

A HUMAN WONDER.

The occurrence of moles covered with fine downy hair is by no means uncommon; but the most extraordinary example of this deformity we have ever seen was brought to our office a few days since by two Spanish gentlemen. The subject is a dark-complexioned, rather short, Mexican Indian woman, of about twenty-two years of age, and who, from the singular nature of her deformity, and the history that attaches to her mother, has received the name of Maria, the orang-outang. It is stated that the mother of this woman belonged to the Indian tribe called the Quiche, inhabiting the province of Soconusco, on the Pacific coast of Mexico. At the age of twenty-five she became the servant to a Spanish family, and ten years afterward disappeared in the mountains, where she remained for several years. A Spanish merchant, so goes the tale, traveling in that part of the country, met an Indian with a child, the subject of this notice, then five years of age, and marking her peculiarly, purchased her. Both the mother and child are in a state of nudity, and the mother informed the gentleman that it was the offspring of an orang-outang. The Spaniard took the child home and reared it to the age of fifteen, when she made her escape, and sought to make her living by exhibiting herself. She was recaptured, and brought over to this country by the Spaniard who first endeavored to reclaim her. The girl, when stripped, is well proportioned, and presents precisely the appearance of having on a pair of bathing trousers, calicoe, made of the skin of some animal. The hairy surface extends to about the level of the umbilicus in front, and the sixth dorsal vertebra behind, and extends about half way down both thighs. The surface of the skin of the body generally is smooth and soft, but that of the hairy surface is blackish, coarse and furfuraceous, reminding the observer somewhat of the skin of the back of a pig; the hair is short, black, and slightly curled. The margins of the hairy surface are sharply defined. Its sensibility is stated to be as acute as that of the other parts of the body. The patient, who seemed to feel her condition acutely, has an agreeable expression of face, with full dark eyes, and an ordinary Mexican type of countenance. The supposition that she owes her parentage on one side to an orang-outang, we utterly deride; and, although she has been brought over to this country for the purpose of exhibition, we trust that so demoralizing a procedure will be prevented; yet it may be expedient to obtain a model of her for the Pathological Museum of the College of Surgeons.—*London Lancet.*

THE EXECUTIONER OF PARIS.—It seems that the famous Sampsons, who have been from father to son for many generations the executioners in the department of the Seine, including Paris, have died out, and that a German or a man of German origin by the name of Heidenreich, now occupies the position which is regarded by Europeans in general as the most horrible business in the world. The recollection of the butcheries, which, in the name of the law, or what during the great revolution was called the law, were performed by the executioner, surrounded the name and position of the executioner of Paris with a peculiar horror. He was regarded as the man of blood by preference. The present executioner of Paris, Heidenreich, is often interviewed by the journalists of the French capital. They describe him uniformly as a well informed man, whose utterances inspire much sympathy. A short time ago four or five of the French journalists called on Heidenreich, who lives in the vicinity of Enghein, about four English miles from the center of the city. They were received with great cordiality. They took coffee with him and smoked his cigars. He made them acquainted with his son, a lad of fourteen years, who, he said, had not the least idea of the terrible functions of his father. He showed them the axe, which he keeps in a special wardrobe, and they close their account of the visit with the remark that "they left Heidenreich with sentiments of the highest respect."

Heidenreich is a man of forty years of age, and of a very determined character. At certain intervals a messenger brings to his house a small bag of yellow leather. He gives his receipt and at once prepares the axe for a new execution, by grinding the edge as sharp as a razor. It weighs about eighty pounds, and is of triangular shape. He leaves his house in company with two assistants, and superintends during the night the erection of the scaffold on the Place de la Raquette. Before daylight he ascends the scaffold, fastens the axe to the block with his own hands, tries whether it moves easily through the pulleys, leaves the terrible instrument in charge of one of his assistants and proceeds to the prison. The Keeper of the prison conducts him in person to the cell of the culprit. Heidenreich asks the name of the man who is designated, and when he ascertains that he lays his hand upon his shoulder and says: "Thou belongest to me."

The executioner then gives a receipt to the director of the prison, and from this moment the culprit is called the patient, whom nobody is permitted to touch except the executioner. He ties the hands of the patient behind his back, puts a short chain on his feet, which permits the culprit to make only very short steps, and connects the chain to the hands by a rope of the exact length required. We pass the rest—it has been so often described. After the execution is accomplished our Parisian interviewers say that Heidenreich returns home, as if heart broken, and all the symptoms of despair upon his countenance. He cleans his axe as soon as he can, hides it in the wardrobe, and then attempts to find comfort in sweet talk with his boy, who tries also to dispel the gloomy thoughts of his father, of the origin of which the poor child is supposed to be ignorant.

In answer to an article in the New York Times, maintaining that in many instances the salaries of clergymen were inadequate to their necessities, a missionary writes that his wants have compelled him to sell a gold ring, which was an heirloom, a seal watch and chain, and with the consent of his wife, a pair of bracelets.

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