

The Story of the Umbrella

The history of the umbrella can be traced beyond the classic ages of Greece and Rome into the dim and doubtful twilight of Chaldean antiquity (says the 'Pall Mall Gazette'). Layard in his excavations on the site of Nineveh, of which so many trophies are to be seen in the British Museum, unearthed a bas-relief representing an Assyrian monarch sitting in state under some variety of parasol. In China and Japan umbrellas have been in use as far back as our knowledge goes. The flimsy little paper Japanese sunshades had screened the coquettish heads of slant-eyed musmes for many generations before it occurred to British housewives of the middle classes to use tasteless imitations of them as fire-grate ornaments. What was more extraordinary (says a writer in the 'Home Messenger') was that the full war attire of the Japanese warrior included not only a fan, but an umbrella of imposing dimensions.

It was a long time before the umbrella became, so to speak, acclimated in this country. In an old illuminated manuscript copy of the Psalms of David, now in the British Museum, there is a representation of a king with an umbrella held over him. No doubt the use of umbrellas in Eastern lands was a matter of common knowledge at that time, through the observations of travellers. In the 17th century they appear to have come into use in Italy, and about the beginning of the 18th English ladies seem to have adopted them to some extent; but the use of them was looked upon as a fashionable feminine refinement, and a man would no more be seen with one than with a lady's workbag.

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A WORD OF WARNING.—There cannot, unfortunately, be the slightest doubt that that dreadful scourge, Consumption, has obtained a strong hold in New Zealand, and anything which will tend to counteract its terrible ravages should be welcomed as a boon and a blessing to mankind. A slight cold, neglected in its earlier stages, is frequently the precursor of phthisis, and many a valuable life could have been saved had an effectual remedy been applied before the disease had established itself in the system. Such a remedy is to be found in TUSSICURA, and the innumerable testimonials received by the inventor of this preparation, which has earned a world-wide reputation, prove conclusively that it is a certain cure for all pulmonary complaints.***

Some English Jesuits.

Commenting on the proposal of the Protestant Alliance that the Jesuits be expelled from the United Kingdom the 'Catholic Herald' says:—The three clergymen proceeded against are typical specimens of the English Jesuit. Father Gerard is a member of one of the best-known families in Britain. The brother of this disloyal intriguer (in Protestant Alliance eyes) is only a Major-General in the army of King Edward VII. Father Sydney Smith was himself a Protestant—as some of the best-known Jesuits were—and Father Thurston is so imbued with profound trust in British fairplay and an implicit confidence in the soundness of the Jesuit position, that he is doing his best to have the charges brought against the Jesuits in England decided by a jury of English public men, nominated by the 'Referee' newspaper or at its instance. The idea that the Jesuits are a disloyal, mischievous, and useless Order is too ludicrous to be argued. There is a Father Ross, of Bladensburg, S.J., there is Father Russell, a brother of the late Lord Russell of Killowen, there is Father Day, S.J., who is the son of Mr Justice Day, Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J., is the son of one Colonel Vaughan and brother of another.

The Jesuit colleges in England have probably sent out more pupils to fight and fall on South African battlefields during the present war than all the other Catholic colleges of England combined. One of the most renowned of recent V.C. heroes was Captain Kenna, a Stonyhurst man. Even those who, like ourselves, take their own view of the war and the British army, recognise that facts of this kind render absurd the contention of the Protestant Alliance that the Jesuit Order is a danger to the British constitution. The strangest, and yet the most amusing aspect of this Protestant Alliance proceedings is that the same Protestant Alliance would be the first to cry out if Protestant clergymen were expelled, or their expulsion attempted, from any Catholic State. There is not the slightest attempt to show any cause why the Jesuits should be expelled. The whole case is rested on the letter of an obsolete law, and on that alone. The Protestant Alliance, like Shylock, cries out for the strict fulfilment of its bond. Like Shylock, it may have more than it bargains for before the case is through.

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