, and rooted out the aggressive offspring of the pines as soon as they appeared above ground. Such food as singing birds are fond of he laid amongst the honeysuckle; so in the morning and evening thrushes and blackbirds and many another sweet songster sang, and the sun shone down on the spot the livelong day. Ug slept with his face turned towards the oak and his hand on his knife; and very little doubt is there

* "He hadde hys hayre on hys backe instedde Of hys cheste, where ye looks ought to goe. [Syngynge] Up wyth ye shouyl," &c.

Chronicle of Ug.

about the fate that awaited the enterprising stranger who should break into this sanctuary. But intellectual curiosity being then at a discount, no old gentlemen or young ladies sought to work their way through the before-mentioned obstacles; and it was fortunate for them that they were not afflicted with the penetrating faculties of modern times. Surgard had once visited the place, and Ug had been his guide; and he led him thither by the long way, which was through the brambles, and he led him thence by the short cut, which was through the air and from the top of a cliff to its bottom. Then Surgard, though not comfortable, was satisfied, and he desired to go thither and thence no more. There was but one who found his way to the hut more than once, and Osric the son of Surgard was he. Ug had loved the lad from his infancy, although apparently with little reason; for Surgard, who delighted in the degradation of others, had cruelly set the huge Briton to perform a nursemaid's duties. He had been called up at night to hush the shrieking morsel, to light fires and warm the semolina; and as perambulators were not then invented, he had been sent to carry the child whilst still in long clothes up and down the terrace to the derisive merriment of the lazy Saxon lackeys.* But Ug, instead of hating the child, attended to its wants with tender care and solicitude, putting him in the way of becoming a healthy member of society, instead of putting him out of the way, as a less humane nurse would have done. His care was required still more when Surgard's wife, in obedience to the desires of her lord, died of a compound fracture. The time came for short-coating the little man, and Surgard commissioned Ug to find him an inexpensive suit. Remembering his own early costume, Ug sought the materials in the wood, and set about making the short clothes as short as possible. He got some wood and resinous gum, and painted a little tail-coat of blue upon Osric's little body, and in his coat of paint and a rabbit-skin for continuation, presented him to his father with joy and much pride. Later Ug taught him all he knew, and by his own example inspired the lad with courage and honesty and pity and gentleness. Some sort of pagan worship, too, he taught him, and Osric thought implicitly with Ug, until a monk taught him to know better, or worse. But the impressions he had received were never entirely effaced. Even when he was thinking of having his head shaved and wearing gray-peas in his shoes, a reverent emotion filled him as he stood before the great oak with Ug; and he seemed to hear again the spirit voices singing within it as he had heard them at a time when he was capable of believing anything.

Surgard was seated in his chair, swearing in very low Saxon at his trembling serfs who had set him there. He was a fine old Saxon, burly and red, with a fiery nose and a watery eye. He had lived not wisely but too well, laughing and quaffing and feeding in a manner rather suited to the old times than an old digestion, and now he had the fine old gout, and every indication of a noble old apoplexy coming upon him. For the last twenty years he had been carried to bed regularly at night, and from his jollity it seemed that he preferred that process to any other; but lately he had also to be carried out of it in the morning, and from his improper language on these occasions apparently it was less pleasant.

"Where's the cold baron?" roared Surgard, striking the breakfast table with the handle of his knife, when he had exhausted his low Saxon.

"The cold baron is all gone, but there's a cold friar outside," said the jester, a miserable fool, who ventured this sorry clench to divert his lord and his lord's anger from himself.

Joy beamed amongst the fat wrinkles in Surgard's face, and for once he refrained from flinging something at the jester's head, his usual manner of repaying the poor fellow's efforts to please. He ordered the friar to be brought in at once with the trouts, and in savage joy he plunged his fangs into a knuckle of ham. Breakfast was a dull meal with Surgard, who ate not because he was hungry, but simply because it was less trying to the jaws than perpetual yawning. At that period no morning paper lay upon the breakfast table to cultivate and improve the taste with special reports of murders, petty larcenies, births, deaths, marriages, and other fearful calamities; and no early post brought begging letters and bills. Occasionally a succedaneum, as in the present instance, was provided for him by Ug. Ug, as Surgard's ranger, had authority to execute the provisions of the game laws—which then were not much better than they now are—and execute also any one offending against those laws. At the rare intervals when he did slay an offender, it was his custom

* How he revenged himself on these rascals is quaintly told in the old chronicle before referred to:

"I gesse he wolde those scurvie Jakes have myghtle roughlie handled,
Hadde not that sely kyd for toe be delicatelle dandled:
Nowe thoughte hys hondes he myght not use,
his foot he colde, and soe
He goeth to one scurvie Jake and kyokes hym with hys toe.
But where he kycked hym none yknew,
though hym they dyd yseke,
Until at laste they founde hym in ye myddle of nexte weke,
Whan moche ye marvel was as Ug hys kycke hym dyd not kille,
Nathless I wot that leveller dyd make ye valet hill."

to carry the body to the hall and cast it upon the threshold. Surgard asked with the greatest regularity if there were any corpses this morning, exactly as we should inquire after letters, and he farther increased the parallel by drawing conclusions from the external appearance of the body as to its internal nature.

With the trouts came the holy defunct. Then the unhappy jester made a bold stroke, and suggested that the fish should be removed.

"Do nothing of the kind," said Surgard, laying violent hands on the dish, and turning one eye fondly on the trouts whilst the other was turned fiercely on the jester.

"Sire, pardon me," said the jester. "I thought you would prefer one course at a time."

Surgard threw another angry glance at the poor creature, and accompanied it with a black-jack. When he had recovered his equanimity he said, "This, if I may judge by the length of his petticoat, is a priest; and this," he continued, resting his foot on the body's chest, "if I may judge by its size, is an abbot's. Ah, me! since the times of my honest old grandfather,* these varlets have had everything their own way—except my venison, and hem me! they shan't have that. I see nothing but ruin for poor old England now there's a prince heir to the throne who knows his letters."† His philosophical reflections were cut short by the appearance on the table of a smoking pasty, and to that he immediately devoted his entire attention. It was a delicious preparation, and the aroma pervading the hall deeply affected the hungry dependents. But far more wonderful was its influence upon the abbot. Slowly that holy man raised his hand, and laying it upon that part of his body which contained his digestive apparatus—it is necessary to be carefully delicate nowadays—solemnly he rubbed it, then audibly he smacked his lips. Surgard had disposed of the meat and the gravy, and was now beginning upon the crust, when these sounds caught his ear. He turned hastily, and looking downwards met the glassy eye of the abbot. The abbot winked and again smacked his lips. The belief in spiritualism was almost as great in that unenlightened age as at present, so that Surgard's hasty impression that these manifestations were due to diabolic agency must not be imputed to ignorance on his part. He was naturally very frightened, and notwithstanding his gout, disposed himself with great celerity in a place of safety, and alternately shrieked for mercy and called upon his serfs to throttle the abbot. That unfortunate man had for a moment imagined himself in his refectory, awakening from an unpleasant dream; but how mistaken such an idea was he quickly realised by finding six or seven heavy vassals sitting upon him. He added his shrieks to those of Surgard, but a wretch stopped his part in the duet by grasping his windpipe. At this juncture there strode into the hall a youth with long golden hair that rippled over his shoulders, a yellow beard that flowed down his breast, an aquiline nose, blue eyes, pink cheeks, coral lips, white teeth, and every other requisite of a hero who might have been a study for Rembrandt, Michael Angelo, Correggio, &c. He cried "Hold!" whereupon the rascal in charge of the abbot's gullet tightened his grasp; for all loved this youth and obeyed his commands. The abbot kicked convulsively, barking Surgard's tenderest shin, and his face became iridescent, exhibiting in one moment the several colors of a very bright rainbow. The youth observed that his word was misconceived, and followed it up by another observation addressed to the rascal. "Unhand your prostrate captive," he said. Then the rascal relaxed his hold, and the abbot felt more comfortable. Osric—for the youth was he—requested the abbot to explain the state of affairs; and this he at once commenced to do, with many prefatory protestations of innocence. Surgard would have put an end to these protestations and the abbot at once and the same time; but Osric insisted upon the poor man having a fair hearing, and a horn of water to clear his throat withal. The abbot then declared that he had not received his wound from Ug the ranger; and to prove that what he said was the truth and no lie, he demanded that he and the ranger might be brought face to face. "So shall it be," said Surgard; "and if their accounts disagree, we'll have the ropes up, and they shall fight it out in the hall before me." This was the method of settling disagreements in those ancient times. The abbot smiled with the consciousness of innocence, and Surgard frowned with the consciousness that he should lose his sport if the abbot were innocent. Osric, whose humanity exceeded his selfishness, put back in his study with a sigh the current number of Alfred's serial ("De Gustibus non Disputandum; or the inexplicable Lichens botanically considered"), which had been his study that morning, and then walked off to the wood for Ug. When he was out of sight Surgard, who now feared he might lose the abbot, thus addressed his prisoner:

"Abbot, thou canst not deny that thou hast had a fair hearing"—the abbot bowed low—"and we have listened to thy prayer for mercy." Then the abbot replied meekly: "Full well I know it, sire. Tell me how I can repay thee for thy goodness." "I will," returned Surgard. "Prepare as quickly as you can and as quietly as possible for death." "Death!" echoed the abbot incredulously.

* If the very apocryphal genealogical tree could be trusted, the old gentleman was no better than his grandson.
† Alfred at this time was at a grammar school.

"Ay, death, abbot," Surgard said; and then with some bitterness continued: "I grieve to see this want of gratitude in thee. This hesitation ill becomes the recipient of so much grace. Weeks and weeks have I spent in solitary anguish, unalleviated by one single delight; and now at this moment, when thou hast the power to afford me five minutes' amusement, thou—grudging niggard that thou art—thou fain wouldst birk me. Oh, this is gruesome!" A cloud appeared to traverse his brow; then addressing a vassal rather in sorrow than in anger, he said, "Bring hither the brands and the hooks; we must hamstring him and put his eyes out—first."

Whilst the minions were carefully collecting these simple yet ingenious contrivances of the age, the abbot implored the assistance of his patron saint; but when the brands were heated red, and miraculous intervention appeared less probable than the loss of his eyesight, he dismissed the saint from his thoughts with a hearty curse, and set his wits to work to supply spiritual deficiency. Presently he said, "Saxon, my heart is charged with pity for thy loneliness, and I grieve to think I may soon cease to be able to offer thee a solace and a comfort, and that which should relieve thee of half thy pains."

Surgard had been more than once the victim of charlatans and quack leeches, and this was why he placed his finger beside his nose and replied to the abbot with a knowing wink.

"No, you don't Old-Parr-me."

"I prate not of boluses," returned the abbot, with an accent of scorn. "I allude to a lovely maiden who might nurse thee in thine infirmity. Thy wife could not object to thy adopting her as a daughter."

"I have no wife," said Surgard cheerfully.

"So much the better," responded the abbot, and added to himself, "for her." Then continued aloud, "There will be no matrimonial diversity of opinion upon the matter."

"How old may this maiden be?"

"Three score and ten."

"What! I'll teach thee to put thy scurvy jests upon me. Clap the irons—"

"I said," interrupted the abbot, "three score and ten; and so she may be if she's spared. At present she is sixteen—and a study for Rubens."

"Rubens be smothered! Who is she, and where does she live? Out with it, and don't let the irons get too cold, there's a good fellow!"

"She hath a voice like to a bird."

"Who is she? I have hunted the country round, yet know I of no such beauty."

"She hath eyes like a fawn's, and she is as supple and like—"

"Where is she?"

"Her cheek is soft and as white as curds of new milk."

Thus, by artful evasions and adroit wiles, did the sagacious abbot succeed in averting the execution of Surgard's barbarous sentence. Ingeniously he excited the Saxon's curiosity, and skillfully he maintained the interest, until the arrival of Osric with Ug allowed him to relax his exertions. When Ug beheld the abbot, a keen observer might have seen him give a start of surprise; but as the keen observer was not born until the time of G. P. R. James, this queer start of Ug's was unnoticed. Being questioned by Osric, he affirmed the abbot's assertions, and declared that never before had he set eyes of hands on him. Then the abbot told how that, whilst meditating in the wood, he had been led to stray from the path by hearing of sweet sounds; and how he saw a hooded monk wandering along with a staff in one hand, but which was worse, a maiden's hand in the other. The maiden was exceedingly lovely, and sang so ravishingly that the nightingales were silent, learning how to sing; and he told how he stepped forward to upbraid the monk, and take the maiden to the lady abbess; and how the monk had struck him down, and the maiden and everything vanished from his sight, and he knew of nothing until the fragrance of the venison partly revived him.

Surgard commanded Ug to seek and to find the monk and the maiden, and to bring them before him. And Ug returned to the woods. Pending the discovery the abbot was confined to the dampest cellar in the establishment, on a diet of lentils and water. Thus Surgard made him fast in two ways, as the jester said. With piteous groans, fat toads, and an unseen swarm of many-legged crawling things the abbot passed a miserable existence, until once more he was brought before Surgard. Ug was standing aloof, with knitted brows in addition to his customary skins.

"Wretch," said Surgard, addressing the abbot; "thy tale is false. Art thou prepared for death?"

The abbot was not prepared for death, but he was for this, and thus he replied: "Sire, who says I'm false himself is false to thee. Trust not the tale of yon hulking catiff; poitroon is written in his face."

Surgard inspected his face with some curiosity, and for the first time wished he knew his letters.

"Yon ranger, fearing for his own safety, hath avoided rather than sought the dread monk."

Ug would have proved his courage upon the spot; but Surgard, having a plan in which the abbot's existence was concerned, forbade the ranger to tear him to pieces, and with a malicious smile he said to the abbot, "Since thou hast reason to suspect Ug of cowardice, lead thyself shall accompany him this night, lead him to where the monk appeared, and if he evades the contest, bring him back to me dead or alive."

The fat abbot quaked like a blanc-mange.