

would not explain

From these accounts the reader may be inclined to conclude that Partick sixty years ago was stupidly, even blameably, steeped in superstition, and he may rejoice somewhat egotistically that those days of gross ignorance and mythic mist are for ever gone, dispelled by the sharp intelligence of the modern mind. Let us be just to our forefathers, however, while thankful that we enjoy a greater measure of light. There is no reason to suppose that in the bulk our natural intelligence is greater than theirs, but our patrimony is greater. We inherit advantages which a few great thinkers have achieved for us; but unless we ourselves are great thinkers, and by our mental labour have added to our patrimony, not merely fattened upon it, we are not entitled to boast. To those men who wrought out for us the problem of steam-power the best thanks of this age are due, for to them, with their physics and mechanics, our present mental elevation is chiefly attributable. They have given us cheap

and rapid locomotion, which our forefathers had not; and travel is of itself an education. They are the fathers of our extensive manufacturing industry, whereby we are brought into relationship with all the world; but, above all, to them we owe it that we have cheap literature. By these agencies many of the old superstitions are being rooted out; at all events they do not crop up so prominently as heretofore, and may ultimately vanish. At the same time, let any one at this day mix with the present population, and hold with them the same social, confidential relationship which existed when the town was a small village; let him become one with the people, young and old, in their hates, their loves, their fears, in personal and family vicissitudes, and listen to their unreserved discourse, and he shall discover that these superstitious beliefs still linger, being woven into the very life of the people, and influencing every action. These ideas, still so widely diffused, and suffusing all our social and religious existence, shall not be eradicated by belief in any theological dogma, however true, unless accompanied with a knowledge of physical science; but we fear these days are yet at a great distance. It may be said that such superstitious ideas are now-a-days confined to the poor and uneducated; certainly among them they prevail to a greater extent, in grosser forms, and are exhibited with less reserve. An educated woman does not now cross the palm of a fortune-teller with a silver coin, nor an educated man consult a wizard to charm away an evil eye, or arrest the progress of disease in his child, but superstitions may be found cropping up in another form. In proof of this, we will confine ourselves to the narration of what took place a

few years ago within the burgh of Partick, the actors in which were educated men and women, all of whom would pity a poor uneducated person for holding the vulgar belief that the spirits of the departed haunted the living as ghosts, or that fairies could spirit into any place unseen. But hear what follows:—

In a public institution within the burgh there was a servant maid, an uneducated person, named Anne. She was what is termed by spirit-world mesmerists a medium, and under the influence of a certain medical professor (an educated man surely) she readily passed into the trance. While in this state (so her friends said) her spirit would leave her body, and at the request or will of the operator visit the spirits of the departed and hold converse with them, fetching and carrying messages from earth to heaven or hell. This is doubtless a vast improvement on the old mode of waiting the appearance of a ghost for obtaining information from the dead; it prevents the nervous shock which the appearance of a ghost often gave; it is capable of being turned to suit our convenience; it enables us to satisfy our curiosity, which ghosts seldom did; and, also, as the sequel will show, it places in our hands direct means of aiding the work of good upon the earth. In order to ascertain the habitat of a certain Paisley dominie, Anne was put into the trance and sent on the voyage of discovery. While on earth the poor dominie was considered a sad heretic, of whose future prospects the very worst was to be *feared*, for he differed widely in his theology from his friend the anxious inquirer on the present occasion. It appears that while the spirit of Anne was absent from her

body and holding converse in the unseen world, her inquiries, and all she said to them, were made audibly by her tongue, so that by means of this the unmesmerized mortals could judge of what was passing, and suggest questions and answers. To the astonishment of the inquirer, in this instance Anne found the unorthodox schoolmaster among the saved in heaven. And not content with answering some of Anne's questions, he made certain inquiries of his mortal audience. While on earth he had two sisters who were dependent on him, and with true human feelings he desired to know their present circumstances. Being instructed what to answer, Anne replied that they were in great poverty. The brother, on hearing this, declared that he would go at once and represent their case at the throne of Christ. Next day the two sisters were, by the kindness of one or more benevolent ladies, placed in comfortable circumstances, in which they still remain.

Again, in order to settle the troubled mind of an anxious theological inquirer, who encountered difficulty in understanding the meaning of Paul in some portions of his 9th chapter of the Romans, Anne's spirit was despatched to make inquiry at the fountain-head. She had no difficulty in finding the apostle, who received her in an affable manner, but, in reply to her question, quoted Pilate's words, "What I have written I have written." That this was not uttered in reproof was made plain by his adding that beyond this answer he was not permitted to go. He had a companion with him, of whom Anne had taken little notice till Paul asked her permission to introduce his friend John the Baptist. Upon the introduction, she looked up at John

in a surprised manner and said, "Oh, I see you have got your head on now." Whereat the two went off laughing.

Our readers may suppose that we are trying our hand at caricature. We assure them that, with the exception of names, they are told as near as possible as they were told to us, along with a number of other examples, by one who was present at some of the *seances* when they took place, and they were told to us as positive evidence coming within their own observation of the truth of the spiritual affinities of mesmerism. When such things are done and believed in by educated men, need we boast of our freedom from superstition? Of the two, for our part we would sooner adhere to the simple faith in wraiths and brownies than to such manifestation of pride, superstition, and blasphemy. In connection with this it is worthy of notice how extremes meet. Between three thousand and four thousand years ago, certain idolatrous nations were in the habit of erecting tombs of wood or stone, wherein were laid their dead, and on which they placed a *teraphim*, through which they consulted the spirits of their departed friends and ancestors. The man of modern culture substitutes for a *teraphim* his servant or his furniture, and consults all and sundry departed spirits through her or his chairs and tables.

Leaving now these survivals of ancient religious relics—at least we think they are so—which we call superstitions, we will give a few different survivals of ancient customs, some of which are not less interesting; and so far as observations go, some are becoming extinct in Partick, while others remain

in a modified form from what was practized in our youth. We refer to children's games and amusements, which were often imitations of the acts of men, and they contain sometimes relics of important social and political matters; and where this cannot be traced, they are interesting, as they are survivals of games found to have been in vogue among children thousands of years ago in different countries of the world.

There was a game common fifty years ago which was played by three boys. The first stood with his back to a wall, the second bowed himself down with his head in front of the first boy, the third rode on the back of the second boy; the first boy acted as judge between the two. The boy riding held up his hand and showed so many fingers, saying "Buck, buck, how many fingers do I hold up?" This was repeated until the boy who was down guessed aright, when they changed places, the three taking the different positions in rotation. This same game, exactly in the same fashion, is said to have been played in the streets of Jerusalem two thousand years ago, and at a later date in ancient Rome. This and the following we have been on the outlook for these ten years, but have not once seen them played in Partick. The other game to which we refer required a number of boys to play it. One boy took the same position as the first in the former game; the second boy was blindfolded, and bowed his head down on the front of the other, so that he could not see the boy that was consulting him, which was done thus: A boy put his hand upon the back of the one blindfolded, while the boy standing repeated the following rhyme:—

“ Hurly, burly, trumpet race,
 The cow gaed up the market place;
 Go east, or go west,
 Go to the crow’s nest,
 Where will this one go?”

The blindfolded boy then names a place where this one was to go and stand. This was repeated till all the boys in the game had been assigned their stations. The second boy then had his bandage taken from his eyes, and having seen that every boy was standing in his appointed place, he shouted “hurly, hurly, hurly,” upon which they all started and ran towards him. He who was last of arriving had to creep through between the legs of all the others as they stood in open file, while they with their bonnets struck him behind. In dirty weather the players arranged themselves in two rows, and the last arrived walked between them, when they struck him as before. This is also a very ancient game. This selection of the hindmost may be a survival of the old Scotch legend concerning compacts made with the *deil*. When his satanic majesty had taught a number the *black art*, he claimed one of his pupils as his fee, and this one he selected by setting them all a-running, whereupon he caught the most laggard, hence the proverb, “Deil take the hindmost.” A story is told of one more cunning than the rest, who, being hindmost, ran with his face to the moon, thus throwing his shadow behind him, which the deil was bound to take, and that man was ever after shadowless.

Jamieson refers to a game he calls *Tappie Towsie*, and gives the following formula for it. A boy takes hold of the forelock and says, “Tappie Towsie, will you be my man?”

If the other answers "Yes," then the first says, "Come to me, then, come to me, then," and pulls him by the lock, which he holds in his hand, to his side; but if the other says "No," he pushes him back again, saying, "Gae frae me, then, gae frae me, then."

We think that this is only the selection of sides for a game, at least it was so with us in Partick. We had a game which I have seen played within these few years, which was a fight-game. A portion of ground was marked off, and equal sides selected; one party took possession of the ground, the other tried to dislodge them; every boy had to have his hands under his arms and hop on one foot, and they then pushed or fought shoulder to shoulder. In selecting the sides for this combat, there was first a captain for each side appointed, and they then selected their men in the way described by Jamieson, taking each one by the forelock and leading him to the camp, simply asking him if he would fight with him. A refusal was treated as a refusal to play, and it was unfair to take one who had refused to engage when chosen in the proper order of selection by the opposition.

We find that Jamieson, as well as others, are of opinion that this form of taking by the forelock is a vestige of ancient manners, representing the mode in which a superior received an inferior as bondman. The law ran thus:—"The third kind of nativitie or bondage is, when ane fre man, to the end he may have the maintainance of ane great and potent man, renders himself to be his bondman in his court by the hair of his forehead; and gif he thereafter withdraws himself, or flees away frae his maister, or denies to him his

nativitie, his maister may prove him to be his bondman by an assise before the Justice, chalenging him that he sic ane day, sic ane year, compeered in his court, and there yielded himself to him to be his slave and bondman. And when any man is adjudged and deserned to be native and bondman to any maister, the maister may take him by the nose and reduce him to his former slavery."

This form of rendering by the hair seems rather to have had a heathenish origin. The consecrating the hair of the head is of very ancient date. The shaving of the head was common amongst the Jews when they made a vow of dedication. It was adopted by the Monks and early Christians when they dedicated themselves to some particular saint, or entered into any religious order. Hence it seems to have been adopted as a civil token of servitude. In the fifth century, Clovis committed himself to St. Germen *by the hair of the head*, and those who thus devoted themselves were termed the servants of God. In civil matters it was such a symbol of servitude, that to seize or drag any person by the hair of the head was considered a great affront, and offence against civil law. In Saxony a fine of 120s. was imposed upon any one guilty of it, while the laws of some other nations made it a capital offence. Thus, in this boyish game there may be a survival of an ancient and, to those who used it, a solemn form of dedicating oneself to God or man.

The game of *Tectotum* is regarded by us as suitable only for the youngest children. The mode of playing it is so well known that it need not be described. Amongst Partick children it was used as a mode of

gambling for such objects as pins, marbles, or buttons, and the structure of the *totum* was simple; but in ancient times, and among rude nations in our own times, the *totum* is elaborately carved and ornamented, and the purposes for which it is employed are of a more serious nature. We select a few instances from Tyler's "Primitive Culture," from which we have derived much information. "In the Tonga Islands, in Mariner's time, the principal purpose for which this was solemnly performed was to inquire if a sick person would recover. Prayer was made aloud to the patron god of the family to direct the nut (a cocoa-nut), which was then spun, and its direction at rest indicated the intention of the god. On other occasions, when the cocoa-nut was merely spun for amusement, no prayer was made, and no credit given to the result. The Rev. G. Turner finds this game common in the Samcan Islands. A company sit in a circle, the cocoa-nut is spun in an open space in the centre, and the oracular answer is according to the person towards whom the monkey-face of the nut is turned when it stops spinning. The islanders use this as a means of divination to discover thieves, and it is still used for casting lots, or for amusement for forfeits in games. There are traces of this Tee-totum divination in New Zealand.

Divining by casting lots, and drawing cuts by straws, or small pieces of stick of different lengths, used by us in games, was in ancient times a most serious appeal to God's judgment where men felt that the case was beyond their wisdom, and these methods of appeal were always accompanied with prayers and rhythmical formulas. The Old Testament has many instances of this

mode of divining or appealing to God by lot. In our games, when deciding by lot, there was a formula repeated while we drew our cut or lot; it was also repeated during play—

“Cress, cross, I wish you may loss,
Fine fun for me to win.”

These simple games and amusements are no doubt survivals of old and important matters of history and manners, of which they are seemingly parodied forms, thus perpetuated in our everyday customs, either by ourselves or our children, their apparent triviality preventing us thinking anything about their meaning or importance. Many of them are so trifling we feel almost ashamed to speak of them, but these often have the highest origin. Take for illustration one of our common nursery stories, which we used to listen to with intense interest. Chambers, in his “Popular Rhymes of Scotland,” gives it very full. His version differs slightly from the way in which it was told us by our mother and grandmother with never-failing interest. This is our version of it:—

“There was ance an auld wife that lived in a wee house by hersel’, and one day when she went out she fand a twal-pennies, so she gaed awa’ to the market and cofferd a fine kid, which she carried hame and made a pet of it. One day she says to the kid, ‘Kid, kid, will you keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries?’

“‘Deed no,’ said the kid, ‘I’ll no keep the house till ye gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries.’

“Then the wife says to the dog, ‘Dog, dog, bite kid, kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries.’

“‘Deed no,’ says the dog, ‘I winna bite kid, for kid ne’er did me ony ill.’

“Then the wife says to the staff, ‘Staff, staff, strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries.’

“‘Deed no,’ says the staff, ‘I winna strike the dog, for the dog ne’er did me ony ill.’

“Then the wife said to the fire, ‘Fire, fire, burn the staff, the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries.’

“‘Deed no,’ says the fire, ‘I winna burn the staff, for the staff ne’er did me ony ill.’

“Then the wife said to the water, ‘Water, water, slokin the fire, the fire winna burn the staff, and the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries.’

“‘Deed no,’ said the water, ‘I winna slokin the fire, for the fire ne’er did me ony ill.’

“Then the wife said, ‘Ox, ox, drink the water, the water winna slokin the fire, the fire winna burn the staff, the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries.’

“‘Deed no,’ said the ox, ‘I winna drink the water, for the water ne’er did me ony ill.’

“Then the wife said to the axe, ‘Axe, axe, fell the ox, the ox winna drink the water, the water winna slokin the fire, the fire winna burn the staff, the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o’ berries.’

“‘Deed no,’ said the axe, ‘I winna fell the ox, for the ox ne’er did me ony ill.’

“Then said the wife to the smith, ‘Smith, smith, hammer

the axe, the axe winna fell the ox, the ox winna drink the water, the water winna slokin the fire, the fire winna burn the staff, the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o' berries.'

"'Deed no,' said the smith, 'I winna hammer the axe, for the axe ne'er did me ony ill.'

"Then the wife said to the rope, 'Rope, rope, hang the smith, the smith winna hammer the axe, the axe winna fell the ox, the ox winna drink the water, the water winna slokin the fire, the fire winna burn the staff, the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o' berries.'

"'Deed no,' said the rope, 'I winna hang the smith, for the smith ne'er did me ony ill.'

"Then the wife said to the mouse, 'Mouse, mouse, cut the rope, the rope winna hang the smith, the smith winna hammer the axe, the axe winna fell the ox, the ox winna drink the water, the water winna slokin the fire, the fire winna burn the staff, the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o' berries.'

"'Deed no,' said the mouse, 'I winna cut the rope, for the rope ne'er did me ony ill.'

"Then the wife said to the cat, 'Cat, cat, kill the mouse, the mouse winna cut the rope, the rope winna hang the smith, the smith winna hammer the axe, the axe winna fell the ox, the ox winna drink the water, the water winna slokin the fire, the fire winna burn the staff, the staff winna strike the dog, the dog winna bite kid, and kid winna keep the house till I gang and buy a bonny bus o' berries.'

"So the cat to the mouse, and the mouse to the rope, and the rope to the smith, and the smith to the axe, and the axe

to the ox, and the ox to the water, and the water to the fire, and the fire to the staff, and the staff to the dog, and the dog to the kid, and the kid keepit the house till the wife gaed and bought her bonny bus o' berries."

The original of this is an old Jewish allegory; when it was written is not known. Tyler, in his "Primitive Culture," refers to it, and, also, a writer in the *Sunday Magazine* for 1870, in an article upon "Passover Observances," who therein gives a literal translation, which we copy, and by which the reader will see how closely the type and antitype resemble each other. The writer in the *Sunday Magazine* considers "The house that Jack built" as the undoubted product of this allegory; evidently he was not acquainted with the simple Scotch story of "Kid, kid:"—

"Considering the enormous antiquity of this allegory, who shall say that we have not here found the archetype of the favourite nursery legend of 'The house that Jack built?'

"One kid, one kid, which my father bought for two zoos.
One kid, one kid.

"There came the cat and ate the kid which my father bought for two zoos. One kid, one kid.

"There came the dog and bit the cat that ate the kid which my father bought for two zoos. One kid, one kid.

"There came the stick and struck the dog which bit the cat that ate the kid which my father bought, &c., &c.

"There came the fire and burnt the stick that struck the dog that bit the cat that ate, &c., &c.

"There came the water and quenched the fire that burnt the stick that struck the dog that bit, &c., &c.

"There came the ox and drank the water that quenched the fire that burnt the stick that struck the dog, &c., &c.

“There came the killer and killed the ox that drank the water that quenched the fire, &c., &c.

“There came the Angel of Death and killed the killer that killed the ox that drank the water, &c., &c.

“There came the Lord and killed the Angel of Death that killed the killer that killed the ox that drank the water that quenched the fire that burnt the stick that struck the dog that bit the cat that eat the kid which my father bought for two zoos. One kid, one kid.

“The best authorities among the Jews agree to regard this curious production with great reverence, and speak of it as a poem containing a parabolic description of incidents in the history of their nation, mingled with the prophetic foreshadowing of events which are yet to come. The most commonly received interpretation makes the “One kid” refer to Israel, which was the one peculiar nation on the face of all the earth. The ‘two zoos’ (a Talmudical coin, the precise value of which it is not easy to fix according to the rate of English money) will then stand for the two tables of the law which God gave by the hand of Moses.

“The ‘cat’ will represent Babylon—the usual symbol of which is a lion, for which the domestic animal is here substituted—which devoured Israel in the days of the Captivity.

“The ‘dog’ is Persia, which overthrew Babylon. This is a name which is constantly applied to Persia in the Talmud.

“The ‘stick’ is Greece, which, under Alexander, subdued the Persian Empire.

“The ‘fire’ is Rome, which in time subdued Greece, and turned it into a Roman province.

“The ‘water’ stands for the descendants of Ishmael, the Mahommedans, who made such fierce inroads upon European kingdoms.

"The 'ox' is supposed to stand for Adam, by which term Western nations in general are understood, and the meaning of the ox drinking up the water is to show that Europeans will hereafter rend the Holy Land from the power of the Infidels.

"The 'killer' refers to the fearful wars that will arise between the armies of Gog and Magog, Cush and Pul, in the latter days.

"The 'Angel of Death' prefigures the pestilence which will then occur, and in which all the enemies of Israel will perish.

"The 'coming of the Lord' means the establishment of God's kingdom under Messiah. The 'Angel of Death,' who is also known as Satan, will then (according to Jewish belief) be destroyed in the presence of the whole world, and the 'Great Tabernacle' will be set up."

It is highly probable that many of our old nursery rhymes and stories have their origin in the old mystic formulæ of both Jewish and Gentile nations.

At certain times the act of spitting was regarded much in the same light as the taking of an oath, and a certain divining value was supposed to reside in the spittle itself. When children were playing at a game of chance—say *odds* or *evens*, *heads* or *throws*, *something* or *naething*—before the boy or girl would make their guess, they dropped a spittle on the back of the hand, then struck it sharp with the forefinger, and to whichever side the spittle flew determined what the guess was to be. To spit upon the first coin earned or obtained by trading before putting it into the pocket was a very common custom. To spit in the *loof* before seizing the hand of the person who had made an offer was

considered clenching the bargain. For a sleepy foot the cure was—

“Spit in the hough, clap on the knee,
And say dinly, dinly, gang frae me.”

Boys had a solemn oath they put to one another when making a promise or bargain, thus—

“Chaps ye, chaps ye,
Double double daps ye,
Fire aboon, fire below,
Fire on every side of ye.”

After saying this the boy spat over his head three times, without which the oath was not binding.

Having arranged the details of a bargain, each boy by spitting on the ground confirmed it. When a boy found himself unable to solve any riddle, to spit on the ground was the symbol of abandoning the attempt to discover the answer. “Spit, and gie ’t o’er,” was the advice given to one who was unusually stubborn, and persisted in the attempt to find it out. When the spittle had been spat the propounder of the riddle was considered bound to reveal the answer. When two boys quarrelled, if one boy wet the other boy’s button with a spittle it was a challenge to fight, and he who did not accept the challenge was considered a coward.

In Kitto’s “Daily Bible Readings,” vol. i, p. 377, is the following:—

“Mahomet held good dreams to be from God’s favour, but a bad dream from the devil; therefore, when anyone dreams of what he likes, he must not tell it to anyone but a friend; but when you dream anything you dislike, you must seek protection with God from its evil and from the wickedness

of the devil, and spit three times over the left shoulder, and not tell the dream to anyone, and verily it will do no harm."

We remember an important discussion which occupied the minds of the religious portion of the community of Partick fifty years ago. It arose from the proposals to build their first churches. All the masonic brotherhood knew that a mason lodge should be set due east and west. Temples and cathedrals were built east and west; hence, also, said Partick people, should kirks. With the Secession Church (East U.P.) there was no difficulty, as the street in front runs in the proper direction; but with the Relief (West U.P.) it was different. To build it parallel with the Dumbarton Road was to go in the face of this sacred rule of due east and west. Many and ingenious were the arguments advanced, hotly discussed indoors and out, in weavers' shops and at street corners; but among those in power the traditional superstition prevailed, and, consequently, the church was built according to old custom—due east and west—and there it stood for many years, an eyesore to those whose æsthetic taste was untrammelled with superstitious feelings. Upon this subject, between what may be termed the Conservative and Liberal sides, party spirit ran high, and the position of the church was the inciting cause of many a witticism and caustic joke. We have seen a Liberal wrought up to fighting heat on being told that he and a few others had been seen in the gray of morning, with their coats off, and their shoulders against the east corner of the church, in the attempt to straighten it with the Dumbarton Road. This traditional custom of building temples and churches

and burying the dead due east and west is, doubtless, a survival of sun-worship.

A prevalent belief amongst the villagers was that peeled onions had a powerful attraction for poisons, and that such should not be left exposed for any time and eaten afterwards. In proof of this property, the following legend was told:—"A certain king or nobleman was in want of a physician, and two celebrated doctors applied. As both could not get the situation, they agreed that the one was to try to poison the other, and he who could save himself by an antidote was to get the place. The two drew cuts who was to take the poison first. The first dose given was a stewed toad. The party taking it applied a poultice of peeled onions over the stomach, which abstracted all the poison of the toad. After two days the second party got the onions to eat, and he died in a very short time." It was generally considered a much more effectual method of cure to apply sliced onion to each armpit for the abstraction or counteraction of poison, the armpits being thought to be far more sensitive than the pit of the stomach. Our mother would never use onions which had lain for a time with their skins off; and we have found in a recent publication an article, which we copy, which gives us reason to think that there was solid foundation for the belief:—

"The Onion a Disinfectant.—According to the observations of an American writer (J. B. Wolff), in the *Scientific American*, the onion is a disinfectant. He states that in the spring of 1849 he was in charge of 100 men on ship-board, with the cholera raging among them. They had onions, which a number of the men ate freely, and those who

did so were soon attacked, and nearly all died. As soon as this discovery was made their use was forbidden. After mature reflection, Mr. Wolff came to the conclusion that onions should never be eaten during the prevalence of epidemics, for the reason that they absorb the virus and communicate the disease; and that the proper use for them is sliced and put in the sick-room, and replaced with fresh ones every few hours. It is a well-established fact, he observes, attested by his own personal knowledge, that onions will extract the poison of snakes. Some kinds of mud will do the same. After maintaining the foregoing opinion for eighteen years, he remarks—'I have found the following well attested:—Onions placed in the room where there is small-pox will blister and decompose with great rapidity; not only so, but will prevent the spread of the disease. I think as a disinfectant they have no equal, when properly used; but keep them out of the stomach.'

It was generally believed of any one showing a morbid hunger that they had some live animal in their stomach, which was fattening itself there at the expense of the food taken by the person. Many stories in corroboration of this belief were common. We give one which was said to have its origin in the neighbourhood of the village:—One day a man who belonged to the village was in the country, and, feeling very thirsty, had lain down and taken a drink out of a pool by the roadside. Afterwards he felt somewhat out of sorts, but recovered after partaking of some food. This uncomfortableness returned whenever his stomach was empty; consequently, to keep himself right, he eat and drank extraordinarily. The poor man knew that this was not a healthy appetite; for, with all his great eating,

his health declined. He consulted doctors, and paid much money to them. They failed to better his condition, even in the smallest degree; but he rather became worse, his appetite still increasing, while his health was gradually sinking. Happily he met with a very skilful old man, who told him to eat a salt herring raw, with all its salt upon it, and on no account to drink anything to it, or after eating it, but to go immediately and lay himself down by a pool or burn, and keep his mouth wide open, which advice he faithfully followed. As he lay gaping, a great ugly toad crept from out his mouth and went into the water. Having drank its fill, it was returning to its old quarters, when the man rose and killed it.

It was also an opinion held by many that a sure means of finding the body of a drowned person, when the spot where the body had sunk was not known, was to procure a dry loaf of bread, dig a hole in it, and put a small portion of quicksilver into the hole, then set the loaf afloat at the spot where the clothes were found, or where it was supposed or known that the unfortunate person had slipped into the water. The loaf would float till it reached the spot where the drowned body lay, and would then sink. Of course this can only refer to rivers. We were told by a man who saw this performance done with success for the recovery of a young man belonging to Partick who was drowned while bathing in the Clyde. His clothes had been found at the side of the river, and the spot near this dragged unsuccessfully for a long time. The loaf, he said, floated down the stream a long way, when it stopped, went round several times, and sank. The creepers were then thrown in at the spot, and the body was found.

We have heard it affirmed by some old people that a live fish in a pot of water would prevent the water from boiling. People did not trouble themselves in these times to put the matter to proof, as they were not sceptical; besides, illustrative evidence was given by Malcolm Sinclair, an old Highland smuggler, who lived long in the village. "One night," said Malcolm, "he and several of his associates had filled a large pot with water from a *burn*, and proceeded to kindle a fire under it; but do as they would, they could not get the fire to burn rightly nor the water to heat. At length one of the party, taking a light, looked into the pot, and there he saw a large burn trout swimming about. They took out the trout, and after that there was no longer any difficulty in causing the fire to burn and the water to boil."

Another myth prevailed amongst the natives of the village, and was told to children with all seriousness—namely, that in large fires which were kept continually burning there was gradually formed an animal called a salamander. This animal required seven years to grow and get vitality, and in consequence of this knowledge it was said that the Clyde Iron-works furnaces were regularly extinguished before the expiry of seven years. If this were not done, and the monster once permitted to escape alive from its fiery matrix, it would prove indestructible, and would range through the world destroying everything it came in contact with. Its destructive powers, when let loose, we suspect were drawn from some of St. John's Apocalyptic visions misinterpreted and misapplied, or probably the survival of the legend of the fiery dragons of ancient romances.

When we recall the state of society existing in our

youth, and judge its conduct in the light of our present knowledge, we find many things which then appeared to us natural and blameless which we must now condemn. When everybody knew everybody—knew everybody's history, circumstances, and daily transactions—everybody's political, social, and religious opinions and crotchets—everybody's misdemeanours, weaknesses, and infirmities of body and temper—personalities were freely resorted to, frequently in a rather unfeeling manner. Our familiar knowledge of each other weakened the sensitiveness of our sympathy, and left us comparatively free to regard such encounters as trials of skill, and award with our plaudits the most successful hitter. It may be easily conceived that many a hard blow met with a laughing approval. From the same cause there was a sad want of charitable judgment of each other, bad motives being hastily attributed, whereas good ones were seldom sought for.

Turning to the state of ecclesiastical matters, there was also much which is now smoothed down considerably. The bulk of the villagers belonged to the Relief body, a sect which some of the smaller and stricter denominations nicknamed *The Ecclesiastical Jawbox*. These attended the Anderston Church, and four of the Partick members were elders there. The Establishment and Secession had each a goodly number of adherents. Of the smaller sects, there were two or three Old Light Burghers, good men and true, joined to equally worthy helpmates; but their views were exceedingly narrow—heaven, in their opinion, being only attainable through the gateway of their own particular formula. On occasions when their minister happened to be away

from home on a Sunday, we have known these Old Lights to travel to Pollokshaws or Paisley, or, if the weather was bad, remain in their houses rather than enter the church of another denomination. There were also a few Wesleyan Methodists, termed *Ranters*, who occasionally held a prayer meeting in one of their own houses, and sometimes favoured the villagers with a sensation sermon on the school green, the preacher on one of these occasions being a woman. We remember that this innovation produced no good effect, St. Paul's injunction against women speaking in the meetings of the early Church being advanced against it. There was only one known Roman Catholic. With so many different but nearly related ecclesiastical denominations in such a small population, it is not wonderful that the cause of the sect was more prominent than the cause of the Master. Nevertheless, in the midst of such distinctive elements there are frequently found some who, comparatively free of the leaven of party, work quietly in the Master's cause. Such a person was William Galbraith, familiarly known to the villagers as Willie Galbraith.

Willie, when I remember him, was a widower, with one daughter, Peggy, whom he had brought up to his own trade of weaving. He was a simple-minded man, and seemed to have literally adopted Paul's resolution to know nothing but Christ. His affection for children was extraordinary, and in consequence his shop was a common resort for boys, the rudest of whom were often subdued by Willie's quiet manner and sometimes severe rebuke; but, in season and out of season, he was instant in drawing their minds to the contemplation of his

Master's character and excellencies. Frequently on summer evenings, when other men were standing in groups discussing politics and village gossip, have we seen Willie, a few boys along with him (ourselves included), walking along west the Dumbarton Road, telling us stories and asking us questions, always directing our young minds in the right path, or gently reproving us when we went wrong. These practices were regarded by the villagers as indicating a weakness of mind; nevertheless his labours produced fruit. He began to keep a Sunday evening school, the first by many years in Partick, and we believe amongst the first in the West of Scotland. He met with his scholars for some time in his weaving shop, until he obtained the use of the old school in Kelvin Street (or Goat); and for many years, without help or much encouragement from any one, he laboured amongst his boys and girls, some of them the roughest in the village; the more elderly and well behaved he selected as monitors for the younger. Occasionally one of his Independent brethren from Glasgow paid his school a visit, and these were red letter nights for Willie. He also started a Sabbath morning class, which met in his own house between eight and nine o'clock; but this proved a failure, partly in consequence of his own kindness, for when only two or three were present he treated them with bread and butter, but when more came there was no treat, which caused disappointment, and led to non-attendance. His Sunday evening school, however, still continued to be carried on with fluctuating success.