

Bygone . . .

---

Punishments.

---

By William Andrews. . . .



**Three Chapters - Scotland**

LONDON :

WILLIAM ANDREWS & CO., 5, FARRINGTON AVENUE, E.C.

—  
1899.

## The Jougs.

THIS old-time instrument of punishment was more generally used in North Britain than in England. It was employed in Holland, and most likely in other countries. In Scotland, its history may be traced back to the sixteenth century, and from that period down to about a hundred years ago, it was a popular means of enforcing ecclesiastical discipline, and was also brought into requisition for punishing persons guilty of the lesser civil offences. In Scotland the jougs were usually fastened to a church door, a tree in a churchyard, the post of a church gate, a market cross, or a market tron, or weighing-post, and not infrequently to prison doors.

The jougs are simple in form, consisting of an iron ring or collar, with a joint or hinge at the back to permit its being opened and closed, and in the front are loops for the affixing of a padlock to secure it round the neck of the culprit.

The "Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London, from A.D. 1550 to

A.D. 1563" (published by the Camden Society in 1848), contains the following note on the use of the jougs: "The 30th day of June, 1553," it is stated, "was set a post hard by the Standard in Cheap, and a young fellow tied to the post with a collar of iron about his neck, and another to the post with a chain, and two men with two whips whipping them about the post, for pretended visions and opprobrious and seditious words." We have modernised the spelling of Machyn.

Disregarding parental authority in Scotland was frequently the cause of young folk being punished by the jougs, and in other ways. Harsh rules of life were by no means confined to North Britain. In Tudor England manners were severe and formal, parents exacting abject deference from their offspring. A child did not presume to speak or sit down without leave in presence of its parents. A little leniency was extended to girls, for when tired they might kneel on cushions at the far end of the room; but boys were expected to stand with their heads uncovered. It is to be feared that true domestic bliss was almost unknown in olden times. Teachers were equally tyrannical, and it is a matter of history that Roger Ascham, the tutor

of Queen Elizabeth, used to “pinch, nip, and bob [slap] the princess when she displeased him.”

Some very curious facts relating to this subject appear in the old Kirk-Session records. “David Leyes, who struck his father,” was, by a Kirk-Session of St. Andrews, in 1574, sentenced to appear before the congregation “bairheddit and beirfuttit, upon the highest degree of the penitent stuool, with a hammer in the ane hand and ane stane in the uther hand, as the twa instruments he mannesit his father,—with ane papir writin in great letteris about his heid with these wordis, ‘Behold the onnaturall Son, punished for putting hand on his father, and dishonouring of God in him.’” Nor was this deemed sufficient humiliation, for the offender was afterwards made to stand at the market cross two hours “in the jaggs, and thereafter cartit through the haill toun.” It was also resolved that “if ever he offended father or mother heireafter, the member of his body quhairby he offendit sal be cuttit off from him, be it tung, hand or futt without mercy, as examples to utheris to abstein fra the lyke.” At Glasgow, in the year 1598, the Presbytery carefully considered the conduct of a youth who had passed his father “without lifting his bonnet.”

A servant in Wigtown, in 1649, was brought before the magistrates for raising her hand and abusing her mistress, and was ordered to stand a full hour with the jougs round her neck.

At Rothesay, a woman gave the members of the Kirk-Session a great deal of trouble through departing from the path of sobriety. Persuasion and rebuke were tried without avail. At last, in the year 1661, the Session warned her that "if hereafter she should be found drunk, she would be put in the jougs and have her dittay written on her face."\*

Mr. James S. Thomson read a paper before the Dumfries Antiquarian Society, supplying some interesting glimpses of bygone times, furnished by the Kirk-Session Records of Dumfries. Not the least important information was that relating to punishments of the past. It will not be without interest to notice a few of the cases. In the year 1637, a man named Thomas Meik had been found guilty of slandering Agnes Fleming, and he was sentenced to stand for a certain time in the jougs at the tron, and subsequently on his bare knees at the market cross to ask her pardon.

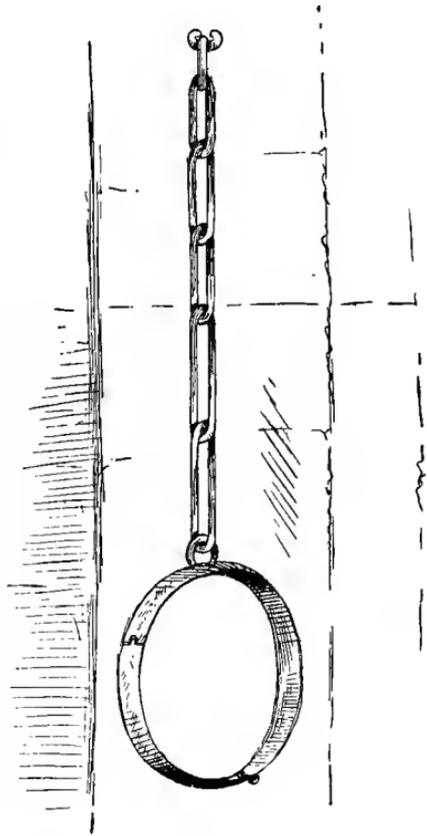
The case of Bessie Black was investigated, and

\* Rogers's "Scotland, Social and Domestic."

it was proved that for the third time she had been found guilty of leaving the path of virtue, and for her transgressions she was directed for six Sabbaths to stand at the Cross in the jougs. In another case it was proved that two servants had been found guilty of scolding each other, and sentence was given that they were "to be put into the jougs presently." A curious sentence was passed in the year 1644. A man and his wife were ordered to stand at the Kirk-style with the branks in their mouths.

Exposure of persons to the contempt of the public was formerly a common form of punishment in Scotland. Curious information bearing on the subject may be gleaned from the old newspapers. We gather from the columns of the *Aberdeen Journal*, for the year 1759, particulars of three women, named Janet Shinney, Margaret Barrack, and Mary Duncan, who suffered by being exposed in public. "Upon trial," it is reported, "they were convicted, by their own confessions, of being in the practice, for some time past, of stealing and resetting tea and sugar, and several other kinds of merchant's goods, from a merchant in the town. And the Magistrates have sentenced them to be carried to the Market

Cross of Aberdeen, on Thursday the 31st [May, 1759], at twelve o'clock at noon, and to be tied to a stake bareheaded for one hour by the executioner, with a rope about each of their necks, and a paper on their breasts denoting their crime; to be removed to prison, and taken down again on Friday the 1st June at twelve o'clock, and to stand an hour at the Market Cross in the manner above mentioned; and thereafter to be transported through the whole streets of the town in a cart bareheaded (for the greater ignominy), with the executioner and tuck of drum, and to be banished the burgh and liberties



THE JOUGS, PRIORY CHURCH, BRIDLINGTON.

in all time coming." In bygone ages, it was a common custom to banish persons from towns for immoral conduct. A woman at Dumfries, for

example, was for a fourth lapse from virtue sentenced "to be carted from the toun."

At a meeting of the Kirk-Session at Lesmahagow, held in June, 1697, the case of a shepherd who had shorn his sheep on the Parish Fast was seriously discussed, with a view to severely punishing him for the offence. A minute as follows was passed: "The Session, considering that there are several scandals of this nature breaking forth, recommends to the bailie of the bailerie of Lesmahagow to fix a pair of jougs at the kirk door, that he may cause punish corporally those who are not able to pay fines, and that according to law."

A common word in Ayrshire for the jougs was "bregan." In the accounts of the parish of Mauchline is an entry as under:

1681. For a lock to the bregan and  
mending it ... .. £1 16 0

In Jamieson's "Dictionary" it is spelled "braideyeane." Persons neglecting to attend church on the Sunday were frequently put into the jougs. Several cases of this kind might be cited, but perhaps particulars of one will be sufficient. A man named John Persene was brought before the Kirk-Session of Galston, in 1651. He admitted

he had not been to church for the space of five weeks. For thus neglecting to attend to the ordinances, he was "injoynd to apier in the public place of repentence, and there to be publicly rebuked, with certificatione that if he be found to be two Sabbaths together absent from the church he shall be put in the breggan."

In "Prehistoric Annals of Scotland," by Daniel Wilson, LL.D. (London, 1863), there is a drawing of a fine old pair of jougs, "found," says Wilson, "imbedded in a venerable ash tree, recently blown down, at the churchyard gate, Applegirth, Dumfriesshire. The tree, which was of great girth, is believed to have been upwards of three hundred years old, and the jougs were completely imbedded in its trunk, while the chain and staple hung down within the decayed and hollow core." The jougs belonging to the parish of Galashiels are preserved at Abbotsford. At Merton, Berwickshire, the jougs may be seen at the church. The Fenwick jougs are still fastened to the church wall, and the old Session Records of the parish contain references to cases where persons were ordered to "stand in the jougs from eight till ten, and thence go to the place of repentence within ye kirk." At the village of Kilmaurs,

Ayrshire, the jougs are attached to the old Tolbooth, at the town of Kinross are fastened to the market cross, and at Sanquhar they are in front of the town hall.

We give three illustrations of the jougs. One represents a very fine example, which may be seen in the Priory Church of Bridlington, Yorkshire.



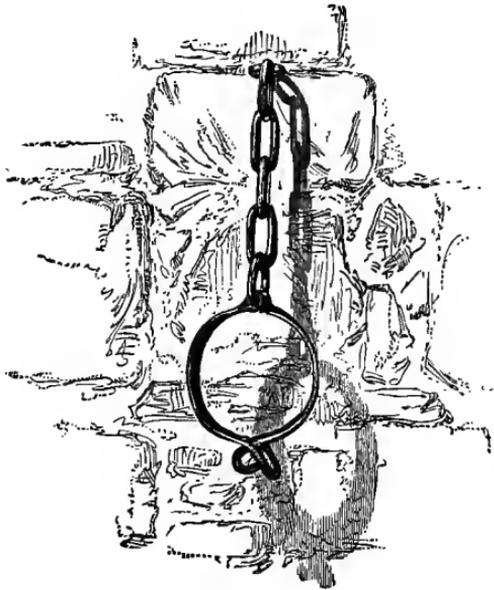
JOUGS FROM THE OLD CHURCH OF CLOVA, FORFARSHIRE.

We believe that this is the first picture which has been published of this interesting old-times relic. It is referred to in the local guide book, but no information is given as to when last used.

It is stated in the "History of Wakefield Cathedral," by John W. Walker, F.S.A., that "an old chain, leaded into the wall at the junction of the north aisle with the tower in the interior of

the church, is said to have been used for the purpose of fastening up persons who disturbed the service." This may be safely assumed that formerly the jougs were affixed at the end of the chain.

In the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Edinburgh, may be seen the jougs of



THE JOUGS AT DUDDINGSTON.

the old parish church of Clova, Forfarshire. About a mile from Edinburgh is the charming hamlet of Duddingston, and at the churchyard gate are the jougs, which form a curious link between the ruder customs of bygone ages and the more refined life of modern times.

## The Brank, or Scold's Bridle.

THE brank was an instrument employed by our forefathers for punishing scolds. It is also sometimes called the gossip's bridle, and in the Macclesfield town records it is designated "a brydle for a curste queane."



In the term "queane" we have the old English synonym for a woman; now the chief woman, the Queen. The brank is not of such great antiquity as the ducking-stool, for the earliest mention of it we have been able to find in this country is in the Corporation records of Maccles-

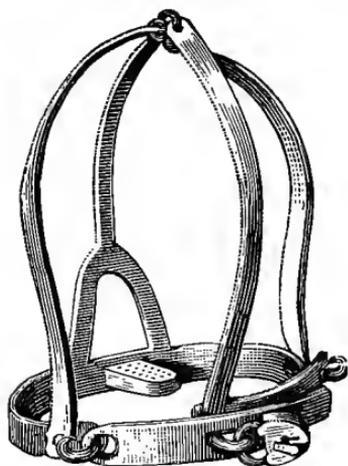
field, of the year 1623. At an earlier period, we have traces of it in Scotland. In Glasgow burgh records, it is stated that in 1574 two scolds were condemned to be "branket." The Kirk-session

records of Stirling for 1600 mention the "brankes" as a punishment for the shrew. It is generally believed that the punishment is of Continental origin.

The brank may be described simply as an iron framework which was placed on the head, enclosing it in a kind of cage; it had in front a plate of iron, which, either sharpened or covered with spikes, was so situated as to be placed in the mouth of the victim, and if she attempted to move her tongue in any way whatever, it was certain to be shockingly injured. With a brank on her head she was conducted through the streets, led by a chain, held by one of the town's officials, an object of contempt, and subjected to the jeers of the crowd and often left to their mercy. In some towns it was the custom to chain the culprit to the pillory, whipping-post, or market-cross. She thus suffered for telling her mind to some petty tyrant in office, or speaking plainly to a wrong-doer, or for taking to task a lazy, and perhaps a drunken husband.

In Yorkshire, we have only seen two branks. We give a sketch of one formerly in possession of the late Norrison Scatcherd, F.S.A., the historian of Morley. It is now in the Leeds Philosophical

Museum, where it attracts considerable attention. It is one of the most simple and harmless examples that has come under our notice. Amongst the relics of the olden time in the Museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, York, is another specimen, equally simple in its construction. It was presented by Lady Thorn-



BRANK IN LEEDS PHILOSOPHICAL MUSEUM.

ton to the Society in 1880, and near it may be seen thumb-screws from York Castle ; leg bar, waist girdle, and wrist shackles, worn by the notorious highwayman, Dick Turpin, executed April 17th, 1739 ; and a leg bar, worn by another notorious high-

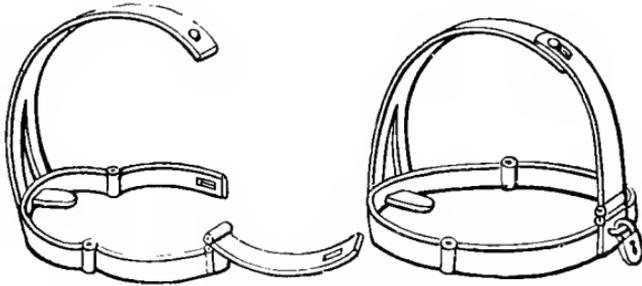
wayman, named Nevison, who suffered death on the gallows, May 4th, 1684.

The brank which has received the greatest attention is the one preserved in the vestry of Walton-on-Thames Parish Church. It bears the date of 1632, and the following couplet :—

“Chester presents Walton with a bridle  
To curb women’s tongues that talk too idle.”

It is traditionally said that this brank was given to Walton Parish by a person named Chester, who had, through a gossiping and lying woman of his acquaintance, lost an estate he expected to inherit from a rich relative. We are enabled to give an illustration of the Walton brank.

Dr. T. N. Brushfield described in an exhaustive manner all the Cheshire branks, in an able paper read before the Architectural, Archæo-



BRANK AT WALTON-ON-THAMES.

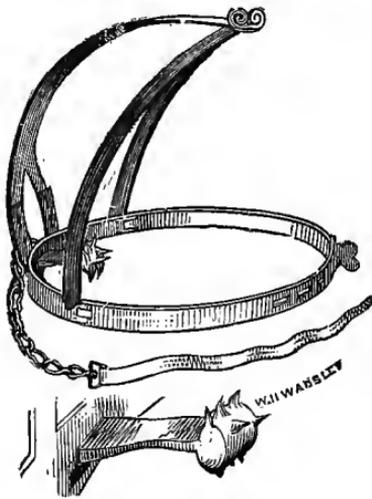
logical, and Historic Society of Chester, and published in 1858. We are unable to direct attention to all the branks noticed by Dr. Brushfield, but cannot refrain from presenting the following account of the one at Congleton, which is preserved in the Town Hall of that ancient borough. "It was," we are informed, "formerly in the hands of the town jailor, whose services were not infrequently called into requisition. In the old-fashioned, half-timbered houses in the borough,

there was generally fixed on one side of the large open fire-places a hook, so that, when a man's wife indulged her scolding propensities, the husband sent for the town jailor to bring the bridle, and had her bridled and chained to the hook until she promised to behave herself better for the future. I have seen one of these hooks, and have often heard husbands say to their wives: 'If you don't rest with your tongue I'll send for the bridle and hook you up.' The Mayor and Justices frequently brought the instrument into use; for when women were brought before them charged with street-brawling, and insulting the constables and others while in the discharge of their duty, they have ordered them to be bridled and led through the borough by the jailor. The last time this bridle was publicly used was in 1824, when a woman was brought before the Mayor (Bulkeley Johnson, Esq.) one Monday, charged with scolding and using harsh language to the churchwardens and constables as they went, on the Sunday morning, round the town to see that all the public-houses were empty and closed during divine service. On examination, a Mr. Richard Edwards stated on oath 'that on going round the town with the churchwardens on the previous

day, they met the woman (Ann Runcorn) in a place near 'The Cockshoot,' and that immediately seeing them she commenced a sally of abuse, calling them all the scoundrels and rogues she could lay her tongue to ; and telling them 'it would look better of them if they would look after their own houses rather than go looking after other folk's, which were far better than their own.' After other abuse of a like character, they thought it only right to apprehend her, and so brought her before the Bench on the following day. The Mayor then delivered the following sentence : 'That it is the unanimous decision of the Mayor and Justices that the prisoner (Ann Runcorn) there and then have the town's bridle for scolding women put upon her, and that she be led by the magistrate's clerk's clerk through every street in the town, as an example to all scolding women ; and that the Mayor and magistrates were much obliged to the churchwardens for bringing the case before them.' " In this case," Mr. Warrington, who furnished Dr. Brushfield with the foregoing information, adds : " I both heard the evidence and saw the decision carried out. The bridle was put on the woman, and she was then led through the town by one Prosper Haslam, the

town clerk's clerk, accompanied by hundreds of the inhabitants; and on her return to the Town Hall the bridle was taken off in the presence of the Mayor, magistrates, constables, churchwardens, and assembled inhabitants."

In Cheshire, at the present time, there are traces of thirteen branks, and at Stockport is the



BRANK AT STOCKPORT.

most brutal example of the English branks.

"It will be observed," says the local historian, Dr. Henry Heginbottom, J.P., "that the special characteristic of this brank is the peculiar construction of the tongue-plate or gag.

It is about two inches long, having at the end,

as may be seen in the engraving, a ball, into which is inserted a number of sharp iron pins, three on the upper surface, three on the lower, and two pointing backwards. These could not fail to pin the tongue, and effectually silence the noisiest brawler. At the fore part of the collar, there is an iron chain, with a leathern thong attached,

by which the offender was led for public gaze through the market-place." It was formerly on market days exhibited in front of the house of the person who had charge of it, as a warning to scolding or swearing women. Dr. Heginbotham states that : " There is no evidence of its having been actually used for many years, but there is testimony to the fact, that within the last forty years the brank was brought to a termagant market woman, who was effectually silenced by its threatened application."

We are indebted to Mr. Alfred Burton for a drawing of the Macclesfield brank. Dr. Brushfield describes this as "a respectable-looking brank." He tells us that "the gag is plain, and the end of it is turned down ; there is only one band which passes over the head, and is hinged to the hoops ; a temporary joint exists at the upper part, and ample provision is made for readily adjusting it to any description of head. The chain still remains attached to the hoop. About the year 1858, Mr. Swinnerton informed Dr. Brushfield that he had never seen it used, but that at the petty sessions it had often been produced *in terrorem*, to stay the volubility of a woman's tongue ; and that a threat by a magistrate to order its appliance

had always proved sufficient to abate the garrulity of the most determined scold."

Towards the close of the first quarter of the present century, the brank was last used at Altrincham. A virago, who caused her neigh-



BRANK AT MACCLESFIELD.

bours great trouble, was frequently cautioned in vain respecting her conduct, and as a last resource she was condemned to walk through the town wearing the brank. She refused to move, and it was finally decided to wheel her in a

barrow through the principal streets of the town, round the market-place, and to her own home. The punishment had the desired effect, and for the remainder of her life she kept a quiet tongue.

There are many traces of the brank in Lancashire. Mr. W. E. A. Axon informs us that his father remembers the brank being used at Manchester at the commencement of the present century. Kirkham had its brank for scolds, in addition to a ducking-stool. We find, in the same county, traces of the brank at Holme, in the Forest of Rossendale. In the accounts of the Greave for the Forest of Rossendale for 1691-2 is an entry of the true antiquarian cast :

Item, for a Bridle for scouldinge women, ... 2s. 6d.

In "Some Obsolete Peculiarities of English Law," by William Beamont, the author gives particulars respecting the Warrington brank. "Hanging up in our museum," says Mr. Beamont, "may be seen a representation of a withered female face wearing the brank or scold's bridle ; one of which instruments, as inflexible as iron and ingenuity can make it, for keeping an unruly tongue quiet by mechanical means, hangs up beside it ; and almost within the time of living memory, Cicily Pewsill, an inmate of the work-

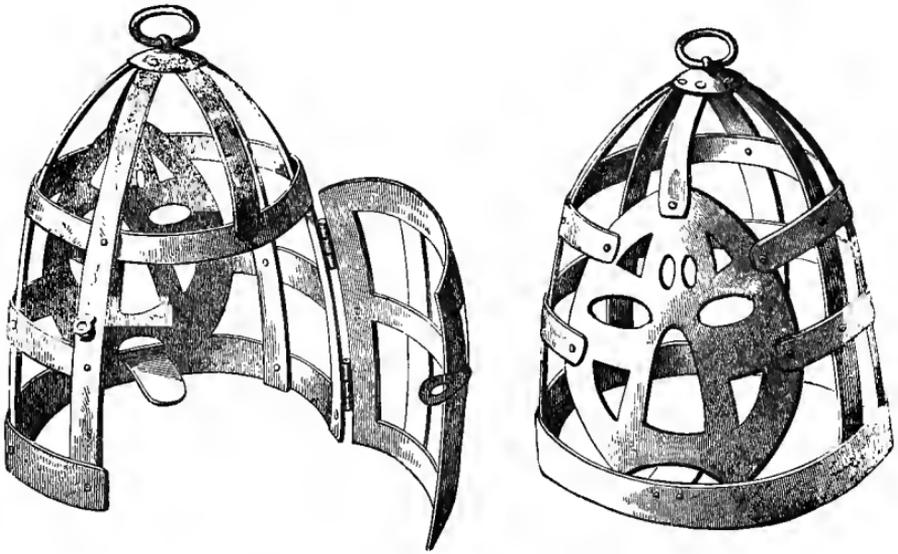
house, and a notorious scold, was seen wearing this disagreeable head-gear in the streets of Warrington for half-an-hour or more. . . . Cicily Pewsill's case still lingers in tradition, as the last occasion of its application in Warrington, and it will soon pass into history."

The Rev. J. Clay told Mr. William Dobson that since his connection with Preston House of Correction the brank was put on a woman there, but the matter coming to the knowledge of the Home Secretary, its further use was prohibited, and to make sure of the barbarous practice being discontinued the brank itself was ordered to be sent to London. A second brank was kept in the prison, principally formed of leather, but with an iron tongue-piece.\*

At the north country town of Morpeth a brank is still preserved. The following is a record of its use: "Dec. 3, 1741, Elizabeth, wife of George Holborn, was punished with the branks for two hours, at the Market Cross, Morpeth, by order of Mr. Thomas Gait and Mr. George Nicholls, then bailiffs, for scandalous and opprobrious language to several persons in the town, as well as to the said bailiffs."

\* Dobson's "Preston in the Olden Time," 1857.

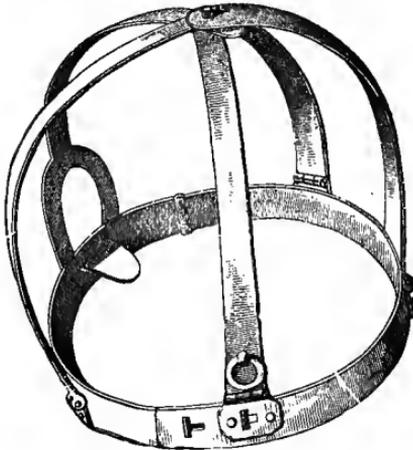
Staffordshire supplies several notable examples of the brank. They were formerly kept at Hamstall Ridware, Beaudesart, Lichfield, Walsall, and at Newcastle-under-Lyme. The branks in the two towns last named are alluded to by the celebrated Dr. Plot, the old historian of the county, in an amusing manner. "We come to



BRANK AT THE MANOR HOUSE, HAMSTALL RIDWARE.

the arts that respect mankind," says Plot, "amongst which, as elsewhere, the civility of precedence must be allowed to the woman, and that as well in punishments as favours. For the former, whereof they have such a peculiar artifice at Newcastle [under Lyme] and Walsall for

correcting of scolds, which it does, too, so effectually and so very safely, that I look upon it as much to be preferred to the cucking-stool, which not only endangers the health of the party, but also gives her tongue liberty 'twixt every dip, to neither of which is this at all liable, it being such a bridle for the tongue as not only quite deprives them of speech, but brings shame for the



BRANK AT LICHFIELD.

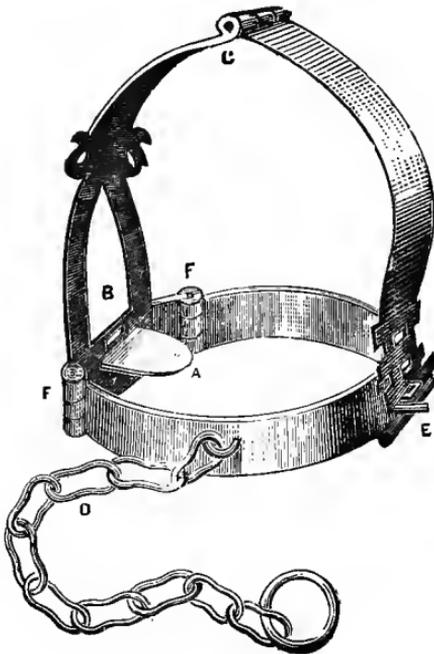
transgression, and humility thereupon, before 'tis taken off. Which, being an instrument scarce heard of, much less seen, I have here presented it to the reader's view [here follows a reference

to a plate] as it was taken from the original one, made of iron, at Newcastle-under-Lyme, wherein the letter *a* shows the jointed collar that comes round the neck ; *b*, *c*, the loops and staples to let it out and in, according to the bigness and slenderness of the neck ; *d*, the jointed semicircle that comes over the head, made forked at one end to let through the nose, and *e*, the plate-iron that

is put into the mouth and keeps down the tongue. Which, being put upon the offender by order of the magistrate, and fastened with a padlock behind, she is led through the town by an officer, to her shame, nor is it taken off until after the party begins to show all external signs imaginable of humiliation and amendment." This brank afterwards passed into the hands of Mr. Joseph Mayer, F.S.A. founder of the Museum at Liverpool.

It is pleasing to record the fact that there is only trace of one brank belonging to Derbyshire—a circumstance which speaks well for its men and women. The latter have for a long period borne exemplary characters. Philip Kinder, in the preface of his projected "History of Derbyshire," written about the middle of the seventeenth century, alludes to them. "The country-women here," says Kinder, "are chaste and sober, and very diligent in their housewifery; they hate idleness, love and obey their husbands; only in some of the great towns many of the seeming sanctificators used to follow the Presbyterian gang, and on a lecture day put on their best rayment, and doo hereby take occasion to goo a gossipping. Your merry wives of Bentley will sometimes look

in ye glass, chirpe a cupp merrily, yet not indecently. In the Peak they are much given to dance after the bagpipes—almost every towne hath a bagpipe in it.” “The Chesterfield brank,” says Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt, “is a remarkably good example, and has the additional interest of bearing a date. It is nine inches in height, and six inches



CHESTERFIELD BRANK.

and three-quarters across the hoop. It consists of a hoop of iron, hinged on either side and fastening behind, and a band, also of iron, passing over the head from back to front, and opening in front to admit the nose of the woman whose misfortune it was to wear it. The mode of putting it on

would be thus: the brank would be opened by throwing back the sides of the hoop, and the hinder part of the band by means of the hinges, C, F, F. The constable, or other official, would then stand in

front of his victim, and force the knife, or plate, A, into her mouth, the divided band passing on either side of the nose, which would protrude through the opening, B. The hoop would then be closed behind, the band brought down from the top to the back of the head, and fastened down upon it, at E, and thus the cage would at once be firmly and immovably fixed so long as her tormentors might think fit. On the left side is a chain, D, one end of which is attached to the hoop, and at the other end is a ring, by which the victim was led, or by which she was, at pleasure, attached to a post or wall. On front of the brank are the initials 'T.C.', and the date '1688'—the year of the 'Glorious Revolution'—the year of all years memorable in the annals of Chesterfield and the little village of Whittington, closely adjoining, in which the Revolution was planned. Strange that an instrument of brutal and tyrannical torture should be made and used at Chesterfield at the same moment that the people should be plotting for freedom at the same place. The brank was formerly in the old poor-house at Chesterfield, and came into the hands of Mr. Weale, the assistant Poor-law Commissioner, who presented it to Lady Walsham. It is (August,

1860) still in the hands of Sir John Walsham, Bart., and the drawing from which the accompanying woodcut is executed was kindly made and furnished to me by Miss Dulcy Bell, Sir John's sister-in-law." \*

The Leicester brank is similar to the one at Chesterfield. At the back of the hoop is a chain about twelve inches long. It was formerly kept in the Leicester borough gaol.



LEICESTER BRANK.

In the year 1821, Judge Richardson gave orders for a brank to be destroyed which was kept ready and most probably frequently used at the County Hall, Nottingham. We gather from a note furnished by Mr. J. Potter Briscoe a curious circumstance in connection with this brank—that it was used to subdue the unruly tongues of the sterner sex, as well as those of noisy females. James Brodie, a blind beggar who was executed on the 15th July, 1799, for the murder of his boy-guide, in the Nottingham Forest, was the last person punished with the brank. During his

\* "The Reliquary," October, 1860.

imprisonment, prior to execution, he was so noisy that the brank was called into requisition, to do

what he refused to do himself, namely, to hold his tongue.

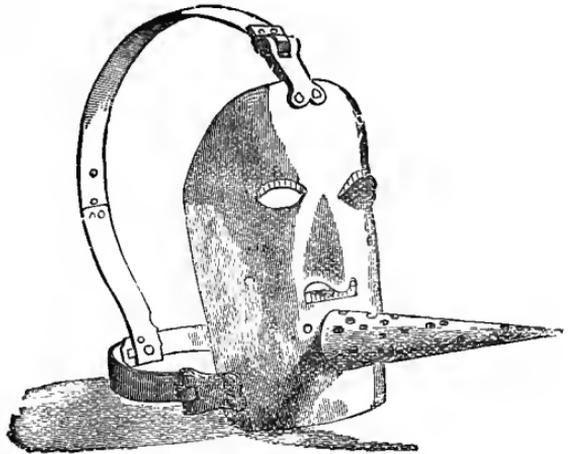
Here is a picture of a brank formerly in the possession of the late Mr. F. A. Carrington, the well-known antiquary. It is supposed to belong to the period of



BRANK FORMERLY IN THE POSSESSION OF MR. CARRINGTON.

William III. Mr. Carrington could not give any history of this curious relic of the olden time.

At Doddington Park, Lincolnshire, a brank is preserved, and is of a decidedly foreign appearance. It will be noticed that

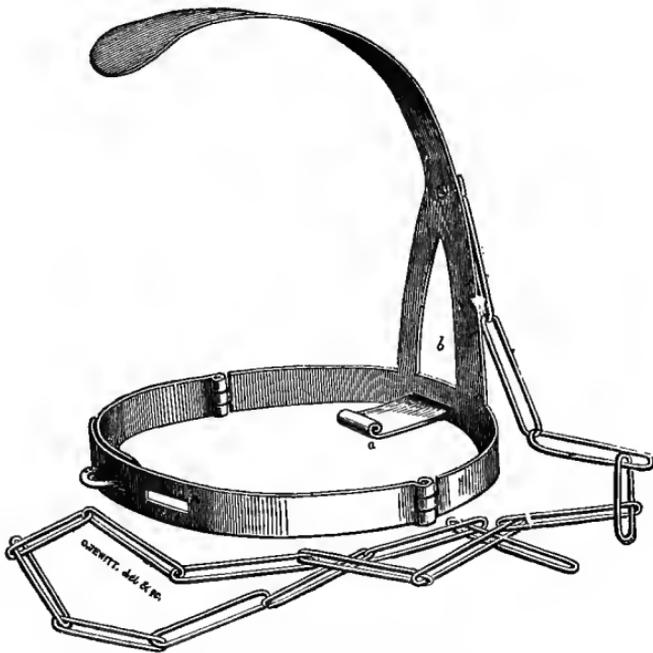


BRANK AT DODDINGTON PARK.

it bears some resemblance to the peculiar long-snouted visor of the bascinets, occasionally worn

in the reign of Richard II. No historical particulars are known respecting this grotesque brank.

In the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, a curious brank may be seen. It is not recorded in the catalogue of the collection by whom it was presented, or where it was previously used ; it is

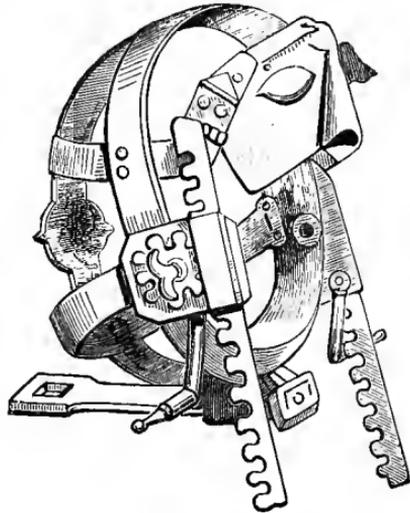


BRANK IN THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM.

described as a “a gag or brank, formerly used with the ducking-stool, as a punishment for scolds.” It will be noticed that a chain is attached to the front of this brank, so that the poor unfortunate woman, in addition to being gagged, had the

mortification of being led by the nose through the town. The gag is marked *a*, and *b* is the aperture for the nose.

A curious engine of torture may be seen in the Ludlow Museum, and we give an illustration of it. It belongs to a class of engines far more formidable than branks. A description of this head - piece appears in the *Archæological Journal* for September, 1856, from the pen of Mr. W. J. Bernard Smith. "The powerful screwing apparatus," says Mr. Smith, "seems calculated to force the iron mask with torturing effect upon the brow



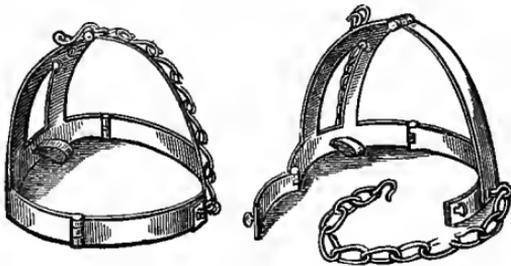
ENGINE OF TORTURE IN THE LUDLOW MUSEUM.

of the victim; there are no eye-holes, but concavities in their places, as though to allow for the starting of the eye-balls under violent pressure. There is a strong bar with a square hole, evidently intended to fasten the criminal against a wall, or perhaps to the pillory; and I have heard it said that these instruments

## Bygone Punishments.

were used to keep the head steady during the infliction of branding." A curious instrument of punishment, belonging to the same class as that at Ludlow, is described at some length, with an illustration, in "Worcester in Olden Times," by John Noake (London, 1849). The picture and description have been frequently reproduced.

Several Shropshire branks remain at the present time. The one at Shrewsbury does not



SHREWSBURY BRANK.

appear to be of any great antiquity. Its form is simple and its character harmless. This bridle was at one time in constant use in Shrewsbury, and there are those yet living whose memories are sufficiently good to carry them back to the days when the effects of the application of the brank in question were to be seen, rather than, as now, imagined. The year cannot be ascertained when this brank was first worn, but it is known to have been last used in 1846.\*

\* Morris's "Obsolete Punishments of Shropshire."

At Oswestry are two branks, one belonging to the Corporation, and the other is in the store-room of the Workhouse. The Rector of Whitchurch has in his possession a brank, which was formerly used by the town and union authorities. At Market Drayton are two branks: one is the property of the Lord of the Manor, and the other formerly belonged to the Dodcot Union. The Market Drayton brank, and also the one at Whitchurch, have on each a revolving wheel at the end of the gag or tongue-plate. In bygone times, the brank was frequently used for correcting unmanageable paupers.

At Edinburgh, in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, is a brank said to be from a town in East Fifeshire, having a rowel-shaped gag. In the year 1560, it was decided by the Town Council of Edinburgh, that all persons found guilty of blasphemy should be punished by the iron brank. In North Britain, it appears to have been used for punishing persons guilty of immorality. On the 7th October, the Kirk-Session of Canongate sentenced David Persoun, convicted of this offence, to be "brankit for four hours," while his associate in guilt, Isobel Mountray, was "banisit the gait," that is, expelled

from the parish. Only a week previously, the same Kirk-Session had issued a proclamation that all women found guilty of this lawlessness "be brankit six houris at the croce."

We close this chapter by directing attention to the Bishop's brank, kept at St. Andrews, respecting which a singular story is told. A woman in a humble walk of life, named Isabel Lindsay, stood up in the parish church of St. Andrews, during the time of divine service, when Archbishop Sharp was preaching, and declared that when he was a college student he was guilty of an illicit amour with her. She was arrested for this statement, and brought before the Kirk-Sessions, and by its members sentenced "to appear for a succession of Sundays on the repentance stool, wearing the brank."

## The Repentance-Stool.

THE records of church-life in Scotland, in bygone times, contain many allusions to the repentance-stool. A very good specimen of this old-time relic may be seen in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries, at Edinburgh. It is from the church of Old Greyfriars, of Edinburgh. In the same museum is a sackcloth, or gown of repentance, formerly used at the parish church of West Calder.

Persons guilty of adultery were frequently placed on the repentance-stool, and rebuked before the congregation assembled for public worship. The ordeal was a most trying one. Severe laws have been passed in Scotland to check adultery. "In the First Book of Discipline," says the Rev. Charles Rogers, LL.D., "the Reformers demanded that adulterers should be put to death. Their desire was not fully complied with, but in 1563 Parliament enacted that 'notour adulterers'—meaning those of whose illicit connection a child had been born—should

## Bygone Punishments.

be executed." Dr. Rogers and other authorities assert that the penalty was occasionally inflicted.

Paul Methven, minister at Jedburgh, in the year 1563, admitted that he had been guilty of adultery. The General Assembly conferred with the Lords of the Council respecting his conduct.



REPENTANCE STOOL, FROM OLD GREYFRIARS, EDINBURGH.

Three years later, we are told, that he was "permitted to prostrate himself on the floor of the Assembly, and with weeping and howling to entreat for pardon." His sentence was as follows: "That in Edinburgh, as the capital, in Dundee, as his native town, and in Jedburgh, the scene of his ministrations, he should stand in sackcloth at

the church door, also on the repentance-stool, and for two Sundays in each place."

A man, on his own confession, was tried for adultery at the Presbytery of Paisley, on November 16th, 1626, and directed to "stand and abyde six Sabbaths barefooted and barelegged at the kirk-door of Paisley between the second and third bell-ringing, and thereafter to goe to the place of public repentance during the said space of six Sabbaths."

At Stow, in 1627, for a similar crime, a man was condemned to "sittin' eighteen dyetts" upon the stool of repentance. Particulars of many cases similar to the foregoing may be found in the pages of "Social Life in Scotland," by the Rev. Charles Rogers, in "Old Church Life in Scotland," by the Rev. Andrew Edgar, and in other works.

Notes bearing on this subject sometimes find their way into the newspapers, and a couple of paragraphs from the *Liverpool Mercury* may be quoted. On November 18th, 1876, it was stated that "in a church in the Black Isle, Ross-shire, on a recent Sunday, a woman who had been guilty of transgressing the seventh commandment was condemned to the 'cutty-stool,' and sat during

the whole service with a black shawl thrown over her head." A note in the issue for 22nd February, 1884, says that "one of the ringleaders in the Sabbatarian riots at Strome Ferry, in June last, was recently publicly rebuked and admonished on the 'cutty-stool,' in the Free Church, Lochcarron, for an offence against the moral code, which, according to Free Church discipline in the Highlands, could not be expiated in any other way."