

A MODERN STAGE TRICK.

Those philanthropists and legislators who have of late been making a study of capital punishment will be interested, perhaps, in seeing a performance at Barnum's circus, in which one of the performers is executed twice every day. The means employed is the old fashioned "defunct" method of decapitation, and although this lacks the refinement and scientific precision of execution by electricity, it avoids, on the other hand, the delays and lawsuits that ordinarily attend this method of punishment.

The poor clown who suffers the death penalty twelve times a week usually enters the ring, and after performing certain acrobatic feats, commits some crime against his fellows, for which he is condemned to die. He is placed upon the block, his head is covered with a cloth. Harlequin approaches as executioner, and begins to cut with a huge knife across the victim's neck. In a moment all is over, the cloth is removed, and Harlequin lifts in the air the severed head. Delighted with his trophy, he carries it about under his arm, places it in a charger in the center of the ring, and finally takes it back to the block wrapped up in the cloth, and places it by the side of the headless trunk. He removes the cloth, and then in sport places a lighted cigarette in its mouth. In a little while you notice that the cigarette begins to glow, smoke comes from the nose, and the eyes roll. Evidently the head has come to life. Not able to bear the horrible sight, he throws the cloth again over the head, seizes it, places it in its original position on the shoulders of the victim, kneads it to the body, and suddenly the figure rises, head and all, and bows to the audience—an orthodox clown. The trick is a good one, and takes with the audience. The way in which it is done is explained in the lower cut.

As soon as the clown lies on the box and his head has been covered with the cloth, he passes his head through an invisible opening in the top of the box. An assistant inside of the box passes up the dummy head, which is an exact fac-simile of the clown's head and face. This is seized by Harlequin, who makes such sport of it as he sees fit. When he places it by the side of the trunk, in reality he passes it through an opening in the top of the box to the assistant within, who substitutes his own head (which is painted to match the other two) in place of it. The other steps in the performance readily follow. The cloth which the harlequin always carries conceals all the sleight of hand, and the whole performance is a series of surprises.

Another performance of a somewhat similar character was recently performed at a theater in this city, in which a clown throws himself on a sofa and is cut in two by a harlequin. One part of the sofa with the body remains in one part of the stage while the other part with the legs and feet (which are all the time vigorously kicking) disappear through a wing at the other end of the stage. The action is very sudden and the effect startling. Of course in this case there are two men similarly dressed. The head and body of one of them appears at the head of the sofa, while the body of the second clown is concealed in the box under the seat at the other end of the sofa, the feet and legs alone being exposed.

An Electric Fire Ball.

At Long Branch, N. J., April 27, during a rain storm, the 55 foot flag-staff about 50 feet away from Life Saving Station 2 on Sandy Hook was struck by a ball of fire as large as a barrel head. The topmast and main spar were shattered from top to bottom. Surfman Joseph Riddle sat at a window and saw the ball shoot from the eastern sky, preceded by a bright white light, which illuminated the vicinity of the station. Riddle noticed a black streak run down the topmast, and the ball of fire struck the mast with a report like that of a cannon. It did not linger as balls of electric light sometimes do, but disappeared like a flash of lightning. No thunder or lightning had been heard or seen before or afterward, and this did not resemble lightning.

Water Rights.

It is frequently claimed that those situated at the head of a fall have certain rights and privileges over those below them. Except in peculiar cases such is not the case. For instance, a party owning all the lands on both sides of a stream, both above and below the fall, may construct a dam and form a pond, and dispose of a certain mill site, and guarantee them certain rights in the use of all the water in the stream, should their necessities require it. He may also sell other sites

Eugenol.

The oil of cloves has for a long time been used as a local remedy for the relief of toothache, but no scientific investigation as to the actual value of the local application of this drug has yet been reported. Liebreich and Langgaard state that the oil of cloves applied to the uninjured skin first produced reddening and then anæsthesia. Recently Dr. Leubuscher has determined the presence in oil of cloves of an active principle, which he terms eugenol. He has made a number of experiments as to the practical value of this principle, of which the following present his more important results:

Eugenol is a clear, dark yellow fluid, in its chemical composition allied to the higher phenols. In water it is insoluble, but readily soluble in alcohol and ether. It has an odor like the oil of cloves, and has also been described under the name of eugenic acid. If a drop of eugenol is instilled into the conjunctival sac of a rabbit, symptoms of irritation are first produced, the secretion of tears being increased, and the conjunctiva becoming somewhat reddened. After the first few minutes the sensitiveness of the cornea utterly disappears, while the conjunctiva is greatly depressed in sensibility, although not to the same degree as the cornea, the anæsthesia lasting for from ten to fifteen minutes. The deeper parts of the eye and the ciliary body are uninfluenced. In experiments to perform iridectomy in a rabbit under the influence of anæsthesia produced by eugenol, reaction occurred at the moment at which the iris was touched, while the division of the cornea was unassociated with any

expression of pain. No after effects, with the exception of slight reddening of the conjunctiva, followed the use of eugenol; the cornea remained unclouded. Similar results followed the application of eugenol to the conjunctiva of the dog, although the symptoms of irritation were here somewhat more marked than in the rabbit. The influence of eugenol was also tested on the mucous membrane of the lips, tongue, and gum of man, and at first produced slight burning, and then considerable reduction in sensibility, lasting from five to fifteen minutes. Complete anæsthesia could not, however, be produced by this remedy. On the mucous membrane of the female genitals there was slight reduction of sensibility, produced through the use of eugenol, it being more marked on the mucous membrane of the vagina than elsewhere. Applied to the uninjured skin, neither burning nor reddening was produced, but slight reduction of the sensibility was produced in from five to six minutes. Although these results are not very striking, the author, nevertheless, tested the practical value of eugenol, and found that the best results were obtained when it was combined with a seventy per cent solution of lanolin ointment; applied to the skin in eczema, it reduced the severity of the itching; second, in ocular surgery, the use of eugenol is not to be recommended, since in man the instillation of a dilute solution of eugenol into the conjunctival sac produces severe reaction.—*Therapeutic Gazette.*

A Caution to Hard Drinkers.

Inebriates are always dangerous subjects to administer ether or chloroform for anæsthesia. In all cases the heart is weakened, and fatty degeneration of various degrees is present. Any substance which lowers its action is perilous, because of the inability of the heart to recover, and the tendency to paralysis. But drinkers have always fatty hearts, and sudden

paralysis is likely to appear with the first inhalation of chloroform. In chronic cases of inebriety, where extensive organic changes have taken place in the brain and spinal cord, paralysis of the respiratory centers occurs first, and respiration stops before the action of the heart. In such cases artificial respiration may prevent death if promptly used. In all cases a sudden checking in respiration and heart beat where ether or chloroform are used is a danger signal of the gravest importance.—*Quarterly Journal of Inebriety.*

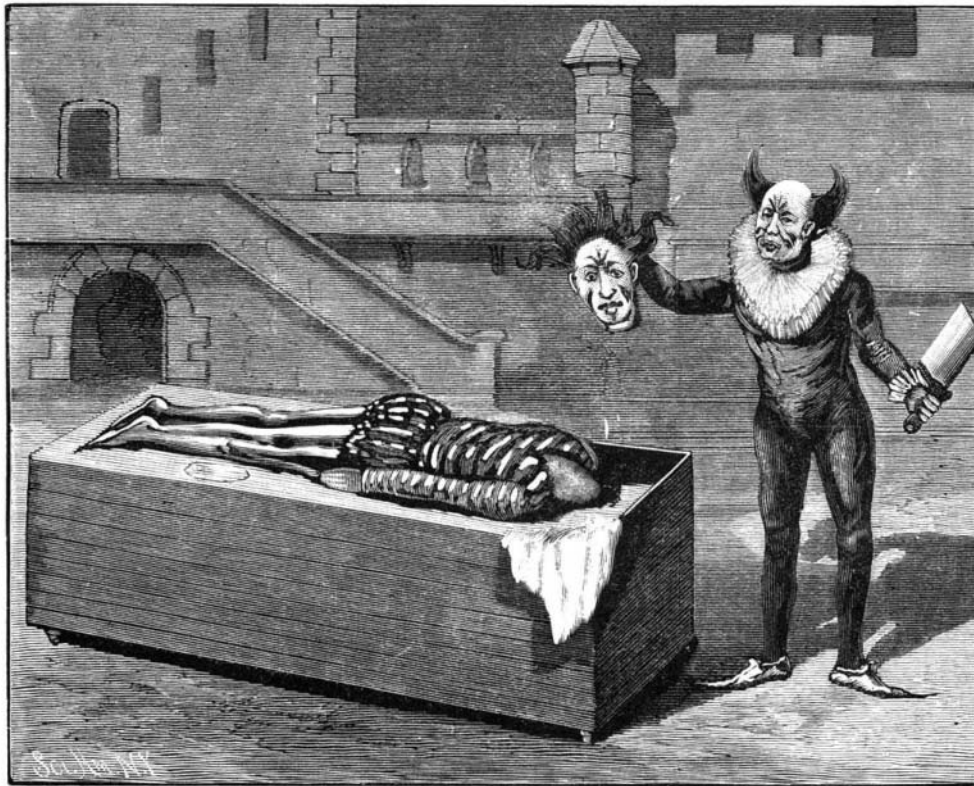


Fig. 1.—A NOVEL STAGE TRICK—DECAPITATION.

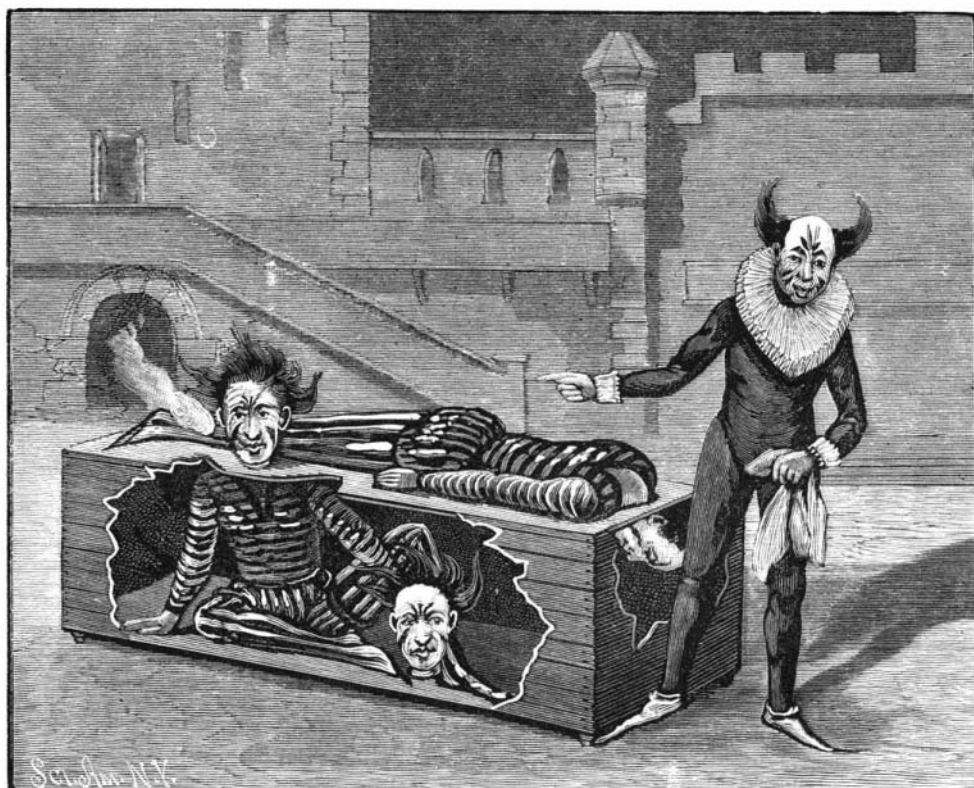


Fig. 2.—EXPLANATION OF THE DECAPITATION TRICK.

and even the State has no legal right to grant the privilege of taking water from such lakes as are under State control, without the consent of the riparian owners of the lands situated upon the outlets thereof.—*C. R. Tompkins, in the Modern Miller.*

THE *Rural New-Yorker* thinks if those who have voted for the golden-rod to be the emblematic national flower were compelled to work a day or so pulling the weed out by the roots, they would change their votes.