

[From Reynolds' Newspaper, London.]

## The Farcical Fast and the Humiliation Humbugging.

If solemn fasts, long prayers, dismal groans, imposing rites, elaborate ceremonials, and bodily prostrations could appease the anger of the gods, all the calamities that have befallen humanity had been averted, and all the nations and men upon the face of the earth would be in the enjoyment of peace, prosperity, and happiness. But such acts as these do not allay the wrath of Heaven, because such outward theatrical performances cannot expiate guilt or atone for transgression. For a man, or nation, living in the constant violation of all just and divine laws, to expect to escape punishment by the performance of certain prescribed priestly mummeries, is the acme of fatuity. There can be no surer symptom of savage stupidity than the existence of such a belief in the minds of a people; nor can there be a more open and impious mockery of Deity than for human beings to ask the Almighty to withhold the punishment due to crime, on condition that the criminals should for once acknowledge themselves miserable sinners, and submit voluntarily to some trifling bodily mortification. We therefore, denounce the National Fast day ordained by royal proclamation, as a most foul and audacious impiety—as a most disgusting and nauseating piece of hypocrisy—and a most silly, inefficacious, and ridiculous remedy for the tremendous evils from which the empire is now suffering.

The appointed fast is, moreover, a wanton and cruel piece of injustice. It is punishing the innocent instead of the guilty. It is shifting the load and the penalty of national sin from the shoulders of the sinners, to the shoulders of those who could not even, if they would, perpetrate those horrible crimes which have drawn down upon England the red vengeance which have made the plains and the cities of India a foul arena for myriads of human beings, transformed into frenzied demons, to enact all the atrocities suggested by satanic inspirations. The appointed fast-day is an impudent and clumsy attempt, on the part of our rulers, to transfer the blame of the Indian insurrection from themselves to the people. It is punishing the working and enslaved classes of England for royal and aristocratic crimes.

Why, in the name of justice and common sense, should we punish our bodies for sins of which our souls are innocent? Why should we fast for the crimes of Lord Palmerston and Prince Albert? We did not appoint a mere Court sycophant to the command of the Indian army. We did not send out an imbecile aristocrat, an emasculated Canning—to be the ruler of one hundred and eighty millions of human beings. Anson and Canning are the tools of the British Court and Cabinet—not the representatives or servants of the British people. Dalhousie and Hardinge were the pets and puppets of the British aristocracy and the East India Company—not the choice or the agents of the industrious and unrepresented people of England. We did not dethrone and spoil the native princes of India. We did not annex the kingdom of Oude. It was not the hardworking people of England who robbed, and tortured, and murdered the farmers and artisans of Hindostan. We in the face of high heaven, solemnly and fearlessly declare that we had no act, or part, in the hellish indignities and cruelties inflicted on the Hindoo women. These are the handiwork of the British Government and the East India Company. These are the doings of our Prince Consort and our Prime Minister—of Mr. Smith, of Cannon-row, and his predecessors—of the Huggs and the Mangies, of Leadenhall-street, and the million of remorseless myrmidons, civil and military, that they let loose upon the helpless and unresisting Hindoos, who have been robbed and tortured, insulted, and massacred, to an extent never before known upon the earth, and for no earthly reason than for the aggrandizement of a contemptible and rapacious section of the English nation. Let, then, those who have been enriched and ennobled by the plunder and torture of the Hindoos, fast, and implore Heaven to avert the punishment due for crimes so fiendish and unparalleled. If the working classes of England had been participants in the millions wrung from the miserable ryots of Hindostan, there would be both justice and reason in asking them to repent and humble themselves in company with the royal, noble, and honorable oppressors and robbers of India. But, inasmuch as neither the guilt nor the gain of the spoliation, torture, and massacre of the Hindoos appertains to the people of this country, we submit, with the utmost confidence, that there is neither sense nor equity in compelling them by royal proclamation to fast and repent, idle and starve, on Wednesday next—or, for that matter, on any other day.

Yet it is the working helot English class—the only class in the country innocent, or rather ignorant, of crimes perpetrated by British rulers in India—that will suffer any inconvenience or punishment by the prescribed royal and farcical humiliation. To the stated sycophants of the aristocracy, fasting and groaning for one day will be only a novel and most pleasant entertainment—scarcely less delightful than the hectic flush, the wasted form, and consumptive cough of the dying *Traviata*. To those lazy and luxurious sinners, who are bloated with rich living—who daily gorge themselves almost to bursting with the choicest viands and rarest wines, it is manifestly no punishment to abstain—supposing them, which we do not, to obey the royal mandate—for one day from food. Such abstinence would, to them, be no penance. It will be better for their health than physic. It will enable them to save a doctor's fee, and to recruit, to some extent, the health squandered in riotous living and fashionable debaucheries. By the proper observance of the fast, the fat and illustrious personages to whom our allegiance is due, will lay in a fresh

stock of strength, and thus start with increased ardor in the royal and noble path of sensuality, selfishness, and frivolity.

Thus far, then, and as far as it concerns the Queen herself, her fat spouse, her effeminate nobles, her supple-spined flunkies, and her soft-tongued sycophants, there can be no objection to the fast and humiliation. Nor do we offer any. Let them enjoy it; it is sure to do them good. And if so minded, and in case the day should hang heavy upon their hands, we have no objection to their masquerading a bit in sackcloth and ashes, which may help to convince the vulgar of the depth of their humiliation, and the intensity of their remorse for the crimes against God and humanity which they have committed, and the frightful sufferings inflicted in consequence upon thousands and millions of their fellow-subjects. If, however, they imagine that their hands can be cleansed of innocent blood, and their souls relieved of the guilt of murder, robbery, and pollution, by the mere emptying of their surcharged carcasses, by the observance of a fast-day, we can tell them that they are labouring under that judicial infatuation which ancient wisdom declared to be the infallible symptom and precursor of perdition.

This royal fast-day has another aspect more repulsive than any at which we have yet glanced. On that day, the priests of all denominations are commanded to pray to God to bless and prosper our arms. Now, the priests, no doubt, will obey. They will storm Heaven with supplications to God—the Christian God—to help our soldiers to slay and exterminate our enemies. Now, mark the character of the war for which the sanction and support of the Christian God is implored. It is a war of fierce and indiscriminate vengeance, which confounds the innocent with the guilty; a war in which no quarter is given, in which the wounded and disabled are mercilessly put to death; a war which has all the features of a wanton and fiendish butchery, and in which the Christian soldiers of England vie with, and in some instances excel, the demoniac ferocity of the fierce Moslem and the frenzied Gentoos. This is no unfounded charge. We challenge any one to prove that it is so. The letters of our officers and soldiers in the East breathe sentiments as hellish, and narrate deeds as diabolical as ever disgraced the name and defiled the nature of man. We hear of many instances in which English men, women, and children have been spared and saved by natives, at the imminent hazard of their own lives. But we have not yet heard of a single case in which a Hindoo, that has fallen into the hands of the British, has been spared. The invariable cry is 'No quarter!' 'Hang them all!'—the sick, the wounded, the innocent, and the guilty, so that they be niggers—send them out of the world in the most frightful, painful, and ignominious method that can be devised. This is horrible and cowardly, and enough to bring down upon England and Englishmen, not only the vengeance of God, but the scorn and the execration of the whole world. Mark, for example, the conduct of General Neill. He glories in having invented a new torture; he boasts of being able to carry his vengeance beyond death into the eternal hell! And, what is more horrible, the organs of the Christian English Government laud this man for such a display of fiendish ingenuity. In his letters, General Neill relates that, as the Brahmins believe that the touch of blood dooms their souls to eternal torments in hell, he compelled a Brahmin of high caste, under the infliction of the lash and the bayonet, to wipe out the blood of a person who was not proven to have been murdered by this Brahmin. After inflicting this ineffable torture upon the agonized wretch, the Christian General Neill ordered him to be hanged! Then, again, we have a Government paper, hoping that the next mail will bring tidings of the extermination of every one of the defenders of Delhi. Another officer writes that he does not exactly relish the work of stabbing the wounded, but that he never interferes to prevent the soldiers from doing so. A second writes—'Our troops are mad for revenge, and we hang the wounded that are left on the field.' And yet—after acknowledging and glorying in such hellish cruelties as these—British officers and journalists whine and howl because the rebels retaliate by committing fiendish atrocities in their turn!

Who, after the perusal of such horrors, will have the temerity to assert that the votaries of Vishnu and Islam are more cruel and inhuman than the professed followers of Christ? It is not our habit to interfere with theological tenets in this journal. We trust, therefore, to be excused for a slight departure, on the present momentous occasion, from this rule. We ask, then, the licensed expounders of the Gospel, how they can reconcile with the principles and precepts of the Christian religion, the invoking of the aid of the Almighty for the accomplishment of this vengeful butchery? We ask them, also, to take for their text, on the fast-day, the following passage from the Lord's Prayer—'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.' Our rulers and soldiers forgive the Hindoos by hanging their bodies and damning their souls. Let, then, the Almighty forgive our rulers and soldiers after the same fashion; and their doom shall be death and eternal torments. We drop the subject in sickening disgust. One would almost imagine that the priests and rulers of this country had renounced Christianity and embraced Thuggism: their cry for human blood could not have been louder than it is, if they had. If so, it is to be hoped that the people will not, in this, as in the last 'Reformation,' take their religion from the altar and the throne.

We have said that the people of England were innocent of the crimes perpetrated by their rulers in India. In this, we were wrong. If a man keeps and feeds a tiger or cobra on his premises, he is justly held responsible for any mischief which the noxious creature may commit. In the same manner, if a nation keeps and pampers

a ruthless and rapacious aristocracy, that nation is guilty of a crime against God and man—against its own and the world's well-being; and is most righteously held to be responsible for those crimes and calamities without which such cruel and obscene divinites cannot either exist or oppress.

[From the Polytechnic Review.]

## The Alpaca.

*The Alpaca; its Naturalization in the British Isles considered as a National Benefit, and as an object of immediate utility to the Farmer and Manufacturer.* By WILLIAM WALTON. Blackwood.

"By trials commenced more than twenty-five years ago, it is equally placed beyond doubt that this animal may, without any great difficulty, be naturalized among us, and made to propagate; and every day the facilities and the efficacy of the scheme to adopt it, become more apparent. The hardy nature and contented disposition of the alpaca cause it to adapt itself to almost any soil or situation, provided the heat is not oppressive, and the air pure. The best proof of its hardiness is its power to endure cold, damp, hunger and thirst, vicissitudes to which it is constantly exposed on its native mountains; while its gentle and docile qualities are evinced in its general habits of affection towards its keeper.

No animal in the creation is less affected by the changes of climate and food, nor is there any one to be found more easily domiciliated than this. It fares well while feeding below the snowy mantle which envelopes the summits, and for several months in the year clothes the sides of the Andes. As before shown, it ascends the rugged and rarely trodden mountain path with perfect safety, sometimes climbing the slippery crag in search of food, and at others instinctively seeking it on the heath, or in rocky dells sheltered by the wintry storm; at the same time that, when descending, it habituates itself to the wet and dreary ranges on the lowlands, so long as it is not exposed to the intense rays of the sun.

Many of our northern hills would try the constitution of any sheep, and yet there the weather is never so inclement or so variable as on the Cordilleras of Peru. With so many advantages, why then shall not the alpaca have an opportunity of competing with the black-faced sheep, the only breed that can exist in those wild and inhospitable lands? Of the two, the stranger would fare best on scanty and scattered food, at the same time affording to the owner a far better remuneration. When ordinary sheep are removed from a cold to a warm climate, the wool becomes thin and coarse, until at length it degenerates into hair. This is the case with those taken from England to the West Indies; whereas the merinos conveyed from Spain to Peru, and bred upon the Andes slopes, yield a fleece which, when well dressed, is preferred by the manufacturer to that of the parent stock.

As regards the alpaca, we bring a lanigrous animal from a dreary and barren situation to one equally well suited to its habits, and at the same time infinitely healthier and better adapted for feeding. The result, therefore, could not fail to be favorable. The atmospheric changes in our climate can have little or no influence on an animal constitutionally hardy and so well coated; and by the adoption of this stock we not only secure to ourselves a new raw material for our manufactures, but also an additional provision of butcher's meat.

If the animals take to the soil, and this, as before observed, they have done even in situations by no means well chosen, an increased weight of both fleece and carcass must follow. An improvement in the quality of the wool may be equally looked for; it being abundantly proved that pasture has a greater influence on its fineness than climate. The staple, also, cannot fail to grow longer, if the animal has a regular supply of suitable food; and, for reasons already explained, this is more readily met with on our mountains than on those of Peru, where the flocks are exposed to great privations.

In other respects, the alpaca would prove an economical stock. It is freer from constitutional diseases than ordinary sheep, and less subject to those arising from repetition and exposure to rain; neither are its young liable to those accidents which befall the lamb. The mothers are provident and careful nurses; nor do the young ones require any aid to enable them to suck. Except at the rutting season, these animals stand in need of no extra attention; neither are they predisposed to take cold. In this respect, the alpaca is pre-eminently favored by nature. Its skin is thick and hard, and being covered with an impervious coat, it is not injured by moisture. Snows and storms never affect these animals. Unhurt they pass through the utmost rigor of the elements, and hence the precautions adopted by our shepherds on some bleak localities, with them would be superfluous.

Another remarkable feature in the alpaca is, that it does not often transpire; for which reason, and its peculiarly cleanly habits, the fleece does not require washing before it is taken from the back. Although often confined to regions, where

'Snow piled on snow, each mass appears  
The gather'd winter of a thousand years.'

the alpaca is not subject to catarrhs, or to those disorders which disable the limbs. The chest being guarded by a callosity, or cushion, which comes in contact with the ground while the animal reposes, the vital parts are not injured should the flock be obliged to pass the night in a damp or unsheltered situation. Besides being free from the diseases incidental to common sheep, the alpaca is less exposed to what are called 'outward accidents.' The facility with which this animal escapes from the fatal consequences of a snowstorm is a valuable property. One shudders at reading the graphic description, given by the Etterick Shepherd, of those sudden and awful cal-

amities which have so often overtaken the farmer in the Scotch Highlands, when

'The feathery clouds, condensed and fur'd  
In columns sweep the quaking glen;  
Destruction down the vale was hurPd  
O'er bleating flocks and wandering men.'

I know not whether, in our hemisphere, the winters have become more severe than in ancient times; but since the well-known 'Thirteen Days' Drift,' supposed to have taken place in the year 1660, at which period so large a portion of the Scotch flocks was destroyed, and so many persons perished, it is a fact that we have had no less than thirty-six inclement seasons during which the losses among sheep were incalculable. Nor have these misfortunes been confined to Scotland. The fall of snow which occurred towards the close of February 1807, was so heavy in England, that in exposed situations the herds and flocks extensively suffered. Of the large number of sheep, on that occasion, overwhelmed in the Borough Fen, near Stamford, only 600 could be dug out alive, the rest being completely buried in the snow. Upwards of 2000 perished on Romney Marsh, and the desolation equally spread to other places.

In our islands, sheep are sometimes smothered by the snow falling down upon them from the hills, or perish in the accumulation of drift. Frequently they have not the courage or the strength to extricate themselves; but from his greater size, boldness and activity, the alpaca is better able to contend with the storm. In their own country, these animals have an unerring foresight of approaching danger, and, collecting their young around them, seek the best shelter which the locality affords. After a tempest seldom is one missing, although they are, as it were, left to themselves, and the country bare of trees. Nothing can be more interesting than to see a flock of Andes sheep overtaken by a storm, and crossing a valley, with the drift reaching to their very backs. Raising their heads in a bold and majestic manner, the old males take the first line, and by pushing through the barrier, or jumping upon it when resistance is too great, succeed in opening or beating down the snow, so as to form a path for the weaker ones to follow.—[pp. 48-50; 55-61.]

**SUPREMACY OF MARONITE PRIESTS.**—In spiritual, nay, in all family matters, amongst the Maronites, the priest rules supreme. Constantly prowling about from house to house, not an incident, however trivial, escapes his vigilance, while the constant and ever-recurring instrumentality of the confessional satisfies the utmost cravings of a curiosity that is only appeased by indulgence.

No Maronite peasant dares to marry without getting the consent of the priest. Nor, indeed, is this submission to the priest astonishing; custom and ancient usage have made it hereditary throughout the entire population; and, lest education might in the least degree dissipate the prestige which time has so thoroughly implanted in the breasts of these simple people, the very school books which are placed in the hands of their children are carefully compiled so as to increase the natural awe with which they regard their spiritual guides.

In a Maronite catechism the following queries and answers occur:

'Q. If you were to see an angel and a priest walking together, which should you adore the most?'

'A. The priest.'

'Q. And how would you show your adoration for the priest?'

'A. By falling down and kissing the ground on which he is walking.'

'Q. Why is the priest to be adored more than the angel?'

'A. Because he is so vastly superior to the angel.'

'Q. Why so?'

'A. Because the angel is a minister and servant of God, whereas the priest can command God to descend from heaven, as in the mass!'

The Maronite priests also sell localities in heaven to their parishioners, by the yard, and many a superstitious Maronite in the Lebanon has, at some period or other of his life, paid a round sum to his priest for a yard or a few yards in the celestial regions, in the full belief that his right is thus secured to him for ever.—[Colonel Churchill's Mount Lebanon, &c.]

When Dr. Franklin's mother-in-law discovered that young man a hawking for her daughter, that good old lady said she did not know so well about giving her daughter to a printer—there were already two printing offices in the United States, and she was not certain the country would support them. It was plain that young Franklin would depend for support on the profits of a third, and this was a rather doubtful chance.

Three or four times a couple appeared before a clergyman for marriage; but the bridegroom was drunk, and he refused to tie the knot. On the last occasion he expressed his surprise that so respectable a looking girl was not ashamed to appear at the altar with a man in such a state. The poor girl broke into tears, and said she could not help it. 'And why, pray?' inquired the minister. 'Because, sir, he won't come when he is sober!'

**SUN FLOWERS.**—Near Edith, (S. C.) says the Mobile Advertiser, a crop is about to be gathered of four acres of sun flowers. The seed will be used for oil and to feed cattle and poultry, as in the South of France; but the chief object is to obtain the fibres of the stalks for paper-making. If the cultivation succeeds it is expected to supply abundant materials for fine writing and printing paper, as well as fine and coarse paper-hanging.