

The Toll-Gate System.

The toll gate or bar, like many other of our institutions, was imported from England. It was introduced into this country at the very time when there was a great outcry against it in the country where it originated. In the year 1346, it is said Edward III. gave authority to some London capitalists to levy tolls on all carriages, wagons, and other vehicles passing on Gray's Inn lane, in consideration of their keeping the thoroughfare in good condition for travel. From this beginning the toll-gate system gradually extended over all England, and in the course of time through most parts of Scotland and Ireland. In the latter country almost all the ancient roads passed under the control of persons who were authorized to collect toll in consideration of their keeping them in passable shape. These persons having obtained their franchise exercised great care in collecting tolls, but often neglected to take proper care of the roads. It was often stated that more persons were employed in collecting toll than in doing work on the roads for riding over which a fee was demanded.

The first open revolt against toll roads was in Wales in the year 1843. A large association of people was organized, who called themselves Rebeccaes in allusion to the verse in the bible which promises to the seed of Rebecca that "they shall possess the gate of them that hate them." They refused to pay toll, rendered the toll-gatherers obnoxious, and demolished the toll-gates and the buildings occupied by the officials. The movement partook of the nature of religious fanaticism. The association was completely successful in causing all the toll gates and bars to be removed. The movement then extended into the Isle of Man and Ireland. The agitation commenced in the south of Ireland in the year 1850 and extended as far as Dublin in 1857. It was found that towns flourished as the roads leading to them were made free. During the year last mentioned an act was passed by parliament abolishing all toll-gates in every part of Ireland. It is reported that the roads in the island have been gradually improving since that time. In 1867 an "Anti-Toll Association" was formed in London, which succeeded in freeing the suburbs of the city from more than a hundred and fifty toll-gates. The movement against toll-roads is now extending into every part of England and Scotland. The introduction and general use of the bicycle is said to have exerted a most important influence in the abolition of toll-gates. The riders think it is rare fun to go past the gatekeeper without stopping to pay toll. They come up so noiselessly and quickly that they are not noticed till they are in the act of passing. Many people now object to living in a part of the country where tolls are exacted for riding over the only roads that connect large towns.

The wastefulness of the turnpike system has been a matter for parliamentary investigation. According to the census of 1881, there were about six thousand persons employed as gatekeepers in England and Scotland. The support of them and their families, estimated to be thirty thousand in all, naturally absorbed a large percentage of the revenue levied on the public. Besides the toll collectors there were numerous officials who drew large salaries. The time lost by travelers in being obliged to stop to pay toll, especially when it was necessary to make change, was considerable. The turnpike system appears to be doomed in Great Britain. No new charters are being granted, and measures are being adopted to render all the roads free. It is somewhat singular that there is not a well organized opposition to toll-gates in this country.

Cowboy Fun.

"I shall never forget an experience of mine in Montana a little over two years ago," said Brakeman Schultz of the Northern Pacific. "There were Andrews, the conductor, Wylie, the engineer, Colby, the fireman, and myself running No. 3 passenger on the Montana division, and one night about dusk we were getting out of Miles City when a red light was seen by the engineer, and he stopped the train. Just as it stopped about a dozen cowboys, togged up in full uniform each with a brace of revolvers in his belt got into the coaches while a few more guarded the engine. I knew trouble was coming as soon as I saw them get on, and I took a seat among the passengers. The conductor did not appear at first to realize that anything was wrong, but went to the forward part of the coach, when half a dozen of the buckskin-clad boys grabbed him and set him upon the coal box. He protested, but the boys paid no attention other than to tell him not to move a finger, as they were going to shoot the heels of his boots off. I rather enjoyed the fun, though I lay mighty close, fearing that they would notice me, but they didn't before the conductor was shot the heels of his boots. He was white as a snow flake, but he held up bravely, fearing a mis-calculated shot. Then they caught me and tied me and a passenger back to back and set us over a seat and then commenced botting among themselves which would pull the other over. The stakes were put up and then two of them got prongs and began touching us up with them. The fellow I had pitted against me was a Swede, and neither of us had any show to pull the other over; then I resorted to a stratagem, and when they gave the Swede a prong and he jumped about a foot I pulled hard, and he came flying over the seat and went so far over that he near broke my back. We were loosened then, and they took the Swede's boots off and stood him on his head, and then played the bastinado on the soles of his feet. Well, you'd die laughing to hear that poor fellow bellow, entreat, pray, and cuss these cowboys, and although my legs were smarting from some dances I got I just roared. After they had done enough mischief they shot out the lights and left the train.

HOME DECORATION.

If we surround ourselves in our daily lives with beautiful objects, they all tend to influence the mind for good and create a love for all that is beautiful and true in form and color.

Linen shams are liked when a cluster of flowers is embroidered in the centre, an insertion of open embroidery outlining them and a frill to match added; through this open insertion is drawn a satin ribbon about an inch wide, which by its careful arrangement is made to look like tiny satin puffs set in at regular intervals.

An elegant screen panel has a peacock embroidered on yellow satin; the brilliancy and beauty of the plumage is faithfully portrayed in filofloss.

Pretty hand-bags are noted with string cut-glass beads in black or dark red.

Squares of plush in imitation of crazy patchwork are among the late products in the fancy work world.

Blotting paper blue is used in combination with light coffee brown with charming effect.

A lovely sofa pillow is of seal brown velvet, with a bunch of nasturtium flowers in all shades from light yellow to deep brown, embroidered in fine chenille, the cushion is edged with a frill of Valenciennes lace, while a thick ruche of loops of yellow satin ribbon is at one corner and a large square bow of the same colored ribbon at the opposite one.

Water filters of Doulton ware are now considered an essential and ornamental addition to the sideboard.

Button-hole insertion is very much liked for bed linen, owing particularly to its extremely durable qualities.

Carved wood mantels should not have lambrequins; a scarf of colored silk is sometimes used, or if preferred a very good effect is obtained by placing pieces of soft silk of any bright color, about one yard in length, under a vase or any large ornament which may be liked on the mantel.

A dining-room, elegantly fitted up in Persian coloring, has the top of the wainscoting bordered with Japanese fans.

Tapestry has always been an expensive luxury, and therefore, although its manufacture can be traced back to remote antiquity, its use has always been limited; as a material for furniture upholstery, nothing could be more elegant than this rich textile.

Silk-mending is such pretty work that many ladies make an accomplishment of it, and filocelle appears at the right juncture, as yarn is too coarse and heavy; a pair of mittens or hosiery darned with the filocelle silk can be so neatly repaired that it is difficult to find the worn places.

Many of the five o'clock tea tables have three tiers of shelves, one above the other.

The red metal is growing in demand for articles of table service; the warm red hue and beautiful polish make it an additional beauty to a handsomely decorated table; tea urns are particularly attractive in this ware; coffee urns, crumb trays and small waiters may also be procured in very unique designs.

A Man of Retentive Memory.

James Crichton, a celebrated Scotchman, was noted for many marvellous qualifications. He is believed to have been born in the year 1590. His father was Lord Advocate of Scotland, and resided at Edilock, in Perthshire. He finished his education in the University of St. Andrew's. There can be no doubt of his extraordinary acquirements, or that he had excellent instructors in every branch of learning. By the time he was twenty he was able to speak and write no fewer than ten different languages, and had attained an astonishing proficiency in the accomplishments of fencing, riding, dancing, singing and playing upon musical instruments. As soon as his education was finished he set out upon his travels, and first arrived at Paris. Conscious of the superiority of his attainments and eager to display them to the world, he affixed on the gate of the College of Navarre a public challenge to all the celebrated men of Paris to dispute with him on that day six weeks upon any subject connected with the arts and sciences, and in any of twelve languages—Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, English, Spanish, Dutch, Flemish and Sclavonian. No fewer than four Doctors of the Church and fifty masters in different sciences prepared to enter the lists against him. On the day appointed three thousand auditors are said to have been present, and after a disputation of nine hours with his various opponents he proved himself superior to them all. At length the president rose from his seat, and, after highly extolling him for his many rare and excellent qualities, gave him a diamond ring and a purse full of gold in testimony of the favor and approbation of the College. So little had Crichton been fatigued with this dispute that on the ensuing day he attended a tilting match at the Louvre, and in the presence of some of the Princes of the French Court carried away the ring fifteen times successively, and broke fifteen spears in striking a mark called the Saracen. In the university of Padua, which was then in the highest reputation, Crichton engaged in another literary contest. He began with an extemporaneous poem in praise of the place and of his auditors; and after having disputed six hours with the most celebrated professors, whom he foiled on every subject, he concluded with an unprepared poem in commendation of ignorance, which was conducted with such ingenuity and elegance as to have astonished all his hearers. He boasted of a retentive memory that it was as requisite to great proficiency, either in science or literature, as intense application.

THE CITY OF THE SUN.

What Life was Like in the Cashmere Capital, Now Destroyed by Earthquake.

Serinagar, or literally Surgia Nagar, the City of the Sun, is the capital of the beautiful and romantic valley of Cashmere one of the most charming spots in the whole earth. It is some seven years ago that in my wanderings I visited this happy valley. A lonely march of about one hundred miles along the banks of the Jhelum River, the ancient Hydaspes, brought me to the smooth waters of the Cashmere Lake. Here I hired a boat covered with matting, and so arranged that the stern of the boat formed a cooking kitchen, both for the crew and passenger. My crew consisted of a full-grown man, an undergrown boy, an old woman, two small children, and a young mother and a plump baby, took their turn at the oars and towing rope, and I managed to get along at the rate of two miles an hour.

It was a clear morning, and beautiful beyond description was the panoramic view as we wound along the river in its circular course. All around the country was rich with verdure. Rising at a distance were the snowy ranges of the Himalaya Mountains, many of them as much as 13,000 feet above the sea level. To quote the words of the traveller Vigne: "Softness mantling over the sublime, snugness generally elsewhere incompatible with extent, are the prevailing characteristics of the scenery of Cashmere." In the centre of this lovely scenery is the City of the Sun, which was destroyed by an earthquake recently.

Serinagar is a considerable city of some 150,000 inhabitants, of whom 20,000 are Hindus and the remainder Mohammedans. The houses are built entirely of wood, and are usually three stories high. The streets are narrow and dirty. The people are dirtier than the streets. No pen could possibly depict the real sanitary condition of Serinagar, and consequently one regrets that as the city had to perish, it did not succumb to the purifying element of fire rather than the upheavals of an earthquake.

The city of Serinagar is on an island in the midst of the Cashmere Lake. It has seven bridges, all made of wooden logs. Some of the bridges are occupied with shops, like old London Bridge, which are extremely quaint, although unsightly structures. There are no cabs or carts or carriages in the city of Serinagar, and therefore no conveyances rumble along its narrow, dirty streets. It is a wise dispensation of Providence that wheeled conveyances have never been introduced in the capital of Cashmere, for the people would be too lazy to get out of the way.

The women of Cashmere are renowned for their beauty. They are exceedingly fair for Orientals. In former years they were seized and sold as slaves for the seraglios of Eastern monarchs. And even in modern days the Cashmere beauty has found a place in the affections of some of India's European rulers and warriors. Physically, the men are a very fine race, and the calves of the Cashmere coolie would give effect to the very best arrangement in knickerbockers. The phenological developments of both sexes is good. But still the Cashmere is a hopeless individual.

The valley of Cashmere is about 100 miles long and averages twenty-five miles in width and the surrounding mountains vary in height from 8,000 to 15,000 feet. The valley itself is about 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. It was formerly a Mohammedan country, indeed all the natives are Moslems, but at the conquest of northern India the British sold the province of Cashmere to one of the Sikh princes a Hindu, and it is now ruled by a Rajah under British protection. The nearest railway terminus is that of Rawul Pindie, where Lord Dufferin received the Ameer of Cabul. This place is some 1,100 miles from Bombay. From Rawul Pindie to the ruined city of Serinagar is about 200 miles, which can be travelled by easy stages.

A TEXAS TRAGEDY.

A Canadian one of the Victims of a Murderer's Knife.

A most brutal murder was committed at Paris, Tex., the other evening, one of the victims being Prof. J. W. Youmans, late of Picton, Ont., well known in the Maritime provinces, especially in St. John, N. B., where he lived a few years ago. Some months ago Sam. J. Holmes, of Paris, separated from his wife, Mrs. Holmes taking in boarders, among whom was Prof. Youmans. Last night Holmes entered his wife's residence, and commenced a murderous assault on her with a bowie knife. Her screams brought her sister, Mrs. Tighe, and Prof. Youmans to the scene. As Professor Youmans entered the room Holmes sprang from the prostrate body of his wife and attacked him, stabbing him several times, killing him instantly. The murderer then turned upon his sister-in-law, Mrs. Tighe, and tabbed her in the chest and arms, inflicting horrible wounds, from which she died the following morning without recovering consciousness.

The outcries of the victims aroused the neighbors and the murderer fled. Mrs. Holmes was found lying upon a bed bathed in blood. She was conscious, but crazed with fear and pain, and dying from the terrible wounds. Upon the floor lay Mrs. Tighe and the body of Youmans. The room presented the appearance of a slaughterpen. The other day Holmes, who is a powerful man, was captured by a posse after a desperate struggle, and when overpowered attempted to commit suicide by swallowing a large dose of morphine. An emetic saved his life and he now lies heavily manacled in prison.

Hyperbole: Auctioneer (selling toy property)—"Why, gentlemen, the very atmosphere's worth the money."

Who Betrayed Khartoum?

Sir Wilfred Lawson asserts that the agent who betrayed Khartoum was not the traitor Farsj Pasha, but a rather honorable Egyptian, who had every reason to hate the British and try to the utmost of his power to thwart their designs. The statement of Mr. Blunt is interesting at any rate. It falls, it is very cleverly concocted; if true, it throws a rather lurid side-light on British recititude and justice with regard to interference in Egyptian affairs. Mr. Blunt writes: "I have ascertained within the last few weeks that the principal agent in the surrender of the city was not Farsj Pasha, as originally stated, but a certain civilian exile from Egypt, who had acted at one time under Arabi as secretary of the Ministry of Marine. I know the history of this man well, I can vouch for its accuracy, as I often heard it at Cairo when I was there. Four years or so ago Awwam was an honest and zealous employe in the Cadastral Survey under Sir Auckland Colvin—a service which of all others under the Control was the most inefficient, and is now acknowledged to have been so. Awwam, provoked at the waste and mismanagement one day had the temerity to draw up a memorandum of what he knew and send it to his chief. The answer was his dismissal. He then appealed to the native press—for there was some liberty in those days—and his grievance made him a hero; and when Arabi came to power he gave him this place as Secretary, which he held at Alexandria down to the bombardment. I never heard of his taking any prominent part in the politics of that eventful time, but on Sir Auckland Colvin's landing he was among the first persons arrested. Lord Charles Beresford tried him by one of his courts-martial and found him guilty of exciting to rebellion, or some such charge; he was handed over to the Circassian tender mercies and after seventy-four days in irons in the terrible Borgho prison, he was exiled to Khartoum. He was clearly a political prisoner if ever there was one; and when Lord Dufferin promised him the amnesty at the compromise of Arabi's trial, I wrote to him recommending Awwam's case to his special attention, and I have his answer, with a memorandum, curiously enough, by the very Sir Charles Wilson who was afterwards to reap such bitter disappointment at his hands. But Lord Dufferin declined to interfere, and Awwam was left at Khartoum to his revenge. On the 26th of January it was he who, with the English again at its gates, negotiated its surrender to its Arab deliverer."

An Editor's Resource.

A New York paper says that England can boast one editor, at least, who might be trusted to run a country paper in the United States. In his youth Sir Richard Phillips edited and published a paper at Leicester, called the *Herald*. One day an article appeared in it, headed, "Dutch Mail," and added to it was an announcement that it had arrived too late for translation, and so had been "set up," printed in the original.

This wondrous article drove half of England crazy, and for years the best Dutch scholars squabbled and pored over it without being able to arrive at any idea of what it meant. This famous "Dutch Mail" was in reality merely a column of "pl." The story Sir Richard tells of the particular "pl" he had a whole hand in, is this:

"One evening, before one of our publications, my men and a boy overturned two or three columns of the paper in type. We had to get ready in some way, for the coaches, which, at four o'clock in the morning, required four or five hundred papers. After every exertion, we were short nearly a column; but there stood on the galleys a tempting column of pl. It suddenly struck me that this might be thought Dutch. I made up the column, overcame the scruples of the foreman and so away the country edition went, with its philological puzzle, to worry the honest agricultural reader's head. There was plenty of time to set up a column of plain English for the local edition."

Sir Richard tells of one man, whom he met in Nottingham, who for thirty-four years preserved a copy of the Leicester *Herald*, hoping that some day the letter would be explained.

"Blue Blood."

The term blue blood, from the Spanish phrase *sangre azul*, is much used without a very clear idea of its signification. Its real meaning is—"not that the blood itself is blue (excepting that all venous blood has a bluish tinge)—but that the persons or class to whom the term is applied have skins as white and transparent as the veins show blue through them, and this is taken as a certain indication that the class or person thus designated is without an admixture of races. Anyone who has traveled in Spanish-American countries, or in Spain, where the term originated, would see at once its applicability. The descendants of the Gothic conquerors of Spain retain to this day the characteristics of their ancestors—the white, transparent skin, blue eyes, and auburn or tawny hair, and their veins show blue through their cuticle; but in case of an admixture of African or Moorish blood, the blue blood (veins) gradually disappear, until in a case of great preponderance of the latter races the veins show merely as ridges. Tourists in Mexico will notice this peculiarity in all Mexican cities, as well as in the haciendas throughout that country, on account of the great admixture of Indian (Aztec, Toltec, and Tlascalan) blood in the population, and everywhere they will find that the people whose veins show blue through the skin are the ruling classes.

A member of the London Meteorological Society has invented an instrument, called the anemograph, which is operated by electricity, and keeps a record on paper of the direction and velocity of the wind.

A HORRIBLE SIGHT.

Witnessed by an Englishman in the Canadian Northwest.

In a new book entitled "Life and labor in the far, far West," written by W. Burnaby, occurs the following account of a scene witnessed by him in the Canadian Northwest. It is a description of the punishment inflicted upon an Indian woman who had committed a grievous sin, probably adultery. The author says:—(On entering inside the wall of poplar trees and twigs, I saw a squaw kneeling in front of the pole. I told the interpreter to find out what she had done, but he either could not learn, or, as I suspect, would not tell me. It was, however, plain she had committed some dreadful misdeed, and she was now getting clear from her sin. She had on her face a mingled expression of devotion and remorse. Rarely have I seen a human figure with such an air of fervency around and living through every line and every (the slightest) movement. The priest, or medicine man, was pouring forth a long oration, and every time he stopped the pom-pom went, all pleased with what he said. After a time a tall Indian, with a hooked nose and an expression which reminded me of the third Napoleon, entered. He was entirely naked but for a hip-cloth he wore. He was a magnificently-built man and his eye burned like a live coal. He took his place in the centre right in front of the squaw in quite a theatrical manner, and deliberately commenced to sharpen a dirk-like knife on a stone which he held in his left hand. The squaw, without a tremor, without a motion or hint of fear, looked on. After a few moments the chief medicine man took a piece of colored cotton, put it into some ashes from the medicine fire, and then the executioner in a most solemn manner took a needle, and raised the skin on the woman's arm up from the point where vaccination is usually imparted. He passed the needle through the skin of her shoulder, and by great force raised it up; then with a knife, which was certainly very blunt he hacked off the piece of skin. This piece of skin he put in the piece of cotton in which the medicine man had placed ashes from the medicine fire. He then went around to the other arm, and performed a like operation. The piece of flesh taken from the left arm was also placed in the piece of cotton, which was sanctified by ashes from the medicine fire. While this was being done a silence in which the fall of a feather could have been heard was observed. I noticed that the medicine man and the executioner were very careful not to touch with their fingers either piece of flesh. Taking the two pieces of flesh and the sacred ashes from the medicine fire, the medicine man held it over the fire with a long oration. Meanwhile the woman stood up and threw her head against the pole and wept piteously. The mystery which, for me, rested on her crime added to the pathos of the situation; while the really dignified bearing of the medicine man, the dusky crowd round, and the city of teepees near imposed on the imagination. The man I have called the executioner looked, as I thought, sternly on the woman as she wept. I have seen Miss Bateman in "Lash," Leonide Leblanc in "Frou Frou," Miss Helen Faucit in the "Strangers," and have wept at her Antigone; but on no stage have I seen a more pathetic, a more heartrending picture than that desolate savage woman, her head against that pole, weeping. When the piece of cotton containing the flesh was burnt, and the medicine man's oration was over, the squaw hurried out of the building. On going outside some five minutes afterwards I saw her dressed up in all the colors of the rainbow, painted profusely, and with a face full of joy, as if she had been cleared from some dreadful crime, and felt that exhilaration Roman Catholics tell they feel when leaving the confessional after the priest has said "Absolve te." What was her crime? Was the executioner her husband?

Mrs. Gladstone.

Mrs. Gladstone is the elderly incarnation of guileless naivette, the matronly essence of impulsive simplicity. She is to appearance all artlessness. I have heard persons who, I think, ought to know better, speak disparagingly of Mrs. Gladstone's sagacity because of those little peculiarities. Believe me, they make a great mistake or they commit a great injustice. Mrs. Gladstone is, in her way, one of the cleverest women living. * * At the very worst she can be credited only with a few small inaptitudes which, if they really deserve that name, are in perfectly artistic keeping with her character. I have heard of ladies and gentlemen, very astute in their own estimate of themselves, who have endeavored to extract early knowledge of public matters from Mrs. Gladstone; I have never heard of one who succeeded; and her aplomb is as remarkable as her discretion. Her is an instance. Two years ago, when Mr. W. E. Forster had resigned his portfolio in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, he was naturally anxious to hear how the Prime Minister would speak of the incident in the House of Commons, and not less naturally anxious to listen without being himself observed. He therefore did not take his ordinary place in the body of that assembly, but made his way into the ladies' cage, or rather that portion of it which is set apart for the lady friends of the wife of the speaker. Directly he had entered he perceived the sole occupant of the department was no less a person than Mrs. Gladstone herself. She was the one person whom he would have avoided seeing. He felt a little discomposed, and was proceeding to evince his discomposure in the rugged, spasmodic way peculiar to that flower of Quaker subtlety. But Mrs. Gladstone was perfectly at her ease. She held up her finger at him, and, shaking her head with an air of gentle reproval, muttered in a low voice, "Naughty! naughty!"