

THE HISTORY OF THE ROD



WILLIAM M. COOPER

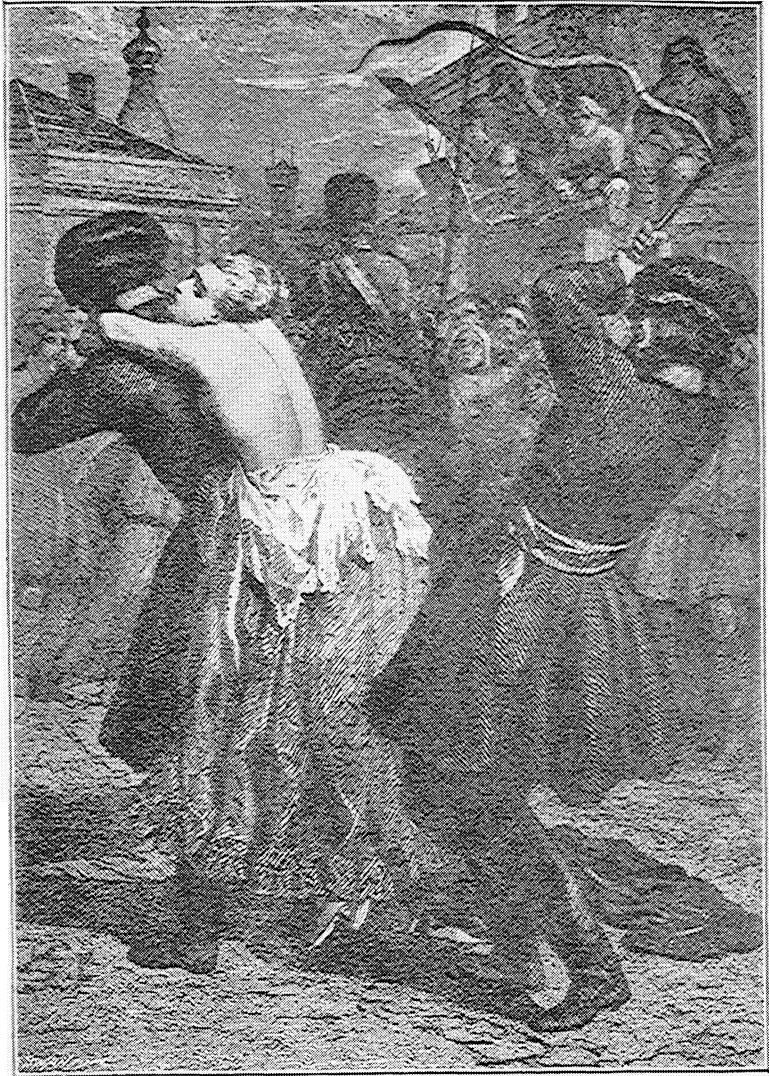
THE HISTORY OF THE ROD

The line between pain and pleasure is as thin as the tail of a whip, and this classic work is the definitive history of flagellation through the ages. As it shows, flagellation is much more than a punishment - it is also intimately tied to discipline and eroticism, has a romantic and even comic side, and has also been used for medical purposes. No one is above the bite of the birch or rod - convent nuns were chastised severely, queens have been flogged, and even favourites of the sultan have had to endure the whip in the great seraglios. The author deals in great detail with whipping in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, the favourite parts of the body for whipping, flagellation and discipline in monasteries and convents, whipping in prisons, the rod in Russia, flagellation in America, whipping in Europe and the Far East, the flogging of slaves, military flogging, school punishments and the birch in the boudoir, all enlivened with colourful anecdotes. There is a chapter on the instruments of whipping, a selection of ribald and erotic poems on whipping, a section on eccentric forms of whipping such as that practised on prostitutes, many detailed line drawings, descriptive accounts and a full index. The work shows the fundamental place whipping has always played in human history, both publicly and in private, and continues to play today.

The late Rev **WILLIAM M. COOPER** was an expert on the history of flagellation and discipline.

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THE BEAUTIFUL MADAME LAPUCHIN.
Knouted by Order of Elizabeth, Empress of Russia.

THE HISTORY OF THE ROD

FLAGELLATION AND THE FLAGELLANTS IN ALL
COUNTRIES FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE
PRESENT TIME

WILLIAM M. COOPER



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PRELIMINARY.

THE writer, now that his work is concluded, is not inclined to dwell on the difficulties under which he laboured in the preparation of the present volume. Although this History of the Rod may be regarded as "a compilation," still the task required more than an ordinary expenditure of time and trouble. The facts and anecdotes brought together in the following pages were found to be very widely scattered, and frequently accompanied by details which on no possible pretence could now be openly published—

*Est et fidei tuta silentio
Merces.*

—HOR.

Indeed, it would have been simply impossible to have given the chronicle of Conventual and Monastic Discipline entire: the coarseness, the brutality, the refined cruelty often exercised, were of a character so objectionable, that no good end could have been accomplished by giving every circumstance and every detail narrated in these old records. The writer's aim has been to lay before the student interested in the progress of civilisation as full an account of the use of the Rod as propriety on the one hand and as history on the other demanded.

No apology is offered for what is recorded in this book: it was neither compiled for the prurient nor the prudish, the writer's sole aim being to give (to the best of his ability) a true History of the Rod as an instrument for correctional purposes in the Church, the State, and the Family.

W. M. C

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is recorded of an old-fashioned schoolmaster that in the course of fifty years he administered to his pupils nearly half-a-million canings, and a hundred and twenty-four thousand proper floggings! This pedagogue, who in the days of Solomon would have been a man after that wise king's own heart, may be taken as the type of a class of teachers who flourished "in the good old days"—rigid disciplinarians who never spared the rod nor spoiled the child. Happy schoolboys of the present day have but a faint notion of those times, or of the severities undergone at school by their fathers and grandfathers. Flagellation, except for garrotters, has gone nearly out of fashion in this country, and the birch of to-day is but the ghost of what it was a hundred years since, and the rod even of that period was only a faint shadow of the terrible whips and scourges of a much earlier age.

Nor was the Rod in early times confined to schoolboys; it had, from small beginnings, become a symbol of authority at which even bearded men

trembled, and, as any one may read, was wielded with tyrannical power by the kings and conquerors of antiquity; for the practice of flagellating the human body dates from the earliest ages of mankind, and has been chronicled by the most ancient authors. Without doubt, the destinies of mankind have been greatly influenced by the scourge, and the curiosities of flagellation form an interesting chapter in the progress of human civilization.

Records of various kinds of corporal chastisement inflicted during the most remote pagan ages are still extant, the heathens having made a most industrious use of the scourge, frequently practising with relentless severity on the backs of their unfortunate captives. The extended use of the whip, however, is due to more Christian times. The ancient Persians were familiar with the Rod: the nobles of the kingdom even were not spared when flagellations were going the round, whilst a satirical custom prevailed then, as it does even yet in some eastern countries, of the punished having to return grateful thanks for the punishment—an observance of etiquette which at a not very remote period, we believe, was insisted upon by hard-hearted lady teachers—

“Flick-em, flap-em, over the knee,
Say, Thank you, good dame, for whipping of me.”

After a time, in Persia, nobles were spared the indignity of a personal application of the scourge, it being arranged in the case of such grandees that future punishments should be inflicted on their

clothes instead of their bare bodies, thus rendering the whipping in their case much pleasanter than it would otherwise have been, leading to the belief that it was at that time the proverb originated, of one law for the rich and another for the poor.

Before the foundation of Rome the whip was the daily portion of the slave, and the ancient Romans became adepts in the use of the scourge. In the satires of Juvenal, and in the writings of other authors, there are numerous examples of severe flagellations bestowed upon slaves. The judges of the period were surrounded by a variety of whips and scourges: in order to strike evil-doers with terror, they were shewn in the courts of law in profusion. These instruments of torture had each a particular name; for mild punishments there was the *ferula*, and for degrees of greater severity there were harsher instruments of correction, the severest of all being the terrible *flagellum*. The Roman judges had unlimited power over the culprits who were brought before them, while masters and mistresses held the lives of their slaves so cheap that it was no uncommon matter for some of them to be whipped to death; and, as all who are versed in the manners and customs of ancient Italy know, the retainers of a first-rate Roman household were so numerous that some of them were sure to be in disgrace. In accounts of Roman life which we have read, some unfortunate slave was generally found asking the feasting guests to intercede with the master and save him from being flogged. In

an elaborate description of Trimalchios' banquet we have an example of this. Indeed, the practice of whipping slaves was often indulged in as an excellent mode of amusing guests, either during dinner or after the feast had terminated. The ladies were, however, far more severe and ingenious in their disciplines than the men, and the waiting-maids of these fair despots led in consequence a very unpleasant life. A lady's dressing-room is said to have been as well furnished with scourges as a court of law. The Roman ladies required a perfect army of female attendants, each having a particular duty to perform connected with the house or the toilette; those performing duties in the dressing-room were made to attend their mistress in a partially nude state, in order that there should be no impediment to an immediate whipping if anything displeased the lady. One way of punishing male slaves was to suspend them by their hands to a strong beam, and attach to their feet a heavy weight, in order that they might not kick the person who flogged them. Ladies used to whip their maids while suspended to the beam, a slight difference, however, being made in the mode of suspension—these victims of the incensed fair being hung up by their hair, a piece of cruel ingenuity that has never been tried in later times, although many persons have been punished for cruelty to their servants. It is not long since a lady in Scotland was imprisoned for thirty days for slapping her servant's face! whilst another mistress who had chastised her servant-maid in the old ortho-

dox fashion, with the household taws, had to pay damages to the young woman in consequence; and we lately read, in the assize intelligence, that a straw-plait manufacturer at Luton was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for birching one of his female workers.

It would appear that at a very early period schoolmasters learned to use rods upon the backs of their disciples. There are numerous anecdotes extant of flogging schoolmasters of ancient times; and there are stories also of preceptors who were flogged by their pupils!

The greatest of all the curiosities of flagellation were those voluntary scourgings which were performed by the Spartan youths of Lacedemonia. Plutarch alludes to the whipping customs of Sparta in the character of an eye-witness. Boys delighted in being whipped for a whole day before the altar of Diana, at the annual contest of flagellations. The "gamest" boy, if we may use the word, was he who could endure the greatest number of stripes—he carried off the prize, or, at any rate, became victor in the contest. These exhibitions were conducted before the parents of the children, who eloquently exhorted their youths to bear the pain with fortitude. Priests were appointed to witness the ceremony, examine the wounds, and predict the future career of the heroes. The example of these youths raised up other sects of flagellants—philosophers who cultivated birch and used whip-cord with a zeal worthy of a better cause. In the course of

time these sects of whipping zealots began to spread (not, however, without being ridiculed) into different countries, giving rise to a great number of anecdotes connected with customs of flagellation, which will be found in the body of this work, and need not be further alluded to here than to mention that at a later date there was founded on these Spartan exhibitions the rather disgusting festival of the Lupercalia, a curious example of the kind of voluntary flagellations once so common.

It was long debated whether flagellation as a punishment or flagellation as a penance was the more ancient of the two kinds of whipping; but there need be little doubt about the matter, corporal *punishment* being as old as sin. The voluntary flagellations, no doubt, resulted in imitation of the punishment: in other words, persons had the strength of mind to punish themselves for such sins as they knew they had committed—and so this practice became in time a portion of the daily life of persons who were more devout than others. Damian, the Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, is the first historian of these voluntary flagellations, and he tells us about the extraordinary vigour with which some of the more zealous of the religious of early days used to flog themselves.

Voluntary flagellation of the kind alluded to dates from a far back period: about the fifth century of the Christian era. The progress of flagellation among the Christians was at first very slow, but, after a time, spread so rapidly as to attract the attention of

all Christendom, a large body having sprung up, who practised the art with great industry and severity "The Flagellants," as they were called, began their career in Italy, but soon extended into Germany, and even into England in a small degree; and the operators of those days used to wield the scourge as if it was a prime social enjoyment. These flagellating bodies originated in superstition, and their acts may be classed amongst the greatest of all the curiosities connected with the use of the whip. One sect of The Flagellants originated in fear of the plague, which was raging at the time, it being thought that only by severe penance could the divine wrath be turned away.

Various modifications of the system in time arose, as, for instance, in Spain, where Flagellants imparted a tone of gallantry to their discipline, by undergoing their self-inflicted punishment under windows in presence of their mistresses. Indeed, to such an extent was the practice carried that there arose persons who taught the polite art of flagellation, perhaps like the art of writing, in half-a-dozen lessons! The ladies were doubtless delighted with the homage paid to them, and rewarded youthful martyrs by lifting their veils for a brief moment. As the author of *Hudibras* says:—

"Why may not whipping have as good
A grace, performed in time and mood,
With comely movement, and by art,
Raise passion in a lady's heart?"

Private and family flagellation rapidly extended. In

the houses of the great nobility, and in the palaces of kings, flogging had become very prevalent. Stories are still extant of queens—Catherine de' Medicis is a motherly example—who, placing their maids of honour over their knees, whipped them like little children; and ladies of quality living at court, whether in the immediate suite of the Queen or not, were not exempt, when they became naughty, from chastisement of the same kind. Pages in the palaces were frequently to be found on the flogging-block—indeed, at one time, the flagellation of a page excited no notice. We read of pages who were whipped for mocking the priests of a household. Others of the King's retainers had frequently to submit to similar discipline; in fact, the oft-recurring administration of corporal punishment was a portion of the every-day life of that period. The place selected for carrying out these disciplines, in the palaces of the kings or the nobility, was the kitchen. Persons of quality, however, were not flogged there; but it was there that flagellations were administered to drunken priests, pert maid-servants, or forward pages, and where generally the lower retainers suffered chastisement. Ladies of rank and persons of condition would, in all probability, be whipped in a much more private place, where they would not be exposed to the gibes and insults of the menial servants.

There are instances on record of queens being flogged: a favourite sultana has before now been made to endure the whip, and among female slaves in the

great scraglies the birch is still very familiar. In such romances and tales as depict the manners and customs of those remote times, there may be found various anecdotes of disciplines inflicted at court. As an instance, the story of the poet Clopinel, which illustrates court life of a certain period, is elsewhere related.

Among the great people who have been flogged we find the names of more than one king.

There is another phase of flagellation equally curious, and of great antiquity—viz., those practices of discipline which were incidental to life in convents and monasteries. Some of the monkish orders were particularly severe in their discipline, and many curious stories are still extant regarding the whipping customs of these devout classes. So far back as the time of the Vestals, we have notices of the severe punishments inflicted for breaches of the rules laid down for the guidance of those virgins who tended the sacred fire. Although these young ladies were persons of great importance, it is on record that several of them were whipped. Having been previously covered over with a thin veil, they were compelled to suffer punishment in a dark room by the hands of a priest.

In convents long ago (and at present [?]), it was the rule that the punishments awarded to erring sisters should be inflicted by a woman that was elderly and severe in her nature; while the flagellations awarded to those of the sterner sex were ordained to be given

by a morose brother ; and strict rules were laid down as to the modesty with which all punishments were to be inflicted. There was, however, a time in the Church when this virtue of modesty was not so highly prized—in fact, at one period, in some of the monasteries, nakedness was held very cheap : delinquent brothers, being made to strip, were flogged, not only in the sight of their own congregation, but before the public as well ! By an act of the Constitution of the Abbey of Cluny, it was ordained that brethren guilty of certain faults should be stript naked, and be tied up and flogged in a street or public place, so that all might see them. Voluntary flagellations, or those not inflicted by the law of the Order, were, of course, inflicted at the will of the individual. Many monks and nuns have been celebrated for the immense number of blows with which they chastised themselves.

There was one priest, in particular, who, in these old times, was celebrated for his zeal in laying on the discipline. His name was Cornelius Adriansen, and he was distinguished by having his particular mode of whipping named after him, so that a Cornelian discipline meant a flagellation *supra dorsum nudum*. Another person in holy orders became at one time very notorious for his style of discipline : this was Father Girard, the trial of whom, for flagellating and otherwise abusing Miss Cadière made at the time a great noise. This *cause célèbre* was published in a folio volume, which gave full details of the doings of the supposed sorcerer.

Throughout the period which we have indicated flagellation, public and private, was as nearly as possible universal; it was in such general repute, especially with monastic bodies, that nuns were recommended to flagellate themselves before proceeding to the election of a lady superior. The instruments in use for the purposes of monastic flagellation have been various. Father Dominic used a besom (*i.e.*, a birch-rod.) Other saints have been more eccentric, and employed whatever instrument came in their way, whether the tongs or a stick. Again, some have used bunches of nettles, whilst others have preferred thistles; and one very devotional lady used a bunch of feathers. St. Bridget beat herself with a bunch of keys; and other ladies of simpler imaginations have made use of their hands.

Flagellation has its romantic and comic side, although it is quite possible that Eton and other schoolboys may fail to see any fun in birch. Schoolboys of the present day who find themselves in "the bill" have generally but a very dim idea of the humour that has at various times been associated with the Rod. In corroboration of what we assert, there is told, on another page, numerous stories connected with the house of St. Lazare, which at one period existed in Paris, known as the seminary of the good boys, and kept by certain pious monks who carried on a *roaring* trade in flagellations.

In a medical point of view, flagellation was at one time in repute; it was thought to be, if we may use

a simile, but another way of blistering the skin ; and as a remedy for certain complaints, the birch held a distinguished place. The ancients also reverted to it as a moral agent, and a remnant of this idea prevailed till a comparatively recent period, as exemplified in the flagellation of maniacs and others. The doctors held that a smart whipping re-animated the torpid circulation of the cutaneous vessels, and led to an increase of muscular energy. Physicians used to prescribe a liberal amount of slapping for some of their patients ; and there is on record an anecdote of a great lady who ordered her servants to give her physician a dose of birch of great strength, as she was under the impression that the learned gentleman was in the habit of betraying the secrets of the prison-house.

Enough is chronicled in the following pages to shew how prevalent the use of the Rod has been in all ages and in all countries. Advancing civilization has happily banished the frequent use of the scourge from among us, and it is admitted that the country does not suffer much from its absence. It is not yet "sixty years since" the birch was wielded with terrible severity both in the public and private schools of our own country, and also in the domestic circle. Masters and mistresses frequently corrected their servants, and parents their children, with the birch or the whip. Apprentices were often chastised. Mrs. Brownrigg flogged some of her girls to death, for which crime she was executed. A century ago, neither sex nor age formed a boundary to the administration of

corporal chastisement. Even grown women had to bow submissive before the Rod. Dr. Johnson tells of a lady in Leicestershire who used to birch her grown-up daughters. In Russia, flogging, although greatly on the wane, still prevails; in that country the stick and the knout form a part of the penal law. We need not wonder, therefore, that the birch is the portion of disobedient *ballet-girls*, and that ladies of quality have been occasionally flogged at the police bureau for the good of their moral health. Stories of the knout are common.

To return again to our own country, we may remind our readers of the time when criminals were flogged through the streets—a custom that may again be revived in the case of garrotters; naughty women were whipped in Bridewell, and parties of fashionables used to be made up to go witness the sight! Some ladies of rank once had the mortification—it was their own choice—to be flagellated by a milliner for theft; and it is recorded that two gentlewomen were birched for stealing caudle-cups from the Royal Palace. Long ago, too, another quaint flagellating custom was exceedingly prevalent in this country. On the occasion of an execution taking place, all the younger branches of a family were thoroughly birched, in order that they might the better recollect the awful event. Perhaps the oddest case of flagellation referring to our own country is that of a clergyman who insisted on whipping his housemaid, “after the manner of a schoolboy,” and who rushed into print to defend his conduct when it was impugned. A curious

practice also prevailed in some of our village schools: a naughty boy would be strapped down to a desk at the door, and, being partially undressed, it fell to every pupil to administer a blow to the delinquent as he or she left the school. Except at some of the large public schools of England, the rod is now seldom used, and even at Eton and Harrow it is not so often resorted to as formerly. The birch was at one time immoderately used in schools for young ladies, and naughty pupils, of all ages, had to submit, often with many humiliating ceremonies—ceremonies said to have been borrowed from the convent schools of foreign countries—to “elegant flagellation.”

In a well-known penny periodical, an attempt was made, about twelve years ago, to persuade the public that corporal chastisement was still inflicted in some of the ladies' schools of this country, but the whole story must have been a pure invention, as no one whom we have consulted seems to know a school in England where such practices are tolerated. A great controversy was lately carried on in the pages of a popular magazine about the whipping of girls. The details which were given of various punishments excited a “sensation,” and were hotly denied—it being asserted that such punishments were too immodest and brutal for the present age of refinement; but that the kind of discipline described is reviving in the domestic circle is certain, and, as it has been more than once recommended by ladies of quality, may again become fashionable. *Apropos* of the whipping

of young ladies, a girl of the period, aged seventeen, lately asked, through the columns of *Public Opinion*, if she could not raise an action of damages against her governess for having whipped her as if she were a child!

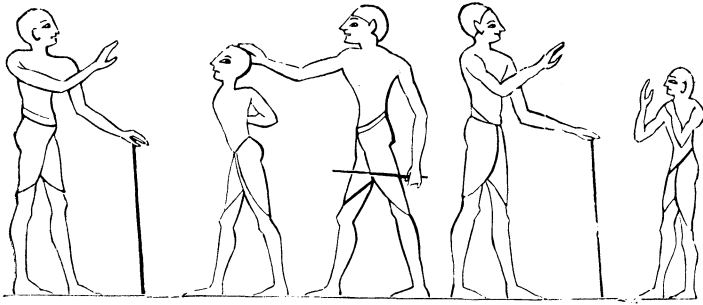
In various foreign countries the Rod is still the badge of power. In Austria soldiers are made to run the terrible gauntlet. Russia has not yet abolished the knout, and the ladies of Poland have been openly scourged by Russian soldiers! China has still the great bamboo; Turkey governs with the stick; the Siamese have their nightly birches; and in Africa there is "mumbo jumbo." Grown young ladies are still whipped in some of the American schools, and it was reserved for the Americans to make a trade of flogging, they having invented, in the days of slavery, a machine for whipping niggers!

The birch has been celebrated in poetry. Many allusions have been made to the Rod by the poets, and there are various serious, sentimental, and satirical poems—whippiads, rodiads, birchiads, &c.—extant; but, unfortunately, they are too coarse for "the general reader." The children's toy-books of forty years ago dealt largely in birch. We have preserved one of these, giving a history of two naughty boys, who never did "nothing at all." Mamma punished them at last, as is related by the poet:—

"Then down both their trousers she took,
While each stroke made them furiously squall.
'Oh, why, mamma, what are you at?'
'My dears, I'm at "nothing at all!"'"

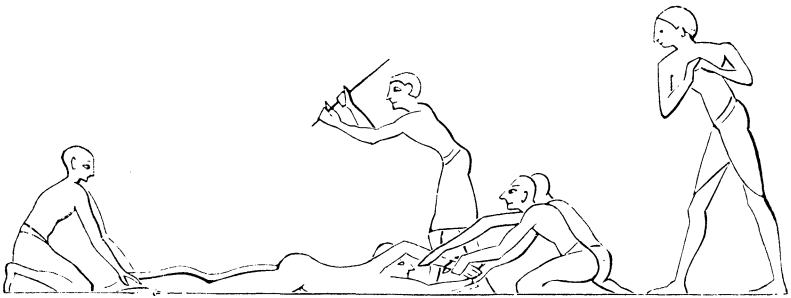
Shenstone's and Crabbe's poetical works have also numerous allusions to the punishment of the Rod ; and there are likewise poems on the subject which, although they were not considered indelicate or vulgar by our grandfathers and grandmothers, are at the present day totally unfit to be reproduced, notwithstanding some of them are very witty and well written.

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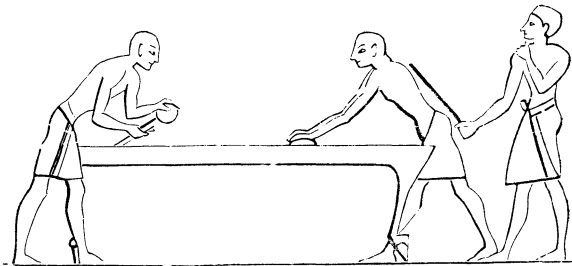
THE GENERAL USE OF THE BASTINADO.

---Beni Hassan.



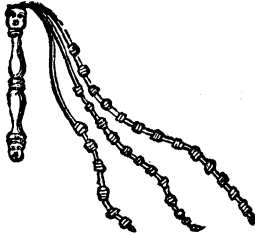
THE BODY HELD DOWN DURING PUNISHMENT.

—Beni Hassan.



LABOURERS BEATEN BY TASKMASTERS.

—Pyramids.



"HORRIBILE FLAGELLUM."—*Hor.*
From a bas relief of Cybele in the Museum
of the Capitol at Rome.



GLADIATORS FIGHTING WITH
FLAGELLA.
—From a Coin

CHAPTER I.

A LEARNED CONTROVERSY TO BEGIN WITH.

THE origin and progress of flagellation is involved in obscurity, and it is unnecessary to say that no means exist of tracing out the first whipping that was inflicted, or the name and address of him or her who administered or received it; but it may be shrewdly guessed that the population of the world would not be very numerous when the practice was instituted. We shall not venture here on an inquiry into antediluvian discipline, preferring to confine ourselves, in the meantime, to the subject in its comparatively modern aspect.

A tremendous dispute agitated the learned world at one period as to whether whipping as a penance or whipping as a punishment was first introduced. One author contended for one view of the case, and his opponent fought to establish an opposite theory. The facts related by the old controversialists are

so lost in words, and hidden in Latin quotations, or so frittered away in notes and commentaries, as to make it a task of no small difficulty to separate the corn from the chaff. Whipping, as a penance, has at any rate made its mark on language. The various methods of doing penance were at first all comprehended under the term *disciplines*; but so great was the prominence awarded to flagellation (*disciplina flagelli*, "the discipline of the whip"), that in process of time *discipline* was used to express that kind of penance alone. Indeed, in French, we find that word appropriated to designate the instrument of religious flagellation: for example, in Molière's play of "Tartuffe; or, The Hypocrite," Tartuffe says to his valet—

"Laurent, serrez ma haire avec ma discipline,
Et priez que toujours le Ciel vous illumine."

Tartuffe, ac. iii., sc. 2.

"Laurent, lock up my haircloth and *discipline*, and pray that Heaven may always enlighten you." Disciplines thus mean voluntary flagellations inflicted on themselves by penitents with scourges, whips, or rods. But the controversy need not be further alluded to than to say, that all the probabilities are in favour of "punishment" as first giving occasion for the use of the rod.

Other two points connected with flagellation that have also formed a subject of controversy, and been the theme of many writers, may be illustrated before going farther. The proper place of the body on which to inflict a discipline gave rise to great differences of opinion: some writers were in favour of bestowing the blows on the back and shoulders, which was called

“the upper discipline”—*sursum disciplina*: others, again, advocated *deorsum disciplina*, “the lower discipline,” as being the proper whipping.

According to the most learned of the controversialists, the upper discipline was highly disapproved of, because of its tendency to hurt the eyes and the breasts of the penitents; such, indeed, is the danger of wounding these sensitive parts, that at this day, when a woman is flogged in Sweden—a frequent occurrence for some offences—she is laid in a copper sheath, which fits the front part of her person with so much nicety as to leave only the hips or back exposed to the lash. A celebrated medical journal lately observed, in commenting on the flogging of a party of garotters, that heavy punishments ought to be given by instalments of ten or a dozen stripes at a time, and that a lower discipline would be, by far, the most effective as a deterrent from crime.

Father Gretzer, a very ancient disciplinarian, was much troubled in his mind as to the proper part on which to lay the stripes, and obtained the following opinion from a learned doctor:—“The vulgar opinion that lashes applied to the back are apt to hurt the eyes is not well grounded. It is true that the great loss of blood injures the brain, and consequently the eyes, which are called by some the *sprouts* of it; and these it affects by the diminution it causes of the vital heat. But there does not arise from disciplines such a great loss of blood as that the brain may thereby suffer any considerable deperdition of its heat; on the contrary, since scarifications on the back are often employed with success for the cure of disorders in the eyes, why should bad consequences to them be feared from a few

stripes? Those, therefore, alone, who are of a weakly habit of body the exercise in question can hurt, but not persons of a good constitution; and when disciplines are so moderately inflicted as to cause no loss of blood, and barely to affect the colour of the skin, no detriment certainly ought to be feared from them."

Such was the decision of an excellent physician, and to it Father Gretzer adds that he willingly and readily subscribes.

"Physicians and anatomists say," writes another author on this part of the subject of flagellation, "that the secret or open communion between all parts of the human body is such, that it is impossible to do any material and continual injury to one part without the other parts being also sooner or later affected. Hence it follows that those persons who execute disciplines upon themselves with great severity fall in process of time into serious distempers of some kind or other, so as at length to find themselves disabled from continuing those practices by which they intended to procure the improvement of their morals."

All physicians, however, do not agree with the authorities just quoted. Some have delivered different opinions concerning the harmlessness of discipline with respect to the eyes; and whether it was that the Capuchin Friars thought the advice of these latter of greatest weight, or that they intended their zeal should be unrestrained by any apprehension, they adopted the use of the lower discipline; and the generality of nuns did the same, from the like intention of securing their eyesight. "Determined thereto by the advice of able physicians and pious persons, they gave up flagellating themselves on their

shoulders, in order to belabour and slash their loins with knotted small cords and hardened rods."

There was still another point to be considered in this matter. By most of the ancient monastic rules, religious persons were forbidden to inspect any part of their naked bodies, lest such indulgence might give rise to wicked thoughts. "If such disciplines," it has been argued, "cannot be performed in secret without danger, is it prudent to execute them in the presence of witnesses?" Tertullian observes, that "Nature has made either fear or shame the attendants on every evil action. What man or woman then could, without shame, execute a lower discipline in company with other persons?" Shakespeare says—

"The chariest maid is prodigal enough
If she unmask her charms to the moon."

This amusing and very learned controversy lasted a long time, and ended, like many others, by the adherents of each system thinking their own the best. The wrangle described, naturally enough, led to another interesting inquiry, which is summarized in the next chapter for the benefit of the curious reader.

CHAPTER II.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ANOTHER CURIOUS CONTROVERSY.

DE LOLME—in reality the Abbé Boileau, brother of the poet—assures us that the part upon which mankind sits is extremely deserving of esteem. It is, in the first place, a characteristic part of humanity: it is formed by the expansion of muscles which, anatomists inform us, are proper to the human species, and exist in no other animal.

Nor do these parts confer upon man a distinction from animals that is of an honorary kind merely. Like the faculty of walking erect, which, as Ovid remarks, enables him to behold the sun or the stars, as he goes forward, it puts him in a condition to promote the liberal arts and sciences, as well as the mechanical arts and manufactures. By the power of *assiduity* it confers upon man, it is so useful to him in the study of the law, that it has been looked upon as being as good as the head itself, with which it has, in that respect, been put upon a par; and it is a common saying in the universities, that, in order to succeed in that study, a man must have an *iron head*, and *leaden posteriors*; to which they add, a *golden purse*, to buy books with.

This part of the human frame not only serves to make man learned and industrious; it contributes as

well to the beauty of the species, being itself capable of a great degree of beauty.

Without mentioning the opinions held by different savage nations, who take pains to paint and adorn that part, we know that the Greeks, who were a cultivated and polite people, entertained high notions of its beauty. They seem to have thought that it had the advantage, in that respect, of all the other parts of the human body; for, though we do not find that they ever erected altars to fine arms, fine legs, fine eyes, or even to a handsome face, yet they did that honour to the part mentioned, and expressly erected a temple to Venus, under the appellation of *Venus Callipyge*. The above temple was built, as some say, on the occasion of a quarrel that arose between two sisters, who contended which of the two was most elegantly shaped in that part of the body.

The Latins entertained the same notions as to the beauty of that part, or those parts, on which man sits as the Greeks. Horace bestows upon them the appellation of *fair*: and he declares it is as his opinion, that for a woman to be defective in this part of the body is one of the greatest blemishes she can have—a defect equal to having a flat nose or a long foot.

Among the moderns, notions of the same kind have prevailed. Rabelais, a well-known writer, La Fontaine, and the celebrated poet Rousseau, all allude to the subject; the latter, in one of his epigrams, speaks of the above-mentioned Grecian temple erected to Venus, and declares that it would have been that temple which he would have most assiduously frequented.

Other persons have thought, that, besides the above advantages, the part mentioned was, moreover,

capable of dignity, and partook of the importance of its owners. This is an opinion which the poet Scarron expressed, in a copy of verses written to a certain lady, whose husband having lately been made a duke, had thereby conferred on her the right to be seated in the Queen's assembly: "she had been given the *tabouret*" (a stool). Favourable sentiments of the kind just mentioned seem also to have been entertained by Lord Bolingbroke, whose distinguished character as a statesman, a politician, and a philosopher, render him extremely fit to be quoted in this place.

Other writers have carried their notions still farther, and have thought that the part in question was capable, not only of being beautiful, but even of being endowed with dignity and splendour. Thus, M. Pavillon, a French *bel esprit* under the reign of Louis XIV., who filled the office of King's General Advocate at Metz, was a member of the French Academy, and nephew of a bishop, wrote some verses which he inserted in the collection of his *works*, entitled, *Métamorphose du Cu d'Iris en Astre*.

On the other hand, we find that part of the body—which has been thought by some to possess so many beauties, and has accordingly become the subject of respect and admiration—has been made by others the object of scoffs, and a chosen place to insult. The prevailing vulgar practice, in cases of provocation, of threatening, or even serving, the part in question with kicks, might be alluded to, but it is better to observe generally, that among all nations it has been deemed the proper place for beatings, lashings, and slappings.

That this notion prevailed among the Romans, we are informed by passages from Plautus, and by St.

Jerome. The same practice was also adopted by the Greeks, as will be proved by the instance of the philosopher Peregrinus. And under the reign of the Emperors, when the two nations (the Greek and Roman) had, as it were, merged into one, similar notions concerning the fitness of the same part to bear verberations and insults continued to prevail. Of this we have a singular instance in the manner in which the statue of the Emperor Constantine was treated, at the time of the revolt of the town of Edessa: the inhabitants, not satisfied with pulling that statue down, in order to aggravate the insult, flagellated it on the part alluded to. Among the French, similar notions prevail. We may cite proofs of this from their language itself, in which the verb that is derived from the word by which the part here alluded to is expressed signifies of itself, and without the addition of any other word, to beat or verberate it: thus, Voltaire supposes his Princess Cunegonde to say to Candide—*Tandis qu'on vous fessoit, mon cher Candide*. From the above French word *fesser* has been again derived the noun *fessade*, signifying a verberation on the same part; the same as the word *claque*, which originally meant a slap in general, now signifies a slap on what has been called "the seat of honour." Among the Italians, the practice of verberating the same part also obtains, if we are to trust to proofs likewise derived from their language; and from the word *chiappa* they make *chiappata*, the meaning of which is the same as the French word *claque*.

We find the practice generally prevalent throughout Europe. It was certainly adopted in Denmark, and even in the court of that country, towards the latter part of the 17th century, as we are informed by Lord

Molesworth, in his "Account of Denmark." It was the custom, his lordship says, at the end of every hunting-match at court, that, in order to conclude the entertainment with as much festivity as it had begun, a proclamation was made—if any could inform against persons who had infringed the known laws of hunting, let him stand forth and accuse. As soon as the contravention was ascertained, the culprit was made to kneel down between the horns of the stag that had been hunted; two of the gentlemen removed the skirts of his coat; when the king, taking a small long wand in his hand, laid a certain number of blows, which was proportioned to the greatness of the offence, on the culprit's breech; whilst, in the meantime, the huntsmen with their brass horns, and the dogs with their loud mouthings, proclaimed the king's justice, and the criminal's punishment: the scene affording great diversion to the queen and those of the court who were present at the ceremony.

In Turkey, a verberation on the breech was the common chastisement inflicted either on the Janissaries or Spahis. In Poland, a lower discipline was the penance constantly inflicted upon certain offenders, previously to tying them together by the bond of matrimony; or, indeed, some time after they had been married. In England, castigations of the same kind were at an early period adopted among the respectable part of the nation. Among the Spaniards, they so generally consider the part of the human body of which we are treating here as the fittest to bear ill usage and mortification, that in every place there is commonly some good friar who makes himself answerable for the sins of the whole parish; and who, according as he has been fee'd for that purpose, flogs himself

or at least tells his customers he has done so: hence the common Spanish saying:—"I am as badly off as the friar's ——;" which is said by persons who think that they are made to pay, or suffer, for advantages they are not admitted to share.

A serious flagellation on that part is the punishment which was established at the Cape of Good Hope among the Dutch, as Kolben informs us, for those found smoking tobacco in the streets: a practice which was frequently the cause of houses taking fire. Among the Persians, punishments of the same kind are also established; and we find in Chardin an instance of a captain of the outward gate of the king's seraglio who was served with it, for having suffered a stranger to stop before that gate and look through it. The Chinese use a like method of chastisement, and inflict it with a wooden instrument, shaped like a large solid rounded spoon. In the "Arabian Nights' Entertainment," which, no doubt, is faithful to the manners of the time, we see, from the story of the cobbler Bakbarah, that they viewed the matter in a similar light. This cobbler having fallen in love with a beautiful lady belonging to some wealthy man, whom he had seen through the window of her house, would afterwards keep for whole hours every day staring at that window. The lady, who proposed to make game of him, one day sent a female slave to introduce him to her, and then gave him to understand, that if he could overtake her by running after her through the apartments of her house, she would accept him as her sweetheart: he was besides told, that in order to run more nimbly he must strip to his shirt. To all this Bakbarah agreed; and after a number of turns, up and down the house,

he was at last enticed into a long, dark, and narrow passage, at the farthest extremity of which an open door was to be perceived ; he made to it as fast as he could, and when he had reached it, rushed headlong through it ; when, to his no small astonishment, the door instantly shut upon him, and he found himself in the middle of a public street of Bagdad, which was chiefly inhabited by curriers. A number of these latter, struck by the sudden and strange appearance of the unfortunate Bakbarah, who, besides stripping to his shirt, had suffered his eye-brows to be shaved, laid hold of him, and soundly lashed the softest part of his person with their straps. To complete his misfortunes, the judge of police sentenced him to receive a hundred strokes on the soles of his feet, and to be banished from the city.

As will be seen throughout the following pages, the custom of whipping was at one period universal ; and in those countries where flogging is still practised in schools or prisons, it is generally the rule to bestow the flagellation on that part of the body which mankind are wont to sit upon.



WOMAN BASTINADOED.
—Beni Hassan.

KING HOLDING A WHIP.
—Thebes.



ASSYRIAN PUBLIC WORKS. SLAVES DRAGGING A COLOSSAL FIGURE.
—Koujunjik Gallery, Brit. Mus.

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CHAPTER III.

FLAGELLATION AMONG THE JEWS.

FLAGELLATION is undoubtedly a very ancient mode of coercive punishment. The earliest record of it occurs in the fifth chapter of Exodus, where the sacred historian informs us that Pharaoh flagellated the Israelites. He required them to furnish a certain quantity of bricks every day, and when the specified number was not made up the officers *were beaten*. The words of the Vulgate are in verse 14 "*flagellati sunt*," and in verse 16 "*flagellis cœdimur*," and both expressions signify, were lashed with rods or whips. Further on in the Old Testament we find that flagellation was the punishment awarded under the old law, as delivered to Moses, to those who were found guilty of particular sins: "And whosoever lies with a woman that is a bond maid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her: she *shall be scourged*: they shall not be put to death, because she was not free." The Mosaic Law likewise prescribed the number of lashes to be administered to criminals: "And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face according to his fault by a certain number. Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy

brother should seem vile unto thee."—Deut., ch. xxv., ver. 2, 3. The writers of the New Testament make frequent mention of flagellation. They all notice the circumstance that Jesus Christ was scourged before his crucifixion. In John, ch. ii., v. 15, we are told that Christ himself made a scourge of small cords, and drove the money-changers from the Temple. In the Acts, ch. v., v. 40, it is narrated that the apostles were beaten with scourges. Saint Paul, in enumerating the persecutions and sufferings he underwent for the sake of the Gospel, says, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one;" and "Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck: a night and a day I have been in the deep;" and again, "And others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments."

The passages which we have quoted from the Scriptures refer only to flagellation as a punishment, and afford no justification of voluntary flagellation, still less of the excessive use of the lash practised and recommended by monks of later days, who often lashed themselves with knotted cords, and sometimes with whips armed with spikes or sharp points. The Law of Moses expressly limited the number of stripes that might be inflicted to forty. In no case might this number be exceeded. Thus, even to the convicted criminal, justice was tempered with mercy, and excessive scourging was forbidden. In practice among the Jews the number of blows inflicted was in fact limited to thirty-nine; lest, by any accident in counting, the criminal should receive more than the legal number. There was another reason still for limiting it to thirty-nine, and this was the peculiar manner in which the punishment of stripes was

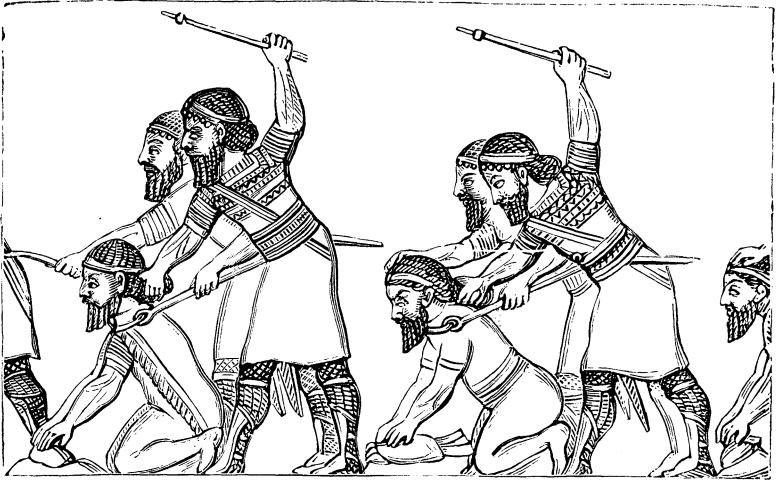
inflicted. The scourge was of leather, and had three thongs—one very long, going round the body at every blow, and the other two much shorter—and this was struck thirteen times, making thirty-nine, whereas an additional blow would have brought the number to forty-two.

The advocates of religious whipping have been extremely desirous to support their position by the authority of Scripture, and have ransacked the Bible for that purpose, but with indifferent success. Besides the passages already quoted, there are only two more referring to flagellation, and these are held by some to prove that flagellation is a scriptural and meritorious exercise. In Psalm lxxiii, v. 14, David exclaims, "For all day long have I been plagued and *chastened* every morning." The words of the Vulgate are "*fui flagellatus*," "I have been whipped;" and taken in a literal sense, may mean that the Psalmist was in the practice of lashing himself every day. The majority of writers are of opinion that the words are to be understood in a figurative and not a literal sense: that the stripes were only the misfortunes and troubles which are so frequently the lot of good men in this world.

The last passage on this point occurs in St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, and has been the subject of much learned controversy. St. Paul there says (1 Cor. ch. ix., ver. 27), "I chastise my body and keep it under subjection." Several writers of great authority assert that the Apostle here means to say that it was his practice to lash himself in order to overcome his vicious inclinations. James Gretzer, one of the Jesuit fathers, affirms that the Greek words in the text literally signify, "I imprint on my own body the stripes or marks of the whip, and render it livid by

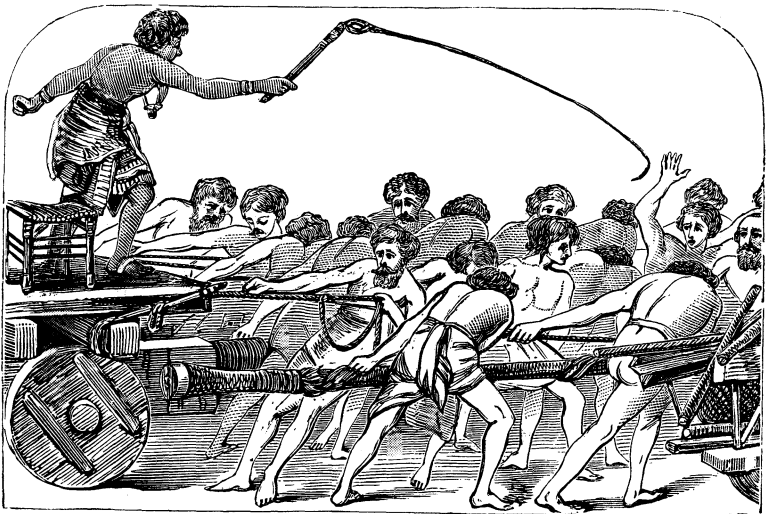
dint of blows," and his opinion is followed by other theologians. Apart from these authorities, and considering the meaning of the Greek word in dispute, it cannot be held to signify voluntary flagellation. It occurs only in this passage and in the parable of "the importunate widow," as given by Luke, ch. xviii., ver. 5, "Lest by her continual coming she weary me." The word means properly to strike under the eye either with the fist or cestus, so as to render the part livid, or as we say black and blue; in common phrase, to give any one a black eye. The word is derived from the Grecian games, of which the Apostle has just been speaking. Its secondary meaning then comes to be, to treat any one with harshness, severity, or cruelty; and thence also so to treat any civil inclinations or dispositions, or to subject one's self to mortification, or self-denial, or to a severe and rigid discipline, that all corrupt passions might be removed. Add to this the fact that Paul, when he has occasion to speak of actual stripes, nowhere uses this expression. Most of the Greek and Latin fathers favour the opinion that Paul did not practise self-flagellation, and that in this particular passage he expressed himself in a figurative manner.

After the compilation of the *Talmud* or *unwritten law* of the Jews, about 500 years after Christ (so named in distinction to the law of Moses or *written law*), containing their traditions, it appears that a kind of voluntary discipline was practised among them. In the third chapter of "Malkos" we are informed that the Jews, after they had finished their prayers and confessed their sins (which were exercises they derived from their ancestors), used to lash one another with scourges. Buxtorf, who is considered a good authority



THE ARMY OF ASSHER-BAM-PAL FLOGGING CAPTIVES TAKEN IN A BATTLE WITH THE SUSIANS.

—*Koujunik Gallery, Brit. Mus.*



A SKETCH FROM "ISRAEL IN EGYPT," BY

E. J. Poynter, R.A.

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thus describes the practice in his "Judaic Synagogue," published in 1661—"That there are constantly two men in every Jewish School, who withdraw from the rest of the company, and retire into a particular place of the room, where they are met; that one lays himself flat on the ground with his head turned to the north and his feet to the south (or his head to the south and his feet to the north); and that the other, who remains standing, gives him thirty-nine blows upon his back with a strap or thong of ox leather. In the meanwhile, the man who is lashed recites three times over the thirty-eighth verse of the 78th Psalm. This verse in the Hebrew language contains just thirteen words; at every word the patient recites, he receives a lash from the other man, which, when he has recited the whole verse three times over, makes up the prescribed number thirty-nine; and at every time he says the last word, he strikes his own breast with his fist. This operation being concluded, the *operator* in his turn becomes the *patient*, and places himself in the same situation as the other had done, who then uses him in the same brotherly manner in which the former had used him, and they thus mutually chastise each other for their sins, and *rub one another* as the learned author observes, *like asses*." This practice of flogging among the Hebrews will be found described in a novel called "Count Teleki; a Story of Modern Jewish Life and Customs."

CHAPTER IV.

FLAGELLATION AMONG THE ROMANS, ETC.

THE ancient Romans carried the practice of flagellation farther, perhaps, than any other nation; and there are several authors who refer to their use of the scourge. Flagellatic emblems were common in every house; and the judges of the nation were surrounded with an array of whips, scourges, and leather straps, in order to terrify offenders and bring them to a sense of duty; but a great number of instruments of flagellation, besides those mentioned above, were successfully brought into use for punishing slaves. Among those were particular kinds of cords, manufactured in Spain. The scourges had all different names: there was the *ferula*, a flat strap of leather, which was the mildest of all; then came the *scutica*, an instrument of twisted parchment, which was a degree more severe than the first named; after that there was the *flagella* and the terrible *flagellum*, the severest of all, which was composed of plaited thongs of ox leather. In the third Satire of the first book of Horace, there is an account of the gradation in severity between the above-mentioned instruments of whipping. Horace lays down the rules which he thinks a judge ought to follow in the discharge of his office, and also addresses himself, somewhat ironically, to persons who, adopting the principles of the stoics,

affected much severity in their opinions, and pretended that all crimes being equal, they ought to be punished in the same manner. "Make such a rule of conduct to yourself," says Horace, "that you may always proportion the chastisement you inflict to the magnitude of the offence; and when the offender only deserves to be chastised with the whip of twisted parchment, do not expose him to the lash of the horrid leather scourge; that you should only inflict the punishment of the flat strap on him who deserves a more severe lashing, in what I am by no means afraid of." There were other instruments of punishment still more terrible than the *flagellum*, such as balls of metal stuck full of small sharp points, and fastened to the end of long whips. So prevalent did the practice of whipping slaves become, that in course of time these unfortunates came to be named by the wits after the particular kind of flagellation they were made to undergo, as *Resticus*, *Bucædæ*, *Verberones*, *Flagriones*, &c. The scourge was looked upon by the Romans as characteristic of dominion; and the master or mistress of a Roman household often exercised their terrible powers with unrelenting severity, the poor slaves being not unfrequently scourged to death from a mere caprice.

It is evident that the flagellation of slaves, or the fear they entertained of incurring punishment, frequently provided Plautus with incidents for the conduct of his plots; thus in his *Epidicus*, a slave who is the principal character in the play concludes, upon a certain occasion, that his master has discovered his whole scheme, because he has spied him, in the morning, purchasing a new scourge, at the shop in which they were sold. Moreover, those same flagellations have in general

formed an inexhaustible fund of pleasantry for Plautus: in one place, for instance, a slave, intending to laugh at a fellow slave, asks him how much he thinks he weighs, when he is suspended naked, by his hands, to the fatal beam, with an hundred weight (*centupondium*) tied to his feet; which was a precaution taken, as commentators inform us, in order to prevent the slave who was flagellated from kicking the man (*virgator*) whose office it was to perform the operation: and in another place, Plautus, alluding to the thongs of ox-leather with which whips were commonly made, introduces a slave engaged in deep reflection on the surprising circumstance of "dead bullocks, that make incursions upon living men."

Vivos homines mortui incursantboves !

There are many other customs of the ancient Romans which might be quoted to illustrate the universal prevalence of flagellation. For instance, whipping and lashing were so generally considered among the Romans as the lot of slaves, that a whip or scourge became the emblem of their condition. Of this there is an instance in the singular custom, mentioned by Camerarius, which prevailed at one time, of placing in the triumphal car, behind the triumpher, a man with a whip in his hand; the meaning of which was to shew, that it was no impossible thing for a person to fall from the height of glory into the most abject condition.

It was quite a sufficient excuse among the Roman ladies to whip a slave if, as Juvenal expresses it, their nose displeased them; in other words, if they were not satisfied with the state of their own charms. Their wantonness of power was carried still farther. It was a

customary thing with some of them, when they proposed having their hair dressed with both nicety and expedition, to have the dressing-maid stripped to the waist, ready for flagellation, should she be guilty of any fault or mistake in performing her task. The fair termagants at last carried these cruelties to such a pitch, that in the beginning of the empire it was found necessary to restrain their licence. During the reign of the Emperor Adrian, a lady was banished for five years for inflicting undue cruelties on her female slaves. The smallest faults, such as breaking glasses or over-seasoning dishes, exposed these wretched serfs to grievous whippings, which were sometimes inflicted in presence of guests who happened to be entertained at table, as a means of affording a little diversion. The following is a literal translation of a passage from Juvenal in which he describes the way an angry woman treats her slaves, upon an occasion when her husband has slighted her : “ Woe to her waiting woman: the dressing maids lay down their tunics, the errand slave is charged with having returned too late, the straps break on the back of some; others redden under the lash of the leather scourge, and others of the twisted parchment.”

With reference to the banishment of the lady mentioned above, it may be stated that in the course of time the severity of mistresses towards their female slaves became so marked that a provision was made in the Council of Elvira to restrain it; in this act it was ordained, that if any mistress caused her slave to be whipped with so much cruelty that she should die, the lady should be suspended from communion for a certain number of years. The following are the terms of the above ordinance, in the fifth canon :—“ If a mis-

tress, in a fit of anger and madness, shall lash her female slave, or cause her to be lashed, in such a manner that she expires before the third day, by reason of the torture she has undergone ; inasmuch as it is doubtful whether it has designedly happened, or by chance ; if it has designedly happened, the mistress shall be excommunicated for seven years ; if by chance, she shall be excommunicated for five years only ; though, if she shall fall into sickness, she may receive the communion."

Ladies having a very large establishment would not themselves condescend, except in a moment of passion, to chastise their slaves. Some great woman had been satirized for doing so :

"I hate a vixen that her maid assails,
And scratches with her bodkin or her nails ;
While the poor girl in blood or tears must mourn,
And her heart curses what her hands adorn,"

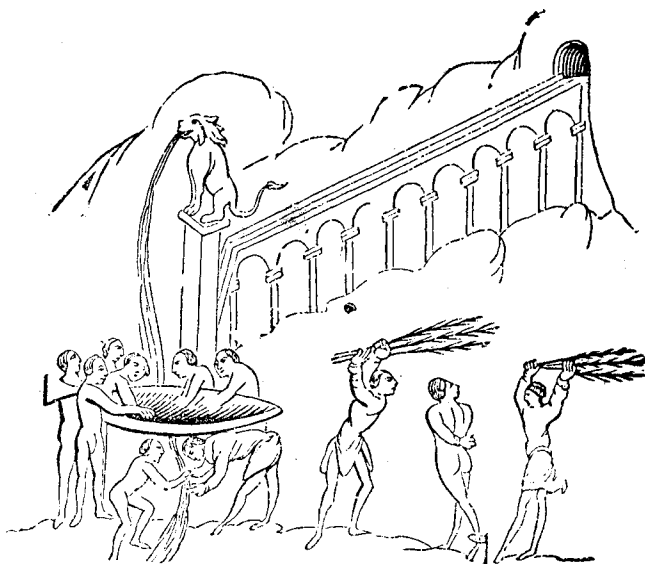
says Ovid. Particular slaves were kept (*lorarii*) for scourging their fellow-slaves. The public flagellators (*carnifices*) were also occasionally employed. Indeed, it was a favour which called for the slaves' gratitude when they received their chastisement from the hand of the Domina. Far more cruel was the punishment when, in her anger, she directed it to be inflicted on the wretched culprit by a female brought up to such employment, and kept for that particular purpose. In this case they were immediately seized, without mercy, and bound, by their twisted hair, to a door-post or a pillar, and lashed on their bare backs with thongs cut from ox-hides, or knotted cords, till the mistress pronounced the word "enough!" or "go!"

But it was not upon their slaves only that Roman masters or mistresses inflicted the punishment of



CRIMINALS BEATEN TO PRISON.

—Harleian MS. 4374.



WASHING AND SCOURGING.

Exercising the rods upon a Saxon slave. From the Harleian MS., No. 603. It was not unusual in those days for servants to be scourged to death by (or by order of) their mistresses. The aptness with which the Saxon ladies made use of the scourge is illustrated by one of William of Malmesbury's anecdotes, who tells us that when King Ethelred was a child he once so irritated his mother that, not having a whip, she beat him with some candles, which were the first things that fell under her hand, until he was almost insensible. "On this account he dreaded candles during the rest of his life, to such a degree that he would never suffer the light of them to be introduced in his presence."