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# A WITCHES' LADDER.

By Dr. ABRAHAM COLLES.

**T**HAT the western counties of England have been in the past to the full as noted as other parts of the country for the belief in various forms of superstition is a fact too well known to need comment; but many are not aware to what an extent those beliefs still linger in the popular mind. Many "white" witches are living at the present day and practising their arts of curing, and among the poor are held in high estimation. Much of the knowledge of the older, especially of the black, witchcraft is, however, extinct, or becoming so; and therefore the following account of certain articles found which are apparently connected with it, may be of interest as a record of a dying past.

In the town of Wellington, in Somersetshire, I lit upon them almost accidentally in the following way: I was calling at a house which has been built within the last few years, and in course of conversation was told that formerly the site of the house in which I then was had been occupied by another building of considerable antiquity, on property belonging to the well-known family of Popham, and which had presumably in olden days been a farm-house. This house had been built with cob walls of great thickness; was covered with thatching also of some feet in thickness; while



A WITCHES' LADDER.

its rooms were so low that in some of them a person of ordinary stature was obliged to stoop his head to avoid striking the ceiling.

Some eight or nine years ago it was discovered that this building was in so unsafe a condition that its instant demolition was become a necessity, and it was during the progress of its destruction that the articles were discovered to which I wish to call attention.

In pulling down the upper storey there was found in a space which separated the roof from the upper room, and to which there was no means of access from below—First: six brooms. Second: an old arm-chair. Third: a rope with feathers woven into it.

The brooms were ordinary looking heather-brooms, but with handles so decayed that they snapped with the least pressure. New handles were put to them, and they were used in the garden, so that they are lost irretrievably. The other two articles, however, were, I found, still supposed to be in existence, but had been stowed away in a warehouse belonging to the establishment.

I had them looked up and brought down for inspection. The chair was old and worm-eaten, square and stiff in shape, and with a rush-bottom which was much decayed. I am informed by a carpenter who examined it that it is made of two woods—oak and ash. Whether the combination may have any special significance I know not, and as the chair has been coloured black I cannot myself distinguish very clearly the difference in the woods, and give the statement on the authority of this man, who professed to have no doubts on the point.

But it is to the last article—the rope—that I wish more especially to refer. When found the various things were placed thus: In front the brooms (their arrangement uncertain). Then, spread on the ground, the rope, and beside that the chair. It is unfortunate that at the time no inquiry or investigation into the significance of these things was made, as year by year the number of those whose age would enable them to throw the light of their personal knowledge of witchcraft on the matter is lessening. Even since these articles have come into my hands two reputed witches whom I proposed to question have died before they could be interviewed.

The workmen who made the discovery of the articles declared them

with confidence to be for the following purposes:—The chair for the witches to rest in : the brooms for them to ride on : the rope to act as a ladder to enable them to cross the roof. In fact, they regarded them as being all placed there for the accommodation of the witches, presumably to render them propitious to the house. I have been unable, however, to discover on what grounds they rested their assertions, but they had no hesitation in at first sight designating the rope and feathers “A witches’ ladder.” Such a name, I think, they would have been unlikely to invent on the spur of the moment, nor would it have been likely to occur to them had there been no tradition extant, however vaguely, of such a thing having been used. It is not of such a form as to suggest of itself the notion of a ladder, nor obviously could it have been used in such a capacity.

It is composed of a piece of rope about five feet in length, and about half-an-inch in diameter. It is made with three strands, and has at one end a loop, as if for the purpose of suspending it. Inserted into the rope cross-ways are a number of feathers—mostly goose, but some crow or rook—not placed in any determinate order or at any regular intervals, but sticking out on all sides of the rope at (or near) right angles to its axis. Examination makes it evident that these feathers had been twisted into the rope at the time when it was first made, not inserted into it subsequently—an opinion which was confirmed by Mr. Bubear, owner of the house, himself a rope-manufacturer, who declared that on that point there could be no doubt. The “ladder” then was apparently made for some purpose, just as we now find it. It was a piece of *new* rope with feathers woven into it, only that now the feathers are in a very imperfect condition, nothing remaining of several of them save the merest stump of the quill.

In all attempts to discover a satisfactory explanation of the original meaning and objects of this so-called “witches’ ladder,” I have so far been baffled. Whether it was, as the workmen who found it seemed to think, intended in some sort to render the witches propitious to the house; or whether, like the broom which used to be laid across a door to keep them out, it was intended as a spell to bar their entrance,—no one whom I have been able to find seems now able to

say. In fact its *use* remains an enigma. The following, however, seems to definitely connect it with witchcraft in some way.

Amongst others who in the course of my inquiries were interrogated, was an old woman who was asked whether she knew anything about witches or witchcraft. She replied that she did, and on being pressed to say what she knew answered that she knew of the use of "the candle with pins in it, of an onion with pins in it, and of the *rope and feathers*." On being further pressed to tell for what purpose they had been used, she either could not or would not say. That she *would* not seems most probable, as there has grown up a great reticence in these parts among those who believe in witchcraft, and a great dislike to speak on the subject to unbelievers. Another old woman who was in like manner questioned, mentioned amongst other things used in magic "the *new rope with new feathers*," thus confirming the former woman, and adding the fact that the materials were to be *new*, as was probably the case as I have said in the "ladder" before us. This woman also professed to be ignorant of its use, though I hope one or other may yet be induced to be more communicative. These are the only instances in which I have hitherto been able to trace any remembrance still existing of the rope and feathers, but, unsatisfactory as they are in some respects, they seem to me to afford a very definite ground for connecting it with witch-superstition, more especially when considered in conjunction with the opinion so readily expressed by the workmen at the time of its discovery.

In the case of neither woman was any leading question put, the mention of the "ladder" being in both instances made first by her and not by her questioner; and mentioned, too, as if it were one of the instruments of magic not less common than those which were spoken of at the same time.

Dr. E. B. Tylor has with great kindness taken some trouble in assisting me by looking up the question in various works on witchcraft and kindred subjects, but has, I understand, as yet found nothing definite. It is, he informs me, unusual for such superstitions to be very local in character, and a wider inquiry may elicit more information.

It is with the hope that this may prove so that I write this account,

believing as I do that the ladder possesses in itself great interest, and is well worth the attention of those interested in folk-lore. I have transmitted it to Dr. Tylor, in whose hands it will remain for preservation among other kindred relics.

---

## NEGRO SONGS FROM BARBADOS.

COMMUNICATED BY THE COUNTESS MARTINENGO-CESARESCO.

### I.—THE INTRODUCTION SONG.

“ I just come out before you all to let you hear me sing,  
 Although it never was a desire to any such thing ;  
 But as you seem to like my song, I try and see what I can do,  
 But as I get to the chorus, you all must join me too :

Own, own, own, own,  
 You all must join me too.

“ Now the cook that I had for my sweetheart,  
 I will tell you the reason why,  
 One Christmas she could bake plum-pudding,  
 Whilst I began at a pie :

Yea i, yea i, yea i, yea i,  
 Whilst I began at a pie.

“ The Missus was in the cellar door,  
 The key I stole out,  
 One pocket I filled with butter,  
 And the other I filled with cheese :

Yea yese, yea yese, yea yese, yea yese,  
 The other I filled with cheese.

“ Whilst I was up in the chimney top,  
 Sitting at my ease,  
 The butter began to melt, likewise  
 I lost my toast and cheese :

Yea yese, yea yese, yea yese, yea yese,  
 I lost my butter and cheese.”

## II.—CALIE CO LIN CUM BIN.

“ Vit is twenty miles beyond de moon,  
*Up in the marning soon,*  
 The darkies eat wid a wooden 'poon,  
*Calie co lin cum bin.*

*Chorus.* “ Hickie nack, tickie nack, rickie rack, trickie track,  
 Sally can't you lob me ?  
 Stand back, Sally, it's a mile from de river,  
 It's calie co lin cum bin.

“ Rise up, Sally, at de blow of de harn,  
*Up in the marning soon,*  
 Fo' we has to work in a field of carn :  
*It's calie co lin cum bin.*

“ Now me and my wife we can't agree,  
*Up in de marning soon,*  
 Fo' she all night is beating po' me :  
*Calie co lin cum bin.*

“ I nebber forget the day I was barn,  
*Up in de marning soon,*  
 Bin barn below one field of carn :  
*Calie co lin cum bin.*

“ How cin I and my wife agree,  
*Up in de marning soon,*  
 Fo' she lacks up all the togs, and carry away all de keys :  
*Calie co lin cum bin.*

“ The darkies come from many a mile,  
*Up in the marning soon,*  
 Come gaze and look me pretty little child :  
*Calie co lin cum bin.*

“ One de prettiest, a' ugliest, a little, you ebber seen :  
*Up in de marning soon,*  
 One de ugliest, a' prettiest, a little, you ebber seen :  
*Calie co lin cum bin.*”

## III.—THE DARKIES' SONG.

“ Say, darkies, hab you seen old massa dis morning,  
 Wid he mont statch (?) on his face ?  
 Go long the road sometime dis morning,  
 Like he going to leab de place.

*Chorus* (repeated after each verse.) “ Old massa run away, hah, hah,  
De darkies say, hah, hah, hah !  
So he big enough, he old enough, he ought to know better,  
Dan fo’ go and run away.

“ He sick\* foot one way, two foot t’other,  
And ’um weigh tree hundred pound ;  
He coat so big he couldn’t pay de tailor,  
So ’um won’ go ralf † way round.

“ He drill so much dat dem call him cap’ain,  
He get so dreadfully tan ;  
I speck he want fool them Yankee  
So dem tink he countryman.”

## IV.—ANGELINA BAKER.

“ My Angelina is so tall,  
She nebber sees the ground ;  
She has to take a telescope,  
When she get down in de town.  
Angelina love the boys  
As far as she can see them,  
She used to follow old massa round,  
And beg him for de freedom.

*Chorus.*

Angelina Baker

“ Wey down the old plantation,  
Da whey ‡ I lived and barn,  
I use go beat the whole creation,  
When we living in de carn.  
Den I work and den I sing,  
So happy all the day,  
Till Angelina Baker (came)  
And tief my heart away.

*Chorus.*

Angelina Baker.

“ I met my Angelina in the springtime, on the fall,  
I meet she in de carn and den meet she at de ball ;  
And evbery time I met her she was smiling like the sun,  
And she leab me here, to weep a tear,  
And stand in de sun and bun.§

*Chorus.*

Angelina Baker.”

\* Six.

† Half.

‡ Where.

§ Burn.

## V.—HANNAH BELLA.

“ No teeth Hannah Bella from Dayrells road,  
 I am asure she is a gipsy toad.  
 Biscuits she will lost her life,  
 And on them she will her fife.(?)

*Chorus* (repeated “ Do, Uncle Dick, O do,  
 after every        For the devil run away with the big Obeah man,  
 verse.)            Foot over foot, and hand over hand :  
                       For the devil run away with the big Obeah man.

“ Brown biscuits now is four for two,  
 Hannah Bella, she can eat for true ;  
 She don’t care whatever come,  
 She will eat you any some.

“ Eighty cents to me she owes :  
 Yes, for biscuits, none in clothes,  
 And before she pays she rather blows.

“ The sailor furniture comes off,  
 A tub, a cabin and a trough ;  
 See the rubbage \* coming down,  
 Pulling hard for Bridgetown.

“ Come see the little soup she took,  
 And the little bone she suck,  
 She lean her head out to the south,  
 Lick her fingers, smack her mouth.”

## VI.—TAKE BACK.

“ My name is Josephus Orange Blossom ;  
 I am one of the finest jovial German in the land,  
 I am as happy, and as jovial, when I get ’um as I make ’um,  
 I am a hunky daddy red-hot country bound.

*Chorus.*    “ Take back, sell your trap, for I am the finest coloured German in  
                   the land ;  
                   I am as happy, and as jovial, when I get ’um as I make ’um,  
                   I am a hunky daddy red-hot country bound.

“ You ought to see me when I dress upon a Sunday,  
 When I go a pomanading in the street ;  
 Why, I dress myself in the height and best of fashion,  
 And squizing wid all de pretty gals I meet.

*Chorus.*        Take back, &c.

---

\* Luggage.



“ Why, there was Clementina, Maude, and Missus Gundy,  
 They was the three finest looking gals beneath the sky ;  
 You ought (to see) them when they dress upon a Monday,  
 What you would swear they was three goddess in the sky.

*Chorus.* Take back, &c.

“ I took her to all the amusements in the city,  
 I said, Clementina . . . I am bound to go.  
 Just because she see me dress so smart, smooth, and witty,  
 She said that I was just her bow.\*

*Chorus.* Take back, &c.

“ One evening when my heart was in a flutter,  
 Round Missus Clementina house I call,  
 She bin curious of peeping through the shutter,  
 When I saw a sight that made my heart pall.

*Chorus.* Take back, &c.

“ I saw her eyes, and all her teeth upon the table,  
 Her curly hair was hanging round the peg ;  
 I laugh out as hard as I was able  
 When I saw her screwing on her wooden leg !

*Chorus.* Take back,’ &c.

These songs are sung on the Carrington Estate in Barbados, and were obtained for me by Miss Elizabeth Carrington, of Great Missenden Abbey, who had them written down by the negroes themselves. It is stated that the coloured people of the United States are fast losing their characteristic minstrelsy. In the preface to the valuable little collection of *Slave Songs*, published by Simpson and Co., New York, 1867, the editors remark—“ It is, we repeat, already becoming difficult to obtain these songs. Even the ‘spirituals’ are going out of use on the plantations, superseded by the new style of religious music ‘closely imitated from the white people.’” Of secular songs there are in that collection very few indeed, and those few are mostly composed in the French dialect, spoken by the negroes of Louisiana. Mr. Joel Chandler Harris has succeeded in finding some further specimens, but a recent writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* confirms

\* Beau.

the impression that a wave of extraordinary solemnity is passing over the American negroes, and that "profane" songs and dances are getting into bad odour everywhere. In Barbados, on the other hand, it is plain that the African race has not lost its light-heartedness. These negroes are also keen politicians, as may be learnt from the concluding verses of a song dealing with the Federation scheme proposed by a late Governor :—

" You see dem prospect nago,  
A wusless \* set of Bajon,  
Git (up) against them nation  
And join de Federation.

" You hear dem prospect nago,  
Dem wusless set of nation ;  
Dem drink a parcel of white rum,  
Den loss den calculation.

" De nagoes nebber better ;  
Dey say dem want to be greater,  
Dem killing all de Backro stock,  
An grab up all de potatoes.

*Chorus.*

" Come you good Bardians !  
Stand upon your station,  
Don't git against your nation  
To join de Federation."

Much folk-lore might be collected in Barbados. One little trait which came to my knowledge some years ago I will recall here. During a cholera epidemic the negroes started the idea that a small piece of copper worn next to the skin was a certain preventive, and my informant declared that those who were thus protected did actually enjoy a singular immunity.

\* Worthless.

## IRISH FOLK-LORE.

### MEDICAL PLANTS.

BY F. W. EGAN, B.A.

[AMONG the Irish peasantry there is a more or less fervent belief in the efficiency of plants to produce cures—in some cases to such an extent that until all plants fail a medical man will not be called in. Many of these cures appear to have been handed down from time immemorial, while some, possibly, may be of more recent introduction. Some of these cures are undoubtedly most efficient, while others, aided by imagination, may be successful. All, however, seem entitled to be included in the records of Medical Folk-lore. The following list has been drawn up by Mr. F. W. Egan.—G. H. KINAHAN.]

*Cures or reported cures by means of plants, used by the peasantry in various parts of Ulster, and some, at least, in the co. Dublin, so far as they have come under my observation.*

Red Sorrel	Cancer	Drink decoction of dried blossoms.
Wood Sorrel	Do.	Apply ointment prepared with the leaves.
Do.	Do. in stomach	Eat the leaves.
Plantain (broad and narrow leaf) called "cut grass" "bleeding grass," &c.	Cuts	Apply bruised leaves, while wet with the juice. Diminishes pain, stops profuse bleeding, and prevents festering.
Potatoes	Sprains	Bathe in hot water in which they have been boiled. All the "mercury" of the potato supposed to be in the water.
Broom	"Water" dropsy, jaundice	Drink decoction of leaves and plant tops.

Dandelion	Stomach, liver, and kidney disorders	Drink decoction, alone or mixed with that of other plants, as root of Tormentilla, &c.
Tormentil (see last)	Liver obstructions	Drink decoction of root; also as a substitute for St. John's Wort in the following case.
Rose Noble, Yarrow, St. John's Wort, Mullein	Liver and kidneys	Decoction of mixture, with or without some other plants, as Tormentil root, Black-head, &c.
Ragwort or Ragweed	Rheumatism, sprained joints, sciatica	Hot fomentations with decoctions of whole plant in water. Also bruised leaves in lard as ointment.
Burdock	"Water" dropsy	Drink decoction in water.
Foxglove	Do. and gravel	Tincture made with gin, used in very small quantity on loaf sugar, known to be a dangerous medicine, and, though spoken of, seems little used.
Marshmallow	Gravel	Drink decoction of roots in water.
Do.	Chest and lung diseases	Do. do. do. in milk (use frequently).
Mullein*	Diarrhœa	Drink decoction in water.
Do.	Boils	Apply leaf roasted between dock-leaves and moistened with spittle, which <i>must</i> be that of an Irishman, at least in co. Dublin. (Probably any one's spittle would do in Ulster.—F.W.E.)
Mullein, Sage, Marjoram, Camomile	Cramps in limbs	Bathe with decoction.
Blackberry leaves	Diarrhœa	Decoction in hot water.
Camomile	Flatulence, colic, indigestion in general	Drink infusion of flowers.
St. John's Wort	Gravel	Drink decoction of leaves and flowers.

\* In connection with this plant a man in the parish of Gartan, co. Donegal, stated, in reference to its likeness to fox or folksglove, "This plant" (folks-glove) "sometimes cannot send up a flower, and it is then called a mullein. Mullein is a most valuable plant that ever was, as it will cure the worst consumption."

Parsley	Gravel and slight disorders of kidneys	Drink strong decoction.
Watercress	King's Evil	Bruised leaves applied as poultice, and juice taken as drink in warm milk.
Brook-lime	Gravel and urinary diseases generally	Decoction, alone or mixed with water-cress.
Yarrow	Kidney diseases	Drink decoction.
Tobacco, as sold	Cuts	Leaf bound on wound to arrest bleeding and heal.
Tansy	Flatulence, pains in joints	Bathe in decoction of leaves in water with salt.
Mountain Ash	Worms	Eat a few berries before breakfast for a few days.
Cranesbill	Hæmorrhages, <i>in cattle</i>	Administer decoction of whole plant, and bathe with same.
Sage (wild)	Promote perspiration	Drink decoction. This has been somewhat used for tea in parts of co. Dublin up to about 50 years ago, when tea was not so plentiful as at present, when bringing home a pound of tea from "the City" to a man's house was regarded in much the same way as <i>bringing in a bottle of whiskey</i> is now—a cause of rejoicing or mirth. People now in Howth remember it.
Dock	Liver obstructions	Drink decoction of root.
Garlic	Sciatica and severe rheumatism	Leaves boiled in water to make a strong bath for whole body (a barrel has been used for bathing in).
House Leek	Corns and warts	Apply the juice.
Meadow sweet	Scrofulous tendency	Drink decoction.
Marjoram (wild)	Indigestion, acidity	Drink decoction.

## CORNISH FOLK-LORE.

BY MISS M. A. COURTNEY.



VERY stream in Cornwall however small is called a river (pronounced revvur). One flows into the sea west of Penzance, between it and Newlyn, known as Laregan, and another at the east in Gulval parish, as Ponsondane river. There is an old rhyme about them that runs thus:

“ When Ponsondane calls to Laregan river,  
 There will be fine weather.  
 But we may look for rain  
 When Laregan calls to Ponsondane.”

Years ago there was a marsh between Penzance and Newlyn, now covered by the sea, known to the old people as the “Clodgy”; when the sea moaned there they said, “Clodgy is calling for rain.” Sometimes at the present day it is “Bucca” is calling, Bucca being the nickname in Penzance for the inhabitants of Newlyn.

“ Penzance boys up in a tree,  
 Looking as wisht (weak, downcast) as wisht can be;  
 Newlyn ‘Buccas,’ strong as oak,  
 Knocking them down at every poke.”

The weather at Mount’s Bay is also foretold by the look of the Lizard land, which lies south:

“ When the Lizard is clear, rain is near.”

The marsh on Marazion Green still exists, and not many years ago no one cared to cross it after nightfall, especially on horseback, for at a certain spot close by the marsh a white lady was sure to arise from the ground, jump on the rider’s saddle, and, like the “White Lady of Avenel,” ride with him pillion-fashion as far as the Red river\* that runs into the sea just below the smelting-works at Chyan-

\* A small stream coloured by running through tin mining works.

dour, a suburb of Penzance. The last person who saw her was a tailor of this town, who died in 1840. He was commonly called "Buck Billy," from his wearing till the day of his death a pigtail, a buff waistcoat, and a blue coat with yellow buttons.

Marazion, or Marketjew, which latter is a corruption of its old Cornish name, Marghaisewe, meaning a Thursday's market, is a small town exactly opposite St. Michael's Mount. Until its present church was built its mayor sat in a very high seat with his back against a window. This is the origin of the Cornish proverb: "In your own light, like the mayor of Marketjew." This mayor is jokingly said to have three privileges. The first is, "That he may sit in his own light"; the second, "Next to the parson"; and the third, "If he see a pig in a gutter he may turn it out and take its place."

In the parish of Breage, near the sea, about four miles from Marazion, are the ruins of Pengersick Castle, of which only some fragments of walls and a square tower now stand. Some of the upper rooms in the latter have fallen in, and they are all in a state of decay. The lower have oak-panels curiously carved and painted, but time has almost effaced the designs. The most perfect is one representing "Perseverance," under which are the following lines:

"What thing is harder than the rock?  
 What softer is than water cleere?  
 Yet wyll the same, with often droppe,  
 The hard rock perce as doth a spere.  
 Even so, nothing so hard to attayne,  
 But may be hadde, with labour and payne."

So many are the legends told of the former inhabitants of Pengersick, that it would be almost impossible at this date to decide which is the original. These ruins stand on the site of a much older castle, and in it dwelt, far back in the dark ages, a very wicked man, who, when he was fighting in foreign parts, forgetting his wife at home, courted a king's daughter, who gave him a magic sword, which ensured in every battle the victory to its owner. He deceived and left her; but she, with her son in her arms, followed him to his home by the Mount. There she met him, and upbraided him with his cruelty, and in a fit of passion he threw them both into the sea. The lady was drowned, and after her death she was changed into a white

hare, which continually haunted the old lord ; but her boy was picked up alive by a passing ship. The lord's wife afterwards died, and he married again a woman as bad as himself, reputed to be a witch, who was very cruel to her step-son, who lived with his father at the castle. One night there was a great storm in Mount's Bay, and the young man went down to the shore to see if there were any vessels in distress, and spied on the beach an almost exhausted sailor, who had been washed in by the waves, and whom he bade his servants carry to his home, and put into his own bed. When he revived, all were struck by the marvellous resemblance to the young heir; and they conceived a great affection for each other. Together they went to Marazion to see if they could find the vessel from whose deck the stranger had fallen into the sea. It was safe in harbour, and the captain, whom the sailor had always thought to be his father, told him then for the first time, "How, when he was an infant, he had rescued him from drowning where last night he had nearly lost his life." Thus they were discovered to be brothers, and a day or two after, when out hunting, guided by the white hare, they accidentally came upon the miraculous sword that had disappeared when his mother was killed. Then these two brothers sailed away from Cornwall, and dwelt in peace in the land of a strange princess; where the Cornishman studied, under a celebrated master, astrology and all other occult sciences. After some time the old lord of Pengersick met his death in this wise: As he was riding out one fine morning, the white hare suddenly sprang up in front of his horse and startled it, so that it ran madly with its rider into the sea, where both were swallowed up. When this news was brought to him, the Cornishman bade his brother an affectionate farewell, and, with his wife, went back to Pengersick, where they lived happily for several generations, for, amongst many other wonderful things, the young lord had discovered an elixir of life which, had they so wished, would have kept them alive to the present day. (*See Bottrell.*)

Another account of the old lord's death says that he and a party of his friends were dining in his yacht around a silver table when she went down, and all on board perished. This happened off Cudden Point, which juts into the sea just opposite Pengersick. Children



living there formerly used to go down to the beach at low water to try and find this silver table. A ship laden with bullion is reported to have been lost here in the time of Queen Elizabeth. "The present castle," one tradition says, "was built in the reign of Henry VIII. by a merchant, who had acquired immense wealth beyond the seas, and who loaded an ass with gold, and broke its back. He sold the castle to a Mr. Milliton, who, having slain a man, shut himself up in it to escape punishment."

Another legend says that Sir William Milliton built it, and, soon after its completion, married a very rich but extremely ugly and shrewish woman, of whom he tried by various ways to rid himself but in vain. One day, after a desperate quarrel, he begged her forgiveness, and asked her, in proof of having pardoned him, to sup with him that evening in a room overlooking the sea. She agreed; and at the conclusion of the feast they pledged each other in goblets of rich wine. Then Sir William's looks altered, and, in a fierce voice, he said, "Woman, now prepare for death! You have but a short time to live as the wine that you have just drunk was poisoned." "Then we die together," she answered, "for I had my suspicions, and mixed the contents of the goblets." Up to this time the moon, which was at its full, had been shining brightly through the open windows, for it was a warm summer night, when suddenly a frightful storm of thunder and lightning arose, the winds lashed the waves to fury, and the moon was darkened. The servants, alarmed by this, and the unearthly, fiendish yells that came from the banqueting hall, rushed upstairs, and there found the bodies of their master and mistress dead on the floor; and through the open window they saw, by the light of the moon which for a moment shone through a rift in the clouds, their souls borne away on the wings of a demon in the shape of a bird.

The original name of Breage parish was Pembro; but St. Breaca, hearing that the inhabitants were at a loss to know how to raise the money for a peal of bells, offered to extricate them from their difficulty on condition that they should call the parish after her. The condition was accepted, the bells were hung, and the parish henceforth was known as that of St. Breage.—Through Rev. S. Rundle.

All Cornishmen at one time were thought to be "wreckers," and from the peninsular-shape of their county came the proverb, "'Tis a bad wind that blows no good to Cornwall." But the dwellers in Breage and the adjoining parish of Germoe must in olden times, from the following distich, have been held in worse repute than their neighbours:

" God keep us from rocks and shelving sands,  
And save us from Breage and Germoe men's hands."

The most noted and daring Cornish smuggler of the last century, Coppinger, a Dane, lived on the north coast, and of him a legendary catalogue of dreadful tales is told, all to be found in the Rev. R. S. Hawker's book, the *Footprints of Former Men in Far Cornwall*. He lays the scene of his exploits in the neighbourhood of Hartland Bay, my informant near Newquay. He swam ashore here in the prime of life in the middle of a frightful storm from a foreign-rigged vessel that was seen in the offing, and of which nothing more was ever heard or known. Wrapped in a cloak, that tradition says he tore from off the shoulders of an old woman who was on the beach, he jumped up behind a farmer's daughter, who had ridden down to see the wreck, and was by her taken to her father's house, where he was fed, clothed, and most hospitably received. He was a fine, handsome, well-built man, and gave himself out to be most highly connected in his own country. He soon won the young woman's affections, and at her father's death, which took place not long after, he easily induced her to marry him; but it was far from a happy union. Luckily they had but one child—a deaf and dumb idiot, who had inherited his father's cruel disposition, and delighted in torturing all living things. It is even said that he cunningly killed one of his young playmates. Coppinger, after his marriage, organized a band of smugglers, and made himself their captain; and quickly through his misdeeds earned the title of cruel Coppinger. One legend relates that he once led a Revenue cutter into a dangerous cove, of which he alone knew the soundings, and that he and his crew came out of it in safety, but the other vessel with all on board perished. Mr. Hawker calls Coppinger's ship the "Black Prince," and says he had it built for himself in Denmark, and that men who had made themselves in any way

obnoxious to him on land were carried on board her, and compelled by fearful oaths to enrol themselves in her crew.

In 1835 an old man of the age of ninety-seven related to this writer that when a youth he had been so abducted, and after two year's service he had been ransomed by his friends with a large sum. "And all," said the old man, very simply, "because I happened to see one man kill another, and they thought I should mention it." The same author gives him a wonderfully fleet horse, which no one but Coppinger could master, and says that on its back he made more than one hairbreadth escape. He has also a marvellous account of his end, in which he disappears as he came, in a vessel which he boarded in a storm of thunder, lightning, and hail. As soon as he was in her "she was out of sight in a moment, like a spectre or a ghost." For this he quotes the following verse:—

"Will you hear of the cruel Coppinger?  
He came from a foreign kind;  
He was brought to us from the salt water,  
He was carried away by the wind."

The one thing certain about him is, that at one time he amassed money enough by smuggling to buy a small freehold estate near the sea, the title-deeds of which, signed with his name, still exist. But in his old age, I have been told, he was reduced to poverty and subsisted on charity.

That in those bygone days smuggling was thought no sin every one knows. And who has not heard the oft-quoted apocryphal anecdote of the Cornish clergyman, who—when he was in the middle of his sermon and some one opened the church door and shouted in, "A wreck! a wreck!"—begged his parishioners to wait whilst he took off his gown that they might all start fair.

The following is, however, a genuine letter of the last century from a vicar in the eastern part of the county to a noted smuggler of that district:—

"Martin Rowe, you very well know,  
That Cubert's vicar loves good liquor,  
One bottle's all, upon my soul.  
You'll do right to come to-night;  
My wife's the banker, she'll pay for the anker."

To the same jovial vicar is credited this grace, given to his hostess' horror at her table after he had dined out several days in succession, and had rabbits offered him, a dish he detested :—

“ Of rabbits young and rabbits old,  
Of rabbits hot and rabbits cold,  
Of rabbits tender, rabbits tough,  
I thank the Lord we've had enough.”

Inland from Breage is the small hamlet of Leed's-town (called after the Duke of Leeds, who has property in Cornwall). It is the seat of the following short story :—“ The Leed's-town ghost runs up and down stairs in a house during the night, and then sits in a corner of the room weeping and sleeking her hair. It is the ghost of a young woman who was engaged to be married to a man, who refused to become her husband until she gave him certain deeds kept in a box in the above room. As soon as the deeds were in his possession, he realised the property and escaped to America, leaving the luckless girl to bemoan her loss. She went mad: night and day she was searching for her deeds ; sometimes she would sit and wail in the spot where the box had been. At length she died : her spirit, however, had no rest, and still constantly returns to keep alive the memory of man's perfidy.”—Through Rev. S. Rundle.

Close to Leed's-town, at the foot of Godolphin-hill, is the old house, or hall, of Godolphin. The basement-floor of the original house alone remains : it consists of a long façade supported by pillars of white granite, the interior containing many objects of interest well worth a visit. Opposite the inhabited part of the house is the King's room, opening on the King's garden. (The title of King's room was given to it from the legend that Charles II. once slept there.) You could leave it by five ways : as there were three doors, one exit through the floor, and another through the roof. Godolphin is held by a very curious tenure, said to have originated in a bet between the representatives of the Godolphin and St. Aubyn families on a snail race. As the Godolphin snail was being beaten, its owner pricked it with a pin to make it go faster, but it drew in its horns and refused to move, consequently the other won. The following is the ceremony which takes place every Candlemas. Before sunrise a person, appointed as reeve

by the Rev. St. Aubyn Molesworth St. Aubyn, the lord of the manor of Lamburn, in the parish of Perranzabuloe (near Truro), knocks at the ancient outer door of the quadrangle, and repeats this demand thrice:—"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Here come I the reeve of the manor of Lamburn, to demand my lord's dues, eight groats and a penny in money, a loaf, a cheese, a collar of brawn, and a jack of the best ale in the house. God save the Queen and the lord of the manor." It is said at the outer door of the quadrangle, at the inner door, and for the third and last time at the table in the kitchen (which is one of the oldest and not least interesting rooms). The above high lordship is paid by the Duke of Leeds to the St. Aubyn family, to whom should they fail an heir the estate reverts. There is another curious tenure in this part of Cornwall, which as I am on the subject I will, before proceeding further, quote. "The parsonage of St. Grade, with a small portion of land, including an orchard, is held of the manor of Erisey by the following tenure, viz. that on Easter-day, yearly, the parson provide a dinner for the master and mistress of Erisey house, and their man and maid, with a pan of milk for a greyhound bitch."—Lake, *Helston and Lizard*.

The old manor-house of Erisey is in Ruan Major (near the Lizard), and of one of the family the following story is told:—"He was dancing with other ladies and gentlemen at Whitehall before James I. and, through the violent motion and action of his body in the middle of the dance, had his cap slip from his head and fall to the ground; but he instantly with his foot tossed it on his head again, and proceeded without let or hindrance with his part in that dance, to the admiration of all who saw it, which gave occasion to King James to inquire who that active gentleman was, and being told that his name was Erisey, he forthwith replied 'I like the gentleman very well, but not his name of Herese!' " The rector of Ruan Minor by ancient usage and prescription (which is always admitted) claims a right of sending a horse into a certain field in the parish of Landewednack, whenever it is cropped with corn, and taking away as many sheaves as the horse can carry away on its back.

"At Jew's Lane Hill, near Godolphin, a Jew is said to have hung himself on a tree still pointed out, and was buried beneath the road.

His ghost appears in the shape of a bull and a fiery chariot. This superstition has been known for generations."—M. H., through Rev. S. Rundle.

#### CORNWALL STONE.

"I remember this stone a rough cube about three feet in height; it stood by the wayside forty or fifty years ago about a-quarter of a mile from the old Godolphin mansion near the coast, where the nobility and gentry of the county were wont periodically to assemble to hear the news from Court. The servants who waited on their masters at the banquet diligently listened to the conversation, and afterwards spread the information thus collected among the crowd assembled for the purpose around Cornwall stone."—G. F. W. *Western Antiquary*, 1881.

An old writer on the Scilly Isles mentions a rock on Bryher, one of the smallest of the islands, where the neighbours were wont to collect to hear and repeat the news. He calls it the News Rock.

Between Helston and the Lizard lies the parish of St. Keverne; unlike the other parishes of Cornwall it contains no mines. To account for this it is said that St. Keverne cursed it when he lived there, for the want of respect shown him by its inhabitants. Hence the proverb "No metal will run within the sound of St. Keverne's bells."

St. Just, from the Land's End district, once paid a visit to St. Keverne, who entertained him for several days to the best of his power. After his departure his host missed some valuable relics, and determined to go in pursuit of his late guest, and try, if possible, to get them from him. As he was passing over Crousa-down, about two miles from St. Keverne church, he pocketed three large stones, each weighing about a-quarter of a ton, to use if St. Just should offer any resistance. He overtook him at a short distance from Breage and taxed him with the theft, which was indignantly denied. From words the saints came to blows, and St. Keverne flung his stones with such effect that St. Just ran off, throwing down the relics as he ran. The stones still lie where they fell, about four hundred yards from Pengersick Lane.

Going along the coast from Breage to the Lizard the solitary church

of Gunwalloe is passed, built so close to the sea that the waves wash its graveyard walls. It is said to have been erected as a thank-offering by some man who escaped drowning when shipwrecked. "In the sand-banks near it (or, as others say, at Kennack cove), the notorious buccaneer Avery is reported to have buried several chests of treasure previously to his leaving England on the voyage from which he never returned. So strongly did this opinion prevail that Mr. John Knill, collector of the Customs at St. Ives, procured about the year 1770 a grant of treasure trove, and expended some money in a fruitless search."—Rev. C. A. Johns, *Week at the Lizard*.

Near by is Mullion parish, of which the celebrated ghost-layer, the Rev. Thomas Flavel, who died in 1682, was the vicar, and the following quaint lines to his memory may still be read in the chancel of his church:—

"Earth take thine earth, my sin let Satan havet,  
The world my goods, my soul my God who gavet;  
For from these four, Earth, Satan, World, and God,  
My flesh, my sin, my goods, my soul I had."

Of him the Rev. C. A. Johns writes:—"This Thomas Flavel, during his life, attained great celebrity for his skill in the questionable art of laying ghosts. His fame still lingers in the memories of the more superstitious of the inhabitants through the following ridiculous stories. On one occasion when he had gone to church his servant-girl opened a book in his study, whereupon a host of spirits sprang up all round her. Her master observed this, though then occupied at church, closed his book, and dismissed the congregation. On his return home he took up the book with which his servant had been meddling, and read backwards the passage which she had been reading, at the same time laying about him lustily with his walking-cane, whereupon all the spirits took their departure, but not before they had pinched the servant-girl black and blue. His celebrity, it seems, was not confined to his own parish, for he was once called on to lay a very troublesome ghost in an adjoining parish. As he demanded the large fee of five guineas for his services, two of the persons interested resolved to assure themselves, by the evidence of

their own eyes, that the ceremony was duly performed. They accordingly, without apprising one another of their intention, secreted themselves behind two graves in the churchyard a short time before the hour named for the absurd rites. In due time the ghost-layer entered it with a book in one hand and a horsewhip in the other. On the first smack of the whip the watchers raised their heads simultaneously, caught a glimpse of each other, and were both so terrified that they scampered off in opposite directions, leaving the operator to finish his business as he might. So popular are superstitions of this kind, and so long do they linger, that to the present day a spot is pointed out on the downs, named 'Hervan Gutter,' where Thomas Flavel's own ghost was laid by a clergyman, of whom he said before his death, 'When he comes I must go.' In olden days there were several of these ghost-laying clergymen in Cornwall, of whom, before going on with the legends of the parishes, I will mention three known in folklore. In the parish of Ladock, on the east side of Truro, dwelt rather more than a century ago the famed ghost-layer, the Rev. Mr. Wood, who, when walking, usually carried an ebony stick with a silver head, on which was engraved a pentacle, and on a broad silver ring below planetary signs and mystical figures. Of him Mr. Bottrell tells many thrilling tales, I will only give the substance of one. Mr. Wood was usually a match for most demons, whom he would change into animals and thrash with his whip; but one more cunning than the rest defied him, by taking the shape of an unknown coal-black bird, and perching on the church tower, from whence during divine service he made all sorts of queer noises, disturbing the congregation, and inciting the irreverent to laughter. He was too high up to be exorcised or reached with the whip. At last the clergyman, at his wits end, remembered that the Evil One could not endure the sight of innocent children, and he sent his clerk round to all the mothers of his parish who had unchristened children, asking them to bring them to church on the next Sunday to have the rite performed. As he was a great favourite with his people all the mothers, and they were eight, readily agreed to come. But as twelve is the mystical number he invited four other mothers whose children had recently been baptised to come as well and bring their children and sponsors with them. The eight children



were christened, and the parson walked out of church followed by the twelve mothers with their infants in their arms. The clerk arranged them in lines five deep, the mothers in front, opposite the belfry door. Mr. Wood directed each to pass her child from one to the other of its sponsors and then hand it to him that he might hold it up for the demon to see; but for some time the cunning bird hid himself behind a pinnacle, and nothing would induce him to look, until one of the children, growing tired, began to cry, and all the others chimed in, screaming in chorus at the top of their voices. Then the demon hopped down from his perch and peered over the parapet to try and find out what could be the matter. The sight of the twelve children had such an effect upon him that he too gave an unearthly yell and flew away never to reappear. The church bells were soon after put in order, and it is well known that no evil spirit ever ventures within sound of their ringing."

I will close this list of worthies by a short notice of Parson Dodge, a vicar of Talland, a village on the south coast of Cornwall, and then give an encounter of the famous Nonconformist divine, John Wesley, with some spirits whom he vanquished at St. Agnes on the north. The church of Talland is not in the centre of the parish, but near the sea; a legend accounts for its position thus: It was begun at a spot called Pulpit, but each night a voice was heard saying:

"If you will my wish fulfil  
Build the church on Talland hill."

and the stones put up by day were removed. Of this church, about a hundred and fifty years ago the Rev. Richard Dodge was vicar. He had such command over the spirit-world that he could raise and lay ghosts at his will, and by a nod of his head banish them to the Red Sea. His parishioners looked up to him with great awe, and were afraid of meeting him at midnight, as he was sure then, whip in hand, to be pursuing and driving away the demons, that in all kinds of shapes were to be seen hovering around him. Amongst his other eccentricities he was fond of frequenting his churchyard at the dead of night. Parson Dodge's fame was not confined to his own immediate district, and one day he received a letter from a fellow-clergyman, the Rev. Grylls, rector of Lanreath, asking his assistance in

exorcising a man habited in black, who drove a sable coach, drawn by headless horses, across Black-a-down, a neighbouring moor, as this apparition, when they happened to meet it, frightened his people almost out of their wits. He acceded to this request, and late at night the two clergymen rode to the spot, where they waited for some time, but seeing nothing decided to separate and return to their respective homes. Mr. Dodge, however, had not gone very far when his horse obstinately refused to proceed a step further in a homeward direction : this he interpreted to be a sign from heaven which he must obey, and giving it the rein he allowed it to go as it willed. It wheeled round and went back at a great pace to the moor. Here through the gloom he saw standing the black coach with the headless horses : its driver had dismounted, and the Rev. Grylls lay in a swoon at his feet. Mr. Dodge was terribly alarmed, but managed to keep his presence of mind, and began to recite a prayer : before he could finish it the driver said—"Dodge is come ! I must begone !" jumped on to his seat and disappeared for ever. Mr. Grylls' parishioners now arrived in search of their rector ; they knew there must be something amiss, for his horse, startled by the horrible spectres, had thrown its rider and galloped off, never stopping until it reached its stable (his friends, through fright, had also been, until the apparition vanished, almost unmanageable). They found him senseless, supported in Mr. Dodge's arms ; but he soon revived, and they took him home, although it was some days before his reason recovered from the shock. A much fuller account of this may be found in the *History of Polperro*, by Mr. T. G. Couch. It has also been published by Mr. Robert Hunt in his *Popular Romances of the West of England*. The Rev. R. S. Hawker, in his *Footprints of Former Men in Far Cornwall*, gives some very interesting extracts from the "Diurnal" of one Parson Rudall, of Launceston, who in 1665, with the sanction of his bishop, laid the Botathen ghost—the spirit of a young woman by name Dorothy Dingley, who could not rest in her grave—"Unquiet because of a certain sin." It is a very well-known fact that the Rev. John Wesley was a firm believer in supernatural agencies ; he compiled a book of ghost-stories, that was lent to me when I was about ten years old by a kind but ignorant woman, the reading of which caused me

many sleepless nights. "On one occasion Wesley could, when at St. Agnes, find no place to pass the night save a house which had the reputation of being haunted. However, he was not deterred; he entered and went to bed. But he could not rest, for there was a terrible tumult below; the sound of carriages was heard, the noise of feet, and fearful oaths. At length he could bear it no longer; he descended, and then found the large hall filled with guests. They greeted him with loud welcome, and begged him to be seated. He consented, saying, however, that he must say grace first. This remark was hailed with roars of laughter. Nothing daunted he began—"Jesus, the Name high over all." He did not finish; in a moment the lights were extinguished; he was alone, and from that time the house was no more haunted.—Through Rev. S. Rundle.

Clergymen in Cornwall are still supposed to be able to drive out evil spirits. A poor, half-crazed woman, yet living in Madron parish, near Penzance, went about ten years since to the house of a clergyman then residing there, and asked him to walk around her, reading some passages from the Bible, to exorcise the ghost of her dead sister, who had entered into her she said and tormented her in the shape of a small fly, which continually buzzed in her ear. Once before the board of guardians she talked sensibly for some time, then suddenly stopped and exclaimed, shaking her head: "Be quiet, you brute! don't you see I am talking to the gentlemen?"

We must now, after this long digression, return to Mullion. Between it and the Lizard is a fine headland, the Rill, and on its summit are a number of loose, rough stones, known as the Apron String, which the country people say were brought here by an evil spirit, who intended to build with them a bridge across to France for the convenience of smugglers. He was hastening along with his load, which he carried in his apron, when one of its strings broke, and in despair he gave up the idea. On the opposite side of the Lizard, at the mouth of Helford river, stands the church of St. Anthony in Meneage; like that of Gunwalloe it is little above the level of the sea, and is also, according to tradition, a votive offering. Some people of high rank, crossing over from Normandy to England, were caught in a storm, and in their peril vowed to St. Anthony that they would build a

church in his honour if he would bring them safe into harbour. The saint heard their prayers, and the church was erected on the spot where they landed. Helford river, in Carew's days, was the haunt of pirates, and of it he says: "Falmouths ower neere neighbourhood lesseneth his vse and darkeneth his reputation, as quitting it onely to the worst sort of Seafarers, I mean Pirats, whose guilty breasts with an eye in their backs, looke warily how they may goe out, ere they will aduenture to enter, and this at unfortified Hailford cannot be controlled, in which regard it not vnproperly brooketh his common term of Helford and the nickname of Stealford."

On the subject of pirates a friend writes:—"The popular play of 'The Pirates of Penzance' had not its origin in that town, but in the little fishing village of Penberth, near the Land's End; but that, alas! is in its 'custom port.' The captain of the pirate vessel, and all his ship's crew, were wrestlers. They would go out to the small Spanish, Dutch, and other merchant ships, and would ask for provisions, or tender assistance, and on making sure that the ship was unarmed they would overpower the sailors and plunder it. This was before the time when the Trinity Corporation had begun its work on our Cornish coast."

From Helford we will proceed to Penryn—the scene of Lillo's play, "Fatal Curiosity." The legend on which it is founded is as follows: A gentleman who had rashly squandered his own and his wife's fortune, sent their only son early into the world to seek his. During his absence his parents were reduced to penury; but he prospered, returned home and sought them out. He did not at first disclose to them who he was, intending to do so later on, but begged to be allowed to rest in their house, and whilst he was sleeping asked his mother to take charge of a casket for him. Her curiosity impelled her to open it, and her avarice was so inflamed at the sight of the rich jewels it contained that she incited her husband by prayers and reproaches to murder the poor young man. After the fatal deed was done, the unhappy pair discovered him to be their son.

It has been said that a party of Spaniards landed at Penryn in 1565, intending to plunder the town, but were alarmed by the sound of a drum beaten by some strolling players, and made a hasty retreat.

Before the year 1600 there were only a few houses where Falmouth now stands, called Pennycomequick, which name tradition declares was given it from the following: A woman, who had been a servant to a Mr. Pendarves, left his employ, and went there to reside, where, I suppose, she kept an ale-house, as the story says that he ordered her to brew a cask of ale, and on a certain day he and some friends would come and drink it. The ale was brewed; but in the meantime a Dutch vessel put into the creek, and she sold it all to the sailors. When her former master and his friends arrived at the appointed time, he was of course very angry. Her excuse was that the "penny comed so quick" that she could not refuse it. The name really means the head of the valley of the creek.

There is a pyramidal monument at the south end of Falmouth erected by one of the Killigrews to the memory of Sir Walter Raleigh, who had been entertained by an ancestor at their family-seat of Arwenack, when there was only one other house in the place. There is a red stain on it, "A blood-mark," the old people said, "that would not wash out, splashed there from the body of a man employed in making it, who fell from its top and was killed."

On the coast just outside the town is Gyllanvaes, or William's Grave, which is pointed out as the place where King Henry I.'s son, who was drowned on his passage from Normandy to England, was buried.

On the opposite side of Falmouth Harbour, where St. Anthony's church now stands, was formerly the priory of St. Mary de Vale, and King Henry VIII. is reported to have landed here in 1537, and told the prior that it would soon be destroyed, and he with all his brethren turned out. It was; but the prior left his curse behind him, and the first holder of the lands lost all his family by untimely deaths, and he himself committed suicide.

Of all the creeks up the Fal from Falmouth to Truro, most marvellous tales of smugglers and their daring deeds are told; and of King Harry's passage, where a ferry-boat crosses the river, this legend: That it is called after bluff King Hal, who forded it with his queen (sometime Katherine of Arragon) on his back. To have

accomplished this feat he must have been taller than the sons of Anak, for in the middle the water is several fathoms deep.

At the head of one of these creeks is Veryan parish. And there is a tradition that should its church clock strike on the Sunday morning during the singing of the hymn before the sermon, or before the collect against perils, at Evening Prayer (which does not often happen), there will be a death in the parish before the next Sunday.

On a hill near Veryan is a barrow, in which Gerennius, a mythical king of Cornwall, was said to have been buried many centuries ago, with his crown on his head, lying in his golden boat with silver oars. It was opened in 1855, when nothing but a kistvaen (a rude stone chest) containing his ashes was found. His palace of Dingerein was in the neighbouring village of Gerrans. A subterranean passage, now known as Mermaid's Hole, one day discovered when ploughing a field, was supposed to have led from it to the sea. Treasures of great value are reputed to be hidden under all the Cornish menhirs and barrows. Carew tells of a gentleman who was persuaded that by digging under a menhir near Fowey he would get great riches. "Wherefore, in a faire moone-shine night, thither with certaine good fellowes hee hyeth to dig it up. A working they fall, their labour shortneth, their hope increaseth, a pot of gold is the least of their expectation. But see the chance. In midst of their toying the skie gathereth clouds, the moonlight is overcast with darknesse, downe fals a mightie showre, up riseth a blustering tempest, the thunder cracketh, the lightning flasheth. In conclusion, our money-seekers washed instead of loden, or loden with water instead of yellow earth, and more afraid than hurt, are forced to abandon their enterprize and seeke shelter of the next house they could get into."

Malpas (pronounced Mopus) ferry was, nearly a century ago, kept by a woman called "Jenny Mopus," who was quite a character. "Wemmin and pigs" she used to declare were the worst things to ferry across.

The water bounds of the borough of Truro are renewed every six years, and the following curious ceremony takes place: On reaching the limits of their jurisdiction, the mayor, town clerk, members of cor-

poration, &c., go on shore, when a writ for the sum of 999*l.* 19*s.* 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* is produced against a person present, selected beforehand. He is arrested by the bailiff of the borough, on which two of the party offer themselves as bail, and the prisoner is liberated. Not far from Perranworthal is one of the most celebrated Cornish Tol-mên, Mên-an-tol, or holed stones. This is an immense egg-shaped mass of granite, perched on a dreary hill nearly 700 feet above the sea, and is thought to weigh 750 tons. It is generally known as the Cornish Pebble, and is supported on the points of two other stones leaving a hollow space beneath. In this it differs from other Mên-an-tol which have the orifice in the centre of the stone (hence their name). There are many in the county. The one at Madron is sometimes called the Crick Stone. It gets this name because in days not very long ago people afflicted with rheumatism, sciatica, &c., in May, and at certain other seasons of the year, crawled on all fours nine times around these Mên-an-tol from east to west, and, if thin enough, squeezed themselves through the aperture. This was then thought such a sovereign remedy for these diseases that parents brought their weak-backed children and carried them around. To work the charm properly there must always be two people, one of each sex, who stand one on each side of the stone. The child, if a male, must first be passed from the woman to the man; if a girl, from the man to the woman, and always from the left of the one to the right of the other. Some sort of divination, too, was formerly practised on these Mên-an-tol by pins laid cross-ways on the top.

In the parish of St. Dennis the church is dedicated to that saint. And when St. Dennis had his head cut off at Paris, blood, a legend says, fell on the stones of this churchyard; a similar occurrence often afterwards foretold other calamities.\* The exact centre of the county is reputed to be a hole in a field at Probus, a neighbouring parish.

At Boconnor, near Lostwithiel, not long ago stood the stump of an old oak, in which, in 1644, when Charles I. made this seat his headquarters, the royal standard was fixed. It bore variegated leaves. According to tradition, they changed colour when an attempt was made to assassinate the king whilst he was receiving the sacrament

\* Dennis is a very common Cornish surname.

under its branches. The ball passed through the tree, and a hole in its trunk was formerly pointed out in confirmation of the story.

Heath, in his *Description of Cornwall*, 1750, speaks of two other trees of the same kind to be seen in this county. "In Lanhadron Park," he says, "there grows an oak that bears leaves speckled with white, as another, called Painter's Oak, grows in the hundred of East. Some are of opinion that divers ancient families of England are preadmonished by oaks bearing strange leaves." A turtle-dove is said to be seen by the Bassetts of Tehidry in Camborne before death.

The church of St. Neot, in the parish of St. Neot, is celebrated for its beautifully painted glass. One of the windows contains many legends of this saint, but they have all been too fully described by other writers to require a lengthy notice from me. St. Neot is the reputed brother of King Alfred, and lived some hundreds of years before the present church dedicated to him was erected. But folklore has it that it was built at night entirely by his own hands, and that he drew from a neighbouring quarry, by the help of reindeer, all the stones he used in the building. He is described as a man of short stature, and tradition also says that after the church was finished he found that he was not tall enough to reach the keyhole of the door, and could not therefore unlock it. To remedy this defect he put a stone opposite (still pointed out), from which, when he stood on it, he could throw the key into the lock with unerring precision. About a mile to the west of it is an elevated spot with a square entrenchment, an ancient granite cross stands at one corner. There is a story attached to it which runs thus:—The crows in this neighbourhood were in his time so numerous that the farmers could not, fearing the mischief they might do in their absence, leave their fields and young crops to attend St. Neot's discourses. He, on hearing of it, determined to put a stop both to the excuse and the thieving habits of the birds, and one day ordered them all to enter this enclosure, from whence they could not stir until he gave the signal; upon which they all immediately flew away and returned no more.

The fine old mansion of Cottrell, situated on the River Tamar, was built in the reign of Henry VII.; it belongs to the Earl of Mount Edgecumbe, and is full of quaint treasures, many of the rooms and the



furniture they contain dating from the time of Queen Elizabeth. But the only part that concerns us is a little chapel in the woods perched on a rock overhanging the river, of which this legend is told. It was erected by Sir Richard Edgecumbe, who was a partizan to Henry, Duke of Richmond, the rival of Richard III. A party of soldiers were sent to take him prisoner, but he managed to elude them and escaped into the woods, where his pursuers were so close upon his heels that he would certainly have been captured had not his cap, as he was climbing down this rock, fallen off his head and floated on the stream. On seeing it the men, thinking that Sir Richard had in despair drowned himself, gave up the chase. He shortly after crossed over to Brittany, where he stayed until the news came of the defeat and death of the king, when he returned home, and, in gratitude for his miraculous escape, caused this chapel to be built.

Dupath Well, not far from Cottrell, was, according to tradition, the scene of a desperate duel between two Saxons, called by one authority Colan and Gotlieb, who were both suitors for the hand of the fair lady Gither; but the Rev. R. S. Hawker, who has written a ballad on part of the legend, gives the name of Siward to the younger and favoured one who killed his rival, but who himself in the combat received a wound from which he soon after died. The same author has also put into verse the well-known story of Bottreaux bells. Bottreaux is the parish church of Boscastle, a corruption of Bottreaux castle, and its tower is, and always has been, silent. When it was built the inhabitants, who had long been jealous of the beautiful peal at Tintagel, a neighbouring village, aided by the Lord of Bottreaux, raised enough money to buy a set for themselves, cast by a famous London founder. But when the ship that brought them was nearly in port the sound of Tintagel bells was in the calm evening borne across the water. The pilot, a native of that parish, hearing them, piously crossed himself, and thanked God that he should soon be safe on shore. On this the captain grew very wroth and said, "Thank the ship and the canvas at sea, thank God on shore." "No!" meekly replied the pilot, "we should thank God at sea as well as on land." At this the captain grew still more angry, swore and blasphemed, and with an oath exclaimed, "Not so, thank yourself and a fair wind." Upon which a

violent storm suddenly arose, the ship became unmanageable, struck on a rock, and went down. All on board, with the exception of the pilot, were drowned. Above the roar of the winds and waves the eager watchers from the shore, who were waiting for the arrival of the vessel with her precious freight, could hear the solemn tolling of their bells. And still before a gale their warning chimes sound from their ocean bed, but woe to the unhappy ship's crew that hears them, for wreck, misfortunes, and deaths are sure to follow. The following proverb would seem to infer that Boscastle, as well as no bells, has no market: "All play and no play, like Boscastle Market which begins at twelve o'clock and ends at noon." Mevagissey church, on the opposite coast, has neither tower nor bells, and there is a standing joke against its people that they sold their bells to pay the cost of pulling down the tower.

Gorran men, who live in an adjoining parish, seem in former days to have been rivals to the famous "Wise men of Gotham," from the absurd deeds attributed to them, such as "Trying to throw the moon over the cliffs," "Building a hedge to keep in the moonlight," &c. The inhabitants of more than one parish in Cornwall are said "to have built a hedge to keep in the 'juckaw' (cuckoo)." In fact, of nearly all in the county some joke is current in the neighbouring villages.

Not far from Boscastle is the beautiful waterfall of St. Nighton's Kieve, and close by are the ruins of a cottage, once the habitation of two ladies, who took possession of it at night. They evidently had seen better days, but their names and from whence they came remain a mystery, as from the date of their arrival they held no communication with the outer world. They kept no servant, and from the villagers bought for themselves the necessaries of life, asking but few questions, and not answering any. At first they took long solitary walks in the most secluded spots of the district; when met they were rarely conversing, and never spoke to a stranger. These walks were gradually discontinued, and one day a rumour spread through the village that one of the poor ladies was dead. Tradition says that the neighbours found the other weeping silent tears by the side of the corpse. After the funeral the survivor daily grew more infirm and

but rarely left the house, and one morning soon after, no smoke issuing from the chimneys of the cottage, the villagers peeped in through the uncurtained windows and saw her sitting dead in her chair. The friends were buried in one grave, and their secret died with them.

In Wellcombe church, near Morwenstow, against the font in the north wall, is a door called the "devil's door," opened at baptisms at the Renunciation, that the devil, which is then supposed to come out of the child, may be able to get away.

Trecarrel, in East Cornwall, formerly belonged to the Trecarells, the last of whom built Launceston church. A singular story has been handed down from the sixth century of the birth and death of his only son. His father is described as having been very learned in philosophy, astrology, astronomy, and other sciences; and it is said that, having surveyed the planetary orbs just as his child was about to be brought into the world, he perceived that the time was unfavourable to its birth, and foreboded a speedy and accidental death to the child. Overcome with these gloomy ideas he hastened to the house, and requested the midwife to delay the birth (if it were possible) for one hour; but nature, conspiring with fate on the downfall of his house, turned a deaf ear to his entreaties, and a son was born, to the great joy of all present except to him who was the most interested in the event. The child, however, grew up in a very promising way, until a servant-maid, having placed him to stand near a bowl of water in order to wash him, chanced to have forgotten the towel, and having stepped into another room to procure one, on her return found the boy dead, having fallen into the water with his head foremost: and in consequence of this unfortunate event the father spent a large part of his large property in charitable purposes, and in building and repairing churches in the county of Cornwall.—J. C. Gilbert.

A story of a similar nature is related of one of the Arundells, of whom it had been foretold "that he should die in the sands." To prevent this he left his house of Efford, near Stratton, and took up his abode at Trevice, another of his estates, about three-and-a-half miles from Newquay. But the Earl of Oxford, having surprised and taken St. Michael's Mount, Sir John Arundell, who was then sheriff of Cornwall, marched there to besiege and retake it for the king,

Edward IV. Here his fate overtook him, for in a skirmish on Marazion sands he lost his life, and was buried in the chapel at the Mount. A funeral procession goes through Stratton before the death of the Bathes of Kilkhampton.

Between Stratton and the village of Marham, about half-a-mile from the former town, in the orchard of Binamy farm-house, is an old quadrangular moat, all that remains to show where stood the castle of the Blanchminsters; an old family now, I believe, extinct in this neighbourhood. Of one of them, who lived in the reign of Edward I. and went with him on a crusade, folk-lore still tells some strange but—through the lapse of time—vague tales. His name was Ranulph de Blanchminster, corrupted by the country people into old Blowmanger, and it is said that after he had been absent for two or three years in the Holy Land, his wife, I suppose thinking that he was dead, married another baron. On his return he shut himself up alone in his castle, with the drawbridge generally raised to keep off intruders. No one was with him when he died; but after his death a will was found leaving the greater part of his property for the benefit of the poor of the parish of Stratton. His effigy may be seen in the church, in the habit of a Crusader, grasping a sword, with his feet resting on the back of a lion. Through his interest Stratton had the charter of its market. His spirit haunts Binamy grounds (avoided after dark by the superstitious) in the form of a hare, which always starts out of the moat and manages to elude the dogs.

Of the doings of the famous Grenvilles of Stow,—Sir Beville, the brave Royalist leader, who lost his life at the battle of Lansdowne in 1643,—Admiral Sir Richard, immortalized by Tennyson in his ballad "The Revenge,"—and of his son, Sir John, who served under Sir Walter Raleigh and died at sea,—I shall say nothing, these noted men belonging more to history than folk-lore.

Under the same head, too, may be classed the Cornish female Whittington, Thomasine Bonaventure, of St. Mary Wike (now Week St. Mary), who lived in the fourteenth century; the daughter of a labourer, she herself was a shepherdess. A London merchant, when travelling in Cornwall, lost his way on our moors, and accidentally met her with her sheep. He asked of her the way, and was so much

struck by her good looks and intelligence that he begged her from her parents and took her back with him to be a servant to his wife. In her new situation she conducted herself with so much propriety that on his wife's death he courted and married her. Soon after he himself died, and left her a wealthy widow. Her next marriage was to a much richer man, named Henry Gall. Widowed a second time, and again inheriting her husband's money, she took for her third and last husband Sir John Percival, Lord Mayor of London. Him, too, she outlived, and after his death returned to her native village, where she employed her great riches in works of charity. Amongst her other good deeds she founded and endowed a chantry there, together with a free school, and lodgings for masters, scholars and officers.

The Rev. R. S. Hawker, in his book before-quoted, has a legend which he calls "The first Cornish Mole. A Morality." I, however, suspect it to be a pure invention of this author; but as it is very pretty, I will give the substance of it. Alice of the Combe was a very beautiful, but proud and vain, damsel; the only child of her widowed mother, with whom she dwelt at Morwenstow. It chanced one day that they, with all the neighbouring gentry, had been bidden to a grand banquet at Stow; and, as she had set her love on the great and noble Sir Beville Grenville, its owner, Alice, to win his affections, dressed herself in her richest robe,—“a woven velvet, glossy and soft,” and put on her fairest jewellery. Her mother, when she saw her thus attired, struck by her exceeding grace and beauty, said, “Often shall I pray to-night that the Grenville heart may yield. Aye, thy victory shall be my prayer.” The haughty maiden replied, “With the eyes I now see in that glass, and with this vesture, meet for a queen, I lack no trusting prayer.” At this a sudden cry was heard, and the damsel disappeared from their sight for ever. Shortly after, the Combe gardener discovered in the garden a small, unknown hillock, and on the top of it shone a ring, which was recognized as the one the lady wore on the day she vanished. A close examination showed that an old Cornish couplet was now traced on it, which the parish priest interpreted to mean—

“The earth must hide  
Both eyes with pride.”

As he uttered these words a low cry was heard by his feet, and there "They beheld, O wondrous and strange! a small dark creature, clothed in a soft velvet skin, in texture and in hue like the Lady Alice her robe, and they saw as it groped into the earth that it moved along without eyes in everlasting night." "She herself had become

THE FIRST MOLE  
OF THE HILLOCKS OF CORNWALL."

Before finishing this section of my work I must say a few words about the islands of Scilly and their legends. The Rev. H. J. Whitfield, M.A., in 1852 published a book on this subject, but his legends are for the most part purely fictitious, and its title, *Scilly and its Legends*, a little misleading.

The Scilly Isles, just off the Land's End, are very numerous, but only five are inhabited; some are mere rocks in the sea, and, counting those, they are said to be a hundred and fifty. The largest is St. Mary's, and the dwellers on it are apt to look with contempt on the inhabitants of the other islands (the Off Islands). The word Scilly is sometimes derived from Sullèh, rocks dedicated to the sun, and sometimes from Sillyas, a conger. This fish is very plentiful on these coasts, and a ridiculous rhyme says that Scilly fare consists of—

"Scads and 'tates, scads and 'tates,  
Scads, and 'tates, and conger,  
And those who can't eat scads and 'tates  
Oh, they must die of hunger."

Occasionally the saying runs: "Oh! the Scillonians live on fish and 'taties every day, and conger-pie for Sundays."

In the beginning of this century, before steamboats were invented, when communication between Scilly and Penzance (the mainland) depended upon wind and weather, in winter its people were often reduced to great straits for want of provisions, which gave rise to the proverb, "There is always a feast or a fast in Scilly." This is, however, now far from being the truth, and Scilly is one of the most prosperous parts of Great Britain; its inhabitants, as a rule, are well educated, they are noted for their courteous manners; and for its beautiful scenery it is well worth a visit. The dialect of its poorer

people, as also the tones of their voices (each island has its peculiarity), differ from those of the same class in West Cornwall. Their pronunciation rather resembles the Irish. *Thread* with them is *tread*, the *th* at the beginning of words being rarely sounded, *pint* is *point*, and *point pint*.

Irreverent people declare that when Ireland was made some little bits of earth fell from the shovel and formed Scilly. Certain it is that when St. Patrick drove out all venomous reptiles from the former place he did the same kind service to the latter. The island of St. Agnes was particularly favoured, for until recently there was not a rat on it, then it was introduced from a wrecked vessel.

Small as St. Mary's is (about three miles long and nine around) it boasts of two capitals; the modern one dates from the time of Queen Elizabeth, and is called Hugh Town; before that Old Town was the principal village. At the east of Old Town Bay is Tolman Point (a corruption, I suppose, of *Tôl Mên*, the holed stone). Of it an old legend says when Scilly was under the monks of Tavistock, and Old Town the only port of St. Mary's, that they drew a chain from "Tollman head" across the entrance, and levied a toll from all who embarked and landed there, not excepting the fishermen. It was abolished by Richard Plantagenet, who, coming disguised to the port, was not recognized by the friar in charge, who demanded from him his dues. Upon which Earl Richard, in a fit of passion, struck him dead at his feet. According to Leland, "Inniscan longid to Tavestock, and there was a poor celle of monkes of Tavestock. Sum caulle this Trescau."

There was a settlement of Benedictine monks here long before the Norman Conquest; their cell was dedicated to St. Nicholas. A few fragments of the abbey which was then founded still exist. It was independent until the reign of Edward I. when it was joined to Tavistock. St. Nicholas, as well as St. Peter, is the patron saint of fishermen; the former also takes school boys under his protection. The same monarch, Edward I., made Ranulph de White Monastery (supposed to be Ranulph de Blankminster, or Randolph de Blancheminster), according to an old archive, constable of these islands, with the castle of Ennor, in Old Town, on his "Paying yearly, at the

feast of St. Michael the Archangel, 300 birds, called puffins, or 6s. 8d." Traces of these monastic visitors are to be found in a pile of rocks at St. Mary's, called Carn Friars (a farm near by bears the same name), and one of the most highly cultivated and sheltered spots, where a few trees grow, is known as Holy Vale. Whitfield places a nunnery there, and says Holy Vale takes its name from a miraculous rosebush that grew in it, and that "One of its flowers was deemed to have the power, if worn, to preserve its bearer from mortal sin," but no other authority mentions it.

Giants, of course, frequently played a great part in the history of Scilly. Buzza's Hill, just beyond Hugh Town (St. Mary's), commemorates a giant of the name of Bosow, who made his home on its summit (now crowned by a Spanish windmill), and from whom the family of Bosow were descended. One of the finest promontories on the same island is Giant's Castle—Troutbeck says, built by the Danes. Here, too, is Giant's Chair, where the Arch Druid used in former days to sit and watch the sun rise. Druidical remains are scattered all over the different islands, and the many "barrows" are known as "giants' graves." In the old abbey gardens at Tresco is a curious stone, about four feet long, two feet wide, and six inches in thickness, in an upright position. Near the top are two holes, one above the other (one being somewhat larger than the other), through which a man might pass his hand. It is supposed to be an old Druidical betrothal or wishing-stone, and used before the monks built the abbey at Tresco. Young people, engaged to be married, would pass their hands through the holes, and, joining them together, would so plight their troth. As a wishing-stone, or to break a spell, a ring would be passed through the holes with some incantations.—J. C. Tonkin's *Guide to the Isles of Scilly*.

The finest headland on St. Mary's is Peninnis, and some of the sheltered nooks under its rocks have rather curious names. One of them is known as Sleeps Abode (or Parlour), and close by is Pitt's Parlour, which commands a lovely view; it is so called after a Mr. Pitt, who, when on a visit to Scilly, spent his summer evenings there with a chosen party of friends. An old lady, a native of Scilly, long since dead, told me that tradition said Mr. Pitt came to Scilly



in consequence of a bet he made with a gentleman (I believe the then governor of the islands), who, when over in London, spoke in the highest terms of the morality of its women, and offered to lay a heavy wager that not a single courtesan could be found on them. Mr. Pitt took up the bet, travelled down to Scilly, and for a long time seemed likely to lose it; but at last, by a large bribe, he overcame the virtue of one very poor woman, and, in gratitude, allowed her a small pension until her death.

At the foot of Peninnis is Piper's Hole (in which there is a pool of fresh water). This is said to be the entrance of a subterranean passage leading to the island of Tresco, where another Piper's Hole is shown as the exit. Old people told marvellous tales of rash people venturing in so far that they never returned, but died there overcome by fatigue—the passage was too narrow for them to turn. Also of dogs who disappeared in the hole at St. Mary's, and after many days crept out from the one in Tresco, very emaciated, and almost hairless. The Rev. J. W. North, in his *Week in the Isles of Scilly*, has an interesting account of Piper's Hole at Tresco.

Half way down Giant's Castle, another steep carn on the same island (St. Mary's), lies a very inaccessible cave known as Tom Butt's Bed, from the fact that a boy of that name hid himself there in Queen Anne's time three days and three nights out of sight of the press-gang.

The wreck of Sir Cloudesley Shovel in 1707 upon Gilston Rock, in Porth Hellick Bay, near Old Town, is of course a matter of history. Very many traditions have, however, gathered around this sad event, related by many authors. I must briefly re-tell them, as no book of this kind would be complete without them.

The admiral, accompanied by the whole of his fleet, was returning home from Toulon, after the capture of Gibraltar, in his ship the Association. When they were off Scilly, on October 22nd, 1707, the weather became thick and dirty, and orders were given "to lye to." This was in the afternoon. Later on, about six, Sir Cloudesley again made sail, but two hours after his ship showed signals of distress, which were answered from several of the others. In two moments she struck on the Gilston Rock, sank immediately, and all on board perished.

The Eagle and the Romney with their crews shared the same fate; the Firebrand also was lost, but her captain with most of her men were saved. "The other men-of-war with difficulty escaped by having timely notice." In this storm between fifteen hundred and two thousand people were drowned in one night.

A day or two before this took place, one man, a native of Scilly, is said to have persistently warned the officer of the watch on board the Association that unless their ship's course was altered she, with all the fleet, would soon be on the Scilly rocks amongst the breakers. These warnings so exasperated the officer that he repeated them to his admiral, and he, vexed that a common sailor should think that he knew better than his superiors how to navigate a vessel, summarily ordered him to be hanged at the yard-arm for inciting the others to insubordination and mutiny. The man before his execution begged, as a great favour, that the chaplain should be allowed to read him one of the Psalms. His request was granted, and he chose the 109th, repeating after the reader in a loud voice all the curses it contains. And with his last breath he prophesied that the admiral, with those who saw him hanged, would find a watery grave. Up to this time the weather had been fair, but as soon as his body had been committed to the sea it changed, the wind began to blow, and his ship-mates were horrified to see the corpse out of its winding-sheet, face up, following in their wake, and even before their vessel struck they gave themselves up for lost men. Some say that Sir Cloudesley's body came ashore on a hatch, on which he had endeavoured to save himself, with his favourite little dog dead by his side. Others, that after the wreck it was cast naked on Porth Hellick beach, where it was discovered by a soldier, who took off his ring which he still wore, and buried him in the sands.

Another account, on the authority of Robert, second Lord Romney, Sir Cloudesley Shovel's grandson, runs thus :—"There is one circumstance relating to Sir Cloudesley Shovel's death that is known to very few persons, namely, he as *not* drowned, having got to shore, where, by the confession of an ancient woman, he was put to death. This, many years after, when on her death-bed, she revealed to the minister

of the parish, declaring she could not die in peace until she had made this confession, as she was led to commit this horrid deed for the sake of plunder. She acknowledged having, among other things, an emerald ring in her possession, which she had been afraid to sell lest it should lead to a discovery. This ring, which she delivered to the minister, was by him given to James, Earl of Berkeley, at his particular request, Sir Cloudesley Shovel and himself having lived on the strictest footing of friendship."

In the place and manner of his burial all traditions agree. Where he lay is still pointed out—a bare spot surrounded by green grass. And the Scillonians will tell you that, because he so obstinately refused to hear a warning, and wantonly threw away so many lives, God, to keep alive the memory of this great wickedness, permits none to grow on his grave.

Another legend has it that the man who gave the warning escaped death, as the storm suddenly arose whilst the Psalm was being read, before the order for his execution could be carried out, and that he was the only person on board the Association who was not drowned.

When Lady Cloudesley Shovel heard of the wreck, she asked that a search might be made for her husband's body. The soldier showed the ring which he had in his possession, which was immediately recognised as Sir Cloudesley Shovel's. The body was dug up and identified by the marks of his wounds. The ring was forwarded to his wife, and she, in gratitude for the soldier's kindness in giving her husband a decent burial, rewarded him with a pension for life. Sir Cloudesley's body was embalmed, first taken to Plymouth by sea, where for some time it lay in state, and finally to London, where it was interred in Westminster Abbey.

The abbey at Tresco, formerly under the jurisdiction of the monks of St. Nicholas\* at Tavistock, has been already mentioned. The abbey house, built on its site, is the seat of Mr. Dorrien Smith (the proprietor, as the Scillonians call him). The gardens that surround

\* "Old Monk" is a term of contempt in Cornwall, applied to old or young men. "I saw the old monk coming down the garden" (a youth of twenty).

it are very beautiful, and famed for the tropical plants that here grow out of doors. There is an anecdote related of one of the inhabitants of Tresco, who, when asked what they did for firewood in a spot where no trees grew, answered, "We kindle our fires from the loppings of our geranium hedges." Tresco, like St. Levan, at the Land's End, was in bygone days the favourite haunt of witches. A poor man there walking out at nightfall had the misfortune to meet with a party of them taking a moonlight ride on their broomsticks. A relation of his was one of the number, and she warned him, in a stentorian voice, that if he ever mentioned what he had accidentally seen, he should bear the marks of their wrath until his dying day. For a long time the secret weighed heavily upon him, and at last he could not refrain from telling his wife. The witches, in revenge, turned his black hair white in a single night.

The Rev. H. G. Whitfield, in his *Legends of Scilly*, gives some marvellous tales of the family of "Dick the Wicked." They were all hardened wreckers, who generations ago lived on this island, and who also had the gift of second sight. Dick himself, according to this writer, when ill and unrepentant, was, by Satanic agency, taken out of his bed and borne, wrapt in a long loose coat, which he was in the habit of wearing, some considerable distance from his house. Here his friends discovered him on the following morning.

On this island stands Cromwell's castle, built during his Protectorate. Old people thought that he in person visited it. The large china tankard, out of which he was said to have drunk his breakfast-beer, still exists. On a hill above are the ruins of Charles's castle. Scilly always remained loyal and true to this unfortunate monarch, and this verse of a ballad told me by a Scillonian was not written of one of them :

"In Cromwell's days I was for him,  
But now, my boys, I'm for the king ;  
For I can turn, boys, with the tide,  
And wear my coat on the strongest side."

St. Warna, who presided over wrecks, was the patron saint of St. Agnes, another of the principal islands. She crossed over here from

Ireland in a wicker-boat covered with hides, and landed at St. Warna's bay. Like many other saints she had her holy-well; and often the superstitious inhabitants of St. Agnes (five families in all), who enjoyed the reputation of being the most daring and unscrupulous amongst the Scilly wreckers of those days, threw crooked pins into it, and daily invoked and prayed her to send them "a rich wreck." There was no church there then, and its people rarely visited the other islands. But it chanced one fine morning the entire population started in their boats for the church of Ennor, in St. Mary Old Town, as two of them wished to be married. After the ceremony was over the clergyman, in the presence of most of his parishioners, who had assembled to witness it (between whom and the men of St. Agnes there was always a bitter feud), rebuked them for their lawless deeds. They, angry at being put to shame before their enemies, answered with many profane and mocking words, and were with difficulty restrained from coming to blows. So incensed were they that they took no notice of the signs which heralded a coming storm, and hastily got on board their boats to return to their own home, which none of them were ever destined to reach, as it broke with great fury when they were about half-way across. When close to land and the rowers were straining every nerve to get there, one wave larger than the rest broke over them, and every soul found a watery grave. This was of course said to be a judgment on them for their wicked ways. Leland briefly chronicles it. From that time St. Warna's well was neglected; there was no one left the day after twelfth-day, as had been the custom, to clean it out and return her thanks for her bounty: it gradually got filled with stones, and at the present day is little more than a hole.

There is a curious labyrinth on this island called "Troy-town," which it is popularly supposed to represent; but all intricate places in Cornwall are so denominated, and I have even heard nurses say to children when they were surrounded by a litter of toys that they looked as if they were in Troy-town.

A peculiar mode of punishment was formerly practised in Scilly. The offenders were placed in a chair called a "ducking chair," and publicly at St. Mary's quay-head "ducked" in the salt water.

## CORNISH GAMES.

Many old games worth recording are still played by Cornish children, out of doors in summer, indoors in winter, and at their numerous school-treats. To those common elsewhere, other names in Cornwall are often given, and different words sung. Some, well-known thirty-five years ago, now (1886) live only in the memory of those who were children then, or linger in a very fragmentary state in some remote country districts. Such as—

“Here comes three dukes a-riding.”

To play this the children were divided into two parties. In the first were only the three dukes: in the second the other players, who stood in a long line, linked hand-in-hand, facing them, the mother in the middle with her daughters ranged according to size on each side of her. One duke was chosen as spokesman, and he began the following dialogue, which was sung; the party singing advanced and retreated, whilst the other stood still:—

“Here comes three dukes a-riding, a-riding,  
Here comes three dukes a-riding, to court your daughter Jane.”

“My daughter Jane is yet too young  
To bear your silly, flattering tongue.”

“Be she young or be she old,  
She for her beauty must and shall be sold.  
So fare thee well, my lady gay,  
We’ll take our horse and ride away,  
And call again another day.”

“Come back, come back! you Spanish knight,  
And clean your spurs, they are not bright.”

“My spurs are bright as ‘rickety-rock’ (and richly wrought),  
And in this town they were not bought,  
And in this town they shan’t be sold,  
Neither for silver, copper, nor gold.  
So fare thee well,” &c.

“Come back! come back! you Spanish Jack (or coxcomb).”

“ Spanish Jack (or coxcomb) is not my name,  
I’ll stamp my foot (*stamps*) and say the same.  
So fare thee well,” &c.

“ Come back ! come back ! you Spanish knight,  
And choose the fairest in your sight.”

The dukes retired, consulted together, and then selected one, singing—

“ This is the fairest I can see,  
So pray young damsel walk with me.”

When all the daughters had been taken away, they were brought back to their mother in the same order, the dukes chanting :—

“ We’ve brought your daughter, safe and sound,  
And in her pocket a thousand pound,  
And on her finger a gay gold ring,  
We hope you won’t refuse to take her in.”

“ I’ll take her in with all my heart,  
For she and ‘ me ’ were loth to part.”

The Rev. S. Rundle, vicar of Godolphin, near Helston, saw some children lately in his neighbourhood playing a portion of this game. when to “ Here comes three dukes a-riding ” they added—“ My rancy, dancy dukes.” Mr. Halliwell Phillips, in his *Nursery Rhymes and Tales of England*, has published three versions of it, but the game as played in Cornwall has some additional couplets.

#### PRAY, PRETTY MISS.

For this—quite, I think, a thing of the past—the children (a boy and girl alternately) formed a ring. One stood in the middle holding a white handkerchief by two of its corners : if a boy he would single out one of the girls, dance backwards and forwards opposite to her, and sing—

“ Pray, pretty Miss, will you come out ?  
Will you come out ? will you come out ?  
Pray, pretty Miss, will you come out,  
To help me in my dancing ?”

If the answer were "No!" spoken with averted head over the left shoulder, the rhyme ran—

"Then you are a naughty Miss!  
Then you are a naughty Miss!  
Then you are a naughty Miss!  
Won't help me in my dancing."

Occasionally three or four in turn refused. When the request was granted the words were changed to—

"Now you are a good Miss!  
Now you are a good Miss!  
Now you are a good Miss,  
To help me in my dancing."

The handkerchief was then carefully spread on the floor; the couple knelt on it and kissed: the child formerly in the middle joined the ring, and the other took his place, or if he preferred it remained in the centre; in that case the children clasped hands and sang together—

"Pray, pretty Miss (or Sir)," &c.

The last to enter the ring had always the privilege of selecting the next partner.

In all these childish games, to prevent disputes, and decide who shall be middleman, hide first, &c., one or other of the following formula is always recited by the eldest of the party, who as he repeats the words points with his forefinger at each player in succession until he comes to the end of the rhyme. The person then indicated goes out:—

"Vizzery, vazzery, vozery-vem,  
Tizzery, tazzery, tozery-tem,  
Hiram, jiram, cockrem, spirem,  
Poplar, rollin, gem."

"There stands a pretty maid in a black cap,  
If you want a pretty maid in a black cap,  
Please to take 'she.'"—(East Cornwall.)

"Enc, mene, mona, mi,  
Pasca, lara, bona (or bora), bi,  
Elke, belke, boh!"



“Eggs, butter, cheese, bread,  
Stick, stack, stone, dead !”—(West Cornwall.)

To this latter there are several nonsensical modern additions.

A game with a jingle somewhat like the first is played by children at Newlyn West, near Penzance, called—

“Vesey, vasey vum.”

One child is blindfolded, the others hide something, and shout—

“Vesey, vasey, vum,  
Buck-a-boo has come !  
Find if you can and take it home,  
Vesey, vasey vum !”

A search is then made for the hidden object: when found the finder in his turn is blindfolded.

After this digression I will give all the other forgotten games before describing those still played.

“FRISKEE, FRISKEE, I WAS, AND I WAS.”

Known elsewhere as “Now we dance looby, looby, looby.” To play it the children formed a ring and danced round, singing—

“Friskee, friskee, I was, and I was  
A drinking of small beer.”

They then stopped suddenly and said, “Right arms in !” (all were extended towards the centre of the circle); “Right arms out !” (all wheeled round with arms outstretched in the contrary direction); “Shake yourselves a little and little and turn yourselves about.” The circle was reformed, “Friskee,” &c., was repeated, and the game went on until all the different parts of the body had been named.

“FOOL, FOOL, COME TO SCHOOL.”

All the children in this game, except one who left the room, called themselves by the name of some bird, beast, or fish. The child outside was brought in, and one chosen as schoolmaster said—

“Fool ! fool ! come to school,  
And find me out the — — :”

giving the assumed name of one of the players. If the fool fixed on the right person, he stayed in and the other went out, which of course involved re-naming; but if he made a mistake they all cried out—

“Fool ! fool ! go back to school,  
And learn your letters better.”

He retired, pretended to knock his head against the door, and returned, when he was again asked in the same words to name some other player.

Some of the games were much rougher, such as “Pig in the middle and can’t get out” and “Solomon had a great dog.”

For the first, one of the children stood in the centre, whilst the others danced around him in a circle, saying, “Pig in the middle and can’t get out.” He replied, “I’ve lost my key but I will get out,” and threw the whole weight of his body suddenly on the clasped hands of a couple to try and unlock them. When he had succeeded he changed the words to, “I’ve broken your locks, and I have got out.”

One of the pair whose hands he had opened took his place and he joined the ring.

For the second, the players knelt in a line; the one at the head, in a very solemn tone, chaunted, “Solomon had a great dog”; the others answered in the same way, “Just so” (this was always the refrain). Then the first speaker made two or three more ridiculous speeches, ending with, “And at last this great dog died, and fell down,” giving at the same time a violent lurch against his next neighbour, who, not expecting it, fell against his, and so on, to the end of the line.

“SCAT” (Cornish for “slap”).

A paper-knife, or thin slip of wood, was placed by one player on his open palm. Another took it up quickly, and tried to “scat” his opponent’s hand before he could draw it away. Sometimes a feint of taking the paper-knife was made three or four times before it was really done. When the “scat” was given, the “scatter” in his turn rested the knife on his palm.

## HOLE IN THE WALL.

A person, who did not know the trick, was blindfolded, another stood in the corner of the room with his mouth open. The fore-finger of the blindfolded player was carefully guided around the walls of the room to find the hole, until at last it was put into the open mouth, when it was sharply bitten.

## MALAGA, MALAGA RAISINS (a forfeit game).

The players sat in a circle. One acquainted with the trick took a poker in his right hand, made some eccentric movements with it, passed it to his left, and gave it to his next neighbour on that side, saying, "Malaga, Malaga raisins, very good raisins I vow," and told him to do the same. Should he fail to pass it from right to left, when he in his turn gave it to his neighbour, without being told where the mistake lay, he was made to pay a forfeit.

## SHE SAID, AND SHE SAID.

This required a confederate, who left the room. The other in the secret asked a person inside to whisper to him whom she (or he) loved, then called in his companion, and the following dialogue was carried on:—

"She said, and she said!  
And what did she say?"

"She said that she loved."

"And whom did she love?  
Suppose she said she loved ——?"

"No! she never said that, whatever she said."

An indefinite number of names were mentioned before the right one. When that came, to the surprise of the whisperer, the answer was—

"Yes! she said that."

The secret was very simple, the name of a widow or widower was always given before that whispered.

The two next are played everywhere, but the words I believe are peculiar to Cornwall.

## DROP THE HANDKERCHIEF.

This is much too common to require a description. I will therefore only give the doggerel, which is recited by the holder of the handkerchief as he walks around the ring :—

“ I sent a letter to my love,  
 I carried water in my glove,  
 And by the way I dropped it.  
 I did so ! I did so !  
 I had a little dog that said ‘ Bow ! wow ! ’  
 I had a little cat that said ‘ Meow ! meow ! ’  
 Shan’t bite you, shan’t bite you,  
 Shall bite you.”

Throws the handkerchief, and chases the girl.

## RULES OF CONTRARY.

Four children hold a handkerchief by the four corners, one moves a finger over it, saying, as fast as possible—

“ Here I go round the rules of contrary,  
 Hopping about like a little canary.  
 When I say ‘ Hold fast ’ leave go ;  
 When I say ‘ Leave go ’ hold fast.”

Any player making a mistake pays a forfeit.

## LADY QUEEN ANNE.

A very pretty version of this old English game is often played at juvenile parties in Cornwall.

One child is chosen to remain in the room, whilst the others go outside and consult together as to whom shall hold the ball (some small thing). They then troop in, with their hands either hidden under the skirts of their dresses, or clasped in such a way that Lady Queen Anne, by looking at them, cannot tell which has it; all repeating—

“ Here come we to Lady Queen Anne,  
 With a pair of white gloves to cover our hand ;  
 As white as a lily, as fair as the rose,  
 But not so fair as you may suppose.”

*L. Q. A.* "Turn, ladies, turn!"

(*Whirl round.*) "The more we turn the more we may,  
Queen Anne was born on Midsummer day."

*L. Q. A.* "The king sent me three letters, I never read them all,  
So pray, Miss —, deliver the ball."

Should she have guessed correctly, all the party courtesy, and say—

"The ball is yours and not ours,  
You must go to the garden and gather the flowers."

And the child who had the ball takes the queen's seat, whilst she retires with the others; but should she have made a mistake, the same party go out again, saying as they courtesy—

(*Repeat*) "The ball is ours and not yours,  
We," &c.

Mr. Halliwell Phillips, in his book before quoted, has shorter versions of this, with different rhymes.

Another game which has descended from generation to generation is—

#### OLD WITCH.

The children choose from their party an old witch (who is supposed to hide herself) and a mother. The other players are the daughters, and are called by the names of the week. The mother says that she is going to market, and will bring home for each the thing that she most wishes for. Upon this they all name something. Then, after telling them upon no account to allow any one to come into the house, she gives her children in charge of her eldest daughter Sunday, and goes away. In a moment, the witch makes her appearance, and asks to borrow some trifle.

Sunday at first refuses, but, after a short parley, goes into the next room to fetch the required article. In her absence the witch steals the youngest of the children (Saturday), and runs off with her. Sunday, on her return, seeing that the witch has left, thinks there must be something wrong, and counts the children, saying, "Monday, Tuesday," &c., until she comes to Saturday, who is missing. She then pretends to cry, wrings her hands, and sobs out—"Mother will beat me when she comes home."

On the mother's return, she, too, counts the children, and, finding Saturday gone, asks Sunday where she is. Sunday answers, "Oh, mother! an old witch called, and asked to borrow ——, and, whilst I was fetching it, she ran off with Saturday." The mother scolds and beats her, tells her to be more careful in the future, and again sets off for the market. This is repeated until all the children but Sunday have been stolen. Then the mother and Sunday, hand in hand, go off to search for them. They meet the old witch, who has them all crouching down in a line behind her.

*Mother.* Have you seen my children?

*O. W.* Yes! I think, by Eastgate.

The mother and Sunday retire, as if to go there, but, not finding them, again return to the witch, who this time sends them to Westgate, then to Southgate and Northgate. At last one of the children pops her head up over the witch's shoulder, and cries out, "Here we are, mother." Then follows this dialogue:—

*M.* I see my children, may I go in?

*O. W.* No! your boots are too dirty.

*M.* I will take them off.

*O. W.* Your stockings are too dirty.

*M.* I will take them off.

*O. W.* Your feet are too dirty.

*M.* I will cut them off.

*O. W.* Then the blood will stream over the floor.

The mother at this loses patience, and pushes her way in, the witch trying in vain to keep her out. She, with all her children, then chase the witch until they catch her; when they pretend to bind her hand and foot, put her on a pile, and burn her, the children fanning the imaginary flames with their pinafores. Sometimes the dialogue after "Here we are, mother," is omitted, and the witch is at once chased.

Mr. Halliwell Phillips calls this the "Game of the Gipsy," and gives some rhymes to which it is played, but I have never heard them in this county.

The next, a game quite unknown to me, I took down from the lips of a little girl in West Cornwall in 1882, who told me it was a great favourite with her and her playmates.

## GHOST AT THE WELL.

One of the party is chosen for ghost (if dressed in white so much the better); she hides in a corner; the other children are a mother and daughters. The eldest daughter says:

“Mother, mother, please give me a piece of bread and butter.”

*M.* Let me (or “leave me”) look at your hands, child. Why, they are very dirty.

*E. D.* I will go to the well and wash them.

She goes to the corner, the ghost peeps up, and she rushes back, crying out—

“Mother! mother! I have seen a ghost.”

*M.* Nonsense, child! it was only your father’s nightshirt I have washed and hung out to dry. Go again.

The child goes, and the same thing happens. She returns, saying—

“Yes! mother! I have seen a ghost.”

*M.* Nonsense, child! we will take a candle, and all go together to search for it. The mother picks up a twig for a candle, and they set off. When they come near to the ghost, she appears from her hiding-place, mother and children rush away in different directions, the ghost chases them until she has caught one, who in her turn becomes ghost.

## MOTHER, MOTHER, MAY I GO OUT TO PLAY.

I thought this game was a thing of the past, but I came on some children playing it in the streets of Penzance in 1883. It may be played by any number, and, as in the two former games, one is chosen for mother. This is the dialogue:

*C.* Mother, mother, may I (or we) go out to play?

*M.* No, child! no, child! not for the day.

*C.* Why, mother? why, mother? I won’t stay long.

*M.* Make three pretty courtesies, and away begone.

*C.* One for mammy, one for daddy, one for Uncle John.

The child, as she mentions the names, spreads out the skirts of her dress and courtesies, after which she retires to a little distance, and then returns.

*M.* Where, child ! where, child ! have you been all the day ?

*C.* Up to granny's.

*M.* What have you been doing there ?

The answer to this is often "Washing doll's clothes," but anything may be mentioned.

*M.* What did she give you ?

The reply is again left to the child's fancy.

*M.* Where's my share ?

*C.* The cat ate it (or, In the cat's belly). What's in that box, mother ?

*M.* Twopence, my child.

*C.* What for, mother ?

*M.* To buy a stick to beat you, and a rope to hang you, my child.

The child at this tries to snatch at the box, the mother chases her until she has caught her (when there are several children, until she has caught one), she then pretends to beat her, and puts her hands around her neck as if she were going to hang her.

#### HERE I SIT ON A COLD GREEN BANK.

The children form a ring around one of the party, who sits in the middle, and says :

"Here I sit on a cold green bank  
On a cold and frosty morning."

Then those in the circle dance round her, singing :

"We'll send a young man (or woman) to take you away,  
To take you away,  
We'll send a young man to take you away  
On a cold and frosty morning."

*Child.* "Pray tell me what his name shall be ?"

Or,

"Pray, whom will you send to take me away ?"

*Circle.* "We'll send Mr. — to take you away."

This is repeated three times with the refrain, "On a cold," &c., after which the dancing and singing cease, and the child is asked, "Sugar, sweet, or vinegar, sour ?" Her answer is always taken in a contrary



sense, and sung, as before, three times, whilst the children circle round. The one in the middle then rises to her feet. The boy (or girl) named advances and kisses her, they change places, and the game begins again.

#### JOGGLE ALONG.

This is a very favourite open air game. To play it there must be an uneven number. He (or she) stands in the middle, whilst the others, arm in arm, circle around him, singing:—

“Come all ye young men, with your wicked ways,  
Sow all your wild oats in your youthful days,  
That we may live happy, that we may live happy,  
That we may live happy when we grow old.  
The day is far spent, the night’s coming on,  
Give us your arm, and we’ll ‘joggle along.’  
That we may live happy,” &c. &c.

At the words “joggle along” they all drop the arm of the person they are leading, and try to catch the arm of the player in front of them, whilst the middle man tries at the same time to get a partner. Should he succeed, the player left without one, takes his place. (*Repeat.*)

I am indebted to the Rev. S. Rundle, vicar of Godolphin, for another set of words to this game, which he calls—

#### THE JOLLY MILLER.

And, under this title, a lady, two years since, saw some children playing it at St. Ives, in Cornwall.

“There was a jolly miller, lived by himself;  
By grinding corn he got his wealth;  
One hand in the upper, the other in the bag,  
As the wheel went round they all called ‘Grab.’”

In this county “Tom Tiddler’s Ground” is known as “Mollish’s Land,” “Cat and Mouse” as “The Duffan Ring,” and “Blind Man’s Buff” as “Blind Buck-a-Davy.” To this last the following words are repeated, which I have never seen in print. One of the players takes the blindfolded person by the shoulders, and says:

“How many horses has your father got in his stables?”

A. Three.

“What colour are they?”

A. Red, white, and grey.

(*Whirling him round.*) “Then turn about, and twist about, and catch whom you may.”

To make barley bread (in other districts, “Cockley bread”) this rhyme is used in West Cornwall:—

“Mother has called, mother has said,  
‘Make haste home, and make barley bread.’  
Up with your heels, down with your head,  
That is the way to make barley bread.”

### BOBBY BINGO.

Of this, which is a very common game at school-treats in some parts of West Cornwall, I have only lately through the kindness of the Rev. S. Rundle succeeded in getting a description. He saw some children in 1884 playing it in his parish, (Godolphin, Helston). A ring is formed, into the middle of which goes a child holding a stick, the others with joined hands run round in a circle singing—

“There was a farmer had a dog,  
His name was Bobby Bingo;  
B. I. N. G. O.  
His name was Bobby Bingo.”

When they have finished singing they cease running, whilst the one in the centre pointing with his stick asks them in turn to spell Bingo. If they all spell it correctly they again move round singing; but, should either of them make a mistake, he or she has to take the place of the middle man.

### WEIGH THE BUTTER, WEIGH THE CHEESE.

Is rather dangerous, and now but rarely played. Two children stand back to back with their arms locked. One stoops as low as he can, supporting the other on his back, and says, “Weigh the butter”; he rises, and the second stoops in his turn with “Weigh the cheese.” The first repeats with “Weigh the old woman”; and it ends by the second, with “Down to her knees.”

## LIBBETY, LIBBETY, LIBBETY-LAT.

A game of a very different character, which pleases young children. The child stands before a hassock, and as if he were going up stairs ; he puts on it first his right and then his left foot, gradually quickening his steps, keeping time to the words :—

“ Libbety, libbety, libbety-lat,  
Who can do this ? and who can do that ?  
And who can do anything better than that ? ”

This ends the games in which children of both sexes join. I must next give those exclusively for boys. I will begin by a very old one.

## SHIP SAIL.

Is a game usually played with marbles ; one boy puts his hand into his trousers pocket and takes out as many marbles as he feels inclined ; he closes his fingers over them, and holds out his hand with the palm down to the opposite player, saying, “ Ship sail, sail fast. How many men on board ? ” A guess is made by his opponent ; if less he has to give as many marbles as will make up the true number ; if more, as many as he said over. But should the guess be correct he takes them, and then in his turn says “ Ship sail,” &c.

## BUCK SHEE, BUCK.

Is another game of chance, and is generally played by three boys in the following way. One stands with his back to a wall, the second stoops down with his head against the stomach of the first boy, “ forming a back,” the third jumps on it, and holds up his hand with the fingers distended, saying,—

“ Buck shee, buck shee buck,  
How many fingers do I hold up ? ”

Should the stooper guess correctly, they all change places and the jumper forms the back. Another and not such a rough way of playing this game is for the guesser to stand with his face towards a wall, keeping his eyes shut.

Leap-frog is known in Cornwall as "Leap the long-mare," and there is a curious variation of it called—

#### ACCROSHAY.

A cap or small article is placed on the back of the stooping boy by each in turn as he jumps over him. The first as he jumps says "Accroshay," the second "Ashotay," the third "Assheflay," and the last "Lament, lament, Leleeman's (or Leleena's) war." The boy who in jumping knocks off either of the things has to take the place of the stooper.

#### BUCKEY-HOW.

For this the boys divide into sides; one "stops at home," the other goes off to a certain distance agreed on beforehand and shouts "Buckey-how." The boys "at home" then give chase, and, when they succeed in catching an adversary, they bring him home and there he stays until all on his side are caught, when they in turn become the chasers.

#### CUTTERS AND TRUCKLERS (SMUGGLERS).

A remembrance of the old smuggling days. The boys divide into two parties; the "trucklers" try to reach some given point before the cutter catches them.

#### MARBLE PLAYING.

Is a favourite recreation with the young fishermen in West Cornwall. Forty years ago "Pits" and "Towns" were the common games, but the latter only is now played. Boys who hit their nails are looked on with great contempt, and are said "to fire Kibby." When two are partners and one in playing accidentally hits the other's marble, he cries out "no custance," meaning that he has a right to put back the marble struck; should he fail to do so, it would be considered out of the game. To steal marbles is "to strakey."

To make ducks and drakes with a stone on the water is in Cornwall called "Tic-Tac-Mollard."

COCK-HAW.

This game is, I believe, known in other counties as "Cob-nut," but in Cornwall the boys give the names of "Victor nut" to the fruit of the common hazel, and play it to the words :

"Cock haw ! First blow ! Up hat ! Down cap ! Victor !"

The nut that cracks another is called a "cock battler."

Children under the title of "Cock battler" often in country walks play a variation of it with the "Hoary plantain," which they hold by the tough stem about two inches from the head ; each in turn tries to knock off the head of his opponent's flower.

WINKY-EYE.

A rural game, played in the spring. An egg taken from a bird's nest is placed on the ground, at some distance off—the number of paces having been previously fixed. Blindfolded, one after the other, the players attempt with a stick to hit and break it.

"UPPA, UPPA HOLYE" (pronounced oopa, oopa holly).

When the writer was a boy, the following were the words used in the boys' game of foxhunting. When the hounds (the boys) were "at fault" the leader cried :

"Uppa, uppa holye,  
If you don't speak  
My dogs shan't folly."  
(East Cornwall. F. W. P. Jago, M.B., Plymouth.)

Boys here, as probably elsewhere, are very fond of hitting each other and then running away, shouting—

"Last blow, never grow,  
For seven years to come."

The old Cornish game of "Hurling" I have already described under the head of "Western Customs."

(To be continued.)

## SOME SIMPLE METHODS OF PROMOTING THE STUDY OF FOLK-LORE, AND THE EXTENSION OF THE FOLK-LORE SOCIETY.



LOOKING back through former volumes of the *Journal*, it strikes one very forcibly how little of *English* folk-lore they contain. While school attendance officers, newspaper-vendors, and popular scientific lecturers, are prowling about our most retired country villages, our members are calmly engaged in "surveying mankind from China to Peru," apparently in happy unconsciousness that these modern Aids to the Advancement of Learning are rapidly destroying the curious old *folk*-learning which it was surely the original purpose of the Society to record before it should be too late.

There must be some misapprehension in the minds of our country members, or this would not be so. Is it that they are bashful, and wait to be asked to contribute? In that case, it might be well to insert an editorial notice to the effect that brief local notes are welcome. Or do they think the numberless little matters of folk-lore which *must* come under the observation of dwellers in the country are too trivial or too well-known to be worth recording? If so, they surely make a great mistake. In the first place, it is just as rash for persons who have chiefly lived in one place to conclude that what is familiar to them must be familiar to all the world, as it is to fly into the opposite (but not uncommon) error of fancying that what is customary in their own neighbourhood is peculiar to the locality and unknown to the rest of the world. Besides, even though a given item may be known elsewhere, it has more than once been pointed out in the *Journal* that the *geographical distribution* of folk-lore is a matter

of interest, and that things already recorded are yet worth noting when a definite, and possibly a hitherto-unnoticed, *locale* can be assigned to them.

Perhaps it might help to remove the evident uncertainty as to what is wanted if particular points on which further information is desirable were from time to time specified by authority in the *Journal*, and members were requested to state the custom or belief of their own neighbourhood as to the matter in question in the next Quarterly Part. This would be something definite, and would undoubtedly meet with a certain amount of response.

Another thing that strikes one every day is the extraordinary ignorance of even otherwise well-educated people, first, of the nature of folk-lore, and secondly, of the existence of the Folk-Lore Society. For myself, I think I have only met with one person who had heard of the latter before I mentioned it, and *he* thought its object was the study of dialects! This general ignorance will have to be removed before any really substantial progress can be made in collecting. For there is one noteworthy point about the study of folk-lore, in which it differs from all other branches of learning except the study of dialects, viz. that it cannot be pursued by the *savants* without the aid of the comparatively unlearned—those who mingle familiarly with the folk, who go in and out among them, know their ways, their ideas, and their modes of thought; nay, who in many cases have themselves been brought up in an atmosphere of old-world manners and customs, very far removed from that of modern English life. These are the people who must be enlisted in the cause and incited to bring grist to the mills of the scientific folk-lorists: the point to be considered is, how best to get hold of them.

In the first place, the admirable prospectus of the Society should be widely distributed, by which I do not mean that it should be sent to all-and-sundry in a halfpenny wrapper, to meet with immediate "happy despatch" in the waste-paper basket; but that every individual member should exert himself or herself to put two or three copies of it into the hands of intelligent friends.

In the second place we ought to gain the attention of the newspapers. What the Psychological Society can do, surely the Folk-Lore

Society can. What steps to take with regard to the London press I leave to the consideration of Londoners; but there are thousands of middle-class country people who can be reached through the country press better than through any other medium, and what I want particularly to urge on our country members is the importance of drawing attention to the subject in the columns of their several local newspapers. The occasional paragraphs headed "Extraordinary Superstition," the announcements that "The ancient custom of so-and-so was observed in this town on such-a-day," would give opportunities for letters or articles on the general subject of folk-lore, which would without question be gladly welcomed by the editors of the better class of country papers. Again, queries on definite points of local usage, &c. will generally meet with some response. I speak from personal experience, and I could name two most energetic collectors who obtain the chief part of their materials in this way. Many of the local editors, too, would willingly, if it were suggested to them, insert portions of the prospectus in the form of a paragraph; especially where there is an antiquarian column, to which it would form a valuable contribution. Moreover, besides helping to arouse the interest of the general public by these means, we could not obtain more useful coadjutors than the writers for the local press themselves. I have, myself, received most courteous and competent assistance in collecting from members of their calling. The chiefs among them are naturally some of the ablest and most cultivated men of their class, and the subordinate members of the staff have unrivalled opportunities of getting at the folk-lore of their several districts.

Perhaps more tangible results in the way of new subscribers, (of whom our funds notoriously stand in need), might be obtained by the private circulation of the prospectus; but the general enlightenment of the public mind would certainly be better attained through the newspapers than in any other way, and this would also be the readiest means of increasing the stock of recorded English folk-lore, while here and there a real appreciation of the subject would be found lurking in unexpected quarters. But apart from interested motives, the promotion of the study of folk-lore is a desirable object in itself. It has a dractical bearing on the affairs of human life. Captain Temple has



pointed out (*Journal*, vol. iv. p. 209) the value of the study to all Englishmen who are called upon (as so many are called upon) to exercise authority over savage and uncivilized tribes. But there are barbarians nearer home than in India or New Zealand, and surely any one who is placed in a position of authority over uneducated folk must gain in largeness of judgment and breadth of view, and must, therefore, be better fitted for his post, when he has arrived at a perception of the cardinal fact that widely separated stages of progress may coexist in the same country at the same time, and has learnt that the ideas of the folk are not necessarily to be ridiculed or despised when they differ from those which his education has instilled into him. When people understand the reasons of the prejudices of uneducated folk they must know better how to deal with them, and how to set about trying to reconcile them with the principles of modern culture and civilization.

CHARLOTTE S. BURNE.

Pyebirch, Eccleshall, Staffordshire.  
13th December, 1886.

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As one of the Honorary Secretaries of the Society I may, perhaps, be allowed to say how heartily I endorse Miss Burne's excellent and practical suggestions as set forth above.

One of them, viz. that relating to the desirability of enlisting the help of country editors, I hope to carry into effect without delay, by printing an extract from the letter itself, together with such particulars from the Prospectus of the Society as shall give an idea of the aims of the Folk-Lore Society, and make, I trust, a not unsuccessful appeal. This I propose to send to the editor of every good country newspaper.

J. J. FOSTER,

*Hon. Sec.*

## STRAY DONEGAL FOLK-LORE.

## BALLOR OF THE EVIL EYE.

**T**ORY Island is twelve miles from the coast of the county Donegal, being the extreme north-west land of Ireland: and, like all the remarkable places round the coast, it has its history and its legends, one of the most remarkable of the latter being that of Ballor.

Ballor of Tory was a sort of Cyclops, having only one eye before, in the middle of his forehead—however, he had a second behind in the middle of the back of his skull; while a glance from the latter would strike a person dead. On this account a person in the co. Donegal, who is supposed to have an evil eye, is called *Suil Bhallor*—or Ballor's eye. Ballor had only one child, a daughter Ethnea; and it was prophesied by a Druid that he would die by the hands of his grandchild; he therefore put Ethnea into the charge of twelve matrons, and sent them to live in a castle on Tor-more (big peak), the highest and a nearly inaccessible crag at the eastern extremity of Tory Island. There Ethnea gradually grew up, a beautiful maiden, wondering how she got there, and what the hairy animals she saw in the *currach* fishing around the island were; but the matrons were true to their trust, and would not let Ethnea know what they were.

In the meantime Ballor was amusing himself, as usual, plundering all boats that tried to pass, and making raids on the mainland, from which he carried off cattle and prisoners.

The chief of the adjoining territory of Tullaghobegley was MacKineely, he being the owner of the cow called Glas Gaivlen—"she was so lactiferous that her fame spread far and wide," and "Ballor of the Mighty Blows and the Evil Eye declared that his ambition could never be satisfied until he got possession of her." But MacKineely brought her everywhere with him, so that it was impossible to steal her. MacKineely had a brother named Gavidia, a smith, whose forge was at Drumnatinne, or the ridge of the fire. One day MacKineely

went to the forge to have a sword made, bringing his cow with him. Another brother, named MacSambthainn, happened to be there, and MacKineely gave him the cow to hold while he went into the forge. Ballor, who was always watching for an opportunity, immediately changed himself into a red-headed boy, and went up to MacSambthainn and told him that he had overheard the two brothers arranging that they would make his swords of iron while they would use all the steel for MacKineely's sword. Enraged, MacSambthainn uttered a dreadful oath, handed the rope of the cow to the red-headed boy, and rushed into the forge; while the red-headed boy, quicker than lightning, carried off the cow, and when the brother came out they saw Ballor with the cow in the middle of the Tory ground. The place where the cow was dragged on shore is still called Port-na-Glaise, or cow harbour. Immediately after the loss of the cow MacKineely went to the Druid, to ask what he should do; but was told he never could get back his cow till Ballor was dead, as he would always keep the hind eye open and petrify any one who tried to get near her. He then went to his familiar spirit, or friendly fairy, called Birage, who told him she would enable Ballor to be killed. To do this she dressed MacKineely in women's clothes, and on the wings of a storm wafted him to the tower on Tor-more where Ethnea lodged. Here Birage demanded admittance for a noble lady she had rescued from the hands of a cruel giant who was carrying her off, and the twelve matrons, fearing the fairy, admitted her and MacKineely. Birage then caused a deep sleep to fall on the matrons, while Ethnea and MacKineely were left together to fall in love; after which the fairy brought MacKineely the way he came back to his abode on the mainland.

In process of time, three sons were born in the tower of Tor-more; and when Ballor heard of them he was furious, and ordered them to be drowned. They were rolled up in a sheet fastened by a pin, and brought to the whirlpool off the island where Ballor had ordered them to be cast. Here the pin, or *deloz*, fell out, and the boys fell into the water, one sinking at once, but the two others were caught and put again into the sheet and cast into the whirlpool—the place being now called Port-a-Deloz, or the harbour of the pin.

The boy that sank was not, however, drowned, as Birage had taken

him under the water to the mainland, and gave him to his father, who sent him to his brother Gavida, who taught him his trade of smith.

A Druid told Ballor that MacKineely was the father of the children; he thereupon called his warriors together and crossed to the main, landing at Ballyconnell, where he seized MacKineely, one of his men catching him by the hair, another by his hands, another by his feet, when he was cast across a large block of stone, when Ballor with one stroke of his sword cut off his head. The stone is called Clagh-an-neely, and still has on it streaks of MacKineely's blood. Some years ago (1794) it was placed on a pillar sixteen feet high, where it still remains.

After the slaughter of MacKineely and his children, Ballor thought he might defy the fates, and frequently visited the mainland, his favourite haunt being the forge of Gavida. Here he met his grandchild without knowing his origin, and became very fond of him. The young smith knew who his father was, and that he was killed at Clagh-an-neely, which he often visited, but by whom he did not know. One day, however, Ballor came to the forge while Gavida was absent, and whiled away the time by telling his exploits to his grandson, and among others boasted of his seizure of MacKineely, and of how he killed him. On which the young smith watched his opportunity, and when Ballor was off his guard ran a red-hot iron into the "basilisk eye" and through his head, thus fulfilling the prophecy and avenging the death of his father.

#### FAIRIES.

Tory Island is a favourable haunt of the good people, and no Toryite will go out alone after dark. Till lately there lived at Killult a woman who used to be carried off by the fairies. One dark night, when they were out looking for her with torches, Owen Kelly of Malin rescued her: she was in the grasp of a little man with a red cap, who disappeared as he came up.

On Tory Island there is a "cursing stone," visited by those who wish to curse their enemies.

G. H. K.

## SUPERSTITIONS, CO. DONEGAL.



THE following I was told by the daughter of a small farmer, the family evidently being descendants of one of the English settlers. These are only a part of the superstitions still prevalent in the country.

## CRICKETS.

“Miss, there is no doubt the crickets know what you speak. At Moyne Hill, at our house, you know, we were getting a new grate in the kitchen, and all the crickets left. A few days afterwards I saw a big cricket outside the door, and I said, ‘You are welcome back, come in,’ and the big cricket and five others immediately came in. Some time afterwards my sister Kate killed one of the crickets, and that night when our stockings were drying at the fire the crickets eat hers, but they did not touch mine.”

It is a very general belief in Ireland that crickets will destroy clothes of people that injure them, and if those people are married they are especially hard on their baby’s clothes.

## WISE WOMEN.

Kate, sister of the girl that told about the crickets, was ill, having a faintness and an all-overness, so that she could not do her work. She was therefore sent to the doctor, and allowed to go home for a few days. When she came back she stated, “The doctor’s bottle did not do me a heap of good : it was queer he could not tell what was the matter with me : but when I went to Mrs. —— she immediately said I had heart-fever, and she cured me.” When questioned as to how she was cured, she mentioned that Mrs. —— was a strong (*i.e.* rich) woman, great at curing “heart-fever.” She had cured hundreds, while her daughter had the power of curing a sprain. The woman did not give the girl any medicine, her *modus operandi* being to strip her patient and measure her three times round her body over the heart with a green tape. The girl states that immediately after the first measurement she began to feel better.

E. L. G. K.

## TABULATION OF FOLK-TALES.

**Generic name of story.**—(Not to be filled up.)

**Specific name.**—A Funny Story.

**Dramatis personæ.**—Rajah and Rance: two puppies (their offspring). Dog; two girls (its offspring). Two Princes. Dog and attendants. A cobra. Palace servants.

**Thread of story.**—Rajah and rance childless, and their dog had no puppies. Rance brought forth two puppies, and the dog two little girls. Rance vexed at this exchanged the offspring, till dog took the girls to a cave in jungle. One day two princes came hunting, and their servants followed their dog and were led to the cave. When the princes saw the girls they carried them off and married them. The dog searched long for them till she came to princes' palace, when the elder daughter knew her and fetched her in. But younger daughter was ashamed of her dog-mother, and caused her to be stoned to death and hidden in a room. Her husband passing through saw a dog, life-size, of gold set in jewels, and when he asked his wife she said it was a gift from her parents in jungle. Rajah then wanted to go to them, but his wife dreading discovery begged to go and make known his coming, but resolveth to die. She sought death by putting her finger in a cobra's mouth, but in so doing picked out a thorn that choked it, when it asked what return it could make. Telling her tale, he promised to provide a father and mother. When rajah came to jungle he saw huge palace, gay retinue, and the rajah and rance, who made him gifts. But his wife dreaded his returning to find all

vanished, till the cobra bade her be cheerful and look back as she went home. She did so and saw palace on fire, and when her husband returned to aid, everything had vanished. When his brother saw the gifts he was curious, and reproached his wife for her silence about her rich parents. Whereupon the sisters quarrelled but the younger at last told her secret. Then the elder, on pretence of visiting her parents, went to seek the cobra, and, putting her finger in its mouth, it bit her, and she died.

**Incidental circumstances.**—Nil.

**Where published.**—In *Old Deccan Days*, pp. 17-22. 2nd edition. London: 1870. *Tale No. 2.*

**Nature of collection,** whether:—

1. *Original or translation.* Oral.
2. *If by word of mouth, state narrator's name.* Narrated in broken English by Anna Liberata de Souza, ayah in the family of Sir Bartle Frere when at Bombay. The narrator belonged to the Lingaets, a South Indian tribe.

**Special points noted by the Editor of the above.**—Nil.

(Signed) EDW. CLODD,  
19, Carleton Road, Tufnell Park, N.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Superstition in Sicily.**—A Naples correspondent writes:—In the province of Catania (Sicily), the festival of San Filippo, the patron saint of Calatabiano, is celebrated in a strangely superstitious manner. The ignorant population of that district believe that San Filippo had the power of restoring to health all those afflicted with epilepsy, insanity, or other nervous maladies—in short, that the invocation of the saint is sufficient to cast out the evil spirit. On the day of the festival such afflicted persons from all the country around are brought by their relations to be cured instantaneously at the church of Calatabiano. On arriving they are seized by robust peasants, who attempt to make them kiss the image of the saint, and cry “Viva San Filippo!” Some, as might be expected, are too stupid to obey, others struggle furiously in the hands of their captors, who then resort to the most savage means of compulsion, tearing off their clothes, pulling their hair, and even biting them, continuing the torture throughout the day until the victims pronounce the sacramental words. This being accomplished, the unfortunate invalids are again consigned to their relations, who take them home with tears of joy, only to be bitterly undeceived by finding them later on worse than before. This year the same scene was repeated, but was soon put a stop to by a police-constable, who in the name of the law arrested all who refused to renounce the barbarous custom.—*Rotherham Advertiser*, 7 June, 1884.

**Saint Patrick and the Devil.**—Can any one give the legend about St. Patrick and the Devil? I used to hear it in the neighbourhood of the Shannon when a boy, but forget it. It was somewhat like the story of Andriamatoa in the *Journal*, *ante*. vol. ii. p. 45, being a trial of skill. All I remember is, the saint gave the devil a

number of things to do, all of which he succeeded in, till at last he told him to make a rope of sand. This he failed in, and the remains of the devil's rope is the Eskers that stretch across Ireland from Dublin to Galway Bay.

I think one of the feats was to make in a day as many islands as there are days in the year—which he did in Clew Bay. And another to make in the same time as many lakes as there are days in the year, which he did in the plain of Connemara, between Clifden and Roundston.

G. H. KINAHAN.

**Ardmore, Co. Waterford.—*St. Declan's church, well, and stone.*—**

This saint is the patron of Ardmore, his day being celebrated on the 29th of July.

The church and well are on the south shore of the bay, while the stone is a little to the north-west on the beach. The latter is a large flattish block of conglomerate which the saint is said to have used as a boat when he first came to the place. It is now supported on the rocks that crop up in the beach, leaving, under it, a space scarcely fifteen inches high. On the patron day any one who passes through the latter under the stone is made whole of any disease he has.

In the churchyard of the more modern church, to the south-west of the village, is one of the early primitive small stone-roofed churches with an Egyptian doorway. This is now called "St. Declan's Cell," as it is said to have been built and inhabited by him. The earth from it is sold to pilgrims on the patron day, and an amusing story is told about it. The churchyard, from continual burials, is now so high that it has nearly smothered up this church except on the north side. On this account no one can get at the ancient west door, and to get into the church a hole has been broken through the north wall. On the 28th of one July a gentleman came to visit the parson, whose glebe lies to the north, alongside the graveyard. His servant, after he had made up his horses and got something to eat, thought he would explore the old ruins; but on this night the old lady that sold the clay to the pilgrims was getting ready her supply in a hole that she had rooted in St. Declan's Cell, and when the man peeped in she rose up with her light. The fellow gave a yell and bolted, never looking



behind him till he reached the glebe-kitchen, where he fell in a faint, and no one ever afterwards would not persuade him that he had not seen the devil in St. Declan's Cell.

**Fortune-telling in London.**—Helen Evans, 69, Cable Street, St. George's, was charged with fortune-telling. Mary Start, a married woman, said on the 30th November she went to the prisoner's house to have her fortune told. The prisoner produced a pack of cards, and witness, at the request of the prisoner, shuffled and cut them. The prisoner turned up the cards and said, "Your husband has left you four months." Witness said, "Not four months." And she said, "Between three and four." She also said witness's husband had gone away with a fair woman who had had two children; one was alive, and one dead. Her husband would come back, but would not live with her. She also said witness would be a widow and a wife in twelve months. She would be married to a fair gentleman with plenty of money. She asked if witness would like to see her husband. On witness replying in the affirmative, the prisoner produced six small packets of herbs and said she was to burn them, and while burning them to repeat a verse. Her husband would then come back. She was to have herbs at twelve o'clock, mid-day, and was also to repeat a verse of poetry, which the prisoner recited as she sewed her stays. The accused then told witness that her charge would be a shilling, and witness paid her that amount. The prisoner said she generally charged threepence for the herbs, but as witness had a lot of trouble she would give them to her.—Mary Thomas said she went to Cable Street to have her fortune told. A pack of cards was shuffled and cut. The prisoner then told witness that her husband had left her, but had not gone away with another woman; also that she would be a widow within twelve months, and that she would marry a man with a dark moustache who had plenty of money. She then gave witness some herbs, which she said would fetch her husband back, provided she repeated the following verse:—

"It's not this herb I wear,  
But Dick's hard heart to tear;  
May he never rest or happy be  
Until he returns to me."

She had also to sew a berry in her stays. Witness paid her 1s. 2d. for two powders, which she had to burn when she got home.—Serjeant S. White, who arrested the prisoner, said he found a large number of fortune-telling cards and also a fortune-telling book, which the prisoner said had been 250 years in her family, in the house. A Bible was also found, interleaved with extracts from a dream-book. There were also 200 parcels in the house, and, on being questioned, the prisoner said, “Young girls who come to have their fortunes told and can’t afford to pay, leave these parcels.”—*Standard*, 17 Dec. 1886.

**Football Games.**—I should be glad if Members could assist me in collecting notices of the various games at football played mostly on Shrove Tuesday in some of the old towns, between married and unmarried, or some other divisions of the people. One or two examples are recorded in Brand, and some in Hone; but these cannot exhaust the instances in England and Scotland. Also, are there any such examples in Ireland?

G. LAURENCE GOMME.

**Yorkshire Custom.**—Mr. V. Giddy, Wistow, Selby, writes to the *Leeds Mercury*: In many villages in the West Riding, Christmas Day is heralded by the appearance, at an early hour, of juveniles, who go from house to house shouting, with great earnestness, the following ditty:—

“I wish yer a merry Christmas,  
 A happy New Year;  
 A pocket full of money,  
 A cellar full of beer.  
 And two or three fat pigs to kill every year.  
 —Please will yer gie me a Christmas box?”

Sometimes the visits are made singly; at other times—and this oftener the case—the youngsters go together in companies of about half-a-dozen. As may be imagined, the chorus from a body of performers like this is not altogether tuneful. Yet the villagers—disturbed as they are by these early callers—would not have the custom discontinued by any means. There is a question of luck connected with it. The visitor who first succeeds in rousing the inmates of the house, and inducing an attendance at the door, is called “the lucky bird,”

and, in return for the sprig of holly which he—the lucky bird—must present, he will receive a few coppers, or perhaps a sixpenny piece. Subsequent callers are treated with much less liberality, but, by persistent importunity, they may succeed in extracting something, if only an orange. At the approach of daylight the youngsters are expected to disappear, though they do not all answer this expectation. The performances are repeated on New Year's Day, which is “the girls' day.” Boys are, however, allowed to appear in the capacity of “lucky bird,” as it is considered extremely unlucky if the first person admitted to the house in the new year is a female.

**Hereford Custom.**—The 11th October stood prominent for autumn sports in the county of Hereford, where an ancient custom prevailed for the young men to assemble in the fields, and choose a leader, whom they followed wherever he might think proper to lead them—over hedges and ditches it might be. This only occurred once in seven years, when they did the business with a hearty good-will. Every publican gave a gallon of beer, and a large plum-loaf, which went by the name of a gauging-cake, which title was also transferred to the day. Any person they might happen to meet was instantly seized upon, and thumped without further ceremony, unless they preferred paying a fine to the leader.—*Cambridge Independent*, 1 Jan. 1887.

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## NOTICES AND NEWS.

*Contes Populaires de Lorraine comparées avec les Contes des autres pays de France et des Pays Étrangers, et précédées d'un Essai sur l'origin et la propagation de Contes Populaires Européens.*  
Par Emmanuel Cosquin. Paris. Vieweg. 1886. 2 vols. 8vo.

This is an interesting and valuable book, and is specially remarkable for its form, which is at once less pretentious and more practical

than that of the majority of the folk-lore collections of later years. It consists of eighty-four popular tales current in Lorraine, and collected (*à la* Grimm) by the author and his sisters at the village of Montiers-sur-Saulx, in the department of the Meuse. M. Cosquin, who in his prefatory note disclaims any literary pretensions, has been careful, in the first place, to give the original tales in their unvarnished form, as taken down from popular recitation; then, in a chapter of 'Remarques,' immediately following each story and conveniently distinguished from it by the use of a smaller type, he examines each tale from the point of view of the folk-lore student, noting the parallel versions and variants that exist in various languages, and establishing (where possible) its affinities with the typical member of the Indian or radical group of folk-tales, to which most, if not all, current European popular stories may with more or less certainty be traced. Monsieur Cosquin has accomplished his self-imposed task with great ability and completeness and has made an important addition to the practical literature of European folk-lore. The reader has especial cause to be grateful to him for the unpretentious and thoroughgoing spirit in which he has treated the various *questiones vexatæ* incidental to his subject, without suffering himself to be led astray by the fantastic *ignes fatui* that have of our days misled so many able writers on popular mythology and left them too often marish-logged in the howling wildernesses of unconditioned conjecture.

A specially valuable feature of the book is the preliminary essay, in which the author discusses the question of the origin and propagation of the European Popular Tales. It is refreshing, in these days of hysterico-cosmological hypothesis run wild, to see the common-sense and practical fashion in which M. Cosquin disposes of the pseudo-scientific litter of mythical and mythico-meteorological theories with which modern folk-lore is so sadly encumbered and of which M. Max Müller and Signor A. de Gubernatis are the *coryphæi tripudiantes*, nor is he less justly severe upon the extravagances of the English *appassionati*, "who profess to find in the ideas and customs of modern savages\* the key to the origin of our tales." He has the

\* M. Cosquin shares with Artemus Ward the opinion, only we fear too well-founded, that "Injuns are pizen wherever met with."

courage to reject all these fashionable forms of *Windbeutelei*\* and to advocate a simple Positivist treatment of the subject, confining himself avowedly to the abstract endeavour to trace the European tale, through its variants and parallel versions current among the different natives of the world, as definitively as possible back to its Indian prototype, without wandering aside into sterile attempts to fasten upon the simple lineaments of the popular legend any precise cosmological significance, mythical or mystical,—sterile because founded upon necessarily incomplete data. It seems to us that, in taking this course, M. Cosquin has rendered a great service to the science of folk-lore and has pointed out the path of practical utility to be followed by future writers who occupy themselves with the examination of other sections of European popular fiction.

It should be mentioned that the book under review is composed of articles contributed to the well-known folk-lore journal *The Romania*, and considerably augmented and retouched for the purpose of the present reprint. We regret that, in his references to the *Thousand and One Nights*, M. Cosquin should have had access to no better version of the great Arabian collection of popular fiction than that of Dr. Habicht, an utterly worthless compilation, which has long been supplanted by more scholarly renderings, notably that published by the Villon Society.

*The History of the Forty Vezirs; or, the Story of the Forty Morns and Eves.* Written in Turkish by Sheykh-Zāda. Done into English by E. J. W. Gibb. London, 1886 (Redway). 8vo. pp. xl. 420.

This is a translation of one of the versions of perhaps the most widely popular collections of tales which the world has ever seen. The Society's edition of the *Book of Sindibad*, by Professor Comparetti, will be known to all our Members, and the present volume is a companion to that. It is derived from a printed but undated text procured a few years ago at Constantinople. The author has collated his version with a manuscript in the library of the India Office, with two purchased from Mr. Quaritch, and other authorities.

\* We thank thee, Schopenhauer, for teaching us that word.

Besides the stories themselves, Mr. Gibb has accomplished some most acceptable editorial work, particularly the comparative table showing the stories found in the different texts and the order in which they occur. There is also a transcript of the stories occurring in other texts than that from which the translation is made. Such a complete piece of work is most valuable.

*Legends and Popular Tales of the Basque People.* By Mariana Monteiro. With illustrations and photographs by Harold Copping. London, 1887 (Fisher Unwin). 4to. pp. 274.

When Mr. Wentworth Webster in 1877 first introduced to the English reading public his collection of Basque stories the science of folk-lore was unknown. His preface reads now, as one looks back, like an old treatise instead of being the production of only ten years ago. He had then to plead the cause of folk-tales, and give some examples of their usefulness to science, and of their value to comparative study; and, though he pleaded on behalf of the then triumphant school of comparative mythologists, the illustrations and phenomena he points out are all of value. Miss Monteiro is, however, on different ground altogether. The infant study of folk-lore has now grown into the dimensions of a science; no pleading is necessary, yet she pleads; theories are advanced which should be supported by sound evidence or left alone; and altogether an artificial tone is given to the construction of a book which should breathe the spirit of the people from whom it emanates. Now these faults of the introductory matter are really of importance from our point of view, though they in nowise deteriorate from the other interest of the book; and we state them candidly, because the work of the Society has been from the beginning to put these matters on a different footing, and one which will lead on to some practical good in the study of folk-lore. We feel quite sure that we have here a genuine collection of popular stories, and this fact makes us all the more regret that it does not appear free from the prejudicial surroundings which accompany it.

In considering the tales themselves we are on quite different ground, for they are unquestionably valuable. Comparing them with Mr.

Webster's collection, they appear more the offspring of a cultured class, or, at all events, of a class influenced strongly by the rule of a priesthood, who might be the means of infusing more or less of their own literary legends into them. Such a collection is by no means of small value, especially if we possessed the key to their origin. They are perhaps parallel to Webster's section vii., "Religious Tales." Miss Monteiro tells them beautifully. All of them are graceful and picturesque, with an almost Eastern colouring to some of the descriptive passages of mountain heights and weird scenery. Added to the charm of the language are the useful topographical details and glossarial notes with which Miss Monteiro has enriched her book. Undoubtedly the tales, aided by these valuable editorial additions, are worth a close and systematic study, for they contain, enshrined in their literary garb, many incidents belonging to the folk-tale proper; and so interesting are the Basque people that the smallest contribution from their folk-lore must always be welcome.

As a handsome piece of book manufacture nothing could be desired. Wide margins, beautiful printing, and well executed illustrations, do credit to all concerned; and, as a gift-book for the new year, we can safely and warmly recommend it. All we regret is that Miss Monteiro should have missed the opportunity, which she assuredly possessed, of adding to our collection of folk-tales a book which would have charmed the student as well as the reader. This might yet be accomplished if a second edition is called for. In the meantime, may we suggest that Miss Monteiro might be in a position to tell us something of the popular superstitions and customs of the districts she evidently knows and loves so well.

Capt. Temple has changed the title of *Panjáb Notes and Queries*, after the completion of the volume in September last, to *Indian Notes and Queries*. Under the new title the periodical will include the whole of India, Burma, and the Far East within its scope; and, in order to render its pages as accurate as possible, Capt. Temple has secured the assistance in the editorial department of several prominent Orientalists, among whom may be mentioned: Messrs. W. Croke, of the North-West Provinces; M. L. Danes, of the Panjáb; R. K.

Douglas, of the British Museum; D. W. Ferguson, of Ceylon; J. F. Fleet, the epigraphist; G. A. Grierson, of Bengal; D. J. A. Hervey, of Malacca; E. H. Man, of the Andaman Islands; R. Sewell, of Madras; and G. Watt, of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition. The periodical will be conducted on the same lines as hitherto, and the first number under the new title will contain notes from Aden, Afghanistan, Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Burma, Central Provinces, Ceylon, Chamba, China, Gujarat, Java, Korea, Kumaun, Madras, Manipur, Nepal, North-West Provinces, Oudh, Panjáb, Rajputana, Shansi, Sikkim, Sindh, Singapore.

Besides several Foreign Members who have joined the Society during the past year are nine residing in India, including their Highnesses the Maharajahs of Travancore and Cooch Behar.

It is hoped to place before the Members very shortly a scheme for completing the long-projected *Handbook of Folk-Lore*.

The Rev. J. Hinton Knowles is collecting material for a work on the Religious Systems of the Kashmirs.



## A WITCHES' LADDER.



AN the "Witches' Ladder," or "Rope and Feathers," so fortunately discovered by Dr. Colles, be one of those ropes which witches are known to have used in many places for the purpose of drawing away the milk from the neighbours' cows? This suggestion I owe to a friend, who has kindly communicated an example of the practice. In Ayrshire, about the beginning of the century, a tenant came to his landlord to tell him, as a Justice of the Peace, that the neighbours were convinced that a Mrs. Young was a witch, and he wished him to proceed against the woman as such. Mrs. Young was said to have been seen riding on the rigging (the ridge) of the house, and to have a rope by pulling at which she drew the milk from her neighbour's cows into her own milk-pail. Napier (*Folk-lore in the West of Scotland*, p. 75) reports a case of a Highland boy in Glasgow who proposed to bring milk from the neighbours' cows by milking the tether. "The tether is the rope-halter, and by going through the form of milking this, repeating certain incantations, the magic transference was supposed capable of being effected." Sometimes in Scotland the rope had to be made of hairs taken from the tails of the cows whose milk was to be stolen; a knot was tied in the rope for each cow, and by pulling at the knots as if she were milking, and at the same time uttering a spell, the witch brought the milk into her pail (R. Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, p. 329). The magic virtue of the rope seems in some cases to have been acquired or at least strengthened by the fact of its having been used to sweep the May-dew from the pasture-fields (Henderson, *Folk-*

lore of the Northern Counties of England, p. 199). In Bohemia the rope must have been cut from the bell-rope; with such a rope you can milk all the cows within sound of the bell (Grohmann, *Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen und Mähren*, no. 965). In Germany the belief that witches can milk the neighbours' cows through a rope is universal (Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube*, § 216). Among the Wends also the same superstition exists (Veckenstedt, *Wendische Sagen Märchen und abergläubische Gebräuche*, p. 283, seq.; Schulenburg, *Wendische Volkssagen und Gebräuche aus dem Spreewald*, p. 167). A broomstick will serve as well as a rope; you stick one end of the broomstick in the wall and work it like a pump-handle, and the milk flows from the other end into your pail (Kuhn und Schwartz, *Norddeutsche Sagen Märchen und Gebräuche*, p. 24 seq.)

In India a witch is supposed to suck the blood of her enemy through a string. To do this she gets on the top of her victim's hut at midnight, and, making a hole in the roof, lets down a string through it till it touches his body. Putting the other end of the string in her mouth she sucks the blood out of the sleeper's body (*Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, New Series, vol. vi. p. 278, seq.) This resembles the Australian mode of sucking a disease out of a man through a string; the patient holds one end of the string and the doctor sucks away at the other, spitting out the disease in the form of blood, which the patient believes has been drawn from his body, but which scoffers are apt to think comes from the gums of the medical practitioner (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiv. p. 361; xvi. p. 39; G. F. Angas, *Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand*, ii. p. 227; Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery in Central Australia*, ii. p. 361).

But what of the *feathers* in the "Witches' Ladder"? Here again Australia may illustrate Somersetshire. In Australia it is the doctor's business to kill as well as to cure, and one of his modes of procedure is this. He takes something belonging to the person who is to be operated on, fastens it to the end of a *throwing-stick*, together with some eaglehawk feathers and some human or kangaroo fat. The throwing-stick is then stuck slanting in the ground before the fire, in such a position that

it must by-and-by fall down. The doctor then sings his charm, mentioning his victim's name, and when the stick falls down the victim dies (*Journ. Anthropol. Inst.* xvi. p. 27 *seq.*; Cp. J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, p. 54, whence it appears that the throwing-stick is thought to turn round and *fall in the direction of the victim's tribe*). Here the object of the throwing-stick and feathers seems to be to *throw and waft* through the air the magic influence, so as to reach the victim. May not this have been the object of the feathers in the "Witches' Ladder"? May they not have been meant to *wing* the charm through the air to the cows, and to *wing* the milk from the cows to the pail? Of course such a magic rope could be used for other analogous purposes. The informer, Edmund Robinson, averred in his deposition of 1633 that "presently after, seeing divers of the company going to a barn adjoining, he followed after, and there he saw six of them kneeling and pulling at six several ropes, which were fastened or tied to the top of the house, at or with which pulling came then in this informer's sight flesh smoking, butter in lumps, and milk as it were syling [skimming or straining] from the said ropes, all which fell into basins which were placed under the said ropes" (Harland and Wilkinson, *Lancashire Folk-Lore*, p. 196). The rope discovered by Dr. Colles "has at one end a loop, as if for the purpose of suspending it," so that it could be used in the way described by the informer. If this explanation should turn out to be correct, the name "Witches' Ladder" would be a misnomer; and it is to be observed that both the old women who were questioned on the subject spoke, not of a ladder, but of "the rope and feathers." At all events, in the present obscurity of the subject, the above suggestion is perhaps worth considering.

J. G. FRAZER.

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An article was published in the *Daily News* drawing attention to this subject, and in the issue of that paper for 26 January, 1887, appeared the following letter:—

“ I read your interesting paragraph about ‘ Folk-Lore,’ and I have with some difficulty unearthed one or two secrets connected therewith, which I transmit to you if it will be of use to you or your readers. I learn that the ‘ witches’ ladder ’ may be made of wheat-straw, called ‘ elm,’ ‘ ellum,’ or probably ‘ haulm-straws.’ Take four straws, tie two together, top and bottom, for one side of the ladder. Tie the other two in same manner, and then insert short straws between for steps. Now take small feathers and place them up each side of the ladder, and you have a real Somersetshire witches’ ladder. It is used in this way. Anything that goes cross-grained, if the ladder is waved to and fro a few times, and the request muttered at same time with the swinging, the thing that was wrong will be righted. For instance, the fire will not burn, or the flats will not heat for ironing, or the lover will not come, or the husband stays out too late; swing the ladder, saying, ‘ Burn fire,’ ‘ Irons heat,’ &c., and all will be well. Another barbarous and cruel custom among the superstitious (I learned) is practised. A young girl has a recreant sweetheart, so she takes a pigeon, and at midnight tears out its heart, sticks it full of pins, and roasts it, and the lover returns to his ladylove, and is faithful ever after, as he should be. I was told that if a witch suspects a person of crime, or of witchcraft, or any offence whatsoever, she hangs her ladder outside her house; if the person comes to the door but cannot be induced to enter, the thing is proved against him. I dare-say it is also used for other purposes, which I will try to discover if you care to be informed.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

W. H. ASHBY.

Royal Hotel, Portishead, Somerset.

P.S.—I omitted to say that the feathers must be taken out of a living bird.

## CORNISH FOLK-LORE.

BY MISS M. A. COURTNEY.

(Continued from p. 61.)

### PART II.



CORNISH people possess in a marked degree all the characteristics of the Celts. They are imaginative, good speakers and story-tellers, describing persons and things in a style racy and idiomatical, often with appropriate gestures. Their proverbs are quaint and forcible, they are never at a lack for an excuse, and are withal very superstitious. Well-educated people are still to be met with in Cornwall who are firm believers in apparitions, pixies (fairies, called by the peasantry *pisgies*), omens, and other supernatural agencies. Almost every parish has a legend in connection with its patron saint, and haunted houses abound; but of the ghosts who inhabit them, unless they differ from those seen elsewhere, I shall say but little.

This county was once the fabled home of a race of giants, who in their playful or angry moments were wont to hurl immense rocks at each other, which are shown by the guides at this day as proofs of their great strength. To illustrate how in the course of time truth and fiction get strangely mingled, I will mention the fact that old John of Gaunt is said to have been the last of these giants, and to have lived in a castle on the top of Carn Brea (a high hill near Redruth). He could stride from thence to another neighbouring town, a distance of four miles. I do not know if he is supposed to be the one that lies buried under this mighty *carn*, and whose large protruding hand and bony fingers time has turned to stone. Here, too, in the dark ages, a terrific combat took place between Lucifer and a heavenly

host, which ended in the former's overthrow. A small monument has been erected on Carn Brea to the memory of Lord de Dunstanville; and I once heard an old woman, after cleaning a room, say, "It was fine enough for Lord de Dunstanville." Every child has heard of Jack the Giant Killer, who, amongst his other exploits, killed by stratagem the one who dwelt at St. Michael's Mount:

"I am the valiant Cornishman  
Who slew the giant Cormoran."

But the sayings and doings of these mighty men have been told far better than I could tell them in Mr. Halliwell Phillipp's book, *Rambles in West Cornwall by the Footsteps of the Giants*; Mr. Robert Hunt's *Drolls, Traditions, and Superstitions of West Cornwall*; Mr. Bottrell's *Hearthside Stories of West Cornwall*; and by many other writers.

Tourists visit West Cornwall to see the Land's End and its fine coast scenery, and express themselves disappointed that none of the country people in that district know anything of King Arthur. They forget that Uther's\* heir was washed up to Merlin's feet by a wave at the base of "Tintagel Castle by the Cornish sea," which is in the eastern part of the county. This castle was built on one of the grandest headlands in Cornwall (slate formation).

The ruins of King Arthur's Castle are most striking. They are situated partly on the mainland and partly on a peninsula, separated by a ravine, once said to have been spanned by a drawbridge connecting the two.

The ascent of this promontory, owing to the slippery nature of the path cut in the friable slate, is far from pleasant; and, as there was a stiff breeze blowing when I mounted it, I thought old Norden was right when he said: "Those should have eyes who would scale Tintagel." You are, however, amply repaid for your trouble when you get to the top.

In addition to telling you of the grandeur of the castle in good King Arthur's days, the guides show you some rock basins to which they have given the absurd names of "King Arthur's cups and saucers."

\* Uther is still used as a Christian name in Cornwall.

Tradition assigns this king another Cornish castle as a hunting-seat, viz. the old earth-round of Castle-an-dinas, near St. Columb, from whence it is said he chased the wild deer on Tregoss Downs.

A dreary drive through slate-quarries takes you from Tintagel to Camelford. Near that town is Slaughter Bridge, the scene of a great battle between King Arthur and his nephew Modred, whom by some writers he is said to have killed on the spot; others have it that Arthur died here of a wound from a poisoned arrow shot by Modred, and that, after receiving his death wound at Camelford, he was conveyed to Tintagel Castle, where, surrounded by his knights, he died. All the time he lay a-dying supernatural noises were heard in the castle, the sea and winds moaned, and their lamentations never ceased until our hero was buried at Glastonbury. Then, in the pauses of the solemn tolling of the funeral bells, sweet voices came from fairy-land welcoming him there, from whence one day he will return and again be king of Cornwall. No luck follows a man who kills a Cornish chough (a red-legged crow), as, after his death, King Arthur was changed into one.

“In the parish of St. Mabyn, in East Cornwall, and on the high road from Bodmin to Camelford, is a group of houses (one of them yet a smith’s shop), known by the name of Longstone. The legend which follows gives the reason of the name :

“In lack of records I may say: ‘In the days of ‘King Arthur there lived in Cornwall’ a smith. This smith was a keen fellow, who made and mended the ploughs and harrows, shod the horses of his neighbours, and was generally serviceable. He had great skill in farriery, and in the general management of sick cattle. He could also extract the stubbornest tooth, even if the jaw resisted, and some gyrations around the anvil were required.

“‘There seems ever to have been ill blood between devil and smith, and so it was between the fiend and the smith-farrier-dentist of St. Mabyn. At night there were many and fierce disputes between them in the smithy. The smith, as the rustics tell, always got the advantage of his adversary, and gave him better than he brought. This success, however, only fretted Old Nick, and spurred him on to further encounters. What the exact matter of controversy on this

particular occasion was is not remembered, but it was agreed to settle it by some wager, some trial of strength and skill. A two-acred field was near; and the smith challenged the devil to the reaping of each his acre in the shortest time. The match came off, and the devil was beaten, for the smith had beforehand stealthily stuck here and there over his opponent's acre some harrow-tines or teeth.

“The two started well, but soon the strong swing of the fiend's scythe was brought up frequently by some obstruction, and as frequently he required the whetstone. The dexterous and agile smith went on smoothly with his acre, and was soon unmistakably gaining. The devil, enraged at his certain discomfiture, hurled his whetstone at his rival, and flew off. The whetstone, thrown with great violence, after sundry whirls in the air, fell upright into the soil at a great depth, and there remained a witness against the Evil One for ages. The devil avoided the neighbourhood whilst it stood, but in an evil hour the farmer at Treblethick, near, threw it down. That night the enemy returned, and has haunted the neighbourhood ever since.

“This monolith was of granite, and consequently brought hither from a distance, for the local stone is a friable slate. It yielded four large gate-posts, gave spans to a small bridge, and left much granite remaining.”—T. G. Couch, *Notes and Queries*, April, 1883.

Upon St. Austell Down is an upright block of granite, called “the giant's staff, or longstone,” to which this legend is attached:—“A giant, travelling one night over these hills, was overtaken by a storm, which blew off his hat. He immediately pursued it; but, being impeded by a staff which he carried in his hand, he thrust this into the ground until his hat could be secured. After wandering, however, for some time in the dark, without being able to find his hat, he gave over the pursuit and returned for the staff; but this also he was unable to discover, and both were irrevocably lost. In the morning, when the giant was gone, his hat and staff were both found by the country people about a mile asunder. The hat was found on White-horse Down, and bore some resemblance to a mill-stone, and continued in its place until 1798, when, some soldiers having encamped around it, they fancied, it is said, as it was a wet season, this giant's hat was the



cause of the rain, and therefore rolled it over the cliff. The staff, or longstone, was discovered in the position in which it remains; it is about twelve feet high, and tapering toward the top, and is said to have been so fashioned by the giant that he might grasp it with ease."—*Murray's Guide*.

There is another longstone in the parish of St Cleer,\* about two miles north of Liskeard, which bears an inscription to Doniert (Dungerth), a traditional king of Cornwall, who was drowned in 872. In fact these "menhirs," supposed to be sepulchral monuments, are to be found scattered all over the county.

The following curious bit of folk-lore appeared in the *Daily News* of March 8th, 1883, communicated by the Rev. J. Hoskyns Abrahall, Coombe Vicarage, near Woodstock:—"A friend of mine, who is vicar of St. Cleer, in East Cornwall, has told me that at least one housemaid of his—I think his servants in general—very anxiously avoided killing a spider, because Parson Jupp, my friend's predecessor (whom he succeeded in 1844), was, it was believed, somewhere in the vicarage in some spider—no one knew in which of the vicarage spiders." Spiders are often not destroyed because of the tradition that one spun a web over Christ in the manger and hid him from Herod.

There are other superstitions current in Cornwall somewhat similar to the above. Maidens who die of broken hearts, after they have been deceived by unfaithful lovers, are said to haunt their betrayers as white hares. The souls of old sea-captains never sleep; they are turned into gulls and albatrosses. The knockers (a tribe of little people), who live underground in the tin-mines, are the spirits of the Jews who crucified our Saviour, and are for that sin compelled on Christmas morning to sing carols in his honour. "Jew" is a name also given to a black field-beetle (why, I know not). It exudes a reddish froth: country children hold it on their hands and say, "Jew! Jew! spit blood!" "A ghost at Pengelly, in the parish of Wendron, was compelled by a parson of that village after various changes of form to seek refuge in a pigeon-hole, where it is confined to this day."—Through Rev. S. Rundle.

\* The Cornish manner of pronouncing the name of St. Clare.

After this digression I will return to St. Cleer, and, beginning with its holy well, briefly notice a few others. It is situated not far from the church, and was once celebrated as a "boussening," or ducking-well for the cure of mad people. Considerable remains of the baptistery, which formerly enclosed it, are still standing, and outside, close by, is an old stone cross. Carew says,—“There were many bowssening places in Cornwall for curing mad people, and amongst the rest one at Alter Nunne, in the hundred of Triggess, called St. Nunne’s well, and because the manner of this bowssening is not so vnpleasing to heare as it was vneasie to feele, I wil (if you please) deliuer you the practise, as I receyued it from the beholders. The water running from S. Nunne’s-well fell into a square and close-walled plot, which might be filled at what depth they listed. Vpon this wall was the franticke person set to stand, his backe toward the poole, and from thence with a sudden blow in the brest, tumbled headlong into the pond, where a strong fellowe, provided for the nonce, tooke him and tossed him vp and downe, alongst and athwart the water, vntill the patient by foregoing his strength had somewhat forgot his fury. Then was hee conueyed to the church and certain Masses sung ouer him; vpon which handling if his wits returned S. Nunne had the thanks: but if there appeared small amendment, he was bowssened againe and againe, while there remayned in him any hope of life for recouery.” The same writer says of Scarlet’s “well neare vnto Bodmin, howbeit the water should seem to be healthfull, if not helpfull: for it retaineth this extraordinary quality, that the same is waightier than the ordinary of his kind, and will continue the best part of a yeere without alteration of sent or taste, only you shall see it represent many colours, like the Rain-bowe which (in my conceite) argueth a running throu some minerall veine and therewithall a possessing of some vertue.” I must give one more quotation from Carew before I finish with him, about a well at Saltash:—“I had almost forgotten to tell you that there is a well in this towne whose water will not boyle peason to a seasonable softnes.”

The holy-wells in Cornwall are very numerous; the greater part were in olden times enclosed in small baptisteries. Luckily the poor people believe that to remove any of the stones of the ruins of these

chapels would be fatal to them and to their children, and for that reason a great number yet remain. It is considered unlucky, too, to cart away any of the druidical monuments (pieces of ancienty), and many are the stories told of the great misfortunes that have fallen on men who have so done. The innocent oxen or horses who drag them away are always sure to die, and their master never prosper. Mr. T. G. Couch, in *Notes and Queries*, vol. x. gives this legend in connection with St. Nunn's well in Pelynt:—"An old farmer once set his eyes upon the granite basin and coveted it; for it was not wrong in his eyes to convert the holy font to the base uses of the pig's sty; and accordingly he drove his oxen and wain to the gateway above for the purpose of removing it. Taking his beasts to the entrance of the well, he essayed to drag the trough from its ancient bed. For a long time it resisted the efforts of the oxen, but at length they succeeded in starting it, and dragged it slowly up the hill-side to where the wain was standing. Here, however, it burst away from the chains which held it, and, rolling back again to the well, made a sharp turn and regained its old position, where it has remained ever since. Nor will any one again attempt its removal, seeing that the farmer, who was previously well-to-do in the world, never prospered from that day forward. Some people say, indeed, that retribution overtook him on the spot, the oxen falling dead, and the owner being struck lame and speechless."

This St. Nunn's well is not the "bousseing" well formerly mentioned, but another dedicated to the same saint, and is resorted to as a divining and wishing well; it is commonly called by the people of that district the "Piskies' well." Pins are thrown into it, not only to see by the bubbles which rise on the water whether the wisher will get what he desires, but also to propitiate the piskies and to bring the thrower good luck. This county has many other divining wells which were visited at certain seasons of the year by those anxious to know what the future would bring them. Amongst them the Lady of Nant's well, in the parish of Colan, was formerly much frequented on Palm Sunday, when those who wished to foretell their fate threw into the water crosses made of palms. There was once in Gulval parish, near Penzance, a well which was reported to have had great repute as

a divining well. People repaired to it to ask if their friends at a distance were well or ill, living or dead. They looked into the water and repeated the words :

“ Water, water, tell me truly,  
Is the man that I love duly  
On the earth, or under the sod,  
Sick or well ? in the name of God.”

Should the water bubble up quite clear, the one asked for was in good health; if it became puddled, ill; and should it remain still, dead. Of the wells of St. Roche, St. Maddern (now Madron), and St. Uny, I have spoken in the first part of this work at pp.

The waters from several wells are used for baptismal rites (one near Laneast is called the “ Jordan ”), and the children baptized with water from the wells of St. Euny (at the foot of Carn Brea, Redruth) and of Ludgvan (Penzance), &c., it was asserted could never be hanged with a hempen rope; but this prophecy has unfortunately been proved to be false. The water from the latter was famed too as an eye-wash, until an evil spirit, banished for his misdeeds by St. Ludgvan to the Red Sea, spat into it from malice as he passed. The Red Sea is the favourite traditional spot here for the banishment of wicked spirits, and I have been told stories of wicked men whose souls, immediately after their death, were carried off to well-known volcanoes.

Almost all these holy wells were once noted for the curing of diseases, but the water from St. Jesus' well in Miniver was especially famed for curing whooping-cough. The saints sometimes lived by the side of the holy wells named after them, notably St. Agnes (pronounced St. Ann), who dyed the pavement of her chapel with her own blood. St. Neot in whose pool were always three fish on which he fed, and whose numbers never grew less.\* St. Piran, the titular saint of tin-miners, who lived 200 years and then died in perfect health. Of these three saints many miraculous deeds are related; but they would be out of place in this work, and I will end my account of the wells by a description of St. Keynes, more widely known outside Cornwall through Southey's ballad than any of the others. It is situated in a small valley in the parish of St. Neots,

\* Supposed to have been shads, vulgarly here called “ Chuck-cheldern ” from the number of bones in them.

and was in the days of Carew and Norden arched over by four trees, which grew so closely together that they seemed but one trunk. Both writers say the trees were withy, oak, elm, and ash (by withy I suppose willow was meant). They were all blown down by a storm, and about 150 years ago, Mr. Rashleigh, of Menabilly, replaced them with two oaks, two elms, and one ash. I do not know if they are living, but Mr. J. T. Blight in 1858, in his book on *Cornish Crosses*, speaks of one of the oaks being at that time so decayed that it had to be propped. The reputed virtue of the water of St. Keyne's well is, as almost all know, that after marriage "whether husband or wife come first to drink thereof they get the mastery thereby."—Fuller.

Southey makes a discomfited husband tell the story who ends thus:

"I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was done,  
And left my wife in the porch;  
But i'faith she had been wiser than me,  
For she took a bottle to church."

St. Keyne not only thus endowed her well but during her stay at St. Michael's Mount she gave the same virtue to St. Michael's chair. This chair is the remains of an old lantern on the south-west angle of the tower at a height of upwards of 250 feet from low water. It is fabled to have been a favourite seat of St. Michael's. Whittaker, in his supplement to Polwhele's *History of Cornwall*, says, "It was for such pilgrims as had stronger heads and bolder spirits to complete their devotions at the Mount by sitting in this St. Michael's chair and *showing themselves as pilgrims to the country round*;" but it most probably served as a beacon for ships at sea. To get into it you must climb on to the parapet, and you sit with your feet dangling over, a sheer descent of at least seventy feet; but it is much more difficult to get out of it, as the sitter is obliged to turn round in the seat. Notwithstanding this, and the danger of a fall through giddiness, which, of course, would be certain death, for there is not the slightest protection, I have seen ladies perform the feat. Curiously enough Southey has also written a ballad on St. Michael's chair, but it is not as popular as the one before quoted; it is about "Richard Penlake and Rebecca his wife," "a terrible shrew was she." In pursuance of

a vow made when Richard "fell sick," they went on a pilgrimage to the Mount, and whilst he was in the chapel,

"She left him to pray, and stole away  
To sit in St. Michael's chair.

Up the tower Rebecca ran,  
Round and round and round;  
'Twas a giddy sight to stand atop  
And look upon the ground.

'A curse on the ringers for rocking  
The tower!' Rebecca cried,  
As over the church battlements  
She strode with a long stride.

'A blessing on St. Michael's chair!'  
She said as she sat down:  
Merrily merrily rung the bells,  
And out Rebecca was thrown.

Tidings to Richard Penlake were brought  
That his good wife was dead;

'Now shall we toll for her poor soul  
The great church bell?' they said.

'Toll at her burying,' quoth Richard Penlake,  
'Toll at her burying,' quoth he;  
'But don't disturb the ringers now  
In compliment to me.'

Old writers give the name of "Caraclowse in clowse" to St. Michael's Mount, which means the Hoar Rock in the Wood; and that it was at one time surrounded by trees is almost certain, as at very low tides in Mount's Bay a "submarine forest," with roots of large trees, may still be clearly seen. At these seasons branches of trees, with leaves, nuts, and beetles, have been picked up.

Folk-lore speaks of a time when Scilly was joined to the mainland, which does not seem very improbable when we remember that within the last twenty-five years a high road and a field have been washed away by the sea between Newlyn and Penzance. An old lady, whose memory went back to the beginning of the present century, told me that she had often seen boys playing at cricket in some fields seaward of Newlyn, of which no vestige in my time remained.

But the Lyonesse, as this tract of land, containing 140 parish

churches, between the Land's End and Scilly was called, and where, according to the Poet Laureate, King Arthur met his death-wound:

“So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
 Among the mountains by the winter sea,  
 Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,  
 Had fallen in Lyonesse about their lord,  
 King Arthur . . . .”

is reputed to have been suddenly overwhelmed by a great flood. Only one man of all the dwellers on it is said to have escaped death, an ancestor of the Trevilians (now Trevelyan). He was carried on shore by his horse into a cove at Perran. Alarmed by the daily inroad of the sea, he had previously removed his wife and family. Old fishermen of a past generation used to declare that on clear days and moonlight nights they had often seen under the water the roofs of churches, houses, &c., of this submerged district.

Whether the memory of this flood is perpetuated by the old proverb, “As ancient as the floods of Dava,” once commonly current in West Cornwall, but which I have not heard for years, I know not, as I have never met with any one who could tell me to what floods it referred.

Old folks often compared an old-fashioned child to St. Michael's Mount, and quaintly said: “She's a regular little Mount; St. Michael's Mount will never be washed away while she's alive.”

Tradition also tells of a wealthy city in the north of Cornwall, called Langarrow, which for its wickedness was buried in sand, driven in by a mighty storm. All that district as far west as St. Ives is sand, known as “Towans,” and the sand is always encroaching.

There is a little church now near Padstow, dedicated to St. Enodoc, which is often almost covered by the shifting drifts. It is in a solitary situation, and service is only held there once a year, when a path to it has to be cut through the sand. It is said that the clergyman, in order to keep his emoluments and fees, has been sometimes obliged to get into it through a window or hole in the roof.

About eight miles from Truro is the lost church of Perranzabuloe, which for centuries was supposed to have been a myth, but the shifting of the sand disclosed it in 1835.

In Hayle owans is buried the castle of Tendar, the Pagan chief who persecuted the Christians, and in the neighbouring parish of Lelant that of King Theodrick, who, after beheading, in Ireland, many saints, crossed over to Cornwall on a millstone.

The afore-mentioned lost city was most likely a very small place, as I asked an old woman three or four years ago, who lived not far from the little village of Gwithian, where I could get something I wanted, and she told me, "In the city."

The bay between this place and St. Ives (St. Ives Bay) has the reputation of being haunted at stormy times before a shipwreck by a lady in white, who carries a lantern.

At Nanceleadra, a village near St. Ives, was formerly a logan rock, which could only be moved at midnight; and children were cured of rickets by being placed on it at that hour. It refused to rock for those who were illegitimate.

Not far from here is Towednack, and there is a legend to the effect that the devil would never allow the tower of its church to be completed, pulling down at night what had been built up in the day. When a person makes an inaudible statement he is in West Cornwall told "To go to Towednack quay-head where they christen calves." (No part of this parish touches the sea.)

Mr. Robert Hunt records a curious test of innocency which, not long since, was practised in this parish. "A farmer in Towednack having been robbed of some property of no great value was resolved, nevertheless, to employ a test which he had heard the 'old people' resorted to, for the purpose of catching the thief. He invited all his neighbours into his cottage, and, when they were assembled, he placed a cock under the 'brandice' (an iron vessel, formerly much employed by the peasantry in baking when this process was carried out on the hearth, the fuel being furze and ferns). Every one was directed to touch the brandice with his, or her, third finger, and say: 'In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, speak.' Every one did as they were directed, and no sound came from beneath the brandice. The last person was a woman, who occasionally laboured for the farmer in his fields. She hung back, hoping to pass unobserved amongst the crowd. But her very anxiety made her a suspected person. She



was forced forward, and most unwillingly she touched the brandice, when, before she could utter the words prescribed, the cock crew. The woman fell faint on the floor, and, when she recovered, she confessed herself to be the thief, restored the stolen property, and became, it is said, 'a changed character from that day.'"

The following was told me by a friend. It took place in a school of one of our western parishes about sixty years ago:—"It was in the days of quill pens, and the master had lost his penknife. Every boy pleaded not guilty. At twelve the master said no boy should leave the school for half-an-hour, when he would return and see if they had found his knife. The door was locked, and at the appointed time he came back with a small, round table, on which he had inserted a 'half-strike' (4 gallons) measure. The table was placed in the middle of the gangway; the master stood by the side of it, and asked if they had found his knife. All said 'No!' 'Well then,' answered he, 'come out slowly one at a time and let each touch this measure with the right forefinger, and the bantam-cock under it will crow at the thief.' The boys went out, boldly as they passed touching the tub, but the master missed one whom from the first he had suspected. He again locked the door, searched the rooms, and there, under a desk, not in his own place, he found the boy hiding. He began to cry, confessed the theft, and gave up the knife."

Another test of innocency, practised in bygone days, was to kindle a fire on one of the table-men (large flat stones), so common in villages in West Cornwall. A stick lit at this was handed to the accused, who had to put out the fire by spitting on it. It is well-known that fear dries up saliva.

I will describe another rough ordeal before I go on to the legends of the Land's End district. It is called "Riding the hatch," or "heps" (a half-door often seen at small country shops). Any man formerly accused of immorality was brought before a select number of his fellow-parishioners, and by them put to sit astride the "heps," which was shaken violently backwards and forwards: if he fell into the house he was judged innocent; but out on the road, guilty. When any one has been brought before his superiors and remanded he is still figuratively said "to have been made to ride the 'heps.'" Hands are

washed, as by Pontius Pilate, to clear a person from crime, and to call any one "dirty-fingered" is to brand him as a thief.

On a bench-end in Zennor church there is a very singular carving of a mermaid. To account for it Zennor folks say that hundreds of years ago a beautifully-attired lady, who came and went mysteriously, used occasionally to attend their church and sing so divinely that she enchanted all who heard her. She came year after year, but never aged nor lost her good looks. At last one Sunday, by her charms, she enticed a young man, the best singer in the parish, to follow her: he never returned, and was heard of no more. A long time after, a vessel lying in Pendower cove, into which she sailed one Sunday, cast her anchor, and in some way barred the access to a mermaid's dwelling. She rose up from the sea, and politely asked the captain to remove it. He landed at Zennor, and related his adventure, and those who heard it agreed that this must have been the lady who decoyed away the poor young man.

Not far from St. Just is a solitary, dreary cairn, known as Cairn Kenidzhék (pronounced Kenidjack), which means the "hooting cairn," so called from the unearthly noises which proceed from it on dark nights. It enjoys a very bad reputation as the haunt of witches. Close under it lies a barren stretch of moorland, the "Gump," over it the devil hunts at night poor lost souls; he rides on the half-starved horses turned out here to graze and is sure to overtake them at a particular stile. It is often the scene of demon fights, when one holds the lanthorn to give the others light, and is also a great resort of the pixies. Woe to the unhappy person who may be there after night-fall: they will lead him round and round, and he may be hours before he manages to get out of the place away from his tormentors. Here more than once some fortunate persons have seen "the small people" too, at their revels, and their eyes have been dazzled by the sight of their wonderful jewels; but if they have ever managed to secrete a few, behold next morning they were nothing but withered leaves, or perhaps snail-shells.

Sennen Cove was much frequented by mermaids. This place was also resorted to by a remarkable spirit called the Hooper—from the hooping, or hooting sounds it was accustomed to make. In old times,

according to tradition, a compact cloud of mist often came in from over the sea, when the weather was by no means foggy, and rested on the rocks called Cowloc, thence it spread itself like a curtain of cloud quite across Sennen Cove. By night a dull light was mostly seen amidst the vapour, with sparks ascending as if a fire burned within it: at the same time hooping sounds were heard proceeding therefrom. People believed the misty cloud shrouded a spirit, which came to forewarn them of approaching storms, and that those who attempted to put to sea found an invisible force—seemingly in the mist—to resist them. A reckless fisherman and his son, however, disregarding the token, launched their boat and beat through the fog with a “threshal” (flail); they passed the cloud of mist which followed them, and neither the men nor the hooper were ever more seen in Sennen Cove. This is the only place in the county where any tradition of such a guardian spirit is preserved.—Bottrell.

The same author tells too a story of a reputed astrologer called Dionysius Williams, who lived in May-on, in Sennen, a century ago. He found his furze-rick was diminishing faster than it ought, and discovered by his art that some women in Sennen Cove were in the habit of taking it away at night. The very next night when all honest folks should be in bed an old woman from the Cove came as was her wont to his rick for a “burn” of furze. She made one of no more than the usual size but could not lift it, neither could she after she had lightened her “burn” by half. Frightened, she tried to take out the rope and run away, but she could neither draw it out nor move herself. Of course Mr. Williams had put a spell upon her, and there she had to remain in the cold all night. He came out in the morning and released her, giving her, as she was poor, the furze. Neither she nor the other women ever troubled him again.

Before proceeding any further, to make an allusion in the next legend intelligible, I must say something about Tregeagle (pronounced Tregaygle), the Cornish Bluebeard, who was popularly supposed to have sold his soul to the devil, that his wishes might be granted for a certain number of years; and who, in addition to several other crimes, is accused of marrying and murdering many rich heiresses to obtain their money. One day, just before his death, he was present

when one man lent a large sum to another without receiving receipt or security for it (the money was borrowed for Tregeagle). Soon after Tregeagle's death the borrower denied that he had ever had it, and the case was brought into Bodmin Court to be tried, when the defendant said, "If Tregeagle ever saw it I wish to God that Tregeagle may come into court and declare it." No sooner were the words spoken than Tregeagle appeared, and gave his witness in favour of the plaintiff, declaring "that he could not speak falsely; but he who had found it so easy to raise him would find it difficult to lay him." The money was paid, but the wretched man was followed night and day by the spirit, and great labour had the parsons and wise men before they could finally rid him of his tormentor. There are many versions of this transaction. Tregeagle himself is said in another to have received the money for an estate of which he was steward and not to have entered it in his books. His ghost was doomed to do many impossible things, such as to empty Dosmery pool, near Bodmin Moor, with a limpet shell that had a hole in the bottom. This pool had the reputation, too, of being bottomless; but it has lately been cut into and drained by the workers of the granite quarries. Strange tales are told in that neighbourhood of his appearing to people, and of his dismal howls at not being able to fulfil his tasks. Mothers all over Cornwall when their children are loudly crying may be often heard to declare "that they are roaring worse than Tregeagle." "A tradition of the neighbourhood says that on the shores of this lonely mere (Dosmery pool) the ghosts of bad men are ever employed in binding the sand in bundles with 'beams' (bands) of the same. These ghosts, or some of them, were driven out (they say horsewhipped out) by the parson from Launceston."—H. G. T. *Notes and Queries*, December, 1850.

Tregeagle had also to remove the sand from one cove to another, where the sea always returned it. It was on one of these expeditions that either by accident or design he dropped a sackful at the mouth of Loe-pool, near Helston. (When in wet seasons the waters of this pool rise to such a height as to obstruct the working of the mills on its banks, and heavy seas have silted up the sand at its mouth, the Mayor of Helston presents by ancient custom two leather purses containing three halfpence each as his dues to the lord of Penrose who

owns Loe-pool, and asks for permission to cut a passage through the bar to the sea.) Another of Tregeagle's tasks is to make and carry away a truss of sand bound with a rope of sand from Gwenvor (the cove at Whitsand Bay) near the Land's End. But his unquiet spirit finds no rest, for whilst he is trying to do his never-ending work the devil hunts him from place to place, until he hides for refuge in a hermit's ruined chapel on St. Roche's rocks (East Cornwall).

When the sea roars before a storm people in the Land's End district say "Tregeagle is calling," and often, too, his voice may be heard lamenting around Loe-pool.\*

The substance of the following I had from a Penzance man (H. R. C.), to whom I must own I am indebted for much information about Cornish folk-lore. All his life he has in his business mingled with the peasantry of West Cornwall, and, unlike myself, he comes from a long line of Cornishmen.

"You know Gwenvor Sands, in Whitesand Bay, at the Land's End, and have heard of the unresting spirit of Tregeagle, by whom that spot is haunted. He foretells storms, and calls before the wind reaches home. I have often heard him howling before a westerly hurricane in the still of midnight at my house in Penzance, a distance of ten miles."

Tradition tells that on these sands, many centuries ago, some foreigners landed, and fought a great battle with the inhabitants, under King Arthur, on Vellan-drucher Moor. "Where Madron, Gulval, and Zennor meet, there is a flat stone where Prince Arthur and four British kings dined, and the four kings collected the native Cornish who fought under them at the battle of Vellan Drucher."—(Bottrell.) This was long before the Spaniards (pronounced Spanyers) in 1595 came ashore at the same place from a galley "high by day" (in broad daylight), and burnt Vellan-dreath, a mill close by.

These foreigners are popularly supposed to be red-haired Danes, and they stayed so long "that the birds built in the rigging of their ships." In all the western parishes of Cornwall there has existed time out of mind a great antipathy to certain red-haired families,

\* A fuller account of Tregeagle and his wonderful doings may be found in Bottrell's *Traditions, West Cornwall*.

who are said to be their descendants, and, much to their disgust, they are often hailed as Danes (pronounced Deanes). Indeed this dislike is carried so far that few would allow any members of their families to intermarry with them. In addition to the usual country gossip in the beginning of this century amongst the women of this district whilst knitting at their doors (for the Cornish are famous "knitters"), or sitting round "breeding" (netting) fishing-nets, they had one never-failing topic of conversation in their fears that the foreigners would land once more on Gwenvor Sands, or at Priest's Cove,\* in Pendeen, near St. Just. Who these strangers were to be they were not at all sure, but they knew that the red-haired Danes were to come again, when Vellan Drucher (a water mill-wheel) would once more be worked with blood, and the kings for the last time would dine around the Garrick Zans (Table Mên); and the end of the world would come soon after: for had not Merlin so prophesied more than a thousand years ago? Garrick Zans is the old name for a large flat stone, the Table Mên (pronounced Mayon), at Sennen, near the Land's End, and seven mythical Saxon kings are said to have dined at it when on a visit to Cornwall, A.D. 600. "Around it old folk went nine times daily from some notion that it was lucky and good against witchcraft."—(Bottrell.)

Off the Land's End is a very striking rock rising out of the sea. It is known as the Irish Lady, from the fact that an Irish vessel was once wrecked on it, and out of all on board one poor lady alone managed to scramble up to the top; but no boat could get to her, and, exhausted by fatigue, she fell into the water, and was drowned. Her spirit still haunts the spot. This is most probably a fanciful tale, as the rock bears some resemblance to a human figure.

"During a dreadful thunderstorm and hurricane on the 30th January, 1648, the day on which King Charles was beheaded, a large stone figure of a man, called the 'Armed Knight,' which stood in an upright position at the extremity of the Land's End, forty fathoms above the level of the sea, was thrown down. On the same day a ship riding in St. Ives Bay, having on board the king's wardrobe

\* A monastery existed there, and in 1883 portions of the building were still standing.

and other furniture belonging to the royal family, bound for France, broke from her moorings, and ran ashore on the rocks of Godrevy Island, where all on board, about sixty persons, were drowned, except one man and a boy."—G. S. Gilbert's *Cornwall*.

The name of Armed Knight has been transferred to another pile of rocks off the Land's End. The "stone figure" thrown down was most probably a natural formation, as one of the rocks there now bears the fanciful name of Dr. Johnson's Head, from a supposed likeness. Other versions of this legend say "that the Armed Knight was only ninety feet high, with an iron spire on its top."

Porthgarra in olden times was known as Sweetheart's Cove from the following circumstance: The daughter of a well-to-do farmer loved a sailor, who was once one of her father's serving-men. Her parents, especially her mother, disapproved of the match; and when the young man returned from sea and came to see his sweetheart, he was forbidden the house. The lovers however met, and vowed to be true to each other, Nancy saying, "That she would never marry any other man," and William, "That, dead or alive, he would one day claim her as his bride." He again went to sea, and for a long time no tidings came, neither from nor of him. Poor Nancy grew melancholy, and spent all her days, and sometimes nights, looking out seaward from a spot on the cliff, called then Nancy's Garden, now Hella Point. She gradually became quite mad; and one night fancied she heard her lover tapping at her bed-room window, and calling her to come out to him, saying: "Sleepest thou, sweetheart? Awaken, and come hither, love. My boat awaits us at the cove. Thou must come this night, or never be my bride." She dressed, went to the cove, and was never seen again. Tradition says that the same night William appeared to his father, told him that he had come for his bride, and bade him farewell; and that next day the news arrived of his having been drowned at sea. Bottrell gives a full account of this legend under the title of "The Tragedy of Sweet William and Fair Nancy."

Not far from the parish of St. Levan is a small piece of ground—"Johanna's Garden,"—which is fuller of weeds than of flowers. The owner of it was one Sunday morning in her garden gathering greens

for her dinner, when she saw St. Levan going by to catch some fish for his. He stopped and greeted her, upon which she reproved him for fishing on a Sunday, and asked him what he thought would be his end if he did so. He tried to convince her that it was not worse than picking greens, but she would not listen to reason. At last St. Levan lost patience, and said—"From this time for ever thou shalt be known, if known at all, as the Foolish Johanna, and thy garden shall ever continue to bear, as now, more hemlocks and nettles than leeks and lentils. Mark this! to make thy remembrance the more accursed for all time to come, if any child of thy name be baptised in the waters of Parchapel-well (close at hand) it shall become a fool, like thyself, and bad luck follow it."—Bottrell.

There is a cleft-stone in St. Levan churchyard called St. Levan's stone; but it is said to have been venerated in the days of king Arthur; and Merlin, who once visited these parts with him, uttered this prophecy concerning it :—

"When, with panniers astride,  
A pack-horse can ride  
Through St. Levan's stone  
The world will be done."

Unless some earthquake splits it further the world will last thousands of years longer.

On an almost inaccessible granite peak seaward of the pile of rocks known as Castle Treryn (pronounced Treen), once the haunt and meeting-place of witches, on the summit of which is perched the far-famed Cornish logan-rock, is a sharp peak with a hole in it, large enough to insert a hand. At the bottom lay an egg-shaped stone, traditionally called the key of the castle, which, although easily shifted, had for ages defied all attempts at removal. It was said that should any one ever succeed in getting it out, Castle Treryn—in fact the whole cairn—would immediately disappear. It was unfortunately knocked out by the men who replaced the logan-rock, thrown down by Lieutenant Goldsmith. Its position was often altered by heavy seas, and from it the old folk formerly foretold the weather.

In Buryan parish, named after an Irish saint, a king's daughter, who came into Cornwall with some of her companions in the fifth



century, is the famous circle of Dawns Myin, or the Merry Maidens, originally consisting of nineteen upright stones. They are nineteen maidens, who for their sin of dancing on a Sunday were all turned into stone. Two menhirs in a neighbouring field are the pipers, who at the same time suffered the same fate. Of these and other stone circles an old writer says, "No man when counting them can bring the stones twice to the same number."

Not far from Buryan, between Sennen and Penzance, is a very solitary weird spot—a disused Quakers' burial-ground. In its lonely neighbourhood is sometimes seen by a privileged few "nigh by day" the spirit of a huntsman, followed by his dogs. He is dressed in the hunting costume of bygone ages; he suddenly appears, for neither his horse's hoofs nor his dogs make any sound, jumps over an adjacent hedge, and is as suddenly lost to view. I do not know if tradition has ever connected this huntsman with Wild Harris of Kenegie,\* who was killed when hunting by a fall from his horse—it was frightened by a white hare, the spirit of a deserted maiden, which crossed its path. His ghost, in his hunting-dress, appeared standing at the door of his house the night he was buried—the funeral, according to an old custom, had taken place at midnight. For years after he might be met in the vicinity of his home, and he and his boon companions were often heard carousing at nights in a summer-house on the bowling-green. Few then cared to pass Kenegie after dark, for his was said not to be the only spirit that haunted the place. Wild Harris's ghost was finally laid to rest by a famous ghost-laying parson, and put as a task to count the blades of grass nine times in an enclosure on the top of Castle-an-Dinas, an old earth fortification near, where he is said to have met his death.†

On the opposite side of Buryan to the Quakers' burial-ground is the parish of Paul (St. Pol-de-Leon). Its church was burnt by the Spaniards in 1595. They landed on a rock, said to have been named

\* A gentleman's seat in the parish of Gulval, near Penzance.

† There is a small enclosure near the castle, where several members of the family of Hosking were interred, owing to a quarrel that Mr. Hosking had with the vicar of Ludgvan over some tithes. The last funeral took place in 1823. On one of the stones is inscribed, "It is virtue alone that consecrates this ground," and "Custom is the idol of fools."

after Merlin—Merlin's car—and marched from Paul to Penzance, which they also fired in several places. I am afraid the inhabitants did not make a very bold stand against them; for Merlin had prophesied centuries before—

“That they should land on the rock of Merlin,  
Who would burn Paul, Penzance, and Newlyn.”

And this caused them to lose courage, and falsify the old proverb:

“Car and Pen, Pol and Tre’  
Would make the devil run away.”

Close by the highway, where the Buryan road joins the high-road from Paul to Penzance, is a smoothly-cut, conical granite stone, popularly supposed to have been placed there in memory of some woman who was found murdered at that spot, with nothing on to identify her, and with only a thimble and ring in her pocket. It really marks the place where an ancient gold ring, three inches and a-half in diameter, bearing the motto, “In hac spe vivo,” was discovered in 1781. In the same parish, a short walk from this place, are some Druidical remains, which have the curious name of “Kerris-roundago.” Some stones taken from it to repair Penzance pier were fatal to the horses who drew them, although they were young and healthy.

In the adjacent parish of Newlyn, a fishing village, the favourite resort of artists, a great deal of gossiping on summer evenings goes on around the small wells (here called peeths), whilst the women wait patiently for each in turn to fill her earthen pitchers; some of the most industrious bring their knitting in their pockets with them. Opposite one of these wells, towering over St. Peter's church, is a striking pile of rocks, “Tolcarn.” On the summit are some curious markings in the stones, which, when a child, I was told were the devil's footprints; but the following legend, which I give on the authority of the Rev. W. S. Lach-Szyrma, Vicar of St. Peters, is quite new to me:—

“The summit of the rock is reticulated with curious veins of elvan, about which a quaint Cornish legend relates that the Buccaboo, or storm-god of the old Cornish, once stole the fishermen's net. Being

pursued by Paul choir, who sang the Creed, he flew to the top of Paul hill and thence over the Coombe to Tolcarn, where he turned the nets into stone."

We have now reached the town of Penzance, and through its streets those of the last generation often heard rumbling at midnight an old-fashioned coach drawn by headless horses; or a procession of coffins might be seen slowly wending its way to the churchyard. It was unlucky to meet this, as death was sure soon to follow, and tradition speaks of a woman who accidentally struck against one and died in the same night. A coach with headless horses and coachman also, just before Christmas, went through the streets of Penryn; this coachman had the power of spiriting away people who met and stared at him, unless they turned their heads and averted the evil by some mystical signs. In Penzance town were many haunted houses, but space will only allow of my noticing a few. One in Chapel Street (formerly Our Lady's Street) was tenanted by the spirit of Mrs. Baines, an eccentric old lady. At the back of her house was a very fine orchard well stocked with fruit-trees, which the boys were too fond of visiting. She determined at last that her gardener should watch for them, armed with an old blunderbuss, charged with peas and small shot. She gave him strict orders should he see any one to say one, two, three, and then fire. He watched two nights, but the boys were too cunning for him, and still the fruit went. On the third, Mrs. Baines, thinking to catch him napping, went herself into the garden and began to shake the apples down from one of the trees. Some say that the man recognised his mistress, and, vexed at her suspecting him, said one, two, three as quickly as he could utter the words and fired. Others, that he was sleeping, and awakened by the noise she made shot her by mistake, exclaiming "I know-ee, you thief, I do; now I'll sarve-ee out, I will." Terrified after he had done the deed, he ran off into the country and there hid himself for some days. The poor old lady was more frightened than hurt, and all the shot were successfully extracted by her doctor; but very soon after this adventure she died. From this time her house and grounds began to have an evil reputation; Mrs. Baines's ghost, dressed in antiquated garb, a quaint lace cap on her powdered hair, lace ruffles

hanging from her sleeves, and a short *môde* mantle over her shoulders, was often seen walking in the gardens or standing under an apple-tree, leaning on the gold-headed cane she always carried. Indoors, too, her high-heeled shoes were plainly heard night after night tapping on the floors as she paced up and down the rooms, which noise was often varied by the whirring of her spinning-wheel. For some time the house was unoccupied, now it is divided into two, and the ghost has been laid to rest. But long after Mrs. Baines ceased to appear her wheel was heard. At last it was discovered that some leather, which had been nailed around a door to keep out draughts, was loose in places, and that the whistling of the wind through this made the peculiar sound. Mr. Bottrell says "that her spirit was laid by a parson, whose name he thinks was Singleton, and he succeeded in getting her away to the Western Green (west of Penzance), which was then spread over many acres of land, where the waves now roll.\* Here this powerful parson single-handed bound her to spin from the banks ropes of sand for the term of a thousand years, unless she, before that time, spun a sufficiently long and strong one to reach from St. Michael's Mount to St. Clement's Isle (across the bay)." About a stone's throw from Mrs. Baines's house, on an eminence above Quay Street, stood in her days Penzance Chapel of Ease, for Penzance was then in Madron parish, called Our Lady's or St. Mary's Chapel. On the same site was built in 1835 the present parish church of St. Mary's. Here, in the memory of a few who still survive, a gentleman in the early part of the century did penance, and afterwards walked from thence through the streets to his house, wrapped in a sheet, with a lighted taper in his hand. It was usual then, as now, for the Mayor and Corporation of Penzance, with the mace-bearers and constables, to go once a month in state to church. Before the reading of the first lesson the mace-bearers left, and visited the public-houses, in order to see that they were shut during service time. When the sermon began they came back and returned to their seats in order to be in readiness to escort the Mayor home. Quay Street was

\* The Penzance promenade is built on part of it. In my childhood it was said to be one of the resorts of "Spring-heeled Jack," of whom I then lived in mortal dread.

once the most fashionable part of Penzance, but the large houses are now divided into smaller tenements; in some of them bits of finely-moulded ceilings, &c. still exist. One of the houses reputed to have been haunted was torn down in 1813, when the skeleton of a man was found built into a wall. It was, of course, put down to be the sailor's, whose spirit was so often seen there, and who (tradition said) had been murdered in that house for the sake of his money. It was well known that he had brought back great riches from foreign parts. There is a myth that Sir Walter Raleigh landed at Penzance Quay when he returned from Virginia, and on it smoked the first tobacco ever seen in England, but for this I do not believe that there is the slightest foundation. Several western ports, both in Devon and Cornwall, make the same boast.

It is a fact, however, that the news of Nelson's death was first heard here. It was brought into the port by two fishermen, who had it from the crew of a passing vessel. A small company of strolling actors were playing that night at the little theatre then standing over some stables in Chapel Street, and the play was stopped for a few moments whilst one of the actors told the audience.

Another haunted house, at the opposite side of Penzance, is celebrated in a poem called "The Petition of an Old Uninhabited House," written and published in 1811 by the Rev. C. V. Le Grice, who was then vicar of Madron. He was a friend of Charles Lamb, who mentions him in his "Essay on Christ's Hospital." About this house a lady once told me a strange story, that I will relate. Forty years ago, she, a perfect stranger to the place, never having been in Penzance before, came to it with her husband and her first child, for she was then a young wife. As they meant to settle in the town, they went first to an hotel, where they intended staying until they could get a suitable house. On the evening of their arrival, her husband having gone out, she sat alone before the fire nursing her child, when she suddenly saw a little old man, in a very old-fashioned dress, come into the room. He sat down in a chair near her, looked steadfastly into the fire, and, after some time, without saying a word, he rose and left. On her husband's return, she told him of her queer visitor. The next morning they made inquiries about him, and found

that the hotel had been built on the site of the old uninhabited house, that nearly the whole of it had been destroyed, but a few of the best rooms remained ; and that they were in a haunted chamber. She declared that she could never sleep there another night, and, temporarily, they engaged some furnished lodgings. These old rooms are now pulled down long since, and billiard and other rooms cover the place where they stood.

Outside the boundary-stone, west of Penzance, stands, in its own grounds, a house to which additions have been made by many succeeding generations. Tradition, of course, gave it a ghost. With the other members of my family, I lived there for several years, but none of us ever saw it. I am bound, however, to state that we never slept in the haunted chamber. For a short period it was occupied by a groom, who one morning came to me with a very long face, and said he dared not sleep there any more, for some mysterious being came night after night, and pulled all the bed-clothes off him; rather than do so, he would sleep in the harness-room.

Still further west of Penzance is a much larger house, to which, like the former, many additions have been made. And up its avenue, after dark, a carriage may be often heard slowly making its way until it reaches the hall-door, where it stops. In this house, about sixty years ago, lived, in very great style, a gentleman, who was a regular autocrat, and of him one of his old servants related to me this anecdote, which is curious as an illustration of the manners of those times. When in his employ, he gave an answer to some question, which afterwards his master discovered to be an untruth. The next Sunday he made him, as the congregation came out, stand at Madron church door, by a tombstone covered with loaves of bread. Of these, he had to give one to each poor person that passed, and say, in an audible tone, "I, William ——, last week told my master a lie."

Mr. G. B. Millett, in his *Penzance Past and Present*, gives a tale well known in this district, about the drinking habits of our ancestors, which, as I am now on the subject of manners, I will quote.

"A particular gentleman, not far from Penzance, loved good liquor, and one evening had gathered some of his jovial companions together, determined to make a night of it. His wife, having had some

experience of such gatherings before, with wise precaution, saw as much wine taken out of the cellar as she thought would be good for her husband and his friends. Then, safely locking the strong oak door, she put the key in her pocket, and announced her intention of spending the evening with some lady friends. The hours were passing pleasantly away, and, with a smile of inward satisfaction, she was congratulating herself upon the success of her forethought, when a heavy stumbling noise was heard upon the stairs, and shortly afterwards two burly footmen staggered into the room, groaning under the weight of a ponderous cellar door, with its posts and lintel, which had been sent by their master for their mistress to unlock."

The manor of Conerton, which at one time nearly included the whole of West Penwith, had many privileges in Penzance. Before the days of county courts, the lord held a monthly court here for the trial of small cases not criminal. Its prison, a wretched place (visited by Howard), no longer exists, but people were confined in it early in this century—sometimes for long periods. I was once shown a beautiful patchwork quilt made in it by a poor woman, who had been imprisoned there for debt.

Until within the last fifty years every butcher in Penzance market had to pay to the bailiff of this manor at Christmas a marrow-bone or a shilling. The first butcher who refused to pay it also defied one of the bye-laws of the market that compelled them to wear white sleeves over their blue blouses. He was brought before the magistrates, and declared "that he would be incarcerated before he would do it." The following is a favourite story handed down amongst the butchers from father to son. A solicitor in Penzance had a very large dog that was in the habit of coming into their market and stealing joints of meat from the stalls. One day one of them went to the lawyer, and said,— "Please, sir, could I sue the owner of a dog for a leg of mutton stolen from my stall?" "Certainly, my good man." "Then, please sir, the dog is yours, and the price of the mutton is 4*s.* 6*d.*" The money was paid, and the man was going away in triumph, when he was called back by these words: "Stay a moment, my good man, a lawyer's consultation is 6*s.* 8*d.*, you owe me the difference:" which sum the discomfited butcher had to pay.

I do not know that the next anecdote can strictly be called folk-lore, and I would not give it had not the last phrase already passed into a proverb in Penzance. When the Volunteer movement was first started, one of the Duke of Cornwall's First Volunteers (as the corps here is named),—I will call him Penkivell—was very enthusiastic, and diligently performed the drill-practise in a loft over his kitchen. One day he gave the word of command—"Private Penkivell, two steps, and fall back." He quite forgot that he was near a trap-door, and down he came through it, crashing the crockery that stood on his wife's "dresser" below. Alarmed at the noise, she ran to see what was the matter, and at the sight of her broken teacups, &c., began to scold. But he stopped her peremptorily, saying, "Woman, hold your tongue! What do you know about war!"

(To be continued.)

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## THE FORBIDDEN DOORS OF THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS.

By W. F. KIRBY.

[Read at the Evening Meeting, 25th March, 1887.]



IT is interesting to reduce a popular story to its lowest terms, and to discover (as we often may without much difficulty) the very insignificant-looking tap-root from which a most luxuriant growth has arisen. I remember once seeing the argument of "Paradise Lost" summed up as follows: "A man and woman find themselves in a garden; they are caught stealing the fruit, and are driven out."

I propose to call attention to five tales of *The Thousand and One Nights*, differing greatly from each other, and yet all based upon two fundamental ideas, and these very simple: (1) the existence of a door, which the hero is forbidden to open; and (2) his falling in love with a beautiful woman whom he sees from the house-top. As regards the latter incident (illustrated in the Old Testament



by the story of David and Bathsheba), the flat roofs of Eastern houses, combined with the seclusion of women, must make it an almost everyday occurrence in the East. The five tales which I am about to consider lead us gradually from the simplest form of the story to the most complex, and they will also furnish occasion for observations on many collateral points besides the two which I have emphasised. Taking them in their natural order of complexity they may be arranged as follows:—

- I. The House with the Belvedere.
- II. The Man who never Laughed during the rest of his Life.
- III. The Third Kalandar's Tale.
- IV. The story of Janshah.
- V. Hasan of Bassorah.

All these tales are to be found in the translations of Mr. Payne and Sir Richard Burton; and all, except that of Janshah, in that of the late Mr. E. W. Lane. It is to be regretted that the only version of Janshah in a published English edition is that of Lamb, taken from Zinserling's translation of Von Hammer's lost French version: and Von Hammer's rendering of this story is one of his very worst, in fact it is so confused as to render it highly probable that several pages of his MS. were transposed. Trébutien's French version is likewise taken from Zinserling; but the only good European version of the story with which I am acquainted besides the two English ones is the German translation of Weil. In a few months, however, Lady Burton's published edition may be expected to render Janshah as accessible to the English public as the Third Kalandar's Tale, the only story of the cycle which occurs in Galland's version.

But to return from this digression. The House with the Belvedere and The Man who never Laughed again are tales which form part of the cluster which goes by the following names: (1) The Book of Sindibad; (2) The Craft and Malice of Women (not to be confounded with a short tale called Women's Craft, which is found in the Breslau and Wortley Montague texts, as well as in the Persian *Thousand and One Days*, where it forms part of the story of Prince Fadlallah); and (3) The Story of the King, his Son, the Seven Wazirs, and the Damsel.

The House with the Belvedere is a house which cannot be entered without danger of sickness or death, and in this respect it resembles the haunted house in the story of Ali of Cairo. In the latter case, however, every one who entered was challenged by the Jinn in the name of a man for whom an enchanted treasure was reserved, and whoever did not respond to the name was put to death. In the tale now under consideration, the house is taken by a young man, who retains his health for some time, when he is accosted by an old woman (the usual go-between in Arab intrigues), who, finding him well, says, "I suppose thou hast not gone up to the upper story, neither looked out from the belvedere there."\* On searching the garden, the young man finds a door covered with cobwebs, and hesitates to open it lest this should be a sign of death lurking within. (The incident of the cobwebs is probably taken from the story of Mohammad hiding in a cave during his Flight, and his pursuers being deceived by a spider's web woven over the mouth.) Our hero at length summons courage, ascends to the belvedere, and sees a beautiful damsel sitting in another belvedere, and at once falls ill with love. Ultimately he obtains possession of her by means of the old woman. In the corresponding and probably older story of the Concealed Robe in the Persian Book of Sindibad (given by Mr. Clouston in his work on *Sindibad*, p. 73) the secret door does not appear. But I believe that there is some connection between forbidden doors and the adventures of the god Frey in the Eddas. Othin and Frigga alone are privileged to sit on the throne Hliðskjálf, from whence they can view the whole earth; but Frey, moved by curiosity, once ascended it, and, as a just punishment for his presumption, was seized with mad love for the giantess Gerda, whom he could only obtain by giving up to his messenger Skirnir the sword which he ought to have reserved to fight the enemies of the gods; and, having thus lost his weapon, he will be slain by the terrible Surtur at the great battle of Ragnarök; and, although we are told that Surtur is to vanquish all the gods, yet Frey is the only antagonist with whom his encounter is specially mentioned.

\* I have generally followed Sir Richard Burton's version, though in some cases I have preferred Lane's spelling of proper names.

Leaving the simplest form of the Forbidden Door, we have next to consider two very similar stories—The Man who never Laughed again and The Third Kalandar. In the former tale a young spendthrift, who is reduced to beggary, is hired to wait on eleven old men, who live together in a grand house, dress in mourning, and weep and lament. One by one they die, and the last cautions the youth not to open a particular door. This also is covered with cobwebs, and is fastened with steel padlocks. The youth opens it, and it leads him through a long passage to the shore of a sea (or river, in some versions), where a great eagle pounces upon him and carries him to an island. He is taken up by a ship, and conveyed to a country inhabited only by women, where he is married to a beautiful queen, and acknowledged as king. The queen again forbids him to open a particular door, but, after seven years, he ventures to do so, thinking to behold greater treasures than he had yet seen, but he finds only the bird within, which carries him back to the seashore. He returns to the house where he had lived with the old men, pines away with vain regrets, and dies. Mr. Hartland (*Folk-Lore Journal*, vol. iii. p. 230) thinks that there was probably only one forbidden door in the original form of the story, and that the absence of any allusion to the harem may be regarded as a sign of antiquity. Mr. Clouston (*Book of Sindibad*, pp. 308-310) refers to several cognate Indian stories. Sir Richard Burton once remarked to me that he considers the forbidden door as a test of whether the real hero, destined to perpetual felicity, has arrived. If he resisted the temptation and did not open the door, he would simply live happy ever afterwards, and there would be no story to relate.

The story of the Third Kalandar is on nearly the same lines as that of the man who never laughed again. Here a wandering prince arrives at a palace inhabited by one old man and ten young men all blind of the left eye, who lament and smear their faces with soot and ashes every night. On asking for an explanation of these strange things, the prince is sewn up in the skin of a ram, and carried by a rukh to another palace inhabited by forty damsels, with whom he remains till the end of the year, one or other being always at his disposal. At the beginning of the new year they leave him for forty days, strictly

forbidding him to open a particular door, within which he finds a winged horse which carries him back to the first palace, where it whisks out his eye with its tail, and the eleven one-eyed men banish him from their company. This story is distinguished from the others by the hero losing an eye, and by his falling in love with forty damsels at once. The heroes of all the other tales of this class content themselves with one bride only. I do not discuss the remainder of the Third Kalandar's story, as it has little or no connection either with forbidden doors or with any of the other stories which relate to them.

In the stories of Janshah and Hasan we have far more elaborate developments, nor do the heroes encounter any calamity which they are unable to surmount, if we except the death of Shamssah at the end of Janshah's adventures. The story of Janshah again introduces us to a prince, who, like Seyf El Mulook in *The Thousand and One Nights*, and the Prince of Kharezm\* in *The Forty Vezirs*, is predestined from his birth to hardship and wandering. (The Traveller's Tales of *The Thousand and One Nights* form a large and highly interesting series, one or two of which touch upon our present subject.) I have already mentioned that Von Hammer's version of this tale is unintelligible; but there is positive proof that it does not exist in its original form even in the genuine text of *The Nights*, for we find Janshah boasting to Bulukiya that he has "looked upon our lord Solomon in his life," though, when he comes to tell his story, it turns out that he has merely visited the courts of Solomon's vicerents. Janshah was the prince of Kabul, a city second to none in the glories of Eastern romance; for here Rudabeh was wooed by Zal, and became the mother of Rustem.

Janshah's adventures begin by his being driven out to sea with a few attendants. In *The Nights*, most if not all the voyages seem to be coasting voyages, and if the vessel is once driven out of sight of land, or upon a coast unknown to the captain and crew, every one is at fault; but Janshah was simply cruising about in a fishing-boat. Once out of their reckoning, Janshah and his men sail from island to island and meet with various adventures. On one island they find cannibal

\* 13th Vezir's Story of Gibb's Translation, p. 151.

monsters, who divide themselves in half. This incident is remarkable as being the only allusion in *The Nights* to the Nesuas, or half-man, except in Scott's story of the Sage and his Pupil. At length they arrive at a country inhabited by apes, and Janshah is compelled to become their king. Seyf El Mulook, another wandering prince, also came to a land of apes, but was more fortunate, for they already had a king, and he was able to pursue his journey when he pleased, without let or hindrance. Janshah and his men dwell with the apes for some time, making successful war upon the Ghuls who are their enemies. In the mountains Janshah finds a tablet written by Solomon which informs him that there are only two passes leading from the country of the apes; one to the east "swarming with Ghuls and wild beasts, Marids and Ifrits" (this reminds us of the approach to the Islands of Wak-wak, in the Story of Hasan of Bassorah), and leading to the shore of the Circumambient Ocean; and the other through the Wady of Ants to a river which dries up every Sabbath, on the other bank of which stands a city inhabited solely by Jews. Janshah is pursued by the apes, but they are attacked by the ants which are as large as dogs; and he succeeds in escaping across a river, but loses all his attendants.

There is no mention of ants in the version of Seyf El Mulook in *The Thousand and One Nights*, but in the Persian version in *The Thousand and One Days*, which I take to represent an earlier form of this story, Seyf's companion Saed is devoured one night, while they are sleeping together on an island infested by ants, Seyf himself only escaping through the magic power of his ring. So incredible did this incident appear to the English or Scotch translator of the version in Weber's *Tales of the East* that he has actually turned the ants into "wild beasts," reminding one of the old story of the African chief who swallowed every yarn the sailor told him, till he said that water sometimes became hard enough to walk upon in his country, when the chief lost all patience, and became highly indignant with him for telling such lies.

I think there is little doubt that the stories of ants in these Eastern tales are connected with the account which Herodotus gives of the ants in the deserts of Northern India, and which he describes as

‘‘somewhat less than dogs, but larger than foxes.’’ (Thalia, § 102-105.)

Janshah, leaving the ants behind him, proceeds on his journey alone till he reaches the Sabbath river, which he crosses, and arrives at the city of the Jews. While waiting for a caravan to take him home, he hears a crier offering a thousand pieces of gold and a beautiful slave-girl in return for a single day’s work. On answering the proclamation, Janshah is taken to a merchant, who leads him to the foot of a high mountain, where he sews him up in the skin of a mule. A huge bird carries Janshah to the summit of the mountain, whence he throws down precious stones to the Jew, who abandons him to his fate. Janshah wanders over the mountains till he arrives at the palace of Sheykh Nasr, Solomon’s deputy-ruler of the birds, who receives him kindly, and promises to send him home when the birds arrive to pay him their usual annual visit. When the day comes, the sheykh goes forth to receive the homage of the birds, giving Janshah the keys of the palace to amuse himself with, and, of course, warns him not to open a particular door. Within it Janshah finds a great basin of water, a pavilion, and a great open saloon, containing many wonderful objects. Presently three doves,\* as large as eagles, descend to the basin, cast off their feather-dresses, and become three beautiful maidens, who bathe there. Janshah joins and converses with them (a very unusual circumstance in any tale of the kind, and wholly inconsistent with what follows), and they presently fly away, and leave him disconsolate.

The Jinn in most of the tales of *The Thousand and One Nights* resemble the Shedim or Mazikeen of the Jews; but the beautiful and gracious beings spoken of in such stories as Janshah and Hasan are human, except in their supernatural power, and more closely resemble the peris of Persia and the fairies of Italian romance, the Ifrits and Morids being represented as their subjects or slaves. The Deevs of Persia have more resemblance to the devils of the Middle Ages than to the evil Jinn of the *Arabian Nights*.

By the advice of Sheykh Nasr, Janshah waits his opportunity till

\* This shows the Persian origin of the story, for peris frequently appear thus, under the form of doves.

next year; but it seems very inconsequential that, after their previous meeting with Janshah, one of the maidens should express her anxiety lest some one should be lying ambushed in the pavilion, and another should reply that there was no cause for anxiety, because none had entered the pavilion since the time of Solomon, neither man nor Jinni. Janshah steals their clothes, and Shamssah, the youngest, consents to become his wife. They remain with Sheykh Nasr for three months, after which Shamssah dons her feather-dress, and carries Janshah to Kabul, a journey of thirty months, in two days. Janshah's father, King Teghmus, builds a splendid palace for the pair, and buries the feather-dress under the foundations; and the wedding is celebrated with great pomp. But at midnight Shamssah, having found her feather-dress by her keen sense of smell, flies away to her own country, bidding Janshah seek her in Takni, the Castle of Jewels.

Janshah falls into a melancholy state, and King Teghmus, being much occupied in condoling with him, is attacked by the hostile kings Kafid and Fakun. Teghmus goes to the war; and, after two months' time, Janshah sets out on pretence of following him, but he gives his escort the slip; and, on the news reaching Teghmus, the latter shuts himself up in Kabul in despair, where he is beleaguered by King Kafid for seven years. Meantime Janshah makes his way back to the city of the Jews, where he again engages himself to the Jew merchant, and returns to the palace of Sheykh Nasr. At the annual meeting of the birds, none of them can give any information respecting the Castle of Jewels; and Sheykh Nasr commands a great bird to carry Janshah back to Kabul, but the bird misses his way, and they arrive at the palace of Sheykh Badri, the King of the Beasts. He receives Janshah kindly; but, when the beasts assemble, they also know nothing of the Castle of Jewels. Then Sheykh Badri sends Janshah to his brother, King Shimakh; and he sends him on to his superior, the monk Yaghmus, the most powerful of living beings, who had lived since the time of Noah. At length Janshah meets with a bird, who carries him to the Hill of Crystal, behind Mount Kaf. Here he is in sight of the Castle of Jewels, though still two months' journey distant. When he at length arrives, he is received in the kindest manner by King Shahlan, his father-in-law; and, after a

time, he returns to Kabul with his wife, escorted by Marids, who destroy King Kafid's army, though the king himself receives a contemptuous dismissal, his life being granted him at Shamssah's request. After this Janshah and his wife pass a pleasant life, spending one year at Kabul and another at the Castle of Jewels, till Shamssah is killed by a shark while bathing, and Janshah sits by her grave weeping for the rest of his days.

The story of Janshah, though purely Arab in its present form, is combined in the *Arabian Nights* with two other tales, those of Hasib and Bulukiya, which are very decidedly Indian in their characteristics.

The last of the tales on our list is the great prose epic of Hasan of Bassorah, one of the longest, most interesting, and most coherent of the tales of *The Thousand and One Nights*. Hasan is no prince but a poor goldsmith, who is drugged by a Persian fire-worshipper, and carried by a great bird to the summit of the Mountain of the Clouds, whence he flings down several bundles of wood to the expectant Magian, who, it is implied, uses them in the preparation of the philosopher's stone. From thence Hasan dives from a precipice into a lake, and, after swimming ashore, he arrives at a palace inhabited by seven damsels, the daughters of a powerful King of the Jinn. The youngest of the maidens adopts Hasan as her foster-brother, and he remains in the palace for some time, till the sisters are summoned to a wedding; and they depart for two months, giving Hasan their keys, and forbidding him to open one door. Within it he finds a staircase leading to the terraced roofs of the palace, with a view over the gardens, and he wanders over the roof till he reaches a splendid pavilion, in the midst of which is a great basin of water. Thither ten birds repair, not sisters, but a princess and her handmaids. Hasan's foster-sister recognises the former by description as the daughter of the supreme King of the Jinn. When the princess returns, Hasan steals her feather-dress, and, after waiting till her companions have flown away, he drags her into the palace by her hair—which Sir Richard Burton explains as a symbolic marriage by capture, thereby legalising their union. This may be correct, for the first impression conveyed by this proceeding, which is specially insisted upon by Hasan's foster-sister, is that of needless if not brutal violence. Hasan's beloved is told



that her feather-dress is burned; and she is easily reconciled to her fate, and consents to become Hasan's wife.

After a while, Hasan remembers the distress of his mother, who was left behind when he was stolen by the Persian; and he and his wife return to Bassorah. To avoid trouble on account of his sudden wealth, Hasan and his family remove to Baghdad, where they dwell for three years, during which time two sons are born.

Hasan then remembers his foster-sister, and sets out to visit her; but during his absence his wife, who has overheard him telling his mother where the feather-dress is hidden, persuades the old lady to let her visit the bath. The report of the beauty of the princess spreads through the city, and comes to the ears of the Empress Zubeydah, who sends for her, and is induced to compel the mother-in-law to give up the feather-dress. The princess takes her children, wraps herself in the feather-dress, and, becoming a bird, returns home, leaving a message for her husband that he must seek her out in the islands of Wak-wak.

It may be observed that although this princess and her family are far less amiable than Shamssah and her connections, yet Shamssah had less cause for deserting Janshah. Shamssah was married with her own consent, and with the knowledge of her sisters, and she had no cause for jealousy; whereas Hasan's wife had been torn from her family without their having any news of her; and it is clear that she felt herself neglected by her husband, even if she was not actually jealous of his foster-sister, though it must not be forgotten that marriage with a foster-sister, according to Eastern ideas, would be equivalent to incest.

When Hasan returns home and discovers his loss, he travels back to the palace of the princesses, which he is able to reach in a very short time, having slain the Persian, and possessed himself of his magic drum, with which he can summon any number of camels whenever he needs them. The princesses and their uncle, Abd El Kuddoos, whom they summon to their counsels, in vain endeavour to persuade Hasan to return to Baghdad; and at length the Sheykh takes him to a cavern, where he gives him a black horse, which conveys him to the Sheykh Abu-r-Ruweysh, who mounts him on an Ifrit, who

carries him to the land of Camphor, opposite the islands of Wak-wak. These islands are inhabited by monsters of all kinds; and trees grew there bearing fruits like the heads of women, suspended by the hair, which cry out wak-wak at sunrise and sunset. This is the cry of the great bird of Paradise, in the Aru Islands, near New Guinea; and ever since reading the account of the bird in Wallace's *Malay Archipelago* I have regarded these islands as the islands of Wak-wak. Sir Richard Burton (vol. viii. p. 60, *note*) says that there are two Wak-waks, one being the peninsula of Guadafui (where the calabash-tree bears gourds resembling a man's head), and the other in the East Indies, about the location of which he seems in doubt.

Hassan, the king of the land of Camphor, sends Hasan in a ship across the strait, and on arriving on the shore of the territories of Wak-wak, the old woman, Shawahi Umm-ed-Dawahi, the leader of the army of amazons, takes him under her protection. When the army marches, they traverse three regions rendered almost impassable by swarms of birds, hosts of wild beasts, and legions of devils respectively; and at length arrive at the territories of the eldest of the seven daughters of the king of the islands of Wak-wak. Hasan recognises in this queen a great resemblance to his wife; and the queen, Noor El Huda, sends to her father for her sister (Menar-es-Sena).<sup>\*</sup> When Noor El Huda is convinced of her sister's *mésalliance*, she casts her into prison, and drives out Hasan, who wanders into the country, where he meets with two boys, the sons of a magician, who are quarreling over two talismans which their father has left them; a cap of darkness and a rod which gives the possessor power over seven tribes of the Jinn. With these talismans, which Hasan steals from the boys, he releases his wife and children, and escapes, accompanied by the old woman, Shawahi.† They are pursued by Queen Noor El Huda, who is defeated after a three days' battle; but her sister begs her life, and makes peace between her and Shawahi. The queen and

<sup>\*</sup> In the version of Hasan of Bassorah, given in the Select Library Edition of the *Arabian Nights Entertainments* (London, 1847), Menar-es-Sena is called Nur-al-Nissa.

† This old woman is a witch, and in one passage she is described as riding on a Greek jar of red earthenware.

Shawahi then return to their own country, while Hasan and his family pursue their journey to the palace of the princesses. Here they rest awhile; and Abd El Kuddoos begs the talismans for himself and Abu-r-Ruweysh. Hasan's sister reproaches Menar-es-Sena with deserting her husband, and she answers with a laugh, "Whoso beguileth folk, him shall Allah beguile." Sir Richard Burton explains this as an allusion to Hasan having stolen her feather-dress; but I understand it rather to refer to her own desertion of her husband, and to the illtreatment she afterwards experienced from her sister.

Scott's MS., in addition to the story of Hasan of Bassorah, contains an abridgment (translated in vol. vi. of his *Arabian Nights*, and included in my own *New Arabian Nights*) under the title of "Mazin of Khorassaun." It differs little, except in length, and in some of the details of the journeys, and in the account of the talismans. Gauttier's French translation, and Habicht's German translation, which is derived from it, give Scott's story under the title of "Azem and the Queen of the Genii."

I might have mentioned that when the hero arrived at the palace of the princesses he finds two of them playing at chess—but chess is frequently mentioned in the *Arabian Nights*.

In the latter part of my paper I fear I have wandered a little from my main subject; but I have used it partly as a peg on which to hang various notes connected with the series of Arabian stories of forbidden doors, and I hope they have not been found altogether uninteresting.

While I was engaged on this paper, Mr. Nutt kindly referred me to Mr. Sidney Hartland's paper on the "Forbidden Chamber" (*Folk-Lore Journal*, vol. iii. pp. 193-242); but I found that Mr. Hartland had taken a different line to mine, and that it was unnecessary for me to remodel my own essay. I was, however, much interested to find the abstract of a story quoted by Hartland, p. 223, from Spitta Bey's *Contes Arabes Modernes* (a book which I had not seen), which is clearly derived from the same source as Chavis and Cazotte's story of the Maugraby, proving that Gauttier was quite wrong in supposing that the latter was based upon the rather bald and uninteresting story of Prince Benazir (Compare Gauttier, *Mille et une Nuits*, vol. vii.

p. 217; Kirby in Burton's *Thousand and One Nights*, vol. x. p. 473). In another of Spitta Bey's tales I find a version of the Jealous Sisters, more resembling Galland's in some particulars than any other with which I am acquainted; while a third contains the story of the Nose-Tree, which I had not met with before in any genuine Oriental form.

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## CHINESE LEGENDS.

### THE BIRD KO KO.O.O.



HERE is in the south of China a bird which, if very frequently heard, is very seldom seen. It is shaped like the brown thrush, but is rather larger; its colour is jet black, and its singing is principally composed of one loud clear double note which may be represented by the words Ko Ko.o.o.

The Chinese explain its existence by the following legend:—

Long ago, no one knows how long, two beautiful young girls, tempted out by a lovely moonlight night, escaped noiselessly from their home and walked towards the hills to see the blossoms of the strawberry tree (*myrica sapida*), which is supposed to wait till night to open its petals.

The elder of the two girls was called Ah Ko, and had lately married Ah Saw's (the other girl) brother. She had come (Chinese fashion) to live with her mother-in-law, and, needless to relate, the young husband was still very much in love. The mother who, like all Chinese women, was a slave to her son was very lavish of her attentions to the youthful bride, and in her desire to please her son was perhaps more anxious for her welfare than for that of her own daughter, Ah Saw. As the two girls were walking gaily chatting together, a large tiger sprang suddenly between them, and seizing Ah Ko in his powerful jaws carried her into the depths of the neigh-

bouring wood. Poor Ah Saw was so horror-struck that she could do nothing for a long time but gaze stupidly at the spot from whence she saw Ah Ko and her unwished-for companion disappear. At last her senses returned, and turning round she ran wildly back to her mother's house.

The latter, anxious about her daughters, was waiting at the door, and on hearing from Ah Saw of the horrible scene which had taken place was so much in terror of what her son would say that she forgot for the time being that she had twice been a mother, and that poor Ah Saw, even though she was not a son, had some claim upon her love. She turned wrathfully upon the poor girl, and ordered her away from her house, forbidding her to reappear before her unless she could bring back her sister-in-law. The girl retraced her steps, and wandered aimlessly about the country, calling Ah Ko Ko.o.o.o. until death, more merciful than her own mother, took pity upon her and carried her away.

We are led to suppose that in spite of her mother's cruelty Ah Saw must have been a very dutiful daughter, since she left her place of rest to come back to this world under the shape of a bird to try and do her mother's bidding. And this is why the sound Ko Ko o.o.o. is so often heard in the south of China.

#### THE BIRD TEE TAI TAI.

In the south of China there is another bird, the existence of which is also explained by a legend. It is a sort of little bird bearing some likeness to the English lark. It rises from the ground with a very sweet twittering song, flying in a straight line higher and higher into space until it is out of sight, continuing its song all the while. It is commonly called "Ah tee tai tai," and "the black bean bird."

Once upon a time there lived a man whose first wife died in giving birth to a little son. The father, who had not been married long enough to grow tired of matrimony, resolved to renew the experiment, and consequently looked round for a second wife. In spite of the immense quantities of babies destroyed at their birth, for the only reason that they are born a girl, women are still very plentiful in

China, and it is almost as easy to find a wife there as it is in England; consequently very shortly after our friend Ah Kwai set to work, he brought to his home a beautiful bride.

At first all went smoothly enough (it generally does, even in China). The young wife, who was fond of children, made a great pet of her stepson, and Ah Kwai was congratulating himself on the excellence of his choice. Sometime afterwards the new wife, Ah Leen, who did not like to be inferior to the first wife, also presented her husband with a son; but she did not die, thinking it did not do to imitate people too far. The happy father thought that this new baby, Ah Tee (Chinese for little brother), would serve as a new link to make stronger the ties of love which existed already between him and his family; but alas! he knew not the heart of a jealous woman. As long as she had no son of her own Ah Leen thought her little step-son a very delightful plaything, but as soon as Ah Tee appeared she concentrated all her love on the new comer. Gradually all her affection for the first-born vanished, then jealousy and hatred took possession of her heart, and she even went so far as to grudge the food and clothing that had to be bestowed upon the poor child.

For several years envy and hatred tortured her heart cruelly, till at last one fine day she determined to free herself from her torment by getting rid of the unconscious cause of it.

She called the two boys to her and gave them both a basket of green beans, telling them that they were to go to a distant field and plant them, forbidding them, at the same time, to come back till the green leaves were seen above ground.

As she had taken great care to boil her step-son's portion she thought she was pretty safe never to see him again, and she began to think a great deal of herself and to think she was decidedly a clever woman. But, as the sequel will show, she was "counting her chickens before they were hatched," or, as the Chinese say, "naming her children before they were born."

Both boys started happy enough, until, when some little distance from home, Ah Tee found out that his brother's beans were bigger than his own. The little despot immediately began to make what is commonly called a fuss, until A Poon, who had been taught pretty

sharply to give in to his whims and fancies, good naturedly gave up his own beans and took his brother's instead.

Arrived at the field they planted the famous beans according to the instructions they had received from their mother, and waited patiently till the green leaves should be seen above ground. After a few days A Poon one morning woke up and found his own patch of ground dotted all over with green, while Ah Tee's was as bare as it was on the day when they planted their seeds, and though the good-natured little fellow was very loath to leave his brother, he dared not disobey the orders he had received. Consequently he started for home with a very heavy heart.

When Ah Leen saw him returning alone she guessed at once what had taken place, and refusing to receive her step-son she sent him back to fetch his brother. The poor boy silently retraced his steps and returned to the field where, look where he would, no trace of Ah Tee was to be found. So not daring to reappear before his mother without her beloved son he wandered about, calling "Ah Tee, tai tai? Ah Tee, tai tai?" (Little brother, where are you?), until at last he died of exhaustion, and was changed into a bird which now in its singing imitates the plaintive wail.

M. T. MANSFIELD.

## CHINESE SUPERSTITIONS.



THE old amahs who take care of our children share the Chinese belief in the inferiority of women, and they will not believe you if, upon the arrival of an infant, you welcome your baby-girl with as much joy as you would a boy. They are further persuaded that during the first days of its life the infant knows to what sex it belongs.

At one time I was staying at Foochow with a friend of mine, who had just had a baby-girl, and I had my amah with me. One evening,

when the baby was crying for no apparent reason—according to the custom of babies,—I asked the amah if she knew why little Edie was crying. “Oh yes,” answered the old thing, with great earnestness, “I savy, he too muchy solly he belong girl.”

Shortly afterwards I had a little son, who behaved in exactly the same noisy manner, quite regardless of his fond parents' feelings. I had tried every means to pacify the little man, but all my efforts proved failures, and I was at my wits ends. Thinking my amah could suggest something, I asked again if perchance she knew why the child was crying so incessantly. The old thing was not to be caught unawares, for she answered with quite as great earnestness that “Robin was crying at thinking that he *might* have been a girl!!”

The Chinese firmly believe that if two friends have babies at about the same time, they should not visit each other with their infants till one of them is four months old. They think that in case such precaution should not be taken one of the two babes is certain to grow weakly, and perhaps die. They have the greatest objection—in fact they absolutely refuse—to enter a room in which a woman has given birth to a child if they have attended a wedding during the previous month. They are afraid of bringing bad luck, not to the mother, but to the newly-wedded pair.

An infant under four months old must not be laid on a table, or else it will be ever after afraid of thunder. If a baby-girl puts out her tongue and makes a sputtering noise, it is a sure sign of rain; while if a baby-boy indulges in the apparently innocent distraction, it will blow hard before the week is over. If a baby-girl's hands are fat and thick, the amah rejoices, and tells you that she will never do any hard work, but that she will enjoy life and marry a rich husband.

Should a baby cut its teeth early, beware, fond parents! your child will grow up to eat its father and mother!! or will never do any thing for itself, but will live upon its parents. On the other hand, the child which cuts its teeth comparatively late will support its parents in their old age. When a baby walks very early, the old women can shake their heads and say the child will have to work hard for its living, even though it is not a Thursday child.

The Chinese have curiously enough the same superstition about



weighing babies that is to be found among the poorer classes of France and England ; and they also share the belief that if you praise your child's good health, or rejoice by words upon any happy event, ill luck is sure to follow.

In France there is an old saying that if it rains on St. Medard day it will rain for forty days. In England it is St. Swithin who looks after the weather ; but in China there is no saint that I know of, so the Chinese content themselves with saying that if it rains on the 27th of the first Chinese month it will rain during forty days.

Much dark and rainy weather is sure to follow a thunderstorm if it takes place before the 27th of the first Chinese month, and a typhoon season is generally predicted if the wind blows from the south on the 11th of the first Chinese month.

On the last day of the old year, rats are said to be running here, there, and everywhere, seeking their mates, and availing themselves of such a good opportunity for eavesdropping. If they hear nothing said about them in a house, well and good ; they will not trouble themselves to go to that house again. But if, unfortunately, the word *rat* is mentioned in their hearing, they will be sure to return in great force on the following year, causing great discomfort to the inhabitants of the house.

If on the Chinese New Year's-day one happens to talk of any sad event—of sickness, sorrow, or any public evil—it will bring ill-luck to oneself and ill-luck to the country. On that day nothing but pleasant subjects must be chosen as topics of conversation.

The Chinese pierce their little boy's ears and make them wear earrings ; for if evil spirits happen to see them they will mistake them for girls, and will not take the trouble to carry them away. For the same reason they dress their little male children's hair in two small pigtails, plaited very tightly on both sides of their head, presenting the appearance of two little horns—the fashion generally adopted by little girls.

M. T. MANSFIELD.

## NEGRO SONGS FROM BARBADOS.



IN the last number of the *Folk-Lore Journal* (*ante*, pp. 5-10) there is an article on "Negro Songs from Barbados," by the Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco, in which the impression is conveyed that though the American negroes are losing their characteristic melody, in the Barbados "the African race has not lost its light-heartedness," as evidenced by the songs given in the text. Of the six songs so given, I think that there are but two which have the least resemblance to original negro songs. The others appear to be of that class which, written by various song-writers in a dialect more or less like that of the negroes, are sung at what are known here as "Negro Minstrel Entertainments," or "Variety Shows." In the former, white men dress as negroes, having blackened their faces and hands; and in the latter, character dances and songs are given, in which the peculiarities of various nations or races (German, French, Irish, Negro) are shown.

The song No. 4, "Angelina Baker," is probably of this type, while that numbered 3, and called "The Darkies' Song," I have been able to trace with absolute certainty. The words and music were written about the second year of our Civil War (1862), under the name of "Kingdom Coming," by Henry C. Work, who died about two years ago. I have a letter from Mr. Geo. F. Root, of Chicago, in which he says, "Nothing can be more certain than that Mr. Work wrote the words and music of 'Kingdom Coming.' I published all his songs of those years, and always went over them with him before publication."

I send you the words of the song, which you will see corresponds with song No. 3 of the article referred to, though the latter omits several verses of the original. It may be of interest to know that

during the early years of our war, as the sea-coast was taken possession of by the Northern navy—"de Linkum gunboats"—the whites fled, and left the negroes in full possession of the plantations on the shore and islands ; and that the word "countryman," as given in the *Journal*, is really "contraband"—a name given early in the war to coloured men who came into the Union lines, and who were detained there as "contraband of war," so that they need not be returned to their masters. This explains why the "massa," by getting tanned, could hope to be taken for a "contraband." The "moutstatch," which puzzled you in No. 3, is, as you will see, "muffstach," or "moustache."

Song No. 1 is evidently the introduction of a variety or minstrel show, and No. 6 is also probably of the same brood. I hope to be able later to send you further proof of the correctness of my opinion regarding Nos. 1 to 6.

Song No. 5 has but little resemblance to the negro character, but I am not prepared to say whence it comes. Song No. 2 is the only one which appears to me to have distinctively negro characteristics ; and of these characteristics, that of the chorus is one of the most noticeable. This frequent interposition of the chorus is very common in negro songs (as in some of the early English ballads and songs), and is found constantly in those of a religious character. I send you copies of one or two of them, taken down from the mouths of negro boys and men at Hampton College (an industrial institution for the education of negroes and Indians), and published, in 1874, in *Hampton and its Students*, a volume which I will endeavour to obtain, and to send you for the library of the Society. I copy these, not, perhaps, as belonging to true folk-lore, but as giving an example of what is more nearly the true negro manner of song than anything I know.

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIÓT.

" Oh, swing low, sweet chariót,  
 Swing low, sweet chariót,  
 Swing low, sweet chariót,  
 I don't want to leave me behind.

## NEGRO SONGS FROM BARBADOS.

“ Oh, de good ole chariot swing so low,  
 Good ole chariot, swing so low,  
 Oh, de good ole chariot swing so low,  
 I don't want to leave me behind.

“ Oh, de good ole chariot will take us all home.  
 Good ole chariot take us all home,  
 Oh, de good ole chariot will take us all home,  
 I don't want to leave me behind.

*Chorus.* “ Oh, swing low, sweet chariôt,” &c.

## NOBODY KNOWS DE TROUBLE I'VE SEEN.

“ Oh, nobody knows de trouble I've seen,  
 Nobody knows but Jesus ;  
 Nobody knows de trouble I've seen,  
 Glory, hallelujah !

“ Sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down ; oh, yes, Lord ;  
 Sometimes I'm almost to de groun' ; oh, yes, Lord ;  
 Although you see us goin' 'long so ; oh, yes, Lord ;  
 I have my trials here below ; oh, yes, Lord.

“ One day when I was walkin' along ; oh, yes, Lord ;  
 De element opened an' de Love came down ; oh, yes, Lord ;  
 I never shall forget dat day ; oh, yes, Lord ;  
 When Jesus washed my sins away ; oh, yes, Lord.

*Chorus.* “ Oh, nobody knows de trouble I've seen,” &c.

## KINGDOM COMING.

## I.

“ Say, darkeys, liab you seen de massa  
 Wid de mufstash on his face,  
 Go 'long de road some time dis mornin',  
 Like he gwine to leab de place ?  
 He seen a smoke, way up de ribber,  
 Whar de Linkum gunboats lay ;  
 He took his hat, and lef' berry sudden,  
 An' I spec he's run away !

*Chorus.* “ De massa run ! ha-ha !  
 De darkey stay ! ho-ho !  
 It mus' be now de kingdom comin',  
 An' de year ob jubilo.

## II.

“ He six foot one way, two foot tudder,  
 An’ he weigh tree hundred pound ;  
 His coat so big, he couldn’t pay de tailor,  
 An’ it won’t go half way round.  
 He drill so much dey call him Cap’an,  
 An’ he got so drefful tann’d,  
 I ’spect he try an’ fool dem Yankees  
 For to tink he’s contraband.

*Chorus.*

## III.

“ De darkeys feel so lonesome libing  
 In de log-house on de lawn,  
 Dey move der tings to massa’s parlor  
 For to keep it while he’s gone.  
 Dar’s wine an’ cider in de kitchen,  
 An’ de darkey’s dey’ll hab some ;  
 I ’spose dey’ll all be confiscated  
 When de Linkum sojers come.

*Chorus.*

## IV.

“ De oberseer he make us trouble,  
 An’ he dribe us round a spell ;  
 We lock him up in de smoke-house celler,  
 Wid de key trown in de well.  
 De whip is lost, de han’ cuff broken,  
 But de massa ’ll hab his pay ;  
 He’s ole enough, big enough, ought to know better  
 Dan to went an’ run away.’”

*Chorus.*

CHARLES P. BOWDITCH.

28, State St., Boston, Mass., U.S.A.,  
 March 7th, 1887.

## AMERICAN SONG-GAMES AND WONDER-TALES.

BY W. H. BABCOCK.



IN her work on the *Study of Folk-Songs*, the Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco tells us that she has been unable to get anything of that nature from the United States. Nevertheless our children have a few native ditties and jingles, if one may judge by internal evidence and the absence of all that would contradict it.

For example, there is the skipping-rope formula first mentioned in my article on "Carols and Child-Lore" (see *Lippincott's Magazine* for September 1886). Since then other versions have reached me from various parts of the country, all traceable to the Atlantic slope. In New England it seems to have been used for at least sixty years, but probably it is much older than that. The original formula—or what I take to be such—runs as follows :

" By the old levitical law  
I marry this Indian to this squaw.  
You must be kind, you must be true,  
And kiss the bride, and she'll kiss you."

Sometimes "levitical" becomes "leviticus." The injunction at the end may be widely varied ; for example, thus :—

" You must be kind, you must be good,  
And split up all her oven wood."

Or :

" Sober live, and sober proceed,  
And so bring up your Indian breed."

All the above are from Massachusetts directly or indirectly.

In the district of Columbia we have:—

“By the Holy Evangels of the Lord,  
I marry this Indian to this squaw.  
By the point of my jack-knife  
I pronounce you man and wife.”

Also—

“By the holy and religerally law.”

The other lines unchanged.

Among the coloured people of Virginia the first line becomes—

“The Bible is a holy and visible law.”

This last instance, lying well out of the line of migration, indicates a very early date of origin. Note, too, that the “levitical law,” and the tendency to lay on good advice and spare not, disappear from the ritual when we leave the Puritan settlements and their colonies. Nevertheless the resemblance is too great for us to suppose more than one root; and the “Indian” and the “squaw” require that root to be in the New World. Probably we are safe in ascribing it to some pioneer of the early colonial period when Indians were more plentiful than ministers, and sometimes inconveniently importunate in their desire to adopt the white man’s ceremonies. Such a half-jesting marriage service would be readily picked up by the children and incorporated into their games, thus ensuring it a life as long as that of the language itself. Considered as a relic of earlier manners and race-dealings it is the most instructive American contribution of the kind that I know. “Blackberry Wine,” reported in *Lippincott’s Magazine* for March 1886, though seemingly of later date, has a certain value of the same sort. But perhaps I may be wrong in thinking it entirely American.

The negroes have a number of song-games still used by adults or half-grown young people in backward neighbourhoods, as well as those confined to the children of that race. I have already reported several which are without any considerable European element, and now add a few more collected by a lady of this city from the recitation of a coloured servant girl, formerly a resident of Bowling Green, Virginia:

## MOSQUITO DANCE.

- “ Mosquito he fly high,  
 Mosquito he fly low (*sway body*),  
 I get my foot on mosquito head  
 He'll never fly no mo' (*turn hands*).
- “ Bile the cabbage done,  
 Bile the cabbage done (*whirl round*),  
 I'm not after no foolishness now,  
 Bile the cabbage done.
- “ Stop that tickling me,  
 Stop that tickling me,  
 I'm not after no foolishness now,  
 Bile the cabbage done.”

## SKIP, ANGELINA.

- “ Skip, Angelina, do go home, do go home,  
 Skip, Angelina, do go home,  
 To get your weddin' supper.
- “ You better not wait till ten o'clock, ten o'clock,  
 You better not wait till ten o'clock,  
 To get your weddin' supper.
- “ Skip all around the cherry tree, cherry tree,  
 Skip all around the cherry tree,  
 And get your weddin' supper.
- “ Walk, Angelina, you go home, you go home,  
 Ten o'clock will be too late  
 To get your weddin' supper.”

## GO ON, LIZE.

- “ Go on, Lize,  
 Go on, Lize,  
 Go on, Lizy Jane,  
 The funniest thing I ever saw,  
 Go on, Lizy Jane.  
 Buffalo kick off bell-cow's horns,  
 Go on, Lizy Jane.
- “ Go on, Lize,  
 Go on, Lize,  
 Go on, Lizy Jane,  
 The black cat skipping clime-eo,  
 Go on, Lizy Jane.



“ Go on, Lize,  
 Go on, Lize,  
 Go on, Lizy Jane,  
 I'll tell my mother when I go home  
 The boys won't let the girls alone,  
 Go on, Lizy Jane.”

## JOHNNY HUNTSMAN.

“ Walk him, Johnny Huntsman,  
 You can't catch square.  
 Walk him, Johnny Huntsman,  
 You can't catch square.

*Chorus.*

“ Dear little Johnny was my son,  
 And I can bounce him all around  
 From my elbow to my thumb,  
 I'll never come here no mo'.

“ Run him, Johnny Huntsman,  
 You can't catch square.  
 Run him, Johnny Huntsman,  
 You can't catch square.

“ He's down in the garding,  
 You can't catch square,  
 He's hid among the daisies,  
 You can't catch square.

*Chorus.*

“ Dear little Johnny,” &c.

## TWO BY TWO.

“ Here we go two by two.  
 Do you want to get married ?  
 Yes, I do.  
 Marry by love, and let it be true,  
 Salute your bride, and pass on through.  
 The needle works finely,  
 The thread runs through.  
 I courted a many pretty girls  
 Before I court you.  
 Hug so neat,  
 Kiss so sweet,  
 Take all that to make it look neat.”

In this last we half enter on another class of songs, those originating among the whites—commonly long ago in Europe, but now finally lodged in the negro memory and fancy. The juxtaposition is

sometimes rather grotesque. For instance, we may pass abruptly in the same company from "Skip Angelina" and the buffalo's incredible gymnastics to

" Sweet pinks and roses,  
 Strawberries on the vine,  
 I choose you a partner,  
 And go along with me.  
 We're walking on the green grass,  
 And round and round we go,  
 And if you want a lady  
 Pray take yourself with me.  
 Hand me your lily-white hand,  
 And go along with me."

The wellspring of this is unmistakable. Oddly I have not as yet found it among the white children, through whom it must have passed to its present repository.

Here is another of a very different sort that seems to have crossed the sea, gin being very little used in this country, to say nothing of other ear-marks :—

" Jennie loves brandy,  
 I love gin;  
 I had an old cow, and she gave such milk  
 It made me think I was rich as silk."

To return to more poetical specimens, I find among these Virginia negro-songs that variant of "Green grows the willow tree" which introduces the "lady with a rose in her hand." Except a slight change in the adjuration to the improvident "young man," who is to be held to his bargain, the words are identical.

On the other hand, the song-games which originate among the negroes never find permanent acceptance among the white children. An aphorism, a few words about weather-lore, a hint about "signs," appealing to childish fear or childish wonder, may thus be transferred, but even here the rule is otherwise. An elderly coloured woman, learned in such matters, explains that in "signs" she always followed her "old mistress." This explains the very great predominance of English elements in negro nurse-lore of birth and death.

But in anything so artistic and extended as a song, a narrative, or

a myth-drama, there are, I think, no exceptions. The tradition is always downward, from the higher class to the lower, from the older to the younger, from the more advanced race to the less advanced. Add to this that the transmission is by way of mouth and ear, not by way of hand and eye, and it is obvious that the deposits having the greatest literary value will be of the period in which the greatest amount of intellect and art have sought an oral outlet. Our child-songs and dramas present side by side the superstitions of pre-Christian savagery, the working of mediæval fancy and institutions, the naive, touching, open-air world of balladry, and the makeshifts of our fighting, Old Testament-reading backwoodsmen a century or two ago; but beyond doubt the balladists have the best of the comparison. Nevertheless the other elements are well worthy of more study than any one has thought of giving them. As a Swiss lake-bed holds the history of all Swiss peoples since the first days of "the strange lake-men of the floating raft," even so the existing games of American children hold the history of the English-speaking peoples of the world from a very early day until now. Not that the record is complete in either case, but the anthropologist can no more afford to neglect the one than the other.

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## FOLK-LORE OF ABORIGINAL FORMOSA.



**A**MONG the aborigines of Formosa will be found individuals who plume themselves on their success as story-tellers. When the weary hunters, after satisfying appetites whetted by an arduous chase, stretch their limbs under the shadow of the trees, on the borders of some grassy glade, some member of the party is sure to seize the opportunity to draw on an inexhaustible repertory; while even those who at other times might consider story-telling an infliction become now pleased listeners,

until, soothed by the deep, slow monotonous of the narrator, one after the other gradually succumbs to the influences of the drowsy god. In the dreary days of the rainy season, too, when few venture out of doors, the story-teller becomes in great request. The recital of one tale sometimes extends over several days, the teller breaking off, as our own magazine writers do, just when some grand *dénouement* is impending, thus ensuring an audience for his next appearance. As his circle of listeners extends, so does his pride increase, while to recruit a congregation at the expense of a rival is the zenith of the reciter's ambition.

Their folk-tales are those of a simple people, not destitute of admiration for a measure of probity, applauding the retribution which follows a disregard of their ideal. The following anecdote fairly illustrates this:

Two beautiful girls, scolded by their parents for giving more time to the adornment of their persons than to the necessary requirements of the household, felt aggrieved, and ran away into the forest. Two young men hearing of this decided to go in search, thinking their exertions, if successful, might induce the parents to look favourably on the suit they intended pressing in future. Coming on the girls near the sea shore, and running towards them, they shouted joyfully, "We have found you, we have found you!" The damsels, mistaking their intentions, jumped into the sea, and were drowned. The pursuers considering they had precipitated the catastrophe felt such remorse that, by mutual arrangement, they stabbed each other to death.

As with nearly all uncivilised peoples, to avenge the death of a relation is a sacred duty, and its neglect would entail all manner of misfortune and odium. The following, however, shows that even this strong prejudice may be overruled by the feelings of contempt and scorn cowardice evokes:—

Two youths, fast friends, and well matched as regards age and personal appearance, had the misfortune to fall in love with the same girl. After due consideration, they decided that the only way out of the difficulty was for one of them to die, and they agreed to submit the selection to the arbitrament of a duel. The weapon chosen was

the bow and arrow. Several shots were exchanged, both receiving severe wounds; finally, one lost courage and fled; the other's blood being up, he drew a bow on the fugitive, killing him. So chagrined were the relations of the coward that they refrained from even claiming blood-money!

Another anecdote shows they have a due sense of the depravity of procrastination; while at the same time the low value set on human life is lamentably depicted:—

A couple of warriors from a certain village laid a wager with two of another tribe that, on a day named, they would come and kill several of their people in spite of any efforts the challenged might make to prevent them. The bet was accepted, and, on the day appointed, the takers kept watch and watch. Very soon the one on guard came and told the other that their adversaries were in sight; but the latter, feeling drowsy, remarked that as they came so openly they could hardly mean mischief, and, closing his eyes, asked his comrade to rouse him up if anything happened. Very soon a sound of loud lamentation awoke him, and, rushing out, he found that, while his friend had been attacked by one warrior and had had enough to do to hold his own, the other, unopposed, had killed ten women and children in the outskirts of the village!

A favourite theme with story-tellers is the adventures of a certain individual who fell down from the sky. Drawing on their imagination they embellish the original, and bring the hero through all kinds of complications, finding full scope for a lavish introduction of well-pointed satire, of which frail woman and certain callings receive a full share. The story, as it is supposed to have been originally related, runs somewhat as follows:—

A young man, living beyond the sky, was playing with a ball, which unfortunately rolled into a rather deep crevice. The player took a spear and poked about for it; in trying to push the spear-point into the ball, he pressed rather heavily on his weapon, drove the ball through the sky, and, losing his own balance, came tumbling down after. Two girls were spreading millet at the time to dry in the sun; hearing a rushing noise they thought it was about to rain, and ran to house the seed; looking up, however, they saw the man and his

ball descending. On reaching the earth the stranger approached the ladies, asking if they could show where his ball had dropped; the girls gave a negative answer, referring him to some masons who were building a house; these sent him to some rattan-cutters, who passed him on to the gamesters, who in turn advised him to ask the fishermen. The latter honestly told him to go back to where he had begun, and explained how silly it was to ask people so distant from where he had seen the ball fall. Back, therefore, went the man to the girls, and again asked them. The two giggled for a bit, and then preferred the mild request that the stranger should agree to serve them by carrying water, pounding rice, and gathering wood, before they would give the information sought. The young fellow consented, whereupon the girls, curious to see the utility of an article on which such store seemed to be set, importuned him to show them how to play at ball. He at once began tossing it, and such was the wonderful feats he performed that people came from all parts to witness his dexterity. For five days he continued to display his skill, when he was ordered to desist and join in the labour of the day, and aid in clearing forest for barley culture. While the other men were hacking and tearing at the trees the stranger occupied himself in skipping among the tree-tops and tying the branches together, all the time singing merrily to himself. This excited the great anger of the others, and, on their return, they reported him as a lazy good-for-nothing, who had played while they wrought; whereupon his mistresses gave him a severe scolding. He merely remarked that a little patience would show that his plot would be the first cleared. Early next morning he went and tied a rope to one of the trees, dragging and swaying on it in such a manner as loosened that tree and all connected to it at their roots; he then raised a great wind which swept the ground clear. Afterwards he borrowed 100 mattocks, which were wielded by invisible hands, gourd-seeds being sown also by the same agency. The gourds as they ripened detached themselves, and, rolling into the barn, were found to be full of barley, each gourd having, in addition, the faculty of evading the grasp of any except the rightful owner. In hunting expeditions the stranger, although posted at the worst passes, always made the biggest bag, the house being rapidly filled with the horns

of the deer that fell to his bow. By a word he could change water into wine; and he liberally invited all to partake freely of the good things he provided in such plenty. Still he was hated by his neighbours, who sought a pretext on which to kill him. He knew this, and thought it about time to leave such ungrateful people, for, among them all, only one old man had ever treated him kindly. He was loth, however, to break the promise made to the girls before open hostility had been shown. One day he gave a feast, and invited all to attend. Having eaten and drunk to their hearts' content, his guests began playing at games. Their host laid a path of deer-skins about 500 yards long, on which he spread peas, and challenged any one to run the whole length without slipping. Several tried and failed, but the challenger ran to the end quite easily, which so enraged the spectators that they openly threatened there and then to make an end of him. On hearing this he carried out all the deer-horns, and made them erect themselves into a ladder, the upper end of which was lost in the clouds. On this he jumped, and began to ascend. His enemies, seeing him escaping, cut at the horns with their axes, but at every blow the axe glanced off and inflicted a wound on the wielder, which soon caused his assailants to desist. When this celestial being got back to his home he was not recognised, and had many hairbreadth escapes from those who pursued him as an interloper; but it would be tedious to continue the relation further; it may suffice to say, that, in common with all romances, everything eventually ended well.

The foregoing may be taken as showing that the aborigines have a notion of some other world inhabited by a superior people, and it is interesting to note that, in keeping with the almost universal belief, they consider the fitting habitation for the good to be above the world, while the bad and mischievous are relegated to the dark caverns under the earth.

Our next tale, besides showing that the dusky maiden need have little to fear from uncongenial attentions, also establishes the fact of a belief in fairies or something akin to these:—

A young Botan \* became too ardent in his devotion to a young lady

\* Name of one of the aboriginal tribes.

of the tribe, and was slain by her relatives ; while, as a warning as to the necessity for love's fervour being kept within due bounds, his seven brothers were banished by the chief.

The exiles went forth into the depths of the forest, and in their wanderings after a new land they crossed a small clearing, in which a little girl, about a span in height, was seated peeling potatoes. "Little sister," they queried, "how come you here? where is your home?" "I am not of homes, nor parents," she replied. Her surprised questioners then asked if she could direct them to a pathway ; and she answered after the following enigmatical manner: "If you find your swords girded on the right you are on the proper road ; if you find them on the left you are going astray." The puzzled brothers shook their heads, and again entered the thick forest. After them came the voice of the pigmy singing—

"You think I am fatherless, motherless, small,  
Devoid of that wisdom which parents instal ;  
Yet I was when fathers and mothers were not,  
And will be when mankind as such is forgot."

They had not gone far when they saw a little man cutting canes and farther on to the right a curious-looking house, in front of which sat two diminutive women combing their hair. Things looked so queer that the travellers hesitated about approaching nearer, but, eager to find a way out of the forest, they determined in their extremity to question the strange people. The two women, when interrogated, turned sharply round, showing eyes of a flashing red ; then looking upward their eyes became dull and white, and they immediately ran into the house, the doors and windows of which at once vanished, the whole taking the form and appearance of an isolated boulder. The startled observers made all haste away, and next day coming to the edge of the forest they entered a fertile valley, inhabited by a gentle people, among whom they eventually settled.

Tales of mighty hunters are common, but these do not pourtray heroes in the true sense of the word. Their greatest chiefs were those whose powers of witchcraft surpassed that of all contemporaries. The supreme chief is the great medicine-man of the tribe,—the high-priest on whom, as a consequence, supernatural power descends : still



as another tale will illustrate, the chief indulges in the miraculous only as a last resource ; no doubt considering wisely that the sorer the straits the more esteemed will be both means and deliverance. Apropos of this, we have the following :—

The tribe of the supreme chief went hunting without inviting a neighbouring sub-tribe, to the great chagrin of the latter, who, waiting until the hunters were in deep sleep induced by the fatigues of the day, went and mutilated the venison and other products of the chase (a most deadly insult). The identity of the spoilers, however, leaked out ere long, and one day when the latter, on returning from a hunt, were presenting some venison to their own chief, two young warriors of the aggrieved tribe appeared on the scene, and mutilated the carcasses under their eyes, remarking that they did not require to come sneaking in the dark when they wanted to do such things. The very audacity of the action acted as a spell, and before pursuit was thought of the two had got safe away. Next day a couple of young braves came and challenged the heroes of the exploit to fight, but the supreme chief would not allow them to go out. Day after day defiance, coupled with many insults, was repeated, until at last the old chief permitted the challenge to be accepted ; whereupon two warriors hid themselves near the spot where the others always appeared, and when the challenge was given jumped out, killing the utterers before they had time to guard themselves. Of course war between the tribes immediately followed. The warriors of the supreme chief got beaten three times, and were in great distress ; then the chief bethought himself of his occult powers, and after due sacrifice invoked a curse on the enemies' water, that it might breed worms, and on the produce of their fields, that it might be blighted. When the victorious tribe found their water undrinkable, and their fruits diseased, there was great tribulation and general abnegation before the gods, beseeching the latter to remove the marks of their displeasure. The supreme chief, when his opponents were sorely subdued by thirst and hunger, asked some one to volunteer to go and set fire to their village, offering as a reward the reversal of a sub-chieftainship, but for some time no one offered. At last a man with an ulcerated leg, who was almost tired of life, undertook the task, and successfully evaded pursuit by

hiding in a heap of sweet potatoe-vines. The whole village was destroyed, the rebels sued for peace, and never afterwards presumed to rise against their ruler.

The cruelty and cowardice above depicted places the actors almost on a level with the famed "Yaller-bellies." Still, does not the proverb, "All is fair in love and war," hold good even with more cultivated peoples than those under notice?

The great success of another chief as a hunter was attributed to his power at staying the burning of the long grass when the fire approached near where he crouched, so that naturally the deer, fleeing before the conflagration, ran for shelter to the very spot where he was posted.

An anecdote is related which is no doubt intended as a sly hit at the genus "fop":—

Two young warriors of goodly appearance paid more attention to their personal adornment than was compatible with the due performance of duties obligatory on them as members of a community, and this of course gave great annoyance to those less favoured by nature. Our heroes, however, were too lost in self-admiration to notice this. One day they were walking along the road in all the glory of feathers and tasselled belts, when two snakes, observing their swagger, determined to humble them somewhat. Assuming the shape of beautiful girls, they accosted the gallants, describing themselves as daughters of the chief of a distant tribe, who, finding none of their own young men handsome enough for husbands, had determined to travel round until they met with two who came up to their ideal of manly beauty. They professed to have now succeeded beyond their expectations, and asked the young gentlemen to sit down with them for a little, with a view of discovering whether mutual arrangements could be made. The delighted beaux gladly assented, and, as the ladies appeared nowise averse to a flirtation, became most pressing in their attentions. Matters progressed so favourably that they at last attempted to snatch a kiss from lips invitingly pouted, when they suddenly found themselves embracing two slimy twisting serpents, which soon wriggled away into a cleft in the rocks. The disgusted and disappointed swains spat after them, but the incident had been

noted, and was made so much of that the subjects of the hoax renounced personal adornment, retiring into the ranks of the daily toilers.

Yet another story, which this time has frail woman for its object.

A pair of young girls, considering no man good enough for them, decided to remain spinsters, and had a house built for themselves somewhat apart from the village. Near this habitation an old man possessed a small garden, and the ladies annoyed him much by continually helping themselves to his fruit unasked; he repeatedly cautioned them, but they proved incorrigible; and, in his wrath, he sacrificed and prayed to the gods to cause these women to become pregnant. To their great shame and astonishment in due time each gave birth to a son. They concealed the fact for some time, but at last decided to notify the village elders, and call all the young men together to see if any would admit being the father, but all denied even a bowing acquaintance with the mothers. At last a half-witted fellow advised the women to tell the children to go to their father and borrow some betel-nut, when, to the humiliation of the erstwhile proud beauties, the two boys straightway went to the old man, who thus became possessed of a brace of handsome young wives.

There is a tradition that long ago, at a certain place, an immense buffalo could be seen, about sundown, roaming round as if in search of food. The beholder would feel his head gradually swelling and his abdomen distending; naturally the afflicted beholders never failed to get away from the place as quickly as possible.

Another legend relates how at full moon, when the members of a certain tribe went down by moonlight to visit an adjacent village, a gigantic man, with pheasant tail-feathers in his hair, could be seen squatting in the middle of the road. Any one seeing this apparition was so startled that he trembled and fell, the spectre vanishing before he recovered.

Among local customs there is one peculiar to the more southern aboriginals. Every fifth year the tribes composing a confederation gather in the house of the head chief, each man bringing with him a tube about seventy feet long, made of the thicker parts of bamboos jointed together. Around a small circle, in which the chief stands, over a

thousand men will pack themselves, each erecting his tube, one end of which they fix in the ground. The chief shouts and throws up a ball. Towards this, as it descends, all incline their rods, into one of which it must enter, and to the owner of this tube the particular fortune represented by that throw will attach itself for the next five years. Each ball has an independent signification, *e. g.* to the first belongs luck in fishing; to the next, the best fortune in hunting; the next, the best rice-fields; the next, success in buffalo breeding, &c. &c. One fortunate individual may perhaps secure several balls, and be considered as especially favoured by the gods. After the last ball has been thrown, the chief places on his head a circlet of bones, and grasps a spear, to which is also attached a bone; the men place inside small houses—which they have previously built—suits of clothes, purses, &c.; the women retire into the dwellings, the apertures of which are carefully closed. The chief then begins a low chant of intimation and invitation to the spirits. At once a cloud obscures the sun (no matter how clear the day may be), everything darkens, a gentle shower falls, and from the houses comes a faint sound of women weeping and murmuring the names of departed relatives; a rustling noise strikes the ears of the hushed and kneeling warriors; the chief pauses, then breaks into a song lauding the virtues of those departed. With a shout the warriors spring up, the women rush out, and all join together in extolling the deeds of those who have vanished from the ranks of the living.

When a young novice is to be initiated into the mysteries of priest-craft many elaborate ceremonies are gone through, as also before a war or other great undertaking.

The tail-feathers of a cock pheasant are in great request, and, when an individual becomes the possessor of one, it is only after due ceremony that he can wear it. A young warrior dons his feather on all festive occasions, but woe betide him if he dreams with the feather in his hair, for then he will meet with much misfortune; on the other hand, if his sleep be undisturbed he may consider that his undertakings will prosper.

Young savagedom have many games wherewith to while away an idle hour. A game which corresponds exactly with English

“Prisoners’ Base” is one of the most popular. Then they have “The Boar,” a most diverting pastime, and “The Fish,” which requires expert swimmers.

“The Boar” is played by one holding two bits of sharpened wood, about the size of boar’s tusks, between his teeth; the other players in turn trying to clasp him around the ribs. If one can do so without being scratched, he takes his turn at “boar,” which is consequently the part of the most expert player. Of course, the longer a “boar” can hold his own the more plaudits he receives, and he does not hesitate to give ugly scratches.

The game of “Fish” is played by two at a time. A creek is selected which widens inwards, and from each side of the entrance two players plunge in together; one has to make for a point in the centre of the beach, and the other must catch him. Those who avoid being caught stand aside until the remaining pairs have had their turn, then all the winners pair off, and so on, until only two are left; these in turn pursue each other until the championship is decided or the contest ends in a draw.

Trials of skill with the bow and arrow, spear, short sword, and matchlock, are common, bets are freely made, and much property lost and won. They also gamble with a kind of dice.

There is no limit to aboriginal superstition; they live in an atmosphere of omens, witchcraft, and goblins. Any inexplicable occurrence is put down as the work of some malicious spirit trying to entrap the unwary. Goblins emerge from dark caverns in the forests, and cause famine, sickness, and death: “For did not Bunkiet’s wife’s brother’s cousin, when gathering turmeric, see grinning imps peeping out from the canebrake? and was it not that year the small-pox carried off two hundred men of the tribe?”

On hearing a sneeze one must at once return, no matter how near he may be to the end of his journey, as “of all things a sneeze is the most unlucky.” Even inside a dwelling, if one happens to sneeze, the rest mumble a charm, with the unction of the old Highland woman who places the tongs in the fire before going to milk the cow. The call of a certain bird, if heard on the left, presages fatal misfortunes, and the hearer must turn back. If one sees an armadillo by

daylight it is unlucky, but if one touches it, then prepare for a sudden death. Death also follows careless handling of the sacred bead "pulatsoo." The touching of a neighbour's meal "girnel" is followed by inflammation of the eyes; and total blindness is only averted by ceaseless sacrificing. A neighbour's corn is similarly protected. One who has unpleasant dreams must confine himself to his house for the day. If your dog howls at night, secure the services of a priestess else there will soon be a death in the family. The crowing of a cock just at sunset is an evil omen; the bird must at once be taken where roads cross and killed. The clucking of a hen at night is also unlucky. If an echo is raised, then great winds and heavy rains will follow; therefore high cliffs and hollowed precipices must be passed in silence, for there dwell the spirits of departed chiefs, and the grounds near are their fields and gardens, which must not be encroached upon. Beware of the bear, the leopard, and the bulong snake. "Did not a wounded bear jump out on a traveller, nearly squeeze him to death, and, when the man fell, poked him about, at every sign of life again biting at him, till the victim, happily recovering his presence of mind, kept perfectly still, when the brute left?" "Cannot a leopard carry off a buffalo by twisting his tail round it?" And "Does not the bulong snake bear an eternal enmity to man since the day when, at the instigation of a Bangsuit family, the gods deprived him of the power of assuming human shape?" Before liquor is partaken of a few drops must first be sprinkled on the ground, to refresh the spirits of departed ancestors. All are afraid of ghosts; women will on no account venture out after nightfall, while young men consider it a test of courage to pass a night in the woods alone.

Priestesses or witches are an institution. A future priestess is known by a small red nut being found in her swaddling-cloths a few days after birth. When the time for initiation arrives, four more nuts will be received from invisible hands in presence of the assembled tribe. These witches have a peculiar jargon of their own, all their chants and incantations being quite unintelligible to the uninitiated. They are supposed to act as intermediaries, and are not considered to exert any malign influence; in fact, being a priestess makes little

difference in the routine of life; they marry, and have all other liberties usually accorded to their sex.

A very general belief is that in ancient times all animals had the powers of speech, and some the faculty of assuming human shape. For instance, water buffaloes could speak until they ate bananas, and to this day buffaloes trample down banana-trees wherever they can reach them. A few of the more interesting little tales, illustrating the foregoing superstition, may not be out of place.

An armadillo and a hare went fishing, bringing potatoes to eat with their fish when caught. To save time they buried the potatoes in the sand, built a fire on top, and left them slowly roasting. The greedy dasypos, however, slipped back, picked out all the big ones, and ate them. When both returned with their fish, the hare made a great outcry over the loss of the potatoes, and taxed the ant-eater with the theft. He stoutly denied it, and in turn accused the hare: eventually the armadillo proposed that their innocence or guilt should be tested by the ordeal of fire, to which he would be the first to submit. This he proposed to carry out by entering a clump of grass, to be fired by the hare, and if he survived the hare must in turn undergo the same trial. The cunning armadillo, on entering the grass, immediately burrowed into the ground, and when he was safely ensconced under the soil he gave the word "ready": of course he escaped unharmed. When it came to the turn of the silly hare, he carefully wrapped himself around with dry grass, and was roasted to death. The armadillo was left to enjoy the fish and potatoes alone, and as he ate he moralized on the uncertainty of life in general.

Animals are supposed to be unable to assume the human form in the day-time. This belief coincides somewhat with that of western nations in their "witching hour of night."

A white land-crab and a monkey became sworn brothers. At night both assumed human shape. The crab was perfect, but the monkey could not rid himself of his tail, which he had always great difficulty in keeping hid. [The full-dress of a Formosa savage is a short apron before and behind]. Near where they abode in the day-time, while in their natural shapes, a pretty girl carrying water was in the habit of passing. Both animals were smitten, and at night

visited her as two sprightly young men. One day the crab proposed that in order to make themselves irresistible, they should go to a certain place and pluck enough of a particular berry to make circlets for their heads. The monkey assented. As the crab could not climb, the monkey went up and threw down the berries, which the crab was to gather up: instead of doing so, his greed overcame him, and he ate them as fast as they fell, until the monkey, astonished at the crab's still replying that the quantity was not yet sufficient, came down. He at once saw what his friend had been doing, and the two began mutual recriminations. The crab, at the same time, knowing he was no match for the monkey, kept carefully backing towards a small crevice; and when the monkey in a climax of rage made a dash at him, he quietly withdrew from reach, leaving his assailant to cool down as best he might. As it was getting dark the monkey hastened to assume the human form, and visit the fair maiden. When on their amorous visitations the monkey always sat down on the large rice mortar: the crab, remembering this, determined to revenge himself, and before the monkey arrived was snugly drawn together on the bottom of his companion's wonted seat. The pretended youth entered, took his usual seat, and began a flirtation, but the crab, crawling up, reached for the tail coiled up under the rear apron, and viciously nipped it. With a howl the impostor jumped up, displaying to the astonished gaze of the maiden and household fully a yard of hairy tail, with a crab dangling at its extremity. Of course he was driven away in scorn, and the crab, with a feeling of great contentment, sidled off to its nest.

The foregoing is no doubt intended to exemplify a triumph of mind over matter; our next, however, relates an encounter between the two, in which the victory is not so decided. The explanation given of the venom of serpents in general and the bulong snake in particular, with the punishment meted out to the species, causes one to ponder over a tale which, in its main points, strangely agrees with parts of the third chapter of Genesis:

A bulong snake fell in love with a young girl, to whom he appeared as a handsome young suitor, eluding the vigilance of her parents by not changing his form until he had got inside the house. It was the



old tale of frail woman, and she gave birth to a child, which, to the astonishment of all, was human only to the waist, underneath that it took the shape of a serpent. The parents, knowing she had no lover among the young men of the village, naturally suspected something supernatural, and their thoughts reverted to the fact that they had often observed a snake crawling across the yard at a certain time, but had not interfered with the harmless reptile. Now, however, they kept watch, and, when the snake appeared, killed it, which action proved so unpropitious that it was resolved never again to kill a snake, but this was not the worst, for the act roused such a spirit of revenge among the serpents that they all swore an eternal enmity towards mankind. By the aid of the priestesses they were deprived of the faculty of assuming other than their natural shape, thus limiting their power of doing evil; ever since, however, the bite of the bulong has proved fatal, and that of many other snakes causes great suffering.

It may be here added that when a man is bit by a "bulong" snake the vicinity is searched, and the first specimen found is tied up near the sufferer. If the man dies—as is nearly always the case—the snake is roasted to death; if, however, the suction applied in such cases to the wound arrests the poison and he recovers, the snake is released.

Few proverbs are found among the aborigines, certainly none worth recording. The same may be said of riddles. Nicknames abound, but would lose all their significance in translation.

The wave of Chinese immigration has already rolled in among this people, but born traders as the Chinese are, they are matched by the east-coast aborigines. The trading instinct bequeathed to them by their Malay progenitors has slumbered for long yet readily responds to the call, and in the zest with which the vocation is pursued old traditions and customs are being quickly forgotten. Although for different reasons—for the Chinese officials are paternal in their dealings with the southern "savages"—to those who would wish to study the aborigines as such, South Cape must regretfully echo the call of North Cape, "Come quickly or you will be too late."

G. TAYLOR.

## JAPANESE NEW-YEAR DECORATIONS.



Y brother, Mr. J. Cole Hartland, who is resident at Yokohama, has forwarded me the appended statement. In the letter enclosing it he writes :—

“ I enclose a short account of the Japanese New-Year Decorations, which was written out for me by Suguki, our compradore. I hope it may interest you. The first part is, I think, a translation from some Japanese book ; but the second part is Suguki's own. Dr. Hepburn, in his *Dictionary* (the best published), gives a rather different account of the ‘ Shime.’ He says it is ‘ the straw rope which Futodama-no-mikoto stretched behind the Sun-goddess to prevent her returning to the cave after Tajikarao-no-mikoto had pulled her out.’ I have questioned Suguki as to this, but he sticks to it that the shime was merely a straw decoration hung about the rocks to excite the curiosity of the Sun-god and so tempt him out. I don't know which tale is the correct one. I don't think any interest is to be attached to the dates on which the decorations are taken down, because until very recently the Japanese kept the same New Year as the Chinese, and that is in February. *Mikoto* in the proper names is simply a title of honour equivalent to *Lord*.”

I have left the paragraph added by Suguki to tell its own tale. The sense is perfectly clear, and the composition is not more rugged than might have been expected from a foreigner writing in an idiom as widely different from his own as English is from Japanese. There may be readers of the *Journal* who can throw further light upon the shime, and account for the variation between the two versions of the tradition. The paragraph which precedes Suguki's observations bears traces, hardly to be mistaken, of European origin ; but I am unable to say whence it is derived.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.

## PLANTS USED IN NEW-YEAR CELEBRATIONS BY THE JAPANESE.

The most striking feature of New-Year's Day in Japan is the decoration placed with more or less completeness before every portal. Every object of which the decoration is composed has, as might be supposed, a symbolic meaning. Suppose a spectator to face the green arch—on his right will be a Me Matsu (*Pinus densiflora*) with its reddish stem, and on his left will be the black trunk of the Omatsu (*Pinus Thunbergii*, or *Massoniana*). Immediately behind the pines rises on each side the graceful stem of the bamboo, of which any kind that is convenient is selected. Its erect growth and succession of knots, marking its increase during succeeding seasons, render it symbol of hale life and a fulness of years. The distance of usually about six feet between the bamboos is spanned by a grass rope (Nawa). Although convenience obliges this rope to be sufficiently high to allow of passage beneath, it should, to accord with its symbolic meaning, debar all bad and unclean things from crossing the threshold. In the centre of arch thus formed of pines, bamboos, and rope is a group of several objects. The most conspicuous is the scarlet yebe, or lobster, whose crooked body betokens the back of the aged bent with the weight of years. The lobster is embowered amongst Yusuri branches. In this Yusuri (*Melia Japonica*), when the young leaves have budded, the old leaves yet remain unshed. So may the parents continue to flourish while children and grandchildren spring forth. In the centre also are the graceful fronds, the Urajiro (*Polypodium dichotomum*). This fern symbolises conjugal life, because the fronds spring in pairs from the stem. These uniform graceful leaves might suggest dangerous ideas of the equality of the sexes, but the simile has not in Japan been pushed to so desperate a length. Between the paired leaves nestles, as offspring, the little leaf-bud. Here and there are quaintly-cut scraps of white paper, the gohei, or offering to the gods; the form of the paper is said by some to be a conventionalised representation of a human form—that of the offerer—devoting himself thus in effigy to the deities. Almost as conspicuous as the lobster is the orange-coloured daidai, a fruit of the Citrus Bigaradia. The juice of the daidai is much prized as a remedy against vomiting. This is

interesting, because the juice of lemon, also an aurantiaceous plant, is often considered by Europeans a palliative for sea-sickness. The New Year arches are cut down in Tokyo on January 7th, and in some other places on January 3rd.

The explanation of "Shime," a rope which the writer calls "Nawa," lacks in the symbolic meaning—that is more important part of the arch than any other else; for the decoration, when abbreviated, is made only of a shime, to which Yuduri and Urajiro sometimes attached, that symbolises the protection of the house from devils. This shime seems in existence of custom from the time almost unknown, and the other plants are added a long after its existence. The tradition tells us the shime is first made with rice-straws to decorate the eaves of the rock in which Sun God concealed himself, to tempt him out with the dancing and music from the cave, so that he will throw the almighty light over the world again. Thus the shime is derived from the old tradition, as you see every temple of Shinto sect has a shime in the front or around the temple eaves all the year round.

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## NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Mysterious Serenades, or Music and Invisible Musicians.**—Mr. G—, a respectable Holderness farmer, resides in a mansion situated at a considerable distance from any other. He has been accustomed for several years, at intervals, to hear during the night the sounds of different musical instruments, which together produced a most delectable and harmonious concert. Two or three friends were taking their Christmas supper with him, when a domestic came to inform them that the musicians were at work in the garden. The party immediately sallied out, and, although they could perceive

nothing save trees loaded with snow, their ears were ravished with notes of music. The night was more than usually serene, the moon nearly at full, and yet, notwithstanding a minute search, not the slightest vestige of a human being could be discovered. The music was all this time continued, and, as far as they could judge, within a few paces of the place they occupied. The farmer and his friends are convinced that they are indebted to "fairies" for the entertainment they received; and as that part of the country was formerly, according to oral tradition, the theatre often selected by Queen Mab and her tiny followers to perform their mystic evolutions, and "Dance the Hay," they are induced to hope it is again fixed upon for the same purpose, and that times like those in which of yore the "Elgin train" condescended to visit mortals are on the eve of returning.—*Hull Packet*.

**Early Witch Trials.**—The late Rev. James Raine, the learned historian of North Durham, published a little before his own death "A Memoir of the Rev. John Hodgson . . . . . author of the History of Northumberland," 2 vols. 8vo. 1857-1858. This work was a labour of love to its author. There is not so far as I know a more excellent life of a man of letters in our language. Hodgson was not only a local historian who holds a high place in the first rank, but also a man of very wide culture. The memoir therefore, as was to be expected, contains much valuable and curious information on subjects which the ordinary reader would not think of looking for in its pages. The geological information given is useful and as accurate as it could be, when we allow for the fact that the existence of "the great ice-sheet" was unthought of when Hodgson made his observations. There are also many facts about the safety-lamp which will be new to most readers. We have good reason to believe (and we say this sorrowfully) that the "Memoir" has been but little read, except by natives of Northumberland and the few students who take interest in local history. As this is the case, it may be well to transfer the following passages therefrom to the *Folk-Lore Journal*.

On the 4th of March, 1821, Hodgson, who was in London, writes to his wife telling her that her aunt Mrs. Burke had repeated to him the following stories:—

“Admiral Delaval and his servant, coming late one night past Benton church (near Newcastle-upon-Tyne), they observed a light in it. He desired his man to get off and see what was doing; but the man refused, saying he did not dare to do it. The admiral therefore gave his horse to his servant, and went himself. Through a window he observed a man and a woman busy about a corpse. He found the door unlocked, and stepping up quickly to the persons found them cutting off the breasts of a female corpse. The man vanished, and was supposed to be the devil; the woman he secured and carried off, but when his servant was requested to take her up behind him he again refused through fear; the admiral therefore had her put up and tied on behind himself. On examining her at the proper court she was found to be a witch, and was of course hanged.”

“The clergyman who preceded Mr. Hall, at Earsdon (near Newcastle-upon-Tyne), had a school for young gentlemen. A beggar-woman came to a poor person’s house in the village, where a child was crying; and its mother being angry with it, dismissed the beggar with some sharp observations. The old mendicant had scarcely gone out of their presence than the child began to cry ‘Mother, mother, that old woman is tearing my heart out of me.’ Alarm was given; the young gentlemen ran after the old woman, whom the child pricked on the forehead with a pin till the blood came, when the spell of torment which she had laid upon it was dissolved.”—Vol. i. pp. 352-3.

[The following document is quoted from the records preserved in the Consistory Court of Durham.]

“June 6, 1627. James Cowle, of the parishe of Morpethe, aged 30 years, a witness, &c., has known the said Sara Hatherick for 8 years, and the said Jane Urwen from his infancy.

“He saith that about two yeares since now last past, a more certaine time he remembrethe not, the said Jane Urwen came to this examine’s house, then situate in Morpeth, about some business in an eveninge, and after some other conference the said Jane asked this examine how and upon what tearmes he had lett a house and certaine grounds unto Lancelott Hatherwick, husband to the said Sara, wherein he satisfied her; whereupon the said Jane Urwen replied and said, that the said Lancelott was nought; but, quoth she, his wife, meaning

the said Sara, is worse; for, quoth she, there was a man went in Cotton Wood to seek his kyne and heard a noise ther, and there was present she, the said Sara, and her mayd, casting of clues through a ridle of all kindes of coloures, as fast as oates, whereunto this examine's wife betweene ther conference said, 'Lord, how can this be?' to whome the said Jane replied and said, that she the said Sara Hatherwick, was a witche—then and ther being presente this examine, &c.

(Signed) James Cowle."

"Dorothy Cowle, wife of James Cowle, of the parish of Morpeth, aged 30 years, a witness, &c., has known Sarah Hatherwick for 4 years and Jane Urwen for the same time.

"She saith that two yeares agoe, a more certaine tyme she remembreth not, the said Jane Urwen came unto this examine's husband's house, then situate in Morpeth, and after divers speeches, amongst them she the said Jane Urwen told this examine and her husband, &c. that ther was an honest man told her that he wanted his kyne, and beinge seekeing them in Cotton Wood, he heard a great noyse ther in a hollinge bushe, where he did see Sara Heatherick and her maid servant sittinge with a ridle betwixt them, and castinge clues as fast as oates; which this examine much wonderinge att, asked how that could be, whereunto she, the said Jane, replied and said that she the said Sara was a witche: and this examine askeing where she learned the same, the said Jane replied that she learned it of the Lady Pauncheforde articulate" (*Book of Depositions from 1626 to 1631*).—Vol. ii. pp. 279-280.

EDWARD PEACOCK.

**An Ancient Highland Superstition.**—The following weird story appears in the *Scotsman* of Jan. 20, 1887:—An occurrence took place in Ullapool on Saturday which illustrates the strong hold that old superstitions still retain among the people of the Highlands. A woman of weak intellect, named Ann Macrae, about 70 years of age, and who resided with a sister and nephew at Moss Cottages, scarcely half a mile from the village, committed suicide by drowning herself in the Ullapool river close by her home. No one, however, seemed to care to have the body recovered until the police got notice of the affair, and two constables were despatched to the place. Notwith-

standing the difficulty experienced in bringing the body ashore, owing to the depth at which it lay and the rocky surroundings of the place, not a soul in the crowd which began to gather would render the slightest assistance, though repeatedly asked to do so. The police, however, managed to recover the body, which was then removed to an outhouse, the use of which was granted by Mr. K. Mackenzie of Moorfields, as neither friend nor neighbour of the deceased would give the corpse admission on any account. A coffin was obtained, and a horse and cart procured to convey the body to the village burying-ground. By this time a crowd of about sixty men had collected. They deforced the authorities, and peremptorily refused to allow the remains of a suicide to be taken to any burying-ground which was within sight of the sea or of cultivated land, as such a step would prove disastrous both to fishing and to agriculture, or, in the words of the almost universal belief of the crofting-fishing community of the north-west, it would cause *famine (or dearth) on sea and land*. Some of those in the crowd found great fault with the police for taking the body out on the wrong side of the river! The police, of course, were powerless against such numbers, and the result was that the horse was unyoked and the cart on which the remains lay was wheeled about and conveyed for several miles over the hills, where beyond sight of sea and cultivated land the body was unceremoniously deposited in mother earth. The police, who followed at a respectful distance, noted that the remains were buried about three miles from Ullapool, on the way to Rhidorroch Forest. The Fiscal at Dingwall has been communicated with, and it is expected that investigations will be made into the affair. This belief regarding suicides is deeply rooted, and the custom has generally been to inter them in out-of-the-way places among the lonely solitudes of the mountains, and such burials are not by any means uncommon. A few years ago the body of a man who had committed suicide was washed ashore on Little Loch Broom. A rough deal box was hastily made, into which the corpse was put, after which all the tools used were sunk in the sea. The box with its ghastly cargo was then towed by ropes across the loch, thence dragged up the hillsides to a lonely nook behind that range of mountains which stretches to the west of Dundonell, where the box, ropes



and all, was hastily buried. According to the popular belief, had the body been left in the loch, or on shore within sight of it, not a single herring would have ventured near it.

**Plough Monday.**—In Cambridge this year, Plough Monday was observed by bands of young men, profusely ornamented with scarves and ribbons, who dragged wooden ploughs of a primitive description about the streets. They ran at a good pace, and by their side ran a companion with a money-box collecting donations. In the bands which I saw, there was no woman or man dressed as a woman, such as we read of in Brand and Dyer. A friend, who was with me, noticed (what I failed to observe) that the men who were dragging the plough wore bosses in front, like the bosses which horses in harness have on their chests.

January, 1887.

J. G. FRAZER.

**Somersetshire Witch Tales.**—The other day I heard for the first time two witch tales, which I will tell you. The locality is not mentioned, but I was led to infer that it happened in Somersetshire.

No. 1. "Some men were engaged in mowing a meadow close to which stood a witch's house. They were constantly annoyed and interrupted in their work by a hare which kept running between the sweeping scythes. By-and-by one of the men said, 'I say, mates, I do believe that hare is the witch.' 'I'll soon see,' answered a second man; and calling to his dog he urged him to give chase to the hare, all the men running, eager and excited, cheering on the dog, which ran faster and faster after the hare, which made for the witch's cottage; with a shriek and a bound the hare tried to jump through the window, but the dog made a bound too and seized the hare by the hind legs; in the struggle the hare had its leg much torn but it finally escaped into the cottage where the men heard dismal moans. On the morrow the witch was seen hobbling about with a bad leg, and on being asked what was the matter replied that she had 'cut her leg while chopping sticks.'"

No. 2. "A black colt was often seen to be feeding in a field close to a witch's house. It always appeared there in the evening, and no one could discover how it got there or to whom it belonged. By-and-

by there grew a feeling in the neighbourhood that it was the witch; so some brave daring youths planned to lie in wait and catch the colt next time it came out to feed. Their plan succeeded admirably, and the colt was caught and taken to a blacksmith's shop where it was shod and turned loose into the field again. Next day the witch was seen with her hands tied up, and she walked as if in great pain; but no one could induce her to relate what had occurred to her. Years afterwards, however, people saw on her hands the print of nails."

W. H. ASHBY.

## NOTICES AND NEWS.

*Suomalaisia Kansansatuja. Iosa. Elainsatuja.* Helsingfors. 1886.

Pp. 453. [Finnish Folk-Stories, Part I. "Stories of Animals."]

This collection, edited, and in a great measure collected, by Mr. Kaarle Krohn, son of the well-known professor at Helsingfors, aims at bringing together all that has been hitherto gathered under the auspices of the Finnish Literary Society relating to stories of animals, in full or in summary. The contents are divided into six parts:—

A. "Adventures of animals," narrated in 273 stories. Of these, "The slyness of the fox" occupies 105; "Domestic and wild animals," 40; "Man and beast," 22; "The hare, the squirrel, and the sable," 10; "The dog, the cat, and the mouse," 12; "The horse, the cow, and the sheep," 7; "Birds," 62; "Fish," 15.

B. "The origin of animals and fables of creation," narrated in 48 stories.

C. "Voices of animals," contained in 135 entries.

D. "Descriptive epithets of creatures," applied to 122 different animals, birds, fish, and insects by the common people.

E. "Supplement," containing 10 stories.

F. "Variants," enumerated under 101 headings. These are all confined to Finland.

As space is limited, it is better to confine our attention to what is perhaps the most interesting section in the collection—to section B.

It may seem a little astonishing to find a Karelian, in 1885, telling the editor that "a lizard is a human being," and a Bothnian narrating, in 1884, that "a frog seems to be of the human species," but such is the case. Story No. 306 runs as follows:—"The lizard is a human being, on account of which it is not the custom to kill it, but only to break off its tail, there is something of the snake at the tip of the tail. In Finland we call it 'Sister-Liisa';\* in more elegant language it is a lizard (F. *sisilisko*)." No. 307 tells of a king's daughter who was so lazy she would not take the trouble even to put on her clothes. At last she says, "How would it be if food came into my mouth without the necessity of eating?" This took place, and she used to hop about the floor on her stomach, and merely open her mouth. But finally she was turned out of doors, and became a frog. "In our country, therefore, one may not kill a frog, as it seems to be of the human family, and lives an idle life." No. 299 informs us how the waterfowl is developed out of a frog. "When all the fishy tribe formed a shoal together, a pike swallowed a frog that was in the shoal. The spawning season came in spring. The other pike came to look: 'What is the matter with thee, that thou hast to give birth to so large an embryo?' The frog had turned into the form of a water-fowl. And afterwards down began to grow upon it, and webs grew between its toes, like the feet of a frog. And from that frog old people say the water-fowl has come into the world, as the Creator forgot to make it on the day of creation." Another story tells of three brothers. One went into the forest, and from him came a bear; another went into a lake, and from him came a frog; while

\* Sister-Liisa, in F. *Sisär-Liisa* and *Sisärliesko*, is merely a corruption of the correct word *Sisilisko*, so it is possible this piece of "folk-etymology" may be the reason that led the narrator to connect the lizard with the human species; though undoubtedly, as I myself have found, there does exist a prejudice in Finland against killing these reptiles. In the "Finnish Charms" (*Loitsurunoja*), edited by Dr. Lönnrot, the origin of the lizard in one instance is assigned to the spittle *Syöjätär* (the Ogress) spat into the water.

the third remained at home, and from him came a man. The triplet is varied in No. 279. The squirrel, the cuckoo, and the frog came from three daughters of a king. One had wished to become such that all would listen to her—she became a cuckoo. The second wished to become such that all young men would run after her—she became a squirrel, which every young man hunts. The third desired to become such that all would be astonished at her, so she became a frog. Though these do not exhaust the human being-frog stories, they are sufficient to illustrate the belief that a relationship, based on superficial likenesses, existed between man and frog.

The dispersal of man through the world is really owing to the pig. "In days of old men lived together, and had their houses side by side. They had already begun to keep pigs, but these became mischievous, and learnt how to visit the neighbours in strange places. Otherwise men would not have got angry with each other, for every one that found living near the village unsuitable had to remove to such a distance that the pigs could not get there to rout up where work was being carried on. And they made their houses in the deep forest, and abandoned their original abodes. And in that manner men have been completely dispersed over the world. They would otherwise have built their houses with their ends abutting in the same district." Before leaving the pig it is well to know why it has a cylindrical snout. "When God made the pig he had to go off to a fire. God was in a great hurry, and the pig was just finished, all but the head, which was in process of formation. It was just the cylindrical part of this pig's snout that remained unfinished when he started for the fire. And hence comes the saying, 'Of that form is the pig's snout, because it was once left unfinished.' It is not known what it would have been like if it had been completed."

The story of the Creation of the World is very different from that found in the Kalevala and is probably of Tatar origin, as both the Mordvins\* and the Altai Tatars † have a legend that tallies closely

\* *Kirjallinen Kunkauslehti* for 1873 is an article on the Mordvins by T. R. A[spelin].

† W. Radloff, *Proben der Volkslitteratur der türkischen Stämme Süd-Siberiens*. 1 Th. pp. 175-184.

with it. "Formerly when there was no land, God was on the top of a golden pillar in the middle of the sea. When he saw His image in it, he said, 'Rise up whoever thou art.' Well, it rose up, and it was the Devil. God then asked, 'how could land be produced?' The Devil said, 'Sure enough it will be produced if one went three times to fetch earth from the bottom of the sea.' Well, he was ordered to go, and the Devil went, but the third time he put some of the earth by stealth into his mouth. From the earth, God rubbed forth the land, between his hands. The earth in the Devil's mouth increased in bulk, and with it the pains in his jaws. Then he came to complain to God that 'he had stolen, and so was in pain.' Well, God took the earth from the Devil's jaws, and threw it at Pohjola, as stones and rocks." The Mordvin account, which is much longer and more circumstantial, begins: "When there was nothing in the world but water, Cham-Pas (the supreme Mordvin god) was drifting about on a stone upon the open sea reflecting how to create the world." The incidents that follow are the same as in the Finnish version, though the word for Devil (*F. piru*) is rendered by *Shaitan*, one of the words that betray its Mahometan Tatar origin, or at any rate a modification of an original Mordvin legend from that quarter. There is, however, one incident in which the two accounts differ. In the one, land is produced by rubbing between the hands, and in the other, sand is thrown here and there upon the sea and it grew into dry land. The former is a common Finnish formula when anything is being created or produced.

For instance, in the 20th *runo* of the *Kalevala*, *Osmotar* rubs a splinter of wood between her hands and produced a white squirrel, she does the same with a chip and produces a golden-breasted martin, and from a husk of grass by the same operation she brings forth a bee. The connection of the two ideas, "rubbing between the hands" and "the creation or production of something," goes back perhaps to the time when fire was produced by turning the fire-stick rapidly between the hands. Some may see a confirmation of this in a squirrel and a golden-breasted martin being the animals produced, as the former is often associated with fire legends. Another common phrase in Finnish songs and charms under similar circumstances is composed of words meaning to "cradle, rock, swing to and fro," precisely the

action of swinging an ignited piece of tinder in the air to made it burn up. For instance, in the Kalevala, R. 47-79, Ukko, the thunder god, gives the Air-maiden the spark he has struck to swing to and fro till it becomes a new moon and sun, though the same words are constantly used when there is no question of actual fire.

In a story told to account for cats liking to crouch under the table, the conclusion is worth noting, "Then she (the bride) transformed the table-cloth into a cat and it began to catch the mice. It is because the cat came from a table-cloth that it likes to sit under the table."

The present form of some of these stories cannot be older than the twelfth or thirteenth century, however primitive the line of thought that gave rise to them may be. The origins, for instance, of the pintail duck, the crane, the sand piper, and the seal, are founded on a Bible narrative. When Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red Sea they turned into pintail ducks, "hence the pintail duck turns into blood when shot, and sinks to the bottom. Therefore it is not shot; it is reckoned to belong to the human species." The captain of the host was transformed into a crane, and the cook to Pharaoh's army became a sandpiper. The latter had waited for the army to come and eat; but, as no one came, he began crying out, *Mi v̄iv̄utti, mi v̄iv̄utti, mi v̄iv̄utti* ("I've had to wait, I've had to wait"), and was turned into a sandpiper, and continues repeating the same words all his life. The dogs of the host were turned into seals, so now they cry, *Varavō, varavō, varavō*. So too, after the murder of Abel, Adam and Eve did not know how to dispose of the dead body. But it happened there was a tall tree close by with a crow's nest in it. One of the young birds fell out and was killed. The mother crow then proceeded to scratch a hole in the ground and to bury the dead bird. Adam and Eve learned from that how they ought to act, "and from that came the first human grave."

In conclusion it is hardly necessary to say that this volume is by far the most complete collection of animal stories of any one country that has yet been published, and that it is furnished with all the necessary details relating to the places of collection, the collectors and narrators' names, that scientific study demands. In addition to the narrator's name there is frequently a note appended giving information

regarding his age, sex, and general character, even mentioning the names of other persons present when the story was being taken down.

JOHN ABERCROMBY.

*Popular Tales and Fictions, their Migrations and Transformations.*

By W. A. Clouston. Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons.  
1887. 2 vols.

These two entertaining volumes consist of a series of papers on a great variety of folk-tales. The author does not write in support of any definite theory, though he expressly disclaims at the outset the "solar myth" theory, and appears to sympathise generally with the conclusions of Benfey. That learned man held that the origin of our western stories must be sought in India, whence they were diffused, chiefly through the medium of Buddhistic teachings, over the whole east, and found their way ultimately to Europe. Mr. Clouston's wide knowledge of this department of oriental literature has enabled him to bring together a vast collection of variants of our best-known stories; and his book is a most welcome and timely contribution to the science of folk-lore. Its special service consists in the forcible manner in which it recalls the attention of students to the wealth of tales, not only in the modern tongues of India, but also in the ancient Sanskrit, and derived thence either immediately and avowedly, or remotely,—and in doing this at a time when we are perhaps in danger of forgetting these elements in the problem of origins. This is no small service to render, and it is one for which every one who is interested in the subject will be grateful.

It is beyond doubt that Europe owes many of its stories to the East. Their lineage is known: they can be traced in literary form during historical times from land to land, and from tongue to tongue, until their primitive type is discovered at last in Buddhistic or earlier Sanskrit works. More than this, some of these stories can even be shown to have been current, usually in still more archaic shape, thousands of years ago, on the banks of the Nile, when the wandering gods of that antique civilisation were sought, "disguised in brutish forms, rather than human." Hence Sir Richard Burton, as cited in the work before us, is inclined to ascribe the origin of folk-tales to the

Egyptians. But while we admit so much, and while we are glad to have the facts upon which the theories of Benfey and Burton rest laid before us without any attempt at straining or distortion, we cannot but think that the author would have added to the value of his work had he permitted himself to give a little more consideration to the spreading fields which lie outside the Aryo-Semitic limits, and he would also have found reasons for distrusting the champions alike of India and of Egypt. We have only room to illustrate our meaning by reference to one group of stories. In the paper on Magical Transformations Mr. Clouston says: "There certainly is no cycle of folktales, of which the members everywhere present a more striking resemblance to each other, or indicate more clearly a common origin. In this case especially is independent invention of the same incidents in different countries and ages altogether out of the question, as I hope conclusively to prove in the course of the present paper." These words refer primarily, not to the group whereof we are about to speak, but to an allied group. Still we believe we are not wrong in assuming that they indicate the author's attitude towards the group, included in the same paper, "in which the hero is pursued by a fierce giant or demon, and escapes by means of certain objects which, thrown behind him on his track, are instantly transformed into obstacles difficult or impossible to be overcome by the enemy." Mr. Clouston gives in the text three examples of this group, namely, from Campbell's *West Highland Stories*, from Thorpe's *Yule Tide Stories*, and from the *Kathá Sarit Ságara*, and refers to three others in a note. These are quite sufficient to indicate the connection between the various Aryan narratives. But there are some very curious variants found in widely distant regions of this world, for which it seems to us impossible to account on the hypothesis of the Indian or Egyptian origin of folktales. A Kaffir story related by Theal, containing certainly much purely native matter, presents us with the ordinary incidents of this group in both forms in which they are found in Europe. The hero and heroine, running away, baffle pursuit by throwing down an egg, which becomes a mist, a millsack which becomes a sheet of water, a pot which becomes a thick darkness, and finally a stone which shoots up into an impassable barrier of rock. Another time the hero and



his friends, hurrying out of the reach of cannibals, are assisted by "a little man," who turns a big stone into a hut for them, while for their pursuers it remains a stone whereon they break their teeth in vain. Dr. Steere, in a paper read before the Ethnological Society some years ago, made mention of a story current among the Yaos on the east of Africa, in which the hero escapes by setting his pursuer dancing every time he nearly comes up to him, and so getting each time a fresh start. It is explained that the pursuer was one of a number of creatures who are believed unable to resist the inclination to dance when they are played to, and who in dancing gradually come to pieces, every separate piece dancing until the music stops, when the limbs slowly come together again. The Tupis of Brazil have a tale of a youth fleeing from an ogress, but aided and instructed by her daughter. He is warned from time to time of the demon's approach by hearing the birds in the forest sing "Kan, kan, kan, kan," and makes friends, first with apes, and then with serpents, to hide him from her. The Roman Catholic missionary Petitot found among two different tribes of British North America a very interesting variant in which (conversely to the ordinary story) the pursuer raises, by magic, obstacles in front of the fugitives. These obstacles,—a mountain, a great lake, an abyss,—are overcome by the superior magic of the hero. In all these accounts the leading idea is one and the same, but each of them differs according to the circumstances and stage of civilisation of the people among whom they are told. The truth is that folk-tales have their root in nothing less than the nature of the human intellect. They do not owe their existence to one race, or to one climate or state of culture. Certain forms of them may, through special advantages, be transmitted from one country to another; but even they, as a rule, meet with indigenous growths of a similar character, with which they mingle freely, and produce many of the wild varieties we are so familiar with in western Europe.

It will therefore be seen that, while agreeing with Mr. Clouston in asserting a common origin for the group of stories to which we have referred, we can by no means admit that that origin is to be sought for in any one age or land, and still less that one body of literature, however remarkable, contains it. The existence of the variants we

have cited, whatever may be their meaning, cannot be squared with any such theory. And what is true of this group, is true, if not of all, at least of very many of the stories recorded in the volumes under review. Our sample has been chosen at random, and it is one which has been supposed to yield special evidence against independent invention. We would not however be understood as asserting any theory on the subject. This is not the occasion for doing so. All that we are concerned now to do is to point out, with all respect to the memory of that great scholar, that Dr. Benfey's conclusions are founded on too narrow a deduction. To our mind no teaching can be satisfactory which severs folk-tales from other departments of folklore and attempts to account for the phenomena of the former on principles inapplicable to those of the latter.

But though we dissent from what, perhaps too rashly, we assume to be Mr. Clouston's opinions, we cordially recommend his book to all students. Many of the stories he gives are elsewhere only to be found in publications inaccessible to ordinary persons. We could indeed occasionally wish that his references to authorities had been more direct and definite; but his workmanship throughout is scholarly and accurate, and in all the thousand pages it would be difficult to find one that is tedious. The work is divided into two parts, the first volume dealing with stories in which the supernatural plays a part, and the second with apologues and comic tales. Of the two the latter is, we think, even more worthy of careful study than the former, since the problems it offers are more difficult of solution.

*The Dravidian Nights Entertainments.* Being a translation of the "Madanakamárájkadai." By Pandit S. M. Natésa Sástri. Madras : 1886. London : Trübner & Co.

In July last year we had the pleasure of reviewing the first and second parts of Mr. Natésa Sástri's *Folk-Lore in Southern India*, and we have now before us another translation from the Tamil, by the same Pandit, of a work which can be known to very few of our members, and which should possess no little interest for story-comparers, and indeed all who are devoted to the study of the history of fiction. One important result of Mr. Natésa Sástri's translations

from the Tamil must be to give another and telling blow to the theory of our European popular tales being the exclusive property of the Aryan race. They also serve to show, as it seems to us, the marked influence of the Tamils on the Buddhist literature of Ceylon, and, in fact, suggest new questions as to the origin and diffusion of tales and apologues current throughout the whole of the Indian peninsula.

Like nearly all Asiatic story-books, the *Dravidian Nights*, as the learned translator happily entitles the English rendering of the Tamil romance *Madana Kâma Râjâ Kadai*, consists of a general, or leading story, within which are sphered or interwoven a series of tales, more or less appropriate to the circumstances which led to their narration. The frame-story is thus outlined by the translator in his preface: "Madanakamârâjâ, the prince of the Mahéndrapuri, falls in love with two female figures represented in a picture. His minister goes in search of them, finds them out after a great deal of difficulty, and succeeds in getting them apparently wedded to himself. The ladies approach, each in her turn, the side of their lord, to give him their company. But as he has meant one of them to be the wife of his master the prince, and as he himself must choose his wife only after the prince has chosen his, he keeps them off by relating fine stories, of the adventures, half probable, half improbable, of some great prince or other hero. By concluding each story with the question, 'And must not such a youth marry you, my gem of womankind?' he prepares them to accept their future lord." And here it may be mentioned, as another of the innumerable parallels of the biblical story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, that the prince had become an exile from his father's court and kingdom in consequence of the daughter of the king's domestic chaplain having fallen in love with him, and on her proffered love being rejected, in revenge accused him to his father of having attempted to violate her chastity, upon which the king ordered his son to be ~~put to death~~; but the executioners, believing him to be innocent, killed a beast in his stead and showed its blood as that of his son; and the prince accompanied by his faithful friend, the son of the king's chief minister, set out for another country.

The stories related by the minister's son to his supposed wives alternately are twelve in number, abound in most interesting adventures,

and present parallels to many incidents in European folk-lore. Thus in the first recital we have, *mutatis mutandis*, a story analogous to the Norse tale (in Dasent) of Farmer Weathersky and his pupil in magic, with its many variants, Welsh, German, Italian, &c. The second story must be considered as containing the germ of the Arabian tale of Aladdin and his Lamp, which has also its analogues in other Asiatic and European tales. A close parallel to the third recital is found in the Rev. Lal Behari Day's *Folk-Tales of Bengal*. In the fifth, we have a variant of the wide-spread story of "The Outcast Child," so ably discussed by Mr. E. Sidney Hartland in this *Journal* last year, p. 308 ff.; in which, *inter alia*, occur the petrifying of victims, bird-maidens, incidents similar to some of those in the Arabian tale of Hassan of Basra, and the beautiful legend of Cupid and Psyche. The sixth recital furnishes a striking parallel to the tale entitled "The Transformation Donkey" in Miss Busk's *Folk-Lore of Rome*. In the seventh story are recounted the marvellous adventures of a prince, who was born in the form of a tortoise, in quest of a divine flower, which he had to obtain before marrying a beautiful princess.

But our space does not permit of even briefly indicating the character of the remaining narratives of the minister's son; suffice it to say that they are all equally curious and entertaining, and in the sequel the prince rejoins his friend and after strange adventures they arrive at his father's capital, with the young ladies, one of whom the prince espouses, while the other becomes the wife of the minister's son; and the conclusion (unlike that of most frame-stories) is full of wonderful incidents. All students of folk-lore and of romantic fiction cannot fail to find this work very useful, and all lovers of fairy tales must be delighted with it from the beginning to the happy end. Considering that English is a foreign language to Mr. Natésa Sástrí, the translation is on the whole very good, and we hope soon to hear of a new edition being required, the present one being, we understand, rather limited.

*The Folk-Songs of Italy.* Specimens, with Translations and Notes, from each Province, and Prefatory Treatise by Miss R. H. Busk, assisted on the Sicilian portion by Dr. Pitriè. (Sonnenschein).

The recent volume of the Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco on Folk-Songs is quickly and ably followed up. Folk-songs are one of the principal developments of the folk-lore of a country, and of all countries those of Italy are the most important. Whatever they may be thought to have borrowed from Greece or the East, they there received a perfection of diction, and became the own utterance of the people in a way which is unrivalled in any other country. Spain alone can dispute the palm; but the Spanish songs which we know and admire most tell of nobles and heroes, and are not *of the people* themselves in the way the Italian songs are.

Miss Busk has devoted many years to working up this collection of them, and she has had the immense advantage of the co-operation of native friends to direct and control her researches, Dr. Pitriè, the greatest of Italian folk-lorists, himself selecting for her the Sicilian contingent. We have every reason to conceive therefore that she has succeeded in her aim of making it perfectly representative of the thoughts and manners of the Italian peoples in all the various provinces of the peninsula; and care and scholarly handling are apparent alike in the selection of information in the Prefatory Treatise and numerous Notes, and in the delicate finish of every part. The structure and the history of the varying forms of the folk-song, all the different parts of the country, are succinctly traced, and the dialectic changes explained, and the relation of local customs and traditions judiciously pointed out; and amid all this immense range of variation, as well as in that of date, the characteristics which distinguish the most polished folk-song from literary poetry are never for a moment wanting.

We have alluded to the range of date, but we ought more particularly to state that this is very considerable. Miss Busk has been fortunate in being able to introduce some very remarkable specimens of very early date. Nothing can be more quaintly pretty than the religious *ballate* at p. 29, while that at p. 126 is one of the most prodigiously stirring utterances of the much-worn theme of a forsaken maiden that has ever been written, and this is over four centuries old.

Some of the music too is from collections dated 1558, while we have also those which Rome and Naples are still creating at the present hour.

In all these matters Miss Busk's volume must take place as the student's text-book, who will also find under his hand a list of all the Italian writers on the subject of folk-poetry to guide his further research, if he need any.

The book is provided with a very complete index; and, if we transcribe the entries under one letter taken by hazard, it will give the reader evidence of two things we have stated—the wide range of the subjects treated in the book, and the representative character which the songs themselves bear of the people's mind. Madrigal; Mafia; Maggi (songs and singers for the month of May); Malta; Manfred; Songs of le Marche; Marirara, a Sicilian sailor's song; Mariola (a Sicilian instrument); Marriage in Folk-songs (15 instances, some satirical); Mattinate (a variation of serenades that will probably be new to most); May in Folk-songs (6 instances); Metre of Folk-songs (12 entries); the Migration of Folk-songs; Mischief-making in Folk-songs; Modern Collection of Italian Folk-songs: Modern Folk-songs (9 entries); Momaria; Montigiani; Moon in Folk-songs; Morality in Folk-songs (11 entries); the Mother-in-law in Folk-songs; Music of Folk-songs; Mythology in Folk-songs, &c.

Among all local subjects *bandelli* are not forgotten, and we shall leave it to the reader to see what Miss Busk has to plead in their favour, but we think the following Corsican song remarkable for its rough dramatic energy:—

Stand back! 'Tis I would know his state,  
O let me to him hie.  
Santo mine own! Brother mine own!  
And have they made thee die!

Ah! freshly have they slain him!  
O Santo mine! Brother mine own!  
My falcon guard he'd made him  
The mainstay of our common home.  
What life is she henceforth to lead?  
The sister left alone!

Among the Sicilian are many of a similar character. The Sicilian on the whole have more singularities than any other province; we have only space to note the fact without pursuing it. The following, of which for some reason Miss Busk gives only an unrhymed translation, strikes us as a very peculiar bit of folk-lore. One day when God the Father was feeling pleased, as He walked in heaven among the saints, He thought He would bestow a fair gift upon the earth. Then from His crown he took a diamond. He dowered it with all the seven elements. And He laid it down over against the rising sun. All nations call it Sicilia. But it is the Eternal Father's own diamond.

We must give one other specimen of a more general character, and we choose the following because it combines both the tenderness and the playfulness which mark the Italian peasant's character. It is from Umbria:—

“I've been up to town and I've seen of girls troops,  
 The dark and the fair; the blue eyes and black,  
 Their hair tied in topknots, their skirts all in hoops,  
 Like tomtit's best feathers spread out at the back  
 Attracting attention all the way up the church,  
 Like tail-spreading peacock displayed in a perch.  
 But if *thou* hadst been there, amid all this display,  
 Thou hadst shone, as o'er stars, the surpassing sun's ray.  
 Ah, nut-brown Ninetta, if thou hadst been there  
 Thou hadst stood for the sun's, and I, for the moon's sphere,  
 The moon who without any word of ripening,  
 Day and night round her bright sun is evermore winding.  
 The moon who attends her bright sun on his way  
 So she can but obtain from him one brilliant ray.  
 And I too am content to attend my Ninetta,  
 If but one bright eyeglance to cast on me I get her.”

The word-for-word translations are all printed to face the originals in order to enable students both of folk-lore and of language to follow the original and make it out for themselves.

We understand that Miss Busk has a very large number more of these songs in hand, and we hope to be called ere long to welcome another instalment of them.

The next meeting of the Society will be held at 22, Albemarle Street, on Friday, 22nd April next, at eight o'clock, to consider draft proof of the three first sections of the *Handbook to Folk-Lore*, now being prepared by Mr. Gomme. These sections are : i. What folk-lore is ; ii. Superstitions connected with great natural objects ; iii. Superstitions connected with trees and plants. Members wishing for proofs before the meeting should apply to Mr. Foster. Other meetings will follow to consider the remaining sections of the handbook.

The annual meeting was held on the 25th March, the President, the Earl of Strafford, in the chair. The rule fixing the number of the Council at twelve was altered, increasing the number to twenty. By this means the Society is able to have on its Council some of its distinguished foreign members as well as lady members. Miss Burne has kindly accepted office as a member of Council. A hearty vote of thanks to the President and to Mr. Foster closed the proceedings.



## CORNISH FOLK-LORE.

BY MISS M. A. COURTNEY.

(Continued from p. 112.)

### PART III.

**T**HE fairies of Cornwall may be divided into four classes, the Small People, the Pixies (pronounced Piskies or Pisgias), the Spriggans, and the Knockers. The first are harmless elfish little beings known all over England, whose revels on fine summer nights have often been described by those favoured individuals who have accidentally had the privilege of seeing them. As a rule they, however, wish to think themselves invisible, and in this county it is considered unlucky to call them by the name of fairies. The stories told about them by our old folk differed but slightly from those related elsewhere. There was the well-known cow that gave the finest yield of milk, and retained it all the year round when others of the herd ran dry, but always ceased the flow at a certain time, and if efforts were made to draw more from her, kicked over the milking-pail. The milkmaid discovered that the cow belonged to the small people by reason of her wearing in her hat a bunch of flowers having in it a four-leaved clover, which rendered them visible, when she saw them climbing up the cow's legs and sucking at her teats. The greedy mistress, when the maid told her of this discovery, contrary to advice, washed the poor animal all over with salt water, which fairies particularly dislike (as well as the smell of fish and grease), in order to drive them away. Of course she succeeded in her object, and by so doing brought nothing but ill luck for ever after on herself and family. When unmolested fairies bring good fortune to places they frequent; but they are spiteful if interfered with, and delight in vexing and thwarting people who meddle with

them. It is well known "that they can't abear those whom they can't abide." Then there were the tales of persons spirited away to fairyland, to wait upon the small people's children and perform various little domestic offices, where the time has passed so pleasantly that they have forgotten all about their homes and relations, until by doing a forbidden thing they have incurred their master's anger. They were then punished by being thrown into a deep sleep, and on awakening found themselves on some moor close to their native villages. These unhappy creatures never, after their return, settled down to work, but roamed about aimlessly doing nothing, hoping and longing one day to be allowed to go back to the place from whence they had been banished. They had first put themselves into the fairies' power by eating or drinking something on the sly, when they had surprised them at one of their moonlight frolics; or by accepting a gift of fruit from the hands of one of these little beings. There are also two or three legends of curious women, who by underhand dealings have got hold of a mysterious box of green ointment belonging to the fairies, which, rubbed on the eyes, gave them the power of seeing them by daylight, when they look old, withered, and grey, and hate to be spied upon by mortals. These women are always interrupted when they have put the ointment on one eye before they have time to anoint both, and by an inadvertent speech they invariably betray their ill-gotten knowledge. They cannot resist making an exclamation when they see a fairy pilfering or up to some mischievous trick. Neither can they keep the secret of the side on which they see, and they are quickly made to pay the penalty of their misdeeds by a well-directed blow from the elf's fist which deprives them of the sight of that eye for ever. All these old wives' tales are fully related by Mr. Bottrell in his three series of *Traditions, &c. of West Cornwall*.

Fairies haunt the ancient monuments of this county, and are supposed to be the beings who bring ill-luck on the destroyers of them. "Not long ago a woman of Moushal (a village near Penzance) told me that troops of small people, not more than a foot and a-half high, used, on moonlight nights, to come out of a hole in the cliff, opening on to the beach, Newlyn side of the village, and but a short distance from it. The little people were always dressed very smart, and if any

one came near them would scamper away into the hole. Mothers often told their children that if they went under cliffs by night the small people would carry them away into 'Dicky Danjy's hole.'—Bottrell.

These small people are said to have been half-witted people who had committed no mortal sin, but who, when they died, were not good enough to go to Heaven. They are also thought, in some state, to have lived before.

The small people go about in parties, but pisky in his habits, at least in West Cornwall, is a solitary little being. I gather, however, from Mr. T. Q. Couch's *History of Polperro* that in the eastern part of the county the name of Pisky is applied indiscriminately to both tribes. He says two only of them are known by name, and quotes the following rhyme:

" Jack o' the lantern ! Joan the wad,  
Who tickled the maid and made her mad;  
Light me home the weather's bad."

Here in the west he is a ragged merry little fellow (to laugh like a pisky is a common Cornish simile), interesting himself in human affairs, threshing the farmer's corn at nights, or doing other work and pinching the maidservants when they leave a house dirty at bedtime. Margery Daw, in our version of the nursery-song, meets with punishment at his hands for her misdoings—

" See saw, Margery Daw,  
Sold her bed and lay upon straw;  
Sold her bed and lay upon hay,  
And pisky came and carried her away.  
For wasn't she a dirty slut  
To sell her bed and lie in the dirt ?"

Should the happy possessor of one of these industrious, unpaid fairy servants (who never object to taking food left for them by friends) express his thanks aloud, thus showing that he sees him, or try to reward him for his services by giving him a new suit of clothes, he leaves the house never to return, and in the latter case may be heard to say:

" Pisky fine, pisky gay !  
Pisky now will fly away."

Or in another version :

“ Pisky new coat, and pisky new hood,  
Pisky now will do no more good.”—(T.Q.C.)

Mr. Cornish, the Town Clerk of Penzance, mentioned at an anti-quarian meeting recently held in that town, “ that there was a brownie still existing in it ; that a gentleman, whose opinion he would take on many matters, had told him that he had often seen it sitting quietly by the fireside.” When mischievously inclined pisky often leads benighted people a sad dance ; like Will of the Wisp, he takes them over hedges and ditches, and sometimes round and round the same field, from which they in vain try to find their way home (although they can always see the path close at hand), until they sit down and turn their stockings the wrong side out, as an old lady, born in the last century, whom I well knew, once told me she had done. To turn a pocket inside out has the same effect. But to quote the words of a late witty Cornish doctor, “ Pisky led is often whiskey led.”

Mr T. Q. Couch in his before-mentioned book has two or three amusing stories of their merry pranks. One is called “ A Voyage with the Piskies.” A Polperro lad meeting them one night as he was going on an errand heard them say in chorus, “ I’m for Portallow Green ” (a place in the neighbourhood). Repeating the cry after them, “ quick as thought he found himself there surrounded by a throng of laughing piskies.” The next place they visited was Seaton Beach, between Polperro and Plymouth ; the third and last cry was “ I’m for the King of France’s cellar.” Again he decided on joining them, dropped the bundle he was carrying on the sands, and “ immediately found himself in a spacious cellar, engaged with his mysterious companions in tasting the richest wines.” Afterwards they strolled through the palace, where in a room he saw all the preparations made for a feast, and could not resist the temptation of pocketing one of the rich silver goblets from the table. The signal for their return was soon given, and once more he found himself on Seaton Beach, where he had just time to pick up his bundle before he was whisked home. All these voyages were made in the short space of five minutes. When on his return he told his adventures they were listened to with

incredulity until he produced the goblet, which proved the truth of his tale. After having been kept for generations this trophy has disappeared. "These little creatures seem sometimes," Mr. Couch says, "to have delighted in mischief for its own sake. Old Robin Hicks, who formerly lived in a house at 'Quay Head' (Polperro), has more than once, on stormy winter nights, been alarmed at his supper by a voice sharp and shrill 'Robin! Robin! your boat is adrift.' Loud was the laughter and the *tacking* of hands (clapping) when they succeeded in luring Robin as far as the quay, where the boat was lying safely at its moorings."

Another of his legends is about a fisherman of his district, John Taprail, long since dead, who was, on a frosty night, aroused from his sleep by a voice which called to him that his boat was in danger. He went down to the beach to find that some person had played a practical joke on him. As he was returning he saw a group of piskies sitting in a semicircle under a much larger boat belonging to one of his neighbours. They were dividing a heap of money between them by throwing a piece of gold alternately into each of the hats which lay before them. John was covetous, and forgot that piskies hate to be spied upon; so he crept up and pushed his hat slyly in with the others. When the pile was getting low he tried to get off with his booty without their detecting the fraud. He had got some distance before the cheat was discovered; then they pursued him in such hot haste that he only escaped with his treasure by leaving his coat-tails in their hands. "The pisky's midwife" is common; but she sees them by accidentally rubbing her eye with a bit of soap whilst washing their baby. Like those who have stolen and applied the green ointment, she loses the sight of it by a blow from an angry pisky's fist. She meets and recognizes the father at a fair where, as usual, he is pilfering, and foolishly asks after the welfare of mother and child. But all these stories in West Cornwall would be told of the "small people" as well as the well-known "Colman Grey" (of course the name varies) which relates how a farmer one day found a poor, half-starved looking bantling, sitting alone in the middle of a field, whom he took home and fed until he grew quite strong and lively. A short time after a shrill voice was suddenly heard calling thrice upon "Colman Grey."

Upon which the imp cried "Ho! ho! ho! my daddy is come!" flew through the keyhole, and was never heard of after. Unbaptised children were, in this county at the beginning of the century, said to turn, when they died, into piskies; they gradually went through many transformations at each change, getting smaller until at last they became "Meryons"\* (ants) and finally disappeared. Another tradition is that they were Druids, who, because they would not believe in Christ, were for their sins condemned to change first into piskies, gradually getting smaller, they too, as ants, at last are lost. It is on account of these legends considered unlucky to destroy an ant's nest, and a piece of tin put into one could, in bygone days, through pisky power be transmuted into silver, provided that it was inserted at some varying lucky moment about the time of the new moon.

Moths were formerly believed in Cornwall to be departed souls, and are still, in some districts, called piskies.

There is also a green bug which infests bramble-bushes in the late autumn that bears the same name, and one of the reasons assigned for blackberries not being good after Michaelmas is that pisky spoils them then. Pisky is in some places invoked for luck at the swarming of bees.

It was once a common custom in East Cornwall, when houses were built, to leave holes in the walls by which these little beings could enter; to stop them up would drive away all luck. And in West Cornwall knobs of lead, known as pisky's pows or pisky feet, were placed at intervals on the roofs of farm-houses to prevent the piskies from dancing on them and turning the milk sour in the dairies.

Country people in East Cornwall sometimes put a prayer book under a child's pillow as a charm to keep away piskies. I am told that a poor woman, near Launceston, was fully persuaded that one of her children was taken away and a piskey substituted, the disaster being caused by the absence of a prayer book on one particular night.  
—H. G. T. *Notes and Queries*, December, 1850.

If piskies are kind and helpful little beings, spriggans or sprites are spiteful creatures, never doing a good turn for any one. It is they

\* The word Meryons is also used in Cornwall as a term of endearment, "She's faather's little Meryon."

who carry off poor babies from their mothers, when they have been obliged to leave them for a few hours alone, putting their own ugly, peevish brats in their cradles, who never thrive under the foster-mother's care, in spite of all the trouble they may bestow upon them. Mr. Bottrell tells the story of a spriggan, a married man with a family, who took the place of a poor woman's child one evening when she was at work in the harvest field. For although an innocent baby held in the arms is thought in Cornwall to protect the holder from mischief caused by ghosts and witches, it has no power over these creatures, who are not supposed to have souls. This legend took place under Chapel Carn Brea on the old road from Penzance to St. Just in Penwith. The mother, Jenny Trayer by name, was first alarmed on her return one night from her work in the harvest field by not finding her child in its cradle, but in a corner of the kitchen where in olden days the wood and furze for the then general open fires was kept. She was however too tired to take much notice, and went to bed, and slept soundly until the morning. From that time forth she had no peace; the child was never satisfied but when eating or drinking, or when she had it dandling in her arms. The poor woman consulted her neighbours in turn as to what she should do with the changeling (as one and all agreed that it was). One recommended her to dip it on the three first Wednesdays in May in Chapel Uny Well,\* which advice was twice faithfully carried out in the prescribed manner. The third Wednesday was very wet and windy, but Jenny determined to persevere in this treatment of her ugly bantling, and holding the brat (who seemed to enjoy the storm) firmly on her shoulders, she trudged off. When they got about half way, a shrill voice from behind some rocks was heard to say,

“Tredrill ! Tredrill !  
Thy wife and children greet thee well.”

Not seeing any one, the woman was of course alarmed, and her fright increased when the imps made answer in a similar voice

“What care I for wife or child,  
When I ride on Dowdy's back to the Chapel Well,  
And have got pap my fill ?”

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\* See *ante*, “Cornish Feasts and Feasten Customs.”

After this adventure, she took the advice of another neighbour, who told her the best way to get rid of the spriggan and have her own child returned was "to put the small body upon the ashes' pile, and beat it well with a broom; then lay it naked under a church stile; there leave it and keep out of sight and hearing till the turn of night; when nine times out of ten, the thing will be taken away and the stolen child returned." This was finally done, all the women of the village after it had been put upon a convenient pile "belabouring it with their brooms," upon which it naturally set up a frightful roar. After dark it was laid under the stile, and there next morning the woman "found her own 'dear cheeld' sleeping on some dry straw" most beautifully clean and wrapped in a piece of chintz. "Jenny nursed her recovered child with great care, but there was always something queer about it, as there always is about one that has been in the fairies power—if only for a few days."

There are many other tales of changelings, but they resemble each other so much that they are not worth relating. In the one above quoted from Mr. Bottrell he gives a third charm for getting a child restored as follows, "Make by night a smoky fire, with green ferns and dry. When the chimney and house are full of smoke as one can bear, throw the changeling on the hearthstone; go out of the house, turn three times round; when one enters the right child will be restored." Spriggans too guard the vast treasures that are supposed to be buried beneath our immense carns and in our cliff castles. No matter if the work be carried on by night or by day, they are sure to punish the rash person who ventures to dig in hopes of securing them. When he has got some way down, he finds himself surrounded by hundreds of ugly beings, in some cases almost as tall as he, who scare the unhappy man until he loses all control over himself, throws down his tools, and rushes off as fast as he can possibly go. The fright often makes him so ill that he has to lie for days in bed. Should he ever summon up courage to return to the spot, he will find the pit refilled, and no traces to show that the ground had been disturbed.

Knockers (pronounced knackers) are mine fairies, popularly supposed to be (as related elsewhere) the souls of the Jews who crucified Christ, sent by the Romans to work as slaves in the tin



mines. In proof of this, they are said never to have been heard at work on Saturdays, nor other Jewish festivals. They are compelled to sing carols at Christmas time. Small pieces of smelted tin found in old smelting-works are known as "Jew's bowels." These fairies haunt none but the richest tin mines, and many are reputed to have been discovered by their singing and knocking underground; and miners think when they hear them that it is a sign of good luck, because when following their noises they often chance on lodes of good ore. When a miner goes into an "old level" and sees a bright light, it is a sure sign that he will find tin there. Knockers like spriggans are very ugly beings, and, if you do not treat them in a friendly spirit, very vindictive. "As stiff as Barker's knee" is a common saying in Cornwall; he having in some way angered the knockers, either by speaking of them disrespectfully or by not leaving (as was formerly the custom) a bit of his dinner on the ground for them (for good luck), they in revenge threw all their tools in his lap, which lamed him for the rest of his life. Mr. Bottrell tells a similar story of a man named Tom Trevorrow, who when he was working underground heard the knockers just before him, and roughly told them "to be quiet and go." Upon which, a showers of stones fell suddenly around him, and gave him a dreadful fright. He seems however to have quickly got over it, and soon after when eating his dinner, a number of squeaking voices sang,

"Tom Trevorrow! Tom Trevorrow!  
 Leave some of thy 'fuggan' \* for bucca  
 Or bad luck to thee to-morrow!"

But Tom took no notice and ate up every crumb, upon which the knockers changed their song to

"Tommy Trevorrow! Tommy Trevorrow!  
 We'll send thee bad luck to-morrow;  
 Thou old curmudgeon, to eat all thy fuggan,  
 And not leave a 'didjan' † for bucca."

After this such persistent ill-luck followed him that he was obliged to leave the mine.

\* Fuggan, a cake made of flour and raisins often eaten by miners for dinner.  
 † Didjan, a tiny bit.

Bucca is the name of a spirit that in Cornwall it was once thought necessary to propitiate. Fishermen left a fish on the sands for bucca, and in the harvest a piece of bread at lunch-time was thrown over the left shoulder, and a few drops of beer spilled on the ground for him to ensure good-luck. Bucca, or bucca-boo, was, until very lately (and I expect in some places still is) the terror of children, who were often when crying told "that if they did not stop he would come and carry them off." It was also the name of a ghost; but nowadays to call a person a "great bucca" simply implies that you think him a fool. There were two buccas—

" 'Bucca Gwidden,' the white, or good spirit,  
 'Bucca Dhu,' the black, malevolent one."

Miners, too, had some superstition in regard to snails, known in Cornwall as "bulhorns," for if they met one on their way to work they always dropped a bit of their dinner or some grease from their lantern before him for good-luck.

Although Cornish miners, or "tinnners" as they are generally called, are a very intelligent, and since the days of Wesley a religious body of men, many of these old-world beliefs still linger. To this day it is considered unlucky to make the form of a cross on the sides of a mine, and when underground you may on no account whistle for fear of vexing the knockers and bringing ill-luck, but you may sing or even swear \* without producing any bad effect. Down one mine-shaft a black goat is often seen to descend, but is never met below; in another mine a white rabbit forbodes an accident. A hand clasping the ladder and coming down with, or after a miner, foretells misfortune or death. This superstition prevails, too, in the slate quarries of the eastern part of the county.

The miners in the slate-quarries of Delabole have a tradition that the right hand of a miner, who committed suicide, is sometimes seen following them down the ladders, grasping the rings as they let them go, holding a miner's light between the thumb and finger. It forebodes ill to the seer.—Esmè Stuart. See "Tamsins Choice," *Longman*, June, 1883.

Miraculous dreams are related; warnings to some miners, which

\* Some say you must neither whistle nor swear, but you may sing and laugh.

have prevented on particular days their going down below with their comrades, when serious accidents have happened and several have lost their lives. Rich lodes, too, have been discovered through the dreams of fortunate women, who have been shown in them where their male relatives should dig for the hidden treasure.

Miners still observe some quaint old customs; a horse-shoe is sometimes placed on a convenient part of the machinery, which each, as he goes down to his day's work, touches four times to ensure good-luck. These must be "Tributers" (pronounced trib-ut-ers), who work on "trib-ut," when a percentage is paid on ores raised; in contradistinction to "Tut-workers," who are paid by the job.

Last year, 1886, at St. Just, in Penrith, two men of Wheal Drea had their hats burnt one Monday morning, after the birth of their first children.

Three hundred fathoms below the ground at Cook's Kitchen mine, near Camborne, swarms of flies may be heard buzzing, called by the men, for some unknown reason, "Mother Margarets." From being bred in the dark, they have a great dislike to light.

Swallows in olden times were thought to spend the winter in deep, old disused Cornish tin-works; also in the sheltered nooks of its cliffs and cairns. It is the custom here to jump on seeing the first in spring.

A water-wagtail, in Cornwall a "tinner," perching on a window-sill, is the sign of a visit from a stranger.

Carew says—"The Cornish tynners hold a strong imagination, that in the withdrawing of Noah's flood to the sea the same took his course from east to west, violently breaking vp, and forcibly carrying with it the earth, trees and rocks, which lay anything loosely neere the vpper face of the ground. To confirme the likelihood of which supposed truth, they doe many times digge vp whole and huge timber-trees, which they conceiue at that deluge to haue been ouerturned and whelmed."

Miners frequently in conversation make use of technical proverbs, such as "Capel rides a good horse." Capel is schorl, and indicates the presence of tin. "It's a wise man that knows tin" alludes to the various forms it takes. To an old tune they sing the words—

“Here’s to the devil, with his wooden spade and shovel,  
Digging tin by the bushel, with his tail cocked up.”

And on the signboard of a public-house in West Cornwall a few years ago (and probably still) might be read—

“Come all good Cornish boys \* walk in,  
Here’s brandy, rum, and shrub, and gin;  
You can’t do less than drink success  
To copper, fish, and tin.”

Miners believe that mundic (iron pyrites) being applied to a wound immediately cures it; of which they are so sure that they use no other remedy than washing it in the water that runs through the mundic ore.—*A Complete History of Cornwall*, 1730.

It is an easy transition from mines to fish, the next staple industry of Cornwall, and to the superstitions of its fishermen and sailors. Fish is a word in West Cornwall applied more particularly to pilchards (pelchurs). They frequent our coasts in the autumn.

“When the corn is in the shock,  
Then the fish are on the rock.”

And if on a close foggy day in that season you ask the question,—“Do you think it will rain?” the answer often is—“No! it is only het (heat) and pelchurs,” that sort of weather being favourable for catching them.

“A good year for fleas is a good year for fish,” the proverb says; and when eating one the flesh must not be always taken off the bone from the tail to the head. To eat them from head to tail is unlucky, and would soon drive the fish from the shore. There are many other wise sayings about pilchards; but I will only give one more couplet, which declares that—

“They are food, money, and light,  
All in one night.”†

Should pilchards when in bulk ‡ make a squeaking noise, they are crying for more, and another shoal will quickly be in the bay.

\* All men are boys in Cornwall.

† Train-oil is expressed from them.

‡ To “bulk” pilchards is to place them, after they have been rubbed with salt, in large regular heaps, alternately heads and tails.

Fishermen dread going near the spot where vessels have been wrecked, as the voices of the drowned often call to them there, especially before a storm. Sometimes their dead comrades call them by their names, and then they know for certain that they will soon die, and often when drowning the ghosts of their friends appear to them. They are seen by them sometimes taking the form of animals.

Mr. Bottrell speaks of a farmer's wife who was warned of her son's death by the milk in the pans ranged round her dairy being agitated like the sea waves in a storm. There is a legend common to many districts of a wrecker who rushed into the sea and perished, after a voice had been heard to call thrice, "The hour is come, but not the man." He was carried off by the devil in a phantom ship seen in the offing. But ships haunted with seamen's ghosts are rarely lost, as the spirits give the sailors warning of storms and other dangers.

In a churchyard near the Land's End is the grave of a drowned captain, covered by a flat tombstone; proceeding from it formerly the sound of a ghostly bell was often heard to strike four and eight bells. The tale goes that when his vessel struck on some rocks close to the shore, the captain saw all his men safely off in their boat, but refused himself to leave the ship, and went down in her exactly at midnight, as he was striking the time. His body was recovered, and given decent burial, but his poor soul had no rest. It is said that an unbelieving sailor once went out of curiosity to try if he could hear this bell; he did, and soon after sailed on a voyage from which he never returned.

Spectre ships are seen before wrecks; they are generally shrouded in mist; but the crew of one was said to consist of two men, a woman, and a dog. These ships vanish at some well-known point. Jack Harry's lights, too, herald a storm; they are so called from the man who first saw them. These appear on a phantom vessel resembling the one that will be lost.

The apparition of a lady carrying a lanthorn always on one part of the Cornish coast foretells a storm and shipwrecks. She is supposed to be searching for her child, who was drowned, whilst she was saved, because she was afraid to trust it out of her arms. For the legends

of "The Lady of the Vow" and "The Hooper or Hooter of Sennen Cove, see *ante*, p. 99.\* Mermaids are still believed in, and it is very bad to offend them, for by their spite harbours have been filled up with sand. They, however, kindly take idiot children under their protection. The lucky finder of one of their combs or glasses has the power (as long as it remains in his possession) of charming away diseases.

Boats are said to come to a sudden standstill when over the spot where lies the body of a drowned man, for whom search is being made. Sailors regard many things as bad omens, such "as a loaf of bread turned upside-down on a table." (This will bring some ship to distress.) They will not begin a voyage on Childermas-day, nor allow a piece of spar-stone (quartz) to be carried on board a vessel: that would ensure her striking on a rock. Of course, they neither whistle when there, nor speak of hares, two most unlucky things; and should they meet one of these animals on their way to the place of embarkation they think it far wiser to turn back home, and put off sailing for a tide. Hares (as already noticed) play a great part in Cornish folk-lore. The following amusing story I had from a friend:—"Jimmy Treglown, a noted poacher living in a village of West Cornwall, became converted at a revival meeting; he was tempted on his way to class-meeting one Sunday morning soon after by the devil in the form of a beautiful hare. Jimmy said, 'There thee art, my dear; but I waan't tooch thee on a Sunday—nor yet on a weeky day, for that matter.' He went briskly on his way for a few paces, and then, like Lot's wife, he was tempted to look behind him. Alas! in Jimmy's own words, 'There she was in her seat, looking lovely. I tooked up a stone, and dabbed at her. Away she runned, and fare-ee well, religion. Mine runned away with her. I went home, and never went to class no more.† You see, it was the devil and 'simmen to me' (seeming) I heard 'un laugh and say, 'Ah! ah! Jimmy, boy, I had thee on the hip then. Thee must confess thee'st had a fair fall.' So I gave in, and never

\* And "Cornish Feasts and Feasten Customs."

† The illiterate Cornish often double their negatives: "I don't know, not I," "I'll never do it, no, never no more."

went nigh the 'people' (Wesleyans) no more. Nobody should fire at hares of this sort, except with a silver bullet; they often appear as white, but the devil knowed I couldn't be fooled with a white 'un.' Nothing is too ridiculous to be told of hares. Another old man from St. Just (still living) once recited this anecdote in our kitchen, and from his grave manner evidently expected it to be believed:—"I was out walking (he said) one Sunday morning, when I saw a hare in a field which I longed to have; so I shied a bit of 'codgy wax' (cobbler's wax), the only thing I had in my pocket, at un, when he ran away. What was my surprise on getting over a stile to see two hares in the next field face to face, the 'codgy wax' had stuck to the nose of the first, and he in his fright had runned against the other, and was holden 'un fast, too. So I quietly broke the necks of both, and carried em home."

"The grapes are sour" is in Cornwall often changed to "Lev-un go! he's dry eaten after all," as the old man said when he couldn't catch the hare.

Sailors and fishermen naturally have many weather proverbs, of which I will give a few:—

"A north wind is a broom for the Channel."

"A Saturday's moon is a sailor's curse."

"A Saturday's and Sunday's moon."

"Come once in seven years too soon."

"Between twelve and two you'll see what the day will do."

"A southerly wind with a fog bring an easterly wind in 'snog' (with certainty)."

"Friday's noon is Sunday's doom."

"Friday and the week are never alike," &c. &c.

"Weather dogs" are pillars of light coloured like the rainbow, which appear on the horizon generally over the sea in unsettled weather, and always foretell storms. The inland dwellers of Cornwall have also their wise sayings on this subject. Rooks darting around a rookery, sparrows twittering, donkeys braying, are signs of rain. Cats running wildly about a house are said to bring storms on their tails. Some of their omens are simply ludicrous, such as "We may look for wet when a cat, in washing its face, puts its paw over its

ear," or when "hurlers" (small sparks) play about the bars of a grate. A cock crowing on a stone is a sign of fine weather; on the doorstep, of a stranger. But here it is well known "That fools are weather-wise," and "That those that are weather-wise are rarely otherwise."

In West Cornwall not very long ago farmers, before they began to break up a grass field or plough for sowing, always turned the faces of the cattle attached to the plough towards the west and solemnly said, "In the name of God let us begin," and then with the sun's course proceeded on their work. Everything in this county, even down to such a small thing as taking the cream off the milk-pans set round the dairy, must for luck be done from left to right. Invalids, on going out for the first time after an illness, must walk with, not against, the sun, for fear of a relapse.

Farmers here are taught that if they wish to thrive they must "rise with the crow (crow), go to bed with the yow (ewe)," not be "like Solomon the wise, who was loth to go to bed and loth to rise," for does not "the master's eye make the mare fat?" "A February spring," according to one proverb, "is not worth a pin," and another says "a dry east wind raises the spring." Sayings current in other counties, such as "a peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom," are also quoted here, but those I shall not give. There should be as many frosty mornings in May as in March, for "a hot May makes a fat church-hay." A wet June makes a dry September, and there is always a black month before Christmas. The farmer too is told—

"A rainbow in the morn, put your hook in the corn.  
A rainbow in the eve, put your hook in the sheave."

A swarm of bees in May is worth a "yow" (ewe) and lamb same day. It is considered lucky in these parts for a stray swarm to settle near your house; and if you throw a handkerchief over it you may claim it as your own. The inside of hives should be rubbed with "scawnsy buds" (elderflowers) to prevent a new swarm from leaving them. Honey should be always taken from the hive on St. Bartholomew's Day, he being the patron saint of bees. Of course all the principal events happening in the families to whom they belonged, in



this as in other counties, were formerly whispered to them, that the bees might not think themselves neglected, and leave the place in anger. At a recent meeting of the Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society a gentleman mentioned that when a boy he had seen thirty hives belonging to Mr. Joshua Fox, of Tregedna, tied up in crape (an universal practice) because of a death in the Fox family. Another at the same time said that when, some years since, the landlady of the First and Last Inn, at the Land's End, died, the bird-cages and flower-pots were also tied with crape, to prevent the birds and plants from dying. Snails as well as bees are thought here to bring luck, for "the house is blest where snails do rest," and children on meeting them in their path, for some reason stamp their feet and say,

"Snail ! snail ! come out of your hole,  
Or I will beat you black as a coal."

Another Cornish farmer's superstition is that "ducks won't lay until they have drunk 'Lide' (March) water;" and the wife of one in 1880 declared "that if a goose saw a Lent lily (daffodil) before hatching its goslings it would, when they came forth, destroy them." Some witty thieves, many years ago, having stolen twelve geese from a clergyman in the eastern part of the county, tied twelve pennies and this doggrel around the gander's neck,

"Parson Peard, be not afeard,  
Nor take it much in anger.  
We've bought your geese at a penny a-piece,  
And left the money with the gander."

Moles in this county are known as "wants," and once in the Land's End district I overtook an old man and asked him what had made so many hillocks in a field through which we were passing. His answer was, "What you rich people never have in your houses, 'wants.'"

To this day in Cornwall, when anything unforeseen happens to our small farmers or they have the misfortune to lose by sickness some of their stock, they still think that they are "ill-wished," and start off (often on long journeys) to consult a "pellar," or wise man, sometimes called "a white witch" (which term is here used indiscriminately for persons of both sexes). The following I had from a dairy-

man I know, who about twelve years ago quarrelled with a domestic servant, a woman living in a neighbouring house. Soon after, from some reason, two or three of his cows died; he was quite sure, he told me, that she had "overlooked" and "ill-wished" him. To ease his mind he had consulted a "pellar" about the matter, who had described her accurately to him, and, for payment, removed the "spell" (I do not know what rites were used), telling him to look at his watch and note the hour, as he would find, when he returned home, that a cow he had left sick would have begun at that moment to recover (which he says it did). The "pellar" also added, "The woman who has 'ill-wished' you will be swaddled in fire and lapped in water"; and by a strange coincidence she emigrated soon after, and was lost in the ill-fated *Cospatrick*, that was burnt at sea.

Water from a font is often stolen to sprinkle "ill-wished" persons or things.

The two next examples were communicated to me by a friend: "Some twenty-six years ago a farmer in a neighbouring village (West Cornwall) sustained during one season continual losses from his cows dying of indigestion, known as 'loss of cud,' 'horn-bloom,' &c. After consulting an old farrier called Armstrong he was induced to go to a 'pellar' in Exeter. His orders were to go home, and, on nearing his farm, he would see an old woman in a field hoeing turnips, and that she was the party who had cast the 'evil eye' on him. When he saw her he was to lay hold of her and accuse her of the crime, then tear off some of her dress, take it to his farm, and burn it with some of the hair from the tails of his surviving stock. These directions were fully carried out, and his bad health (caused by worry) improved, and he lost no more cows. A spotted clover that grew luxuriantly that summer was no doubt the cause of the swelling." "Another farmer in the same village eighteen years since lost all his feeding cattle from pleuro-pneumonia; believing them to be 'ill-wished' by a woman, he also consulted the Exeter 'pellar.' He brought home some bottles of elixir, potent against magic, and made an image of dough, pierced it from the nape of the neck downward, in the line of the spine, with a very large blanket-pin. In order to make the agonies of the woman with the 'evil eye' excruciating in

the last degree, dough and pin were then burnt in a fire of hazel and ash. The cure failed, as any one acquainted with the disease might have forecast."

Besides those remedies already mentioned for curing cattle, you may employ these :—"Take some blood from the sick animal by wounding him ; let the blood fall on some straw carefully held to the place ; not a drop must be lost ; burn the straw, when the ill-wisher will be irresistibly drawn to the spot ; then by violence you can compel him to take off the spell." Or, "Bleed one animal to death to save the whole herd."

A local newspaper, in 1883 (*Cornishman*), gives the following :—"Superstitions die hard.—A horse died the other day on a farm in the neighbourhood of St. Ives. Its carcase was dragged on a Sunday away up to the granite rock basins and weather-worn bosses of Tre-croben hill, and there burnt, in order to drive away the evil spell, or ill-wishing, which afflicted the farm where the animal belonged." I, a few years since, saw a dying cat taken out of a house, on a mat, by two servants, that it might not die inside and bring ill-luck. In 1865 a farmer in Portreath sacrificed a calf, by burning, for the purpose of removing a disease which had long followed his horses and cows. And in another case a farmer burnt a living lamb, to save, as he said, "his flock from spells which had been cast on them."—Robert Hunt.

The *Cornishman*, in another paragraph, says :—"Our Summercourt (East Cornwall) correspondent witnessed an amusing affair on Thursday morning (April, 1883). Seeing a crowd in the street, he asked the reason, and found that a young lady was about to perform the feat of *throwing a pig's nose over a house for good luck!* This is how it was done. The lady took the nose of a pig, that was killed the day before, in her right hand ; stood with her back to the house, and threw the nose over her head, and over the house, into the back garden. Had she failed in the attempt her luck was supposed to be bad." "Whet your knife on Sunday, you'll skin on Monday," is a very old Perran rhythm and St. Hilary (West Cornwall) superstition, so that, however blunt your knife may be, you must use it as it is, lest by sharpening it you bring ill-luck on the farmer, and he lose a sheep or

bullock." Mr. T. Q. Couch, *W. Antiquary*, 1883, says of one, "He is an old-fashioned man, and, amongst his other 'whiddles' (whims), keeps a goat amongst his cattle, for the sake of keeping his cows from slipping their calves." Branches of carr (mountain ash) were, in the east of the county, hung over the cattle in their stalls to prevent their being "ill-wished," also carried in the pocket as a cure and prevention of rheumatism.

The belief in witchcraft in West Cornwall is much more general than most people imagine. Several cases have lately come under my own notice; one, that of a man-servant in our employ who broke a blood-vessel, and for a long time was so ill that his life was despaired of. He was most carefully attended by a Penzance physician, who came to see him three times a day. But directly that his strength began to return he asked permission to go to Redruth to consult a "pellar," as he was quite sure that he had been "overlooked" and "ill-wished." An old Penzance man, afflicted with rheumatism, who gained his living by selling fruit in the streets, fancied himself ill-wished. He went to Helston to see a "wiseman" residing there, to whom he paid seven-and-sixpence, with a further promise of five pounds on the removal of the "spell." As he was too poor to pay this himself a brother agreed to do it for him, but somehow failed to perform his contract. Now the poor old man thinks that the pellar's ill-wishes are added to his former pains.

The "pellars" wore formerly magical rings, with a blue stone in them, said to have been formed by snakes breathing on hazel-twigs. Our country-people often searched for these stones. Many are the charms against ill-wishing worn by the ignorant. I will quote some mentioned by Mr. Bottrell: "A strip of parchment inscribed with the following words forming a four-sided acrostic:—

S A T O R  
A R E P O  
T E N E T  
O P E R A  
R O T A S

"At the time of an old lady's decease, a little while ago, on her breast was found a small silk bag containing several charms, among

others a piece of parchment, about three inches square, having written on one side of it 'Nalgah' (in capital letters); under this is a pen-and-ink drawing something like a bird with two pairs of wings, a pair extended and another folded beneath them. The creature appears to be hovering and at the same time brooding on a large egg, sustained by one of its legs, whilst it holds a smaller egg at the extremity of its other leg, which is outstretched and long. Its head, round and small, is unlike that of a bird. From the rudeness of the sketch and its faded state it is difficult to trace all the outlines. Under this singular figure is the word 'Tetragrammaton' (in capitals); on the reverse in large letters—

'Jehovah.'

'Jah, Eloim.'

'Shadday.'

'Adonay.'

'Have mercy on a poor woman.'

"A pellar of great repute in the neighbourhood tells me that this is inscribed with two charms, that Nalgah is the figure only. The Abracadabra is also supplied, the letters arranged in the usual way. Another potent spell is the rude draft of the planetary signs for the Sun, Jupiter, and Venus, followed by a cross, pentagram, and a figure formed by a perpendicular line and a divergent one at each side of it united at the bottom. Under them is written, 'Who-soever beareth these tokens will be fortunate, and need fear no evil.' The charms are folded in a paper on which is usually written, 'By the help of the Lord these will do thee good,' and inclosed in a little bag to be worn on the breast."

People in good health visited these pellar every spring to get their charms renewed, and bed-ridden people who kept theirs under their "pillow-beres" were then visited by the pellar for the same purpose. In every small Cornish village in olden times (and the race is not yet extinct) lived a charmer or "white witch." Their powers were not quite as great as those of a pellar, but they were thoroughly believed in and consulted on every occasion for every complaint. They were not only able to cure diseases, but they could, when offended, "overlook" and ill-wish the offender, bringing ill-luck on

him, and also on his family and farm-stock. The seventh son of the seventh son, or seventh daughter of the seventh daughter, were born with this gift of charming, and made the most noted pellars; but any one might become a witch who touched a Logan rock nine times at midnight. Places mentioned elsewhere, as being in Cornwall their favourite resorts, and where they went, it is said, riding on ragwort stems, instead of the traditional broomsticks.

Or, he might, says another writer, use the following charm: "Go to the chancel of a church to sacrament, hide away the bread from the hands of the priest, at midnight carry it around the church from south to north, crossing east three times. The third time a big toad, open-mouthed, will be met, put the bread in it; as soon as swallowed he will breathe three times upon the man, and from that time he will become a witch. Known by five black spots diagonally placed under the tongue." There is also a strange glare in the eye of a person who can "overlook," and the eyelids are always red.

They could in this county change themselves into toads, as well as hares. Mr. Robert Hunt relates the story of one who met her death in that form, and Mr. T. Q. Couch tells the tale of a sailor who was a "witch" \* which received several injuries whilst in the shape of that animal. When a very small child, having a "kennel" (an ulcer) on my eye, I was unknown to my parents taken by an old servant to a Penzance "charmer," who then made a great deal of money by her profession. All I can remember about it is, that she breathed on it, made some curious passes with her hands and muttered some incantation.

About twelve years ago, a woman who lived in the "west country" (Land's End district) as well as being a "white witch was a famous knitster," and we amongst others frequently gave her work. When she brought it back she was treated by our maids, who lived in great fear of her "ill-wishing" them, to the best our kitchen could afford, and many were the marvellous stories she told me of her power to staunch blood, &c., when doctors failed. It was not necessary for her to see the person; she could cure them sitting by her fireside if they were miles away.

\* See *ante*.

A part of Launceston Castle is locally known as Witch's Tower, from the tradition that one was burnt at its foot, no grass grows on the spot; another is said to have met with the same fate on a flat stone close to St. Austell market-house.

I will give some of their charms culled from various sources, and remedies for diseases still used in Cornwall:—Take three burning sticks from the hearth of the “overlooker,” make the patient cross over them three times and then extinguish with water. Place nine bramble-leaves in a basin of “Holy Well's water, pass each leaf over and from the diseased part, repeating three times to each leaf. Three virgins came from the east, one brought fire, the others brought frost. Out fire! In frost! In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” Or take a stick of burning furze from the hearth, pass over and above the diseased part, repeating the above nine times. If you can succeed by any means in drawing blood from the “illwisher” you are certain to break and remove the spell. Stick pins into an apple or potatoe, carry it in your pocket, and as it shrivels the “illwisher” will feel an ache from every pin, but this I fancy does not do the person “overlooked” any good. Another authority says, “Stick pins into a bullock's heart, when the illwisher will feel a stab for every one put in and in self defence take off the curse.”

A friend writes, “An old man called Uncle Will Jelbart, who had been with the Duke of Kent in America, and also a very long time in the Peninsula, about forty years ago lived in West Cornwall; he had a small pension, and in addition made a good income by charming warts, wildfire (erysipelas), cataracts, &c. He used to spit three times and breathe three times on the part affected, muttering ‘In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost I bid thee begone.’ For cataract he pricked the small white ‘dew-snail’ (slug) found about four a.m., with a hawthorn spine, and let a drop fall into the eye; and in the case of skin diseases occasionally supplemented the charm with an ointment made of the juice extracted from house-leeks and ‘raw cream’; he sometimes changed the words and repeated those which with slight variations are known all over Cornwall:

'Three ladies (or virgins) come from the east :  
 One with fire and two with frost ;  
 Out with thee, fire, and in with thee, frost,  
 In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.'

This is often said nine times over a scald. In prose it begins thus, 'As I passed over the river Jordan, I met with Christ. He said, What aileth thee? Oh Lord, my flesh doth burn. The Lord said unto me, Two angels,' &c.

A lady once told me that about forty years ago she was taken to a "charmer" who stood in a Cornish market-place on fixed days, to have her warts cured. The remedies for this childish complaint are very numerous. I once had my forehead rubbed with a piece of stolen beef, which was then buried in a garden, to send them away, the idea being that as the beef decayed the warts would fall off or dwindle gradually. There are two or three other ways of getting rid of them of a similar kind. Touch each wart with a new pin, enclose them in a bottle, either bury them in a newly-made grave of the opposite sex, or at four cross-roads; as the pins rust, the warts will disappear. Or, touch them with a knot made in a piece of string, there should be as many knots as there are warts, bury it, when the rope decays so will the warts. The two next are selfish remedies. Touch each wart with a pebble, put the stones in a bag, throw them away, and the finder will get them and they will leave you. Or, in coming out of church, wish them on some part of another person's body (or on a tree); they will go from you and appear on him, or on the spot named. One method employed by professional "charmners" is to take two pieces of charred stick from a fire, form them into a cross and place them on the warts and repeat one of the formulæ above quoted. Yet another is to wash the hands in the moon's rays focussed in a dry metal basin, saying,

"I wash my hands in this thy dish,  
 Oh man in the moon, do grant my wish,  
 And come and take away this."

When pricked by a thorn, use one of the following charms:—

"Christ was of a virgin born:  
 And he was pricked by a thorn,  
 And it did never 'bell' (fester),  
 And I trust in Jesus this never will."



Or,

“ Christ was crowned with thorns,  
The thorns did bleed but did not rot,  
No more shall thy—(mentioning the part affected):  
In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

In prose: “ When Christ was upon the middle earth, the Jews pricked him, his blood sprung up into heaven, his flesh never rotted nor ‘ fustered,’ no more I hope will not thine. In the name, ” &c.—From Mr. T. Q. Couch, who gives two others very similar.

#### FOR TETTERS.

“ Tetter, tetter, thou hast nine sisters,  
God bless thee, flesh, and preserve thee, bone ;  
Perish thou, tetter, and be thou gone:  
In the name, ” &c.

“ Tetter, tetter, thou hast eight sisters, ” &c.

This charm is thus continued until it comes to the last, which is, —

“ Tetter, tetter, thou hast no sister, ” &c.—Bottrell.

#### TOOTHACHE.

In prose and verse slightly varied, common in all parts of the county, —

“ Christ passed by his brother’s door,  
Saw Peter his brother lying on the floor ;  
What aileth thee, brother,  
Pain in thy teeth ?  
Thy teeth shall pain thee no more ;  
In the name of, ” &c.

This is to be worn in a bag around the neck. Mr. T. Q. Couch gives this charm in prose; it begins thus, “ Peter sat at the gate of the Temple, and Christ said unto him, What aileth thee ? ” &c. Another remedy against toothache is, always in the morning to begin dressing by putting the stocking on the left foot.—Through Rev. S. Rundle.

A knuckle-bone is often carried in the pocket as a cure and preventive of cramp. I once saw an old woman turn out her pocket;

amongst its contents, as well as the knuckle-bone, was the tip of an ox-tongue kept for good-luck.

Slippers on going to bed are when taken off, for the same complaint, often placed under the bed with the soles upwards, or on their heels against the post of the bed with their toes up. The following is from Mr. T. Q. Couch: "The cramp is keenless, Mary was sinless, when she bore Jesus: let the cramp go away in the name of Jesus." All the charms published by the above-named author in his *History of Polperro* were taken from a manuscript-book, which belonged to a white witch.

When a foot has "gone to sleep" I have often seen people wet their forefingers in their mouths, stoop and draw the form of a cross on it. This is said to be an infallible remedy. Mr. Robert Hunt has a rather similar cure for hiccough. "Wet the forefinger of the right hand with spittle, and cross the front of the left shoe (or boot) three times, repeating the Lord's Prayer backwards." The most popular cure for this with children is a heaping spoonful of moist sugar. A sovereign remedy for this and almost every complaint is a small piece of a stale Good Friday bun grated into a glass of cold water. This bun is hung up in the kitchen from one year to the other. Bread baked on this day never grows mouldy.

#### FOR A STRAIN.

"Christ rode over the bridge,  
Christ rode under the bridge;  
Vein to vein, strain to strain,  
I hope, God, will take it back again."

#### FOR AGUE.

When our Saviour saw the cross, whereon he was to be crucified, his body did shake. The Jews said, "Hast thou an ague?" Our Saviour said, "He that keepeth this in mind, thought, or writing, shall neither be troubled with ague or fever."

#### FOR WILDFIRE (Erysipelas).

"Christ, he walketh over the land,  
Carried the wildfire in his hand,<sup>3</sup>  
He rebuked the fire, and bid it stand;  
Stand, wildfire, stand (three times repeated),  
In the name of," &c.—T. Q. Couch.

Mr. Robert Hunt gives in his book on *Old Cornwall* a Latin charm for the staunching of blood. I find, however, on making inquiries that it is not the one generally used, which is as follows :

“ Christ was born in Bethlehem,  
 Baptised in the river Jordan ;  
 There he digged a well,  
 And turned the water against the hill,  
 So shall thy blood stand still,  
 In the name,” &c.

There are other versions all much alike; a prose one runs thus, “ Baptised in the river Jordan, when the water was wild, the water was good, the water stood, so shall thy blood. In the name,” &c. —T. Q. C.

The Rev. S. Rundle says a charmer once told him the charm for staunching blood consisted in saying a verse from the Psalms ; but she could not read, and he was inclined to believe the form was, “ Jesus came to the river Jordan, and said, Stand, and it stood, and so I bid thee, blood, stand. In the name,” &c. For bleeding at the nose, a door-key is often placed against the back. Cuts are plugged with cobwebs; flue from a man’s hat, tobacco leaves, and occasionally filled with salt.

Club-moss is considered good for eye diseases. On the third day of the moon, when the thin crescent is seen for the first time, show it the knife with which the moss for the charm is to be cut, and repeat,

“ As Christ healed the issue of blood,  
 So I bid thee, begone,  
 In the name of,” &c.

Mr. Robert Hunt says,

“ Do thou cut what thou cuttest for good !”

“ At sun-down, having carefully washed the hands, the club-moss is to be cut kneeling. It is to be carefully wrapped in a white cloth, and subsequently boiled in water taken from the spring nearest its place of growth. This may be used as a fomentation. Or the club-moss made into an ointment with butter made from the milk of a new cow.”

A “ stye ” on the eye is often stroked nine times with a cat’s tail ; with a wedding ring taken from a dead woman’s, or a silver one

from drowned man's, hand. The belief in the efficacy of a dead hand in curing diseases in Cornwall is marvellous. I, in a short paper read at an antiquarian meeting, gave this instance, related to me by a medical man about ten years ago (now dead). A day or two after a number of other cases in proof of my statement appeared, to my surprise, in our local papers, which, as well as my own, I will transcribe. "Once I attended a poor woman's child for an obstinate case of sore eyes. One day when leaving the house the mother said to me, 'Is there nothing more, doctor, I can do for my little girl?' I, jokingly, answered, 'Nothing, unless you care to stroke them with a dead man's hand.' About a week after I met the woman in the streets, who stopped me, and said, 'My child's eyes are getting better at last, doctor.' I expressed myself pleased that the ointment I had given her was doing good. To my astonishment, she replied, 'Oh, it is not that, we never used it, we took your advice about the dead man's hand.' Until she recalled it to my memory, I had quite forgotten my foolish speech." "I am one of those who can bear testimony to the fact of a cure having been effected by the means above-named. I was born with a disfigurement on my upper lip. My mother felt a great anxiety about this, so my nurse proposed that a dead man's hand should be passed seven times over my lip. I was taken to the house of one Robin Gendall, Causeway-head, Penzance, who at that time was lying dead, and his hand was passed over my lip in the manner named. By slow degrees my friends had the satisfaction of seeing that the charm had taken effect."—*Octogenarian*.

"I may add my testimony to Miss Courtney's remarks as to the belief in Cornwall in the virtue of the touch of a diseased part by a dead man's hand. A case came under my knowledge at Penzance of a child who had from birth a peculiar tuberos formation at the junction of the nose with the forehead, which the medical men would not cut for fear of severing veins. The child was taken by her mother to a friend's house, in which were lying the remains of a young man who had just died from consumption. The deceased's hand was passed over the malformation seven times, and it soon began to grow smaller and smaller." "I have myself seen the child since Miss Courtney read her paper (November, 1881), and, though

the mark is still apparent, I am assured it is surely, if slowly, disappearing. A relation of mine also tells me that, like Miss Courtney, she was taken to the Penzance witch for the purpose of having a 'stye' removed from one of her eyes by charming."—Tramp.

I was told of many other cases—one by another surgeon; but it would be useless to repeat them. I will end with one I have taken from *Notes and Queries*, December, 1859:—

"A lady who was staying lately at Penzance attended a funeral, and noticed that whilst the clergyman was reading the burial service a woman forced her way through the pall-bearers to the edge of the grave. When he came to the passage, 'Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' she dropped a white cloth upon the coffin, closed her eyes, and apparently said a prayer. On making inquiries as to the cause of this proceeding, this lady found that a superstition exists amongst the peasantry in that part that if a person with a sore be taken secretly to a corpse, the dead hand passed over the sore place, and the bandage afterwards be dropped upon the coffin during the reading of the burial service, a perfect cure will be the result. This woman had a child with a bad leg. and she had followed this superstition with a firm belief in its efficacy. The peasants, also, to the present day wear charms, believing they will protect them from sickness and other evils. The wife of the clergyman of the parish was very charitable in attending the sick and dispensing medicines, and one day a woman brought her a child having sore eyes to have them charmed, having more faith in that remedy than in medicines. She was greatly surprised to find that medicines only were given to her."—E. R.

There is no virtue in the dead hand of a near relation. A curious old troth plight was formerly practised in Cornwall: The couple broke a wedding ring taken from the finger of a corpse, and each kept one half. The editor of a local paper (*Cornishman*) once obtained a piece of rope, with which a man was hanged, for a poor woman who had walked fourteen miles to Bodmin in the hopes of getting it, that she might effect the cure of her sore eyes.

The Rev. S. Rundle writes that "a Cornish surgeon recommended a charmer as being more efficacious than himself in curing shingles.

According to the same authority, a liquid composed of bramble and butter-dock leaves is poured on the place, whilst a light stick is waved over the decoction by the charmer, who repeats an incantation." It is popularly supposed in Cornwall that should shingles meet around your waist, you would die. The cures and charms against epilepsy are also very numerous, and very generally used here. Thirty pence are collected at the church door by the person afflicted, from one of the opposite sex, changed for sacrament money (silver), and made into a ring to be worn day and night. Very lately, at St. Just in Penwith, a young woman begged from young men pennies to buy a silver ring, a remedy which she believed would cure her fits. Another charm, which it requires a person of strong nerves to perform, is to walk thrice around a church a midnight, then enter and stand before the altar. In connection with this rite the Rev. S. Rundle relates the following :—"At Crowan (a village in West Cornwall), an epileptic subject entered the church at midnight. As he was groping his way through the pitchy dark, his heart suddenly leaped, and almost stood still. He uttered shriek upon shriek, for his hand had grasped a man's head. He thought it was the head of the famous Sir John St. Aubyn. He was removed in a fainting state, and it was then discovered that he had seized the head of the sexton, who had come in to see that nothing was done to frighten the man. The unfortunate fellow never recovered from the shock, but died in a lunatic asylum." "A middle-aged Camborne man was subject to violent fits until two years ago, when some one told him to kill a toad, put one of its legs in a bag, and wear it suspended by a string around his neck. He did so, and has never had a fit since."—*Cornishman*, December, 1881.

Toads are also worn as charms for other diseases in this county :—"On the 27th July, 1875, I was lodging with a very intelligent grazier and horse-dealer, at Tintagel, Cornwall, when he was knocked down by a very serious attack of quinsy, to which he had been subject for many years. He pulled through the crisis; and on being sufficiently recovered he betook himself to a 'wise woman' at Camelford. She prescribed for him as follows :—"Get a live toad, fasten a string around its throat, and hang it up till the body drops from the head; then tie the string around your own neck, and never

take it off, night or day, till your fiftieth birthday. You'll never have quinsey again. When I left Tintagel, I understood that my landlord, greatly relieved in mind, had already commenced the operation."—Augustus Jessop, D.D.

When a kettle won't boil, instead of the old adage, "A watched pot never boils," Cornish people say, "There is a toad or a frog in it." It is here considered lucky for a toad to come into the house.

Snakes avoid and dread ash-trees, a branch will keep them away. A small piece of mountain ash-wood "barc" is also one of the numerous cures and preventives of rheumatism. Our peasantry believe however much you may try to kill quickly an adder or snake, it will never die before sunset. Mr. Robert Hunt says, "When an adder is seen, a circle is to be rapidly drawn around it and the sign of the cross made within it, whilst the first two verses of the 68th Psalm are repeated." This is to destroy it; there are also charms to be said for curing their bites, when they are apostrophised "under the ashen leaf." This charm for yellow jaundice I culled from the *Western Antiquary*, "I was walking in a village churchyard near the town of St. Austell (I think in the autumn of 1839), when I saw a woman approach an open grave. She stood by the side of it and appeared to be muttering some words. She then drew out from under her cloak a good-size baked meal-cake, threw it into the grave and then left the place. Upon inquiry I found the cake was composed of oatmeal mixed with dog's wine, baked, and thrown into the grave as a charm for the yellow jaundice. This cure was at that time commonly believed in by the peasantry of the neighbourhood."—Joseph Cartwright, March 1833.

The words of charms must be muttered, they lose their efficacy if recited aloud, and the charmer must never communicate them to one of the same sex, for that transfers the power of charming to the other person. Of superstitious rites practised for the cure of whooping-cough, &c., I will speak a little further on. Cornishmen in the last century from their cradles to their graves might have been guided in their actions by old women's "widdles" (superstitions), some as already shown are still foolishly followed; but I hope that few people are silly enough at the present day to leave their babies' heads a

twelvemonth unwashed, under the mistaken notion that it would be unlucky to do it.

I have often and very recently seen the creases in the palms of children's hands filled with dirt; to clean them before they were a year old would take away riches—they would live and die poor. Their nails too for the same period should be bitten, not cut, for that would make them thieves. Hair at no age must be cut at the waning of the moon, that would prevent its growing luxuriantly; locks shorn off must be always burnt, it is unlucky to throw them away; then birds might use them in their nests and weave them in so firmly that there would be a difficulty in your rising at the last day. Children's first teeth are burnt to prevent dog's or "snaggles" irregular teeth coming in their stead. "All locks are unlocked to favour easy birth (or death)." —A. H. Bickford, M.D., Camborne, 1883.

A popular notion amongst old folks is, that when a boy is born on the waning moon the next birth will be a girl, and vice versâ. They also say that when a birth takes place on the growing of the moon, the next child will be of the same sex." A child born in the interval between the old and new moons is fated to die young, and babies with blue veins across their noses do not live to see twenty-one. A cake called a groaning cake is made in some houses in Cornwall after the birth of a child, of which every caller is expected to partake. The mother often carries "a groaning cake" when she is going to be "upraised" (churched); this she gives to the first person she meets on her way.

"Kimby" is the name of an offering, generally a piece of bread or cake, still given in the rural districts of this county to the first person met when going to a wedding or a christening. It is sometimes presented to any one who brings the news of a birth to an interested party. Two young men, I knew about thirty years ago, were taking a walk in West Cornwall; crossing over a bridge they met a procession carrying a baby to the parish church, where the child was to be baptised. Unaware of this curious custom, they were very much surprised at having a piece of cake put into their hands. A magistrate wrote to the *Western Morning News*, in January 1884, saying, that on his way to his petty sessions he had had one of these christen-



ing cakes thrust into his hand, but unluckily he did not state in what parish this happened. This called forth several letters on the subject, parts of which I will quote.

“About thirty years ago at the christening of a brother (in the Meneage district, Helston), and when the family party were ready for the walk to the afternoon service in Cury church, I well recollect seeing the old nurse wrap in a pure white sheet of paper what she called the ‘cheeld’s fuggan.’\* This was a cake with plenty of currants and saffron, about the size of a modern tea-plate. It was to be given to the first person met on returning, after the child was christened. It happened that, as most of the parishioners were at the service, no one was met until near home, almost a mile from the church, when a tipsy village carpenter rambled around a corner, right against our party, and received the cake. Regrets were expressed that the ‘cheeld’s fuggan’ should have fallen to the lot of this notoriously evil liver, and my idea was that it was a bad omen. However as my brother has always been a veritable Rechabite, enjoys good health, a contented mind, and enough of this world’s goods to satisfy every moderate want, no evil can thus far be traced to the mischance.”  
—J. C., *Western Morning News*.

“Kimby” in East Cornwall is the name of a thing, commonly a piece of bread, which is given under peculiar circumstances at weddings and christenings. When the parties set out from the house to go to church, or on their business, one person is sent before them with this selected piece of bread in his or her hand (a woman is commonly preferred for this office), and the piece is given to the first individual that is met. I interpret it to have some reference to the idea of the evil eye and its influence, which might fall on the married persons or on the child, which is sought to be averted by this unexpected gift. It is also observed in births, in order that by this gift envy may be turned away from the infant or happy parents. This ‘kimby’ is commonly given to the person bringing the first news to those interested in the birth.”—T. Q. Couch, *Western Morning News*.

“I witnessed this custom very frequently at Looe in South-east Cornwall from fifty to sixty-five years ago. I believe it is correct to

\* Fuggan, a flat cake.

say that this gift was there a small cake, made for the occasion, and termed the 'christening-crib,' a crib of bread or cake being a provincialism for a bit of bread," &c.—William Pengelly, *Western Morning News*.

Children, when they leave small bits of meat, &c. on their plates, are in Cornwall often told "to eat up their cribs."

The Rev. S. Rundle, Vicar of Godolphin, says, "That once he was sent for to baptise a child, around whose neck hung a little bag, which the mother said contained a bit of a donkey's ear, and that this charm had cured the child of a most distressing cough."

In some parts of Cornwall it is considered a sure sign of being sweethearts if a young man and woman "stand witness together," *i.e.* become godfather and godmother of the same child.—T.C. But not in all, for I remember once hearing in Penzance a couple refuse to do so, saying that it was unlucky. "First at the font, never at the altar." When I was young, old nurses often breathed in babies' mouths to cure the thrush, thrice repeating the second verse of the Eighth Psalm, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings," &c. "May children and 'chets' (kittens) never thrive," and it is unlucky to "tuck" (short coat) children in that month.

"Tuck babies in May,  
You'll tuck them away."

It is of course considered an unfortunate month for marriages. Neither should babies "be tucked" on a week day, but on a Sunday, which day should also be chosen for leaving off any article of clothing; as then you will have the prayers of every congregation for you, and are sure not to catch cold. A friend lately sent me the following charm of one year's duration which prevents your feeling or taking a cold. "Eat a large apple at Hallow-een under an apple-tree just before midnight; no other garment than a bed-sheet should be worn. A kill or cure remedy."

An empty cradle should never be rocked unless you wish to have a large family, for—

"Rock the cradle empty  
You'll rock the babies plenty."

The jingles which follow are often repeated by Cornish nursemaids with appropriate actions to amuse their little charges. First, touching each part of the face as mentioned with the forefinger,

“Brow brender,\*  
 Eye winker,  
 Nose dropper,  
 Mouth eater,  
 Chin chopper,  
 Tickle-tickle.”

Second—

“Tap a tap shoe,† that would I do,  
 If I had but a little more leather.  
 We'll sit in the sun till the leather doth come,  
 Then we'll tap them both together.”

Here the two little feet are struck lightly one against the other.

Children with rickets were taken by their parents on the three first Sundays in May to be dipped at sunrise in one of the numerous Cornish holy wells, and then put to sleep in the sun; this was thought to strengthen them. Small pieces torn from their clothes were left on the bushes to propitiate the pixies; or for the same disease they were passed nine times through a Mên-an-tol (holed stone). A man stood on one side, and a woman on the other, of the stone. The child was passed with the sun from east to west, and from right to left; a boy from the woman to the man, a girl from the man to the woman. This order is always, in these charms, strictly observed. As lately as 1883, in the village of Sancroed, West Cornwall, a little girl, suffering from whooping-cough, was passed from a man to a woman nine times under a donkey's belly; a little boy standing the while at the donkey's head feeding it with “cribs” of wheaten bread. My informant did not know if on this occasion any incantation was repeated. Another family, he tells me, some years back were in the same neighbourhood cured of the whooping-cough by donkey's hair, which was dried on the baking iron of the open hearth, reduced to powder, and administered to them. There are very various ways of

\* Brend, to knit the brows.

† Tap a shoe, to sole.

doing this, one is between thin slices of bread and butter. Some authorities say the latter ingredients must belong to a couple called John and Joan. Mr. Robert Hunt gives a charm which in a measure combines the two above-mentioned. "The child must be passed naked nine times over the back and under the belly of a female donkey. Three spoonfuls of milk drawn from the teats of the animal, three hairs cut from its back, and three from its belly, are to stand in the milk three hours, and to be given in three doses repeated on three mornings." Mr. Hunt also says, "There were some doggrel lines connected with the ceremony which have escaped my memory, and I have endeavoured in vain to find any one remembering them. They were to the effect that as Christ placed the cross on the ass's back when he rode into Jerusalem and so rendered the animal holy, if the child touched where Jesus sat it should cough no more." I will quote another of Mr. Hunt's charms. "Gather nine spar-stones (quartz) from a running stream, taking care not to interrupt the free passage of the water in doing so. Then dip a quart of water from the stream, which must be taken in the direction in which the stream runs--by no means must the vessel be dipped against the stream. Then make the nine stones red-hot, and throw them into the quart of water. Bottle the prepared water, and give the afflicted child a wine-glass of this water for nine mornings." Other remedies are to cross the child over running water nine times, or under a bramble bough bent into the ground (this latter and through a cleft ash are also tried for hernia). Some nurses take children, with whooping-cough, out for a walk, in hopes of meeting a man on a white or piebald horse. Should they be fortunate enough to do so, they ask the rider how they can cure the patient: whatever advice he gives is implicitly followed. Children with dirty habits are often threatened with "a mousey pasty" (made of mice), which they are told shall be cooked for their dinners.

Cornish children are warned by their nurses not to grimace, lest, whilst so doing, the wind should change and their faces always remain contorted. There is another form in which this warning is often given: "Don't make mock of a 'magum' (May-game), for you may be struck comical yourself one day." 'Magum' in most cases

means a facetious person, one who is full of merry pranks, and the expressions, "He's a reg'lar magum," or "He's full of his magums," are often heard. But the idea intended to be conveyed in the first saying is that it is wrong to make fun of a person suffering from an infirmity, which may at any time afflict the jeerer. The puritanical notion of Sunday lingers in the belief in Cornwall that it is unlucky to use a scissors on that day, even to cut your nails; you must

"Cut them on Monday, before your fast you break,  
And you'll have a present in less than a week."

Children here are pleased to see "gifts" (white spots) on their thumbnails, as

"Gifts on the thumb are sure to come,  
But gifts on the finger are sure to linger."

Occasionally white spots on the five fingers are named as follows: "A gift, a friend, a foe, a true lover, a journey to go." Should the little ones, when picking flowers, sting themselves with nettles, they are of course in this locality, as elsewhere in England, taught to rub the spot with dock-leaves, repeating the words, "In dock, out nettle"; but they are often told in addition to wet the place affected with their spittle, and make a cross over it with their thumbnails, pressed down as heavily as possible. School-boys and school girls often years ago practised a cruel jest on their more innocent companions. They induced them to pick a nettle by saying "Nettles won't sting this month." When the children were stung and complained the retort was, "I never said they would not sting you." The blue scabious in Cornwall is never plucked. It is called the devil's bit, and the superstition is handed down from one generation of children to another that, should they transgress and do so, the devil will appear to them in their dreams at night. But any one who wishes to dream of the devil should pin four ivy-leaves to the corners of his pillow. Flowers plucked from churchyards bring ill-luck, and even visitations from spirits on the plucker. Wrens and robins are sacred in the eyes of Cornish boys, for

"Hurt a robin or a wran,  
Never prosper, boy nor man."

A groom who had, when a lad, shot a robin and held it in one of his hands told me that it shook ever after. But they always chase and try to kill the first butterfly of the season; and, should they succeed, they will overcome their enemies—I suppose, in football, &c.

Earwigs they hold in detestation, as they believe that, should they get into their ears, they will cause madness. There is a legend popular amongst them which relates that a poor man was once driven frantic by a very queer sensation in his head. At last, not being able to bear it any longer, he went into a meat-market, laid it down upon a block, and asked a butcher to chop it off. Whilst in this recumbent position an earwig crept out of his ear, and the pain instantly ceased. Our school-boys have other fallacies, such as, the pain caused by a “custice,” *i. e.* a stroke across the palm of the hand with a cane, may be neutralised by placing two hairs on it crossways. Also that the wound made by a nail can be kept from festering by wrapping the nail in a piece of fat bacon to prevent its rusting.

School-girls’ superstitions are more sentimental, and often connected with wishing. If, when talking together, one accidentally makes a rhyme, she wishes; and, should she be asked a question, before she speaks again, to which she can answer Yes, she thinks that she is sure to get it. When an eyelash falls out its owner puts it on the tip of her nose, wishes and blows at it; should she blow it off, she will have her wish. Should she by chance hear a dog dreaming, she stands up, puts a foot on each side of it, and then wishes. Years ago one gravely told me that if I wanted to know a dog’s dreams I must throw a pocket-handkerchief over it when sleeping and keep it there until it awoke; then, before getting into bed, put it under my pillow, and I should have the same dream. Dreams in Cornwall are always said to go by contraries. “If you dream of the dead you will hear tell of the living,” &c. To dream any one is kissing you is a sign of deceit. “Of fruit out of season, trouble without reason.”

“A Friday’s dream on Saturdays told  
Is sure to come true, be it ever so old.”

To see if a friend loves her, a Cornish girl pulls out a hair from

her friend's head, and then tries to suspend it by the root from the palm of her own hand. If this can be done the test is successful. When a little older there are many ways in which our maidens "try for their sweethearts." A few of the rules prescribed for these rites, which have been handed down from generation to generation, may be worth transcribing. "Draw a bracken fern, cut it at the bottom of the stalk; there you will find your lover's initials." Take an apple-pip between the forefinger and the thumb, flip it into the air, saying, "North, south, east, west, tell me where my love doth rest," and watch the direction in which it falls. Go into the fields at the time of the new moon and pluck a piece of herb yarrow; put it when going to bed under your pillow, saying—

" Good night, fair yarrow,  
Thrice good night to thee;  
I hope before to-morrow's dawn  
My true love I shall see."

If you are to be married your sweetheart will appear to you in your dreams.

"Look out of your bed-room window on St. Valentine's morn, note the first man you see, and you will marry the same, or one of the name."

To lose your apron or your garter shows that your lover is thinking of you. Three candles burning at the same time is the sign of a wedding; and the girl who is nearest to the door, the cupboard, and the shortest candle will be married first. When two people accidentally say the same thing at the same time the one who finishes first will be married first. There are a great number of omens similar to these last, equally stupid, and not worthy of notice.

"Friday is a cross day for marriage," and "If you marry in Lent you'll live to repent." Should you in marrying

" Change the name, and not the letter,  
You'll change for the worse, and not the better."

but it is lucky if your initials form a word.

When a younger sister marries first the elder is said to dance in the "bruss" (short twigs of heath or furze), from an old custom of

dancing without shoes on the furze prickles which get detached from the stalk. It is considered extremely unlucky here to break or lose your wedding-ring, also for a wedding-cake to crack after baking. A lady told me of one made for a couple she knew, which fell to pieces when taken out of the oven. Before the wedding came the bride had sickened of some disorder, was dead and buried. A hole in a loaf, too, foretells a separation in a family; and to turn one upside down on a table wrecks a vessel.

Only old maids can rear a myrtle, and they will not blossom when trained against houses where there are none.

“A young woman who has been three times a bridesmaid will never be a bride.” “It was an old custom, religiously observed until lately in Zennor and adjacent parishes on the north coast of Cornwall, to waylay a married couple on their wedding night and flog them to bed with cords, sheep-spans, or anything handy for the purpose, believing that this rough treatment would ensure them happiness and the ‘heritage and gift that cometh from the Lord,’ of a numerous family. At more modish weddings, the guests merely entered the bridal chamber, and threw stockings in which stones or something to make weight were placed, at the bride and bridegroom in bed. The first one hit of the happy pair betokened the sex of their first-born.”  
—Bottrell.

Should there be a great discrepancy between the ages of the bride and bridegroom, or the marriage of a couple in any way be a matter of notoriety, they are in West Cornwall on their wedding night often treated to a “shallal,” a serenade on tin-kettles, pans, marrow-bones, &c. Any great noise in this part of the county is described as being “a reg’lar shallal.” In olden times, and in fact the custom is not quite discontinued at the present day, for I heard a whisper of one having taken place in a small fishing-village two years ago. Married people accused of immorality were in Cornwall punished by a “riding.” I will give the description of one by Mr. T. Q. Couch.

“A cart was got, donkeys were harnessed in, and a pair personating the guilty or suspected were driven through the streets, attended by a train of men and boys. At Polperro (East Cornwall) the attendants acted as trumpeters; the bullock’s horns used by the fishermen at sea



for fog or night signals were always available for the purpose. The mummers were very cautious, by careful disguise in dress or voice, and avoiding of anything directly libellous in their rather ribald dialogue, to keep themselves out of the clutches of the law. I remember one *riding* when an old rusty cannon of the smuggling period was waked up from its long quiet for service for the occasion, and bursting, led to the mutilation of several and the death of one." On the borders of Devon and in that county this ceremony was known as a "mock-hunt."

A lock of hair hanging down over the forehead is in Cornwall called "a widow's lock"; and children are still here told when that happens "to shed their hair back out of their eyes." A foolish warning says,

"Go thro' a gate when there's a stile hard by  
You'll be a widow before you die.

The sudden appearance of rats or mice in Cornish houses is said to be a certain forerunner of sickness and death. Many curious tales are told in confirmation of this superstition; one I particularly remember was in connection with a young man who was killed on the West Cornwall Railway. After the accident, they vanished as quickly as they came. It is also considered to be very unlucky for a bird to perch on the window-sill of a sick person's room, farewell then to all chances of recovery; and strange birds coming into a house foretell the death of some one in it, or connected with the family. I was once where a little child lay dying, a small brown bird sang on the window-sill, the nurse told me that it was waiting to carry away the child's soul. "But when a flea bites a sick person he is sure not to be dangerously ill, as it is well known that they never bite those who have had their death-stroke." The superstitions that you cannot die easily on pillows stuffed with wild bird's feathers, and that life goes out with the tide, are as current here as in other places. Death in Cornwall is often spoken of as "going round land," and "gone dead" is a common idiom. A threat to kill is occasionally conveyed in the words "I will give you your quietus." In some cases it is supposed that life may be restored after death if when the breath stops the

body be violently shaken. When a member of a family dies, his death it is said will bring two others with it,\* from the idea that one misfortune never comes alone. A Cornish country vicarage was lately startled by the tolling at an unwonted hour of the church bell. On sending to ascertain the cause of the disturbance an "old inhabitant was found in the belfry, who had been engaged in the absence or illness of the usual sexton to dig the grave. He said in explanation that in his time it was always usual for the gravedigger to toll the bell three times before breaking the consecrated ground."—J. H. C., *Notes and Queries*, 5th series, vol. ii. August, 1874.

A corpse should never be carried to church by a new road, and should a hearse stop on its way to the churchyard there will soon be another death in the house. Singing funerals, or as they are called in Cornwall buryings (pronounced "berrins"), were once almost universal (and one may still occasionally be met). The mourners and friends following the coffin sang as they walked through the streets or lanes their favourite hymns, often to most elaborate tunes.

"To shaw our sperrits lev-us petch †  
The laast new berrin tune."—Tregellas.

Flowers and shrubs planted in Cornish churchyards are never plucked from the fear that the spirits of the departed will at night visit the desecrator. Cross-roads, the former burying-place of suicides, are after nightfall avoided, such spots being haunted.

With a few general superstitions, I shall bring this work to an end. It is unlucky in Cornwall to see the new moon first over the left shoulder, or through a window, especially if the day should happen to be a Friday. To ensure good luck on your first sight of her, you should curtsy, spit on your money and turn it in your pocket. (A man well paid for any chance job early in the day calls it here "a hansel," and spits on the money for good luck). If you particularly desire anything, look at the new moon and wish before you speak. You may also wish when you see a falling star, and if you can succeed

\* A similar superstition prevails about breakages, and a servant who has had the misfortune to break a valuable piece of china will sometimes smash a common basin or tea-cup to arrest the ill-luck.

† "Pitch a tune," to give the keynote.

in framing it before it disappears your wish will be granted. Seeing the new moon in the old moon's arms is a sign of a change in the weather, so is a star passing over it. The change will be for the worse if the moon goes over the star. "Herbs for drying must be gathered at full moon; winter fruit picked and stored at full moon, not to lose its plumpness. Timber should be felled on the bating of the moon, because the sap is then down, and the wood will be more durable." —Bottrell.

Two weather proverbs say, "That Cornwall will stand a shower every day, and two for Sundays;" and

"There is never a Saturday in the year  
But what the sun it doth appear."

Card-table Superstitions:—"Good luck in cards, bad luck in a husband (or wife)." "A shuffling cut is good for the dealer." "1 2 3 4 played in succession, kiss the dealer." To cut an honour for the trump card is unlucky, for "When quality opens the door there is poverty behind;" but "Good luck lurks under a black deuce" (it should be touched by the cutter).

Superstitions connected with the body:—A twitching in the eyelid is lucky; but you must not say when it comes nor when it goes.

Right eye itching, a sign of laughter; but left over right, you'll cry before night.

Right cheek burning, some one praising you; left one, abusing (a knot tied in the apron-string will cause the slanderer to bite his or her tongue); but left or right are both good at night.

Nose itching, you will be kissed, cursed, or vexed; or shake hands with a fool.

Right hand itching, some one will pay or give you money; but the left you will be the payer. In regard to the former,

"If you rub it on wood,  
It will be sure to come good."

Fire Superstitions:—A difficulty in kindling the fire in the mornings is a sign of anger; burning only on one side, of a separation in the family (some say of a wedding). A flake of smut on the bar of the grate shows that a stranger is coming to the house. Should the

fire be burning brightly, he will bring good news; but if the contrary, bad. If after you poke the fire it burns up brightly, your sweetheart is in a good temper; but should it not improve he is in a bad one. A coal popping out of the fire is either a cradle or coffin, or a purse. It is allowed to cool and then examined to find out the shape; if pronounced to be a purse, it is shaken close to the ear, when should it jingle it is said to contain money. I once saw this done in a school by its mistress.

“Ladies’ trees,” small branches of dried seaweed, are sometimes hung up in chimneys to protect houses from fire; or a Passover biscuit is suspended by a string from a nail in the wall for the same purpose.

A bright spark on a candle foretells a letter, but if pointed out it never arrives.

There are so many unlucky omens in Cornwall that to believe in them all would make life miserable, and to enumerate them would fill a volume. The major part of them too are silly and not worth transcribing; three or four of them as examples will I am quite sure amply suffice.

“If you sing afore bite,  
You’ll cry before night.”

“It is unlucky to sing carols before Christmas;” also, “To scat\* hands before Christmas,” *i.e.*, beat them for warmth.

“It is unlucky to pour out water or any other liquor back-handed.”

“It is unlucky to lend, or say thank you for a pin.” And

“If you see a pin, and pass it by,  
You’ll want a pin before you die.”

“It is unlucky to mend your clothes on you, for then you will never grow rich.”

It is unlucky to wear a hole in the bottom of a shoe for,

“A hole in the sole,  
You’ll live to spend whole.”

And with this distich, I will at last conclude this already, I am afraid, much too long a work.

\* Scat, to slap.

# BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND DEATH RITES OF THE CHINESE.

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## PART I.—BIRTH.

BY NORMAN G. MITCHELL-INNES.



THE original intention of these notes on the Birth, Marriage, and Death Rites of the Chinese, was to limit the description to those in force in the Canton province.

It has, however, been found by experience that there exists no hard and fast rule as to their different observance in each province. There are no doubt some which are distinctly peculiar to a certain part of the country, but others are tolerably universal. In addition to this, the customs in force in a province vary to a great extent according to the district under observation, and a ceremony well-known in Canton would possibly be either ignored or denied by a resident in the north of the province. Even in the same town the practices are varied, the more superstitious naturally having the most ceremonies, and vice versâ.

From these reasons it has been found to be impracticable to disentangle from the mass of information given by writers in the *China Review*, the *Chinese Recorder*, and other periodicals, as well as in isolated publications, those customs which may be considered to belong specially to the Canton province; and the course pursued in these notes will therefore be to take the account of their ceremonies as given by natives of the province as a centre round which may be grouped such information as has been obtained from the previous

descriptions given by foreign residents, in so far as it may appear from its congruity or special interest to be suitable.

Commencing then with birth, it is found that the curiosity natural to all mothers to know beforehand the sex of the child about to be born has its place also in China, where the intense desire for male offspring must render it of even more absorbing interest than in other countries. The selection of cards representing females holding children in their arms, arithmetical calculations of a mysterious nature based upon the age of the woman, the day and hour of her birth, &c., and even the supposed position of the expected infant, are all resorted to for this purpose. In the event of the labour being protracted, the husband, his father and mother, with the parents of the wife, worship the cross-pieces and the corners of the door to obtain for the babe a happy entry into life. Should the woman, however, die in childbed, she descends into hell, where she is placed up to her lips in a pool of blood, afterwards undergoing the further tortures with which the Buddhist place of torment is furnished. On the day of birth, a basin containing lighted candles and incense-sticks is placed beneath the bed in honour of the bed-god. Pummelo leaves and slips of the Lak Pa Wong, a fragrant thorn (?), are suspended over the door to ward off evil influences and spirits. If the children previously born have died, it is said that the demons of the 3rd and 7th morning, or of the 30th day of the month, have killed them, and, on the advent of another child, those in attendance, not stopping to wash it, wrap it in a piece of cloth and run with it to the wet-nurse, this being the only occasion on which the services of that functionary, so common in Western countries, are employed. By her the child is suckled till old enough to be weaned. On the third morning the god of the bed is worshipped and offerings of vinegar and eggs dyed red are made. The worship of this divinity being conducted beneath the bed, renders it an impossible act for the Tàn Ka, or boat population, who accordingly have two gods, one for the head and one for the foot of the bed, whom they worship with great zealousness. It is on this day that the services of a Taoist priest are brought into requisition. Entering the house, he passes into the hall, bedroom, and kitchen, bearing a piece of the plant known as wai ts'ò, and a bowl of clean water with which he sprinkles

the rooms, chanting at the same time certain liturgies. This ceremony is known as The Purification. He further takes some onions, garlic, celery, pig's gall, a steelyard, some leaves of the juniper-tree, and a hundred cash, all of which are put into a basin containing the water with which the child is to be washed. The cash, which are termed "wash the boy money," are then strung on to the leaves or small twigs of the tree, and given to the friends of the family. The onions (ts'ung) are to make the child (ts'ung ming) clever, the garlic (sün) to make him a good reckoner on the (sün p'un) abacus, the celery (k'ar) that he may be (k'an lik) industrious, the gall (t'am) that he may be (t'am) courageous, the steelyard to prevent demons running away with him, the juniper-leaves that he may have as long a life as is possessed by that tree. Presents are also made at this time in the shape of bracelets, shoes, &c., but these are of trifling value, the proper time being the last day of the first month of the babe's life. These ceremonies concluded, the next step is to have the child's fortune told in order to ascertain the particular idol or tree to which he belongs. The belief is entertained that in the spirit-world a tree is planted to represent the life in the world below, and that the child is as much the fruit of the tree as it is that of the womb. The idea of fruit is sometimes replaced by that of flowers, in which case a male is represented by a white flower, a female by a red. The fruit is supposed by some to be weighed previous to the birth of a child and to be increased or diminished according as it is too little or too great, thus accounting for the birth of children having an extra finger or a hare-lip. The adoption of a girl in cases where there is no family is occasioned by the hope that it may have the effect of a graft upon the tree in the spirit-world, and thus render it productive. A couple who have been married for ten years and have had no children will engage a Taoist priest to water the garden in the unseen land, or a sorceress may be hired to proceed thither in order to change the earth round the tree or plant which it is desired should bear fruit. In other cases Kam Ha, the Lucina of the Chinese in some parts, as the Fa Wong Fu Mo, or parental king of the garden, is to some extent in others, is invoked, and a shoe is borrowed from her temple and taken home, there to have incense burnt before it on her shrine. If the device prove successful, a pair of shoes, exactly

resembling that borrowed, must be returned to the temple. A flower from one of the temple vases may be substituted for the shoe, but it receives no homage, and is not returned. The parental king of the garden alluded to is to the Chinese a more mythical being than the Goddess Kun Yam. He is supposed be the guardian of the trees and flowers in the spirit-world, and is on that account worshipped by married women on the 20th day of the second moon.

The proper tree or idol having been ascertained, the child is placed under its care and protection, and the priest then proceeds to inquire of it by what name the child shall be called. Selecting a name he throws up the divining "cups"—two wooden blocks having one side concave the other convex. Should one fall with the convex side upward while the other is concave it is considered that the name is disapproved of. Another name is therefore selected, and the operation is continued until both fall with the same side upward, when the name last chosen is considered to be the proper one, and is therefore bestowed upon the child.

The belief in a close connection between a child and its patron idol is sometimes so strong that the boy will call its father uncle or elder brother, reserving the term father for the idol, from fear that were this not done the idol might in its jealousy kill the child.

It is held that an infant brings with him into the world a bow and arrow with which he may shoot his relatives, and, to obviate this, the fortune-teller has to make bows and arrows of paper and burn them thus returning to the spirit-world those originally brought from it.

To prevent the child from being borne off by demons, a fisherman's net is sometimes spread over the opening in the mosquito-curtains. Should the horoscope prove an unlucky one, the evil fortune presaged is averted by hanging from the left ear of the boy or the right of the girl a small silver medal, having on one side the words "long life," and on the other "riches and honour." This is worn for long, sometimes till marriage, the ceremony being known as "suspending the ear tablet." In early life a cash is frequently suspended from the wrist to ensure long life, whence the name "longevity cash."

At the end of the first month of the babe's life a feast is held, which is attended by the friends and relatives, who then bring with them the



presents intended for the child. These take the form of silver neck trinkets, cap ornaments, silver and at times gold unicorns, &c. &c. The unicorn is believed to appear at the birth of sages, such as Confucius, and the presentation of its image is therefore exceedingly complimentary. Sometimes a present of money is given varying in amount from one hundred cash to a dollar. This is termed the "favourable market." The maternal grandmother, or, if she be too poor, the father on her behalf, presents the child with clothes, some cloth, a cap, wine, and a fowl. The presents are either wrapped in red paper or are accompanied by a red paper slip, on which is written, "Gifts sent at the end of the first month, long life, riches, and happiness."

A curious custom prevails in Canton known as "singeing the little pig"; this is effected by passing the child several times over a fire of charcoal, and is a prefatory step to the expulsion of fear. In performing this latter ceremony, which has for its object the warding off of evil influences as well as the rendering the child courageous, a lump of alum is taken by the mother, who, touching with it the child's forehead, eyes, breast, and shoulders, repeats a formula destined to ensure it against timidity. The alum is then put into the fire and is supposed or expected to assume the form of the creature which the child most dreads.

The idea of changelings exists in China as elsewhere. To avert the calamity of nursing a demon, dried banana-skin is burnt to ashes, which are then mixed with water. Into this the mother dips her finger and paints a *cross* upon the sleeping babe's forehead. In a short time the demon soul returns—for the soul wanders from the body during sleep and is free,—but, failing to recognise the body thus disguised, flies off. The true soul, which has been waiting for an opportunity, now approaches the dormant body, and, if the mark has been washed off in time, takes possession of it; but if not, it, like the demon, failing to recognise the body, departs, and the child dies in its sleep.

In families in which children have been born but have died young, the parents will swear that, if the spirit will preserve the child, they will fast for a certain number of months or years—perhaps fixing a

period such as the child's marriage. This is called "eating the long fast." In some cases they promise that he shall be dedicated to the service of Buddha, and his head is in consequence kept clean-shaved. Should the device, however, prove successful, and the child become strong and healthy, the parents, unwilling to lose him, will purchase a boy to take his place, and the child's queue is then allowed to grow.

## PART II.—MARRIAGE.

The romantic side of marriage—the theme of so many Western poets, play-writers, and actors—is to our ideas almost entirely wanting in China. There, marriage takes the form of a bargain, the preliminaries to which are conducted by what are known as go-betweens. The bride and bridegroom have but little to say as to their engagement, which is contracted on their behalf by their parents or guardians. In most cases they can only know by hearsay the kind of person they are destined to marry. Marriage contracts are frequently entered into before the birth of the children, in which case, should both be boys or both girls, the engagement naturally falls to the ground. This is also the case in the event of one proving to be a leper. It is considered dishonourable to a girl of ten years of age to be still disengaged: at fourteen or fifteen she may not leave the house, and retires from the presence of strangers. The juristical idea of marriage would appear to be a double manumission enforced by no positive law, and, until concluded, involving no rights of the two manumitted as against the manumitters, but involving moral duties to carry the agreement to manumit into effect as between the two manumitters.

No such thing as a marriage contract is considered necessary in China, where neither the State nor any of the religions interest themselves in the forms or ceremonies enacted: but it would appear that from long custom the following three ceremonies have come to be regarded as essential:—1. Consent of the parents or senior male representatives; 2. Acceptance of the marriage-presents by the family of the bride; 3. Formal transfer or bringing home of the bride.

The great disability to marriage between two parties is consan-

guinity, as tending to institute or perpetuate hereditary disease. This opinion is so strongly held, that marriage between those related by blood even in the hundredth degree is condemned, though it no doubt takes place under strong incentives, such as the desire to keep money in the family. On the other hand, relationship on the mother's side is taken into no account.

The money paid by the parents of the bridegroom-elect to those of the girl is not looked upon as her price but as a set-off against the expense incurred in bringing her up, and is a sort of settlement upon the parents.

The usual age for betrothal is that of puberty. A go-between is selected by the family of the boy to proceed to that of the bride, to obtain her eight characters—two being for the year of her birth, two for the month, two for the day, and two for the hour,—in order to examine her horoscope. The go-between prefaces the conversation by inquiring whether the girl has yet got a mother-in-law. The answer being in the negative, she requests permission to find one for her, and mentions the boy as a suitable match. A lengthy conversation then ensues, both sides professing entire indifference to the decision of a question which they are both most eager to have settled in the affirmative. The go-between is dismissed with an evasive answer, but after the consent of the idol has been obtained—the belief that marriages are made in heaven being as prevalent in China as elsewhere—the assent of the parents is signified, and the parties become engaged. It is customary at this time to state what station the girl is intended to occupy—whether that of first or of second wife. Considerable difference of opinion prevails as to the position which the latter holds, some looking upon her as an inferior wife, others as a superior slave. There can be no doubt that her status is decidedly beneath that enjoyed by the wife proper, but to what extent is vague, and depends in all probability on the feelings with which her husband regards her. Offences committed against her are by law punishable two degrees less severely than those affecting the wife; and on her marriage, though she partakes in the worship of her husband's ancestral tablets, she is excluded from that of heaven and earth. Respectable parents would be averse to giving their child to be

secondary wife to a man already married, and a woman, once espoused as the wife proper, can never be degraded to the position of the second. At the same time, marriage with the first wife being a *marriage de convenance*, while that with the second is frequently one of affection, her lot might frequently be a happier one than that enjoyed by her superior; while from the fact that on the death of the father no distinction is made in the division of his property as between the children of the first and those of the second wife, it would appear that the station she occupies must be considerably removed from that of a bondservant. It may be noticed that the name employed to signify this second wife is included among the many deprecatory terms applied by the Chinese to themselves in polite conversation.

The period which intervenes between betrothal and marriage varies from one or two months to eighteen or twenty years, according to the age of the parties.

On the acceptance by the parents of the bride of the presents sent by the family of the bridegroom, the engagement is considered to be formally ratified, the presents being regarded as the earnest-money of a bargain. Proceedings, however, may be broken off by immorality on the part of the bride-elect, though not on that of the bridegroom, except when he is a leper, noted theft, leprosy, or great deformity. But, with these exceptions, there is no retreat from the bargain entered into. Were the parents of the bride to engage her to a third party, their proceedings would be held null and void, the remedy for breach of promise being, not damages, but specific performance—a right to the very thing bargained for.

On the ratification of the engagement, the family of the youth sends presents of cakes, bread, pork, fowl, earrings, and bracelets to that of the girl, which then returns purses, boots, stockings, and a full-dress hat. At each feast of every year, presents are exchanged until the consummation of the marriage.

In the event of the death of parents during the period of engagement, the marriage is by law deferred for twenty-seven months, though the poorer classes marry at the expiration of one hundred days. On the death of the Emperor, a similar interdict is laid on the entire empire.

Should the affianced girl die during the period of betrothal, the intended bridegroom worships and burns incense before a pair of the shoes last worn by her for two years to induce her spirit to be present. In some cases a comb is broken, and the pieces are sent to be put in her coffin.

In the event of the death of the bridegroom-elect, the bride will sometimes refuse to marry—many indeed would object to engage their son to her. In this case she can oblige the parents of her intended husband to shelter and support her; and in poor families a girl will sometimes be sent to her future parents-in-law as soon as the engagement has been entered upon.

In some cases a girl is purchased to train up as a wife for the son, thus obviating much of the ordinary expense; and in very poor families the extraordinary practice may be observed of purchasing a woman whose husband is still living, but who is willing to dispose of her. In this case, an ordinary black sedan is employed for her conveyance to the residence of her purchaser, where a feast is held, and the acts of worship performed as in ordinary cases; a bill-of-sale being considered necessary as a ratification of the act.

It is considered disgraceful for a widow to marry again, and suicides on their part, as also on that of girls whose betrothed have died, are considered meritorious, and are sometimes performed in public.

A widow who has kept the memory of her husband sacred till the age of fifty can, if possessed of influence, have an honorary portal erected to her in the street.

In the event of her contracting a second marriage, she may not employ a bridal chair nor wear bridal clothes, her choice in colours being limited to black, white, or blue, and her chair-bearers to two.

If she have had children, she may not take them with her. All relationship with them is considered to be at an end: they remain with their paternal grandfather, and speak of themselves as having no mother or as having been deserted.

Pressure is at times brought to bear upon a widow by parents making no particular pretence to respectability to induce her to marry again, and thus relieve them from the expense of supporting her, and

the help afforded to their daughter-in-law is in some cases bestowed so grudgingly that her friends will take pity on and shelter her.

Marriages seldom take place in the first month of the year, the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th being the most favoured.

During the period of betrothal it is customary on several occasions to burn before the ancestral tablets three incense-sticks and two candles in order to inform the ancestors of the intentions of their posterity. A quantity of paper-money is often burnt at the same time. If after marriage it were discovered that any fraud or substitution had been practised the entire proceedings would be held to be ineffective, the reason being, absence of consent.

In the event of long delay on the part of the girl's parents in consummating the marriage, the youth may kidnap his bride, in which case none but her own family may interfere.

Our admiration of a Juno-like figure is not shared by the Chinese, whose beau-ideal is a small person, a chalky complexion, and of course compressed feet. A pensive, languid look, and a silvery voice are also special attractions. Husbands are never seen in public with their wives, and do not compare favourably with them as regards the observance of the marriage vow. Their treatment of them in other respects is also frequently culpable, the only restraint to their illusage being the fear of their committing suicide or of their parents coming to their rescue.

The divorce of a wife is more easily obtained than in western countries, there being seven cases in which its application is permitted,—1, Unfilial conduct towards the parents of the husband; 2, Adultery; 3, Jealousy; 4, Loquacity; 5, Theft; 6, Virulent disease; 7, Barrenness; the last two being doubtful. Notwithstanding the presence in the category of numbers three and four, divorces are uncommon, and there are three conditions under which no divorce could take place unless in a most exaggerated case:—

1. If the wife have lived with her husband and served his parents until their death;
2. If her husband have risen from a poor estate at the time of marriage to a high one with office under Government;

3. If her parents and brothers being dead, she have no home to go to.

Resuming the account of the proceedings during betrothal, it appears that two or three months before marriage the fortune-teller is consulted in order that a lucky day may be chosen, and soon after this has been decided presents are sent by the family of the bridegroom to that of the bride, consisting of clothes, bracelets, hairpins, and fruits. A sheet of red paper is also sent to the bride, stating the day and hour fixed upon for the performance of the marriage ceremony, thus allowing her time to make the necessary preparations. A month or two before marriage, a sheet of red paper, having on the top a dragon and a phoenix, is sent to her. Down one side of the paper is written K'in tsò, together with the eight characters, and great luck; while down the other is written Kw'ar tsò, together with the eight characters of the bride, and great luck. With the presents above enumerated are also sent some tens of dollars, some gilt flowers for the hair, and an ornament for the head representing a dragon and a phoenix surrounding a male and female shoe. This is called "harmonious conjunction till old age." The bride returns a present consisting of a purse, a fan-case, hat, and boots. She also sends a purse containing a piece of sweetmeat called heung t'ong, lotus-nuts, lin Asz, an ingot (ting) of silver, and one covered with gold; the idea being that they will assuredly (ting) be as sweet to each other as sugar, and for successive (lin) generation produce noble sons (kw'ai tz.) The day before the marriage the parents of the bride send a bed, 10 chairs, 3 tables, 2 mosquito-curtains, 2 bed-covers, 6 or 8 boxes, 6 cupboards, lamps, teacups, a water-bubble pipe, &c. If the family be a very wealthy one, a slave-girl accompanies the bride, together with several hundred cash; and, in some cases, a field or a house is given as her marriage portion. If during his earlier years the bridegroom have suffered from ill-health, and have consequently been committed to an idol for protection, the Taoist priests are now called in to thank the gods for preserving him to his present age, while the idol is informed that his services are no longer required. If the family be wealthy, about 140 dollars will be spent on this ceremony. A pig is killed, and fowls and fish prepared. The pig is taken up by its legs by the

Taoist priests, one holding the tail in his teeth, and after running round with it in a circle they divide it amongst themselves.

Presents of fans, handkerchiefs, shoes, and stockings must be made to the priests.

On this day also, the brothers or uncles of the bride go in sedans to the house of the bridegroom with presents. The bridegroom comes out to meet them in full dress, and, on their departure, makes them a present of a dollar or two. The bride now is bathed and has her hair dressed as a "new woman," *i.e.*, in the style of a married woman, by one whose husband is still living, and who has been as fruitful as a vine. The wedding clothes assumed and the hair dressed with flowers, the bride worships for the last time the ancestral tablets, and salutes her relatives. The dress assumed by the bridegroom consists of a long robe having a red sash thrown across from shoulder to waist, a full dress hat, and dress shoes. The red and gilt flower-chair, employed on the occasion of marriages, is taken with sound of flute, drum, and gong to the residence of the bridegroom in readiness for the following morning, and, the ornamental cover being removed, is taken into the house, and laid before the shrine of the household gods.

It is curious to trace the customs of "scattering rice" and "throwing shoes," so prevalent at our weddings at the present time, to their original cause. It appears that the former is performed on the bride leaving her house, in order to prevent a certain fabulous bird which dwells among the stars from injuring her on the way to that of her husband. It also takes place in the bedchamber of the newly-married couple to drive out evil spirits and as an augury of prosperity. The latter was formerly looked upon as a renunciation or transference of authority. It is with this intention that in China a pair of shoes belonging to the bride is sent to her husband, who henceforth will have that authority over her which formerly belonged to her father and mother: with this may be compared the act of Ruth's kinsman in plucking off his shoe as a sign of his renunciation of any claim to marry her; and the expression in the Sixtieth Psalm, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe," the meaning being, "I will renounce Edom."

The adoption of red as the colour suitable for marriages and other festive occasions is worthy of note as owing its origin to the peach-tree,



representing which it exercises a deterrent power over the spirits and their evil influence. It would appear therefore that it is employed rather as deprecating evil than as imploring happiness.

The peach-tree is entirely dependent on the heat of the sun, and hence has become the emblem of the great and natural expeller of demons, whose hours of mischief are those of darkness. Hence also the peach-tree is the symbol of the East, of the vernal sun, and of longevity, as representing the principal creative power in the universe.

Early on the wedding morning, which is supposed to be passed by the bride and her relatives in tears, the bridegroom sends a present of a goose and gander, wine, fruits, a marriage robe of red, and, if one of the literati or an official, a phoenix headress or coronet. The goose, with part of the presents, is returned, the gander, &c., being retained by the bride. Shortly after this, the bridal chair, attended by the minstrels, proceeds to her residence. Her parents thereupon take a piece of red paper rolled into a spill, which they dip in oil, and insert lighted into the chair in order to chase out any demons that may be lurking inside. The bride, her features entirely concealed by a square red silk veil, is carried out and placed in the chair, care being taken to avoid allowing her feet to touch the threshold. Two women, relatives of the bride, follow her in sedans, dressed in red robes. The band of musicians leads the way playing with great vigour, while crackers are discharged at short intervals. On arrival at the house, the bridegroom places a ladder on the inside of the door, ascending which, he stretches out one leg for the bride to pass under. This is known as "the man is strong, the woman weak." The bridegroom has also two female attendants dressed in red robes. One of these holds a sieve containing the fruit known as "dragon's eyes," with a few chopsticks and juniper-leaves. The other holds a measure containing rice, in which are fixed two lighted candles, a mirror, a two-foot rule, a lighted lamp, dragon's eyes, and lotus-nuts. This measure is taken hold of by the bride and the second woman, whilst the first holds the sieve over the bride's head; thus escorted, she enters the house, crossing in doing so a saddle placed on the ground to signify the speed with which she escapes from any demons who may be following. The chopsticks (*fai*

tsz) signify the desire that she may (fài) quickly (tsz) a son produce. The dragon's eyes (ün ngàn) that he may become a (pong ngàn) second on the list of Hanlin doctors, if he do not attain to the rank of the first (chong ün). The mirror is employed as being extremely obnoxious to evil spirits, who cannot endure the sight of their own faces.

In the bride's room is a table on which are two lighted candles, and in the middle a pair of men's and a pair of women's shoes, with a pig's head. An old woman takes the rice and scatters it on all sides to expel demons. The bridegroom is then lifted up by two men by the side of the bed, while the bride stands on the bed facing him at a lower elevation. In her hand she holds a red sash with a round steel mirror on it. A knot having been tied in this one end is pulled by the bride and the other by the bridegroom, who then puts it in his sleeve.

The anxiously-awaited moment now arrives when the bridegroom, raising the veil, first looks on his bride's face, but, whether the results prove satisfactory or the reverse, whether she be beautiful as a fairy or hideous as a gnome, there is now no escape for him, and though a bridegroom has been known on inspection of his bride flatly to refuse to have anything to do with her, yet she would be held by all to hold the position of his wife, and, as such, to be entitled to all a wife's privileges.

The bridegroom then taps the bride three times on the head with a fan, indicating his authority over her. This is called "the junction of relationship," the couple now becoming man and wife for ever. The two women who accompanied the bride then take off their red robes, wash their faces, and go back, the bridegroom presenting them with a sum sufficient for a feast.

At night the bridegroom's friends and relatives assemble for a feast. If numerous, the relatives feast on the first and the friends the second day. The newly-married couple first worship heaven and earth, and afterwards the bridegroom's ancestors, and they then salute his parents, relatives and friends. The offerings consist of a pig's head, fish, fowl, and a pair of male and of female shoes. The clothes on this occasion are white. A general feast then ensues.

On the second morning the bride makes presents of spectacle-cases, fan-cases, &c., to her friends and relatives.

On the third morning she enters the kitchen and takes out of the cauldron some cooked and some glutinous rice, with green beans, which she steams together. She then takes a cooked fowl and some pork, with which she worships the god of the fireplace. She then gets some bread, pork, the glutinous rice, &c., which she takes to her mother's house.

In the evening the bridegroom follows, makes a feast, and worships the ancestors of his 'parents-in-law, also saluting them themselves, their friends and relatives.

All persons invited are expected to bring presents. The money sent by guests to defray the probable expense of their entertainment varies from eighty cents for a child and a hundred and forty for an adult to as much as fifteen or twenty dollars.

A talented but poor youth will at times enter the family of his wife adopting their name. This custom is known as "giving the pledge."

It may be noticed that should the day fixed on for the wedding prove inauspicious, a piece of meat is suspended at the door for the dreaded tiger to eat, and not disturb the wedding-party; or a picture of Chin Kung, a Taoist priest possessed of great power over influences inimical to the bride, is pasted on her sedan.

### PART III.—DEATH.

The exaggeration which accompanies the mourning ceremony of the Chinese renders it exceedingly distasteful to the feelings of western nations. Under the affectation of heartbroken grief assumed by those nearly related to the deceased there may be, and probably in many cases is, a stratum of real sorrow, but all that meets the eye is the performance of a prescribed ritual to satisfy public opinion, and to secure for the performers an increase of prosperity. It must indeed in many instances be with a sense of relief that a son witnesses the removal of one whom he has ever regarded during life as possessed of

despotic power over his person ; but whether such be his sensations or not the prescribed grief must be exhibited, the prescribed routine of eulogistic ceremonies performed.

The Chinese theory of death is that it takes place in accordance with the reckoning of heaven, exercised through the power of the god or goddess controlling the special disease from which the patient suffers. To this delegate, therefore, the prayers for recovery are addressed. It may be here noted that noon and midnight are considered to be the two periods most fatal to life.

A curious aversion is exhibited by some to saving the life of a person in imminent danger—as from drowning, the belief entertained being that the spirit of the person near death is destined to relieve that of the last person deceased from keeping further watch and ward.

The Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, with the North American Indians and many other savage tribes, have agreed with the Chinese in rendering religious homage to the departed, and in pacifying gratifying, and honouring their manes in the world of spirits.

The superstitious nature of the Chinese, ever prone to believe in the presence of the supernatural, renders them extremely susceptible to a belief in the power of the spirits of the deceased over the survivors. It is in this that their sacrifices to their ancestors, their deification of illustrious men of former times, the erection of orbate temples to the spirits of those who have no relatives, and the annual feeding of hungry ghosts, have their origin and their explanation.

So material indeed is the view taken by them of the spirit-world, that the practice instituted by Chi Hwangti, B.C. 250, of having his slaves killed and buried with him, to serve him in his future state, is still to be traced in the burning at the present day of mock paper-money, paper clothes, sedan chairs, bearers, &c. &c., for the service of the deceased in the spirit-world—fire, the great transforming power, being considered efficient to change these paper-representations into realities in the region of the shades.

In addition to thus supplying the bodily wants—if such a term may be permitted—of the spirits of their ancestors, the Chinese further consider it their duty to inform them—through the ancestral tablets—of any important family events which may be about to take place;

and, on accession to official rank or literary fame, their worship must be specially celebrated.

The ancestral tablets alluded to are formed of wood, chestnut being the most orthodox—12 inches high in accordance with the 12 months, 4 inches broad for the four seasons, 12 fan ( $\frac{1}{10}$  inch) thick for the 12 hours. The top is arched like heaven, the bottom flat like earth. In a family temple they are ranged on shelves in chronological order, the number gradually increasing downwards. The following are specimens of the inscriptions on a father's and on a mother's tablet respectively:—"The tablet of Mr. Hwáng Yungfah (late Chingteh), the head of the family, who finished his probation with honour during the Imperial Ts'ing dynasty, reaching a sub-magistracy. The name lately held is that by which he was known during his lifetime; that now assumed is an ancestral title, bestowed upon him by some learned friend of the family after his decease."

The mother's tablet reads:—"The tablet of Madam Hwàng, originally of the noble family Chin, who would have received the title of lady, and who in the Imperial Ts'ing dynasty became the consort of her husband." It will be observed that no ancestral title is bestowed upon the wife.

One result of this constant endeavour on the part of the Chinese to propitiate their ancestors would appear to be the checking of enterprise, it being held that any change in the surroundings to which an ancestor has been accustomed while on earth must be displeasing to his spirit now that he has left it.

A superstitious, but sanitary dislike, is entertained to burial within the city walls, the hill-sides beyond that limit being usually selected for the purpose. Cremation, once universal, is now limited to the priests of Buddha.

Ancestral halls are built by individuals, or by several branches of a family of the same surname, large sums being expended in their erection and ornamentation. They are endowed, and the income is devoted to repairs and maintenance of worship. Incense is burnt every morning and evening, and on the 1st and 15th of the moon there are special offerings, with wax tapers and prostrations, in precisely the same manner as in the worship of idols.

In the hall of a large and rich Canton family there are two apartments, in each of which there are about eleven hundred tablets, and in a room between them an image of the first ancestor, B.C. 300, who was a disciple of Confucius.

On the death of a man two candles and three sticks of incense are lighted and placed at the foot of the bed, a bundle of paper money being placed under his head as a pillow, and his face being covered with the same. The corpse is arrayed in full dress clothes, hat, and boots, as though he were going to see an official, the popular belief being that he is about to see Im Lò Wong-Yama, the Ruler of Hell.

If the deceased be of a wealthy family, he is dressed in twenty or thirty coats; if poor, in eight or ten. A man is then summoned to write on a piece of buff-coloured paper a sentence or two eulogising the departed, which is then pasted up beside a picture representing him, on the other side of which is written, Amida Buddha, Liberator from Hell. The phrase of eulogy is probably in the style of—Respectful, Reverential, Benevolent, Compassionate. The writer must hold the rank of a Kung Shang, or presented licentiate. Two or three licentiates are at times invited to be present with him. A chair and the eight sounds, or music, must be provided for his use, all expenses being defrayed by the bereaved family. The eldest son or grandson, as chief mourner, then takes a white earthenware vase, in which are placed three sticks of incense stuck in as many pieces of paper money, and a piece of silver. The chief mourner, dressed in hempen clothes, and with his head bound with a white cloth, is led out by two persons who support him on either side to the river side. In one hand he holds the vase, in the other a short piece of bamboo wrapped round with white paper. His friends and relatives dressed in white follow in the rear. Arrived at the bank of the river, candles and incense-sticks are lighted, and the piece of silver, for which three cash are frequently substituted, is thrown into the water, a little of which is then dipped up, and taken back to wash the breast of the corpse. This custom is known as buying water. Should there be no river at hand, the nearest water is selected, and in Hong Kong the hydrants are used for this purpose. The washing has now become a mere pretence. When it has been concluded, the mouth of the deceased

is opened, and the world-wide custom of introducing a piece of silver to defray his expenses to or in the spirit world is observed.

The white cloth wrapped round the heads of the mourners is supplied by the family. The relatives are dressed in white coats, the females wearing, in addition, trousers of that colour. Sons, daughters, and grandchildren have braided in their hair threads of hemp, or blue or white cotton. No silks, satins, or red garments should be worn for 27 months.

The periods of mourning are five in number, varying according to the relationship of the parties, viz.:

1. Long mourning—three years reduced to 27 months, is observed by children and wives, also on the death of the Emperor.
2. Limit—one year, by grandchildren, husbands, nephews.
3. Great merit—9 months by those one remove from No. 2.
4. Little merit—5 months by those one remove from No. 3.
5. Silky hemp—so called from the clothes worn—3 months by those one remove from No. 4.

In the event of the father dying before the grandfather, the son, on the decease of the latter, must take his father's place, and mourn for three years.

The colours worn in mourning for a father or mother are—for the first year, white; for the second, blue; for the third, black.

In mourning an uncle, the first colour is blue; the second, black.

If any daughters of the family be married, they must assume mourning, and come to their father's house. There they must wash their heads, and then return to their homes, where they worship the ancestors of their husbands. This done, they return to their father's house as mourners.

A lucky day is selected by a Taoist priest for placing the corpse in the coffin. Large sums are expended on these longevity boards, as they are termed, which are considered to be most suitable presents as from a son to his parents. One thousand dollars is not an extraordinary sum to give for a coffin, and that employed in the burial of Sui Lun, a former Governor-General of the two Kwong provinces, is said to have cost 6000 dollars.

Should the day of decease be an unlucky day, the body may not be

encoffined for one day. Should it be still more unlucky, two or three days must be passed, for, if not, another member of the family will surely die. If all goes well, the priest is requested to make a charm to suspend over the door, musicians are engaged, and the encoffining takes place. After nailing down the lid, the friends and relatives must kneel beside the coffin and kotow.

The wives, sons, and daughters of the deceased then go to the door of the house, where they weep and wail. This is called indicating the road; the supposition being that the spirit of the deceased not knowing where to go these weeping persons facing west can thus communicate to it the way it should take to reach the Western Heaven, the Paradise of Buddhists. A similar belief in the power of the survivors to direct the spirit of the deceased may be observed in the wailing cry addressed to the spirit of a person who has died at a distance from his native place, viz., *loi kwai loi, loi kwai loi, come home, come home*. This is also resorted to in the case of sick persons, the Chinese believing with other nations that illness is caused by the spirit of a man leaving his body to wander to and fro.

During the few days immediately following death the eldest son must fast and weep by the coffin, at night sleeping by its side. For seven days he must kotow to any one visiting him.

This period is known as *shan ts'at*, or the first seven. Buddhist priests are engaged to chant a liturgy to grant a passage for the soul. The Taoist priests must also go to the idols worshipped by the deceased during his lifetime, and inform them—it would almost appear in grim irony—that their worshipper, having died, is no longer in need of their protection.

Should the deceased have been an opium-smoker or fond of wine, paper opium-pipes and wine-cups are burnt for his enjoyment, as also are paper-houses, furniture, and servants.

On the twenty-first day after death the nearest female relatives must proceed to the house of the genii, or necromancer, clad in white, to inquire whether the deceased is happy or not. In the latter case, they must buy what he requires, and burn it. A present of rice, eggs, cash, incense, and candles must be made to the wizard.

Should the family be a wealthy one, a Buddhist priest is engaged



on seven times seven, or the forty-ninth day, to get the deceased to heaven. If poor, this ceremony is dispensed with; but in rich houses it is performed on every seventh day till the forty-ninth is reached.

At night a small platform is erected at the door surmounted by a table at which the priests recite their prayers. Rice is scattered, and libations made. This is known as the dispensation of supplies to hungry ghosts who have no relatives to take care of them. In the event of death from opium swallowing, drowning, hanging, throat-cutting, or child-birth, a fire is made by the Buddhist priests, at which chains and bricks are heated; holding these in their hands and teeth they step on red-hot bricks, thus enabling the spirit to be born again or to transmigrate, and, in consequence, deterring it from returning to molest its former friends. In some cases a cauldron of boiling oil is employed. The priests rushing into the room seize soil or anything lying about, and fling it into the cauldron, saying that they have caught the soul of the dead man, and have roasted it, thus preventing its return in order to seek some one to die and take its place.

After one hundred days, a wealthy family will hold another mass for the release of the soul from hell.

During the seventh month of each year a letter must be transmitted by the agency of fire to the departed containing gold and silver paper-money.

As the day selected for burial approaches, a geomancer is engaged to select a lucky spot. During the period occupied by his search he has to be maintained by his employers, and some are thus kept for months and even for years.

This selection of a spot for burial is considered extremely important as affecting the future fortunes of the survivors, and in cases in which misfortune is experienced, the remains will be dug up and transferred to a more favourable locality.

The coffin while awaiting burial is kept in the hall. In the city of Shin Kwàn, in the north of the province of Kwangtung, an odd belief exists that, the shape of the city resembling that of a gourd, the dead represent the seeds. Were the gourd deprived of its seeds, say the

people, how could it thrive? As a consequence of this theory, coffins are kept stored up in the houses, some being furnished with as many as ten or even more. From time to time a proclamation commanding interment is issued by the mandarin, and in the commotion which ensues the coffins are hurriedly buried almost anywhere.

When a family is resident in a place in which they have no family sepulchre, the coffin is frequently placed in the public temples, or in dead-houses erected for the purpose, a small sum being annually paid to the priest to burn incense before it. Coffins of such persons are also kept in their houses for years, it being not uncommon in Canton to have ten or more resting in the lararium.

Should the body have been buried on the return of the family to their native place, the remains are disinterred and placed in a covered jar while awaiting removal; under the title of potted ancestors they are well known to foreign residents in China.

It may be noticed that youths under twenty, unless married, have no tablet erected to them, and children under ten years of age no funeral procession.

Two or three days before burial another mass is performed by the Buddhist priests to "open the way," *i.e.* to prevent evil spirits from annoying the soul on its way to the grave.

The friends and relatives present white candles, incense, and paper-money. Some present the five sacrificial animals, fowl, fish, pork, duck, and rabbit: some, the three animals, fowl, fish, and pork. By others, pieces of blue flannel are given on which are written four eulogistic characters.

It is to be observed that the red slips of paper on the doors expressing felicity are now replaced by others of a blue colour with letters in white; blue being the recognized colour in such cases on all occasions of mourning.

Gold and silver paper, and paper rolled up to represent bales of cloth, is burnt. Wealthy families now celebrate a feast, while the poor find a fast to be better adapted to their resources.

Those presenting the five or the three animals worship at the side of the coffin, the arrangements being—visitors at the rear of the coffin,

chief mourners on either side. The master of ceremonies directs them when to stand and when to kneel, the form employed by him stating the name of the deceased, and imploring him to be present and to partake of the bounties provided. The offerings are afterwards divided among the mourners.

A chair is now despatched to bring an influential person to the house, his office being to change the character a prince on the ancestral tablet into a lord. He comes escorted by a band of musicians, and preceded by a large blue state umbrella. Having effected the required change in the tablet, he salutes it with three bows and retires. The degree held by this person should be at least that of Kung Shang.

At the time selected by the geomancer, the coffin-bearers and the funeral procession start for the grave. As it proceeds through the streets, the musicians play dirges at short intervals. The coffin is preceded by several Buddhist priests holding small paper banners, in front of whom goes a man buying the road by scattering pieces of paper, each slip being regarded as current money in Hades, and now employed to propitiate malicious wandering ghosts, and deter them from molesting the wraith of the deceased on its way to the grave. Immediately behind the coffin comes the chief mourner tottering along supported by his servants, and holding the short bamboo previously described to drive away the Cerberis or dogs which guard the bridge leading into Hades. In some cases he also carries a banner with the epitaph of the spirit written on it to show it the way to its long home. Should the deceased have held official rank, his tablets are borne in the procession, while the number of beats to which his position entitles him are given by gong-bearers. A splendid shrine containing a picture of the dead man, with pavilions containing incense, fruits, a roast pig, &c., and a pall of richly embroidered silk, give an air of magnificence to the procession which contrasts strongly with the unshaven head and dishevelled garments of the chief mourner. Bands of music, servants, relatives, and friends follow at the various stages of the cortège, the length of the funeral train being sometimes half-a-mile or even more.

Tables are arranged on the route supplied with eatables for the service of the spirit.

If the family be rich, the services of a man of repute are enlisted to accompany the mourners to the grave there to worship the Earth Queen, or Terminalia.

Arrived at the grave, the geomancer cuts the comb of a cock in honour of the hill spirit, to whom, as well as to the Earth Queen, sacrifices are offered.

The grave is in the south, constructed in the form of an Omega, or perhaps better, in that of a large armchair, in the seat of which the coffin is deposited, the tombstone being let into the masonry of the back.

The limits of the grave are defined by two small stones above and behind it.

Stone lions guard the tombs of high officials, and in some cases lofty stone pillars are erected in front or an approach is made between two lines of stone animals.

The coffin is deposited in its resting-place to the accompaniment of crackers, after which prayers to the soul and the hill spirit are recited and burnt by the priests. The following may serve as specimens:—

“ I beg to announce to my parent that, since he cast off this world and departed, I have cherished my grief, and shall continue to do so to the end of my days : I have constantly kept in my breast morning and evening, sorrowing in vain. Having divined favourable auguries with thankfulness I am come here to a lucky spot, where the wind dwells and the (earth) dragon’s pulse rests. On this lucky day I take up the coffin and deposit it. The form returns to the grave and the spirit to the hall. There they will remain for thousands of generations. May you, now settled in this place so beautiful and desirable, abundantly illuminate your prosperity, that happiness and riches may be theirs obtained by your goodness. Be pleased to regard this.”

“ I beg to announce to the terminalia of this hill that the fortunate divination of my parent has directed me to this spot, and I now, on opening the ground, respectfully announce it with entire sincerity,

praying you to come and extend your protection that my ancestors' souls may repose in peace, and my posterity be prosperous."

After the grave is covered, the procession returns and, having eaten some food, disperses. It is believed by some that on the return of the family the spirit accompanies them ; by others that one of the three souls remains at the grave, the second in the tablet, and the third in the spirit world. The tablet is now installed with those in the lararium and receives similar worship.

In China, where husband and wife share one tomb, the former is placed in the place of honour, the left, the latter being placed on his right. Should a grave be ruinous or filled with coffins, it is repaired and the ashes are taken out of the coffins and placed in jars, each one of which is marked. They are then reburied, and the grave is closed, the act being announced by a prayer.

On the third morning a visit is paid to the grave, where worship is performed, and the tombstone erected.

Each year on the 106th day after the winter solstice, *i.e.*, in the beginning of April, and on the ninth day of the ninth moon, worship is conducted at the tombs, which are swept and cleaned, the former festival which is known as *ts'ing ming* being the more important. Candles and incense-sticks are lighted, and the three animals are offered, a supply of paper-money being burnt for the service of the departed. Strips of paper are then attached to the grave as evidence that the rites have been performed.

NORMAN G. MITCHELL-INNES.

May 15, 1883.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS  
DANCES OF CERTAIN PRIMITIVE PEOPLES IN  
ASIA AND AFRICA, TOGETHER WITH THEIR  
SURVIVALS IN EUROPE.

BY MRS. J. C. MURRAY-AYNSLEY.

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CHAPTER I.

SOUTHERN INDIA AND THE CENTRAL PROVINCES OF HINDOSTÁN.



T is chiefly in out of the way and mountainous districts in various countries that national dances still survive.

We propose in this series of papers to give examples from Ladakh or Western Tibet, situated in the extreme north of the Himalayas and bordering on Central Asia, and also of the dances of the hill tribes of the highlands of Assam, of Hindostán proper, of the Southern Peninsula of India, of Egypt, Greece, Algeria, and Spain (this latter country is still very Eastern in many of its customs), and of our own highlands of Scotland. As we proceed, the strange resemblance which exists between the dances of Asia and some of those of Europe cannot fail to strike the reader. Except where otherwise stated, they have all been witnessed by the writer. To any one who has visited these different localities it is most interesting and curious to note how perfectly each dance seems adapted to the surroundings of these various peoples: one gains an insight into their characters and temperaments, and can understand to how great an extent the climate and the physical aspect of a country acts upon its inhabitants, and even influences their amusements. Certain peoples are incited to dance through light-heartedness, others by warlike impulses, others by religious fervour; to some again, their

climate necessitates violent exertion; whilst grief also, or at least simulated sorrow, needs some such expression of its feelings.

In Algeria, and in the plains of India, dances are executed in a slow and languid manner, though religious fervour causes the members of the Aïssaona sect in Algeria, and the dervishes of Egypt, to make such rapid movements as to cause extreme exhaustion when the excitement which produced them is at an end.

In mountainous districts, such as the highlands of Scotland and of Greece, the Spiti valley in the Himalayas, and the British province of Coorg in Southern India (which latter lies at a height varying from 2,000 to 5,000 feet above the sea), dancing seems to come naturally to their inhabitants, and to be almost a necessity to them, assisting to work off their superfluous energies.

Certain of the dances of India, more especially those of the Deccan and of Coorg, would seem to belong to the most ancient types, and to be such as would suggest themselves to aboriginal peoples.

The greater portion of the high table-land in Southern India, commonly called the Deccan, now belongs to the Nizam of Hyderabad, but a part of it is British territory.

The religion of Mahomet, as we see it in India, seems to have the tendency to render its votaries stern and uncompromising; one cannot imagine a Musulman dancing or caring to witness theatricals. The Hindú religion is also in some of its aspects one of fear, especially to that section who worship their god Saiva; yet Hindús have their light-hearted moments, they enjoy hearing music and being present at dances or theatrical representations, which in Southern India are given by troupes of men and young lads, who travel about the country performing in the various towns they visit; the boys take the women's parts, and wear the native female dress on these occasions. When we witnessed such a performance at Belgaum in the Deccan all were Hindús, except the manager, who was a Parsí.

The theatre, a rude temporary native building, was very imperfectly lighted by some tiny lamps filled with cocoa-nut oil, it therefore required but a slight stretch of the imagination to fancy the scene laid in a dark forest or in a mountain cavern.

One of the dances recalled our May-pole dance, now alas! almost,

if not quite, extinct. It formed a portion of a kind of ballet which followed a drama founded on an incident in the history of Delhi in the olden time.

The performers consisted of an equal number of men and boys; long scarves of two or more colours were attached to the summit of a high pole which was erected on the stage, each person who took part in this dance held one of these scarves; whilst moving most gracefully they described certain figures, thereby causing the different scarves to entwine themselves, and form various patterns, which was of course only possible by keeping time and all making precisely the same movements. It is singular to find an almost identical dance existing in three widely-separated continents: the May-pole dance of Europe, the pole and ribbon dance of the Deccan, and the Baile de la Conta, or ribbon-dance of Yucatan, would all appear to have had a common origin. A very interesting account of the latter appeared in 1884 in the *Queen* newspaper.

Strutt,\* writing at the beginning of the present century, says that the May-games were no doubt the relic of a more ancient custom practised by the heathens in honour of the goddess Flora.

Stowe,† in 1605, speaks of them thus: "In the month of May, the citizens of London of all estates generally in every parish, and in some instances two or three parishes joining together, had their several mayings . . . . with good archers, morrice dancers, and other devices for pastime all day long . . . . these great mayings and May-games were made by the governors and masters of the city, together with the triumphant setting up of the great shaft, or principal may-pole in Cornhill before the parish church of St. Andrew, which was thence called St. Andrew Undershaft."

Philip Stubs, a writer who was contemporary with Stowe, inveighs strongly against the maypole, which, as he says, "they covered all over with flowers and hearbes bound round with strings from the top to the bottome, and sometimes it was painted with variable colours, having two or three hundred men, women, and children following it with great devotion, it being drawn along by twentie or fourtie yoke of

\* *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England.*

† *Antiq. Vulgares.*



oxen, every ox having a sweet nosegay of flowers tied to the tip of his horns."

The decline of such pastimes and games in England would appear to be due to the Puritans. In 1618 King James I. issued an edict in consequence of what he saw in his progress through Lancashire, "rebuking certain Puritanes and precise people in prohibiting and unlawfully punishing of our good people for using their lawful recreations and honest exercises on Sundays and other holy days after the afternoon sermon or service. It is our will that after the end of divine service our good people be not disturbed . . . . . from any lawful recreation, such as dancing, nor having of May games, morris dances, and the setting up of maypoles."

Charles the First renewed this proclamation in the eighth year of his reign. A pamphlet written by a High Churchman more than three years later, in answer to some attacks made upon this ordinance of Charles, by the Puritanical party, suggests "that those recreations are meetest to be used which give the best refreshment to the bodie, and leave the least impression on the minde: shooting, leaping, and the like, are rather to be chosen than diceing or carding."

In certain parts of France maypoles are still in use. The traveller who chances to be going from Bordeaux to Nantes, or *vice versa*, during the month of May cannot fail to remark in almost every village on his route, tall poles decked with coloured streamers, and garlands of flowers, which had been used recently, still hanging on to them.

Another dance given at Belgaum on the same occasion may be styled the club-dance: every performer holds a short staff in each hand, and flying in and out amongst his companions, with the club in his right hand, he strikes one belonging to a neighbour, and with that in his left hand he hits the club of another dancer; all keep the most perfect time; their movements are made with remarkable precision, though they are so rapid that the eye can scarcely follow them; the dancers appear to be threading an endless maze or labyrinth.

Though executed by hired performers on this occasion, there is little doubt that this is an indigenous dance, for in the district between Belgaum and Púna the little village *gamins* may be seen dancing it for their own amusement. Both this and the maypole

dance are such as would naturally suggest themselves to the dwellers in forests or jungles ; the club-dance is also a favourite with some of the semi-wild and aboriginal races who inhabit the jungles in Coorg and the outlying districts of the Mysore State, such as the Holeyas and the Kurumbers, who belong to the very lowest caste (if, indeed, they should not be styled outcasts or pariahs); the men have been civilized to a small extent owing to the demand for labour in opening out coffee plantations ; their womenkind, however, remain in the thickets, and are rarely, if ever, seen by Europeans.

The war-dances which we read of as still taking place amongst savage peoples before going into battle have their prototypes in Asia, in Greece, and even amongst ourselves.

Some of the hill tribes in Assam execute a dance which in some of its aspects carries us back to a very early stage of human civilization (this will be described in its proper place).

A favourite dance with the Coorgis proper is a true sham-fight which sometimes degenerates into real earnest blows given on both sides ; and in Ladakh, or Western Tibet, in Greece, and in the highlands of Scotland, we find a dance performed between two crossed swords, which is probably but a remnant of a very ancient custom—that of worshipping weapons before going into a combat, or, maybe, of rejoicing over a vanquished foe.

The province of Coorg (a mountainous district situated to the west of the native state of Mysore, in Southern India) has only been British territory little more than fifty years, therefore it is highly probable that in their singular and characteristic war-dance we see the mode in which they were in the habit of attacking their foes—each man singling out his adversary. The Coorgis proper (as distinguished from the wild and aboriginal tribes of whom we have already spoken) are a decidedly fair race compared with the people of Mysore ; possibly there may be an admixture of Arab blood in their veins, for in more than one respect they resemble the Arabs of Hyderabad, in the Deccan ; their dress is not dissimilar ; in build and general personal appearance they are not unlike the Nizam's Arab subjects, and, like these latter, they are a warlike race : almost every man carries arms of some kind, even if he does not possess a gun. Both

the Coorgi and the Arab of Hyderabad are in the habit of sticking a large knife in their girdle ; some of these knives are very handsome, and descend from father to son ; many of them have silver handles adorned with turquoises and other precious or semi-precious stones. Some have supposed that the ancestors of the Coorgis came from the Concan, or from Canara, both which districts are on the western coast of the southern peninsula of India : they imagine that continued invasions into their country may have caused them to retreat into this wild and hilly region. Their religion is Hindúism, with a strong current of the older forms of ancestor, and of tree and serpent worship underlying it ; but, whatever may be their origin, they seem to have preserved a perfectly distinct type of features, dress, and customs, from those who surround them.

Their natural surroundings, and the persecutions which the Coorgis had to endure at the hands of Tippoo Saïb, and, later on, the oppressions of their own last native ruler, have, no doubt, contributed to make them what they now are—a brave and independent race, prepared to defend their country to the last inch of ground. The two national dances which we are about to describe will serve to illustrate the character of this people better than words can do.

As far as we could ascertain, it is the men only who dance. When we witnessed these dances no native women were present even as lookers-on, possibly the hour and the place may have had something to do with their absence. At 9 p.m. we found a considerable number of Coorgis assembled in a clearing in the natural jungle. It was a wild scene ; the forest was only illumined by torches made of a resinous kind of wood. The torch-bearers formed a large circle within the open space ; in the centre of this the musicians placed themselves ; their instruments were drums and a kind of pipe. Two of the dances were especially remarkable, and they seemed perfectly adapted to the locality and the people. In the first of these each man placed himself in position, so as to be about two feet distant from his neighbours before, behind, and on either side of him. All the performers began dancing a rapid measure amongst and around each other. At given intervals every pair of dancers faced each other and pirouetted, then all once more commenced the same wild movements as before. They

seemed, as a rule, always to turn the reverse way to what we usually do; and, except when the different couples were setting to each other, they invariably passed back to back.

The second dance was even more peculiar, inasmuch as it would seem to be a remnant of a period when every man's hand was against his brother. The performers may consist of any equal number of persons; they always dance in pairs. Before they begin each man is given a bundle of sticks or bamboos. This he holds in his left hand and a stouter stick is then handed to him, which he grasps with his right hand. At first all these men dance round and round with head erect, as if they were going to war, or were in search of adventures. Presently they narrow the circle, they assume a crouching attitude, their eyes glance here, there, and everywhere. The respective adversaries have been singled out, the intending aggressors make a feint or two, then bend their knees so that they are only about two-thirds their ordinary stature, at the same time they place their feet close together and make a succession of bounds or rather hops, like a frog, and with the sticks which they hold in their right hands the different attacking parties aim sundry cuts at the legs of the men whom they have selected as their adversaries. These latter now too take up the same kind of attitude; each endeavours to ward off the blows intended for him with the bundle of bamboos he holds in his left hand, whilst by a skilful hop he tries to return the attack and hit his antagonist's limbs. This kind of game goes on for perhaps an hour between the different pairs of combatants. It is a point of honour with them never to strike above the knee; but occasionally the players become excited, blood is drawn, and severe wounds inflicted.

Whether intentionally, or perhaps because one player is more skilful than the other, one of the parties is victorious in the end, the conqueror clasps his adversary round the waist and raises him from the ground, the vanquished man does the same. This is done to show that neither bears malice.\*

\* Mr. C. T. Newton, of the British Museum, in his *Travels and Discoveries in the Levant*, says that whilst he was staying at Budrum (the ancient Halicarnassus) in Asia Minor he witnessed the performances of some Turkish wrestlers. These men have also a similar custom. Mr. Newton continues: "The defeated

Some low-caste men from the north-west of the Mysore state, and who brought their own musicians with them, next attempted the club dance as performed in the Deccan. They did not do it well, for, as we heard afterwards, these particular individuals had not been in the habit of dancing together; but the fact of their doing it proved that this same dance is common to the aborigines of more than one hilly district in Southern India. This same dance must at one period have been in use in other parts of that peninsula. At a place called Tadputri in the Madras presidency, a few hours distant by rail from the civil and military station of Bellary, there are certain old temples in the Dravidian style of architecture. A Saiva and a Vaishnava one are in the same enclosure. The latter, which is the larger temple of the two, has sculptured capitals on its columns with much defaced human figures. There are also traces of painting on the ceiling of the colonnade of the ante-temple. It is highly probable that the ceiling of the centre part was at one time similarly decorated, for the slabs which form it are very rough, without ornamentation of any kind, and not in keeping with the rest of the building.

In addition to the main approach through the ante-temple there are two side entrances flanked by stone seats. The slab of stone which forms the back of one of these seats has female figures upon it, sculptured in bas-relief; they are represented performing a club dance like those we witnessed at Belgaum and in the Coorg jungles. The hair of these figures is arranged in a large knot on one side of the head, as worn by Madrassee women at the present day. From the waist to the knee they have a kind of full petticoat or rather kilt. This being, as we said before, a Vaishnava temple, these damsels were most probably intended to represent the gopis or milk-maids who were the attendants of Krishna. This same dance is said to be still very frequently performed by the natives of the Bellary district at the time of the Dussera and other great feasts.

At Sagar, in the Central Provinces of India, a curious dance is executed by Hindú women; it takes place about the middle of September, and is said to be peculiar to that district: numbers of native hero arose from mother Earth. Each lifted his antagonist up in the air once in turn in token of amity."

men are present, but as spectators only. On the appointed day troupes of natives of all classes, and of course all dressed in their best, may be seen going in the same direction, viz. towards the lake, one side of which abuts on the native city. Some little time beforehand preparations have been made for this feast: wheat or other grain has been sown in earth placed in pots of very ingenious fashion, made of large leaves held together with the thorns of a species of acacia. Owing to its having been grown in a dark place the stems are of a pale straw colour, though the plants are quite small ones. The richer women walk along in a stately manner, each followed by her train of attendants carrying trays filled with such pots; the poorer ones carry their own plants. As soon as each procession arrives at the open square at the top of the ghât (or flight of steps leading down to the lake) every family or circle of friends deposit their pots upon the ground, and commences dancing round them. After a time the dancers descend to the water's edge, taking their pots of earth and corn with them. They then wash away the soil from the plants, and distribute these latter amongst their friends. Every available point of observation is occupied by the men, but they take no part whatever in this ceremony, which probably fixes the season for sowing some particular crop.

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## TWO SOUTH PACIFIC FOLK-TALES.



**M**R. LORIMER-FISON, who is well known to students of anthropology, and is joint author with Mr. Howitt of *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, and has lived many years in Fiji, has kindly sent me two folk-tales which he obtained from the natives, and which he considers as bearing some resemblance to our favourite nursery stories of "Jack and the Giants" and "Jack and the Bean-stalk"; be this as it may, they will prove both interesting and useful to story-comparers:

"The hero of the first tale was the son of a Tongan chief by one of his inferior wives. During a sea voyage a sudden whirlwind carried

away the mast and sail of the canoe, and the chief ordered his crew to paddle back to land. After paddling nearly all day they became exhausted, and could do no more. The chief ordered the future hero's mother to be killed for them to eat ; but she jumped overboard with her infant, and came up between the canoe and the outrigger, where she was concealed by the deck, supporting herself on the steering-oar, which had dropped into the sea in the confusion caused by her escape. Here she remained till darkness set in, and then floated quietly away, holding her child on the blade of the steer-oar. The great sea-birds swooped down upon them as they drifted, and, in spite of all her efforts, one of them struck the child and tore out one of his eyes. Hence he was afterwards known by the name of Matandua, "The One-eyed." They drifted to the island of Fiji, where they were found on the beach by an old man. The poor mother was lying dead on the sand, holding the living child to her bosom. The old man took Matandua home to his wife, and they brought him up as their own son. When he came to manhood they told him his history so far as they knew it, and his mother appeared to him in a dream, confirming the tale, and directing him to return to Tonga. So he set sail in a small canoe, and his mother flew before him in the shape of a little green bird, showing him the course. When he reached Tonga, he found that an enormous giant had killed most of the men, and taken for his own purposes all the women who were worth appropriating. The green bird led Matandua to the place in the forest where the few survivors had concealed themselves, and he found them in wretched case, afraid to stir abroad in quest of food because of the giant. Matandua at once set out to destroy the monster, to whom warning had been given of his approach by a great bat, which was the giant's familiar. The giant issued forth, and the fight began. Matandua's mother had revealed to him in a dream that the giant was only vulnerable in one part of his body, namely, behind his knee. Matandua struck him there, avoiding his return blows by nimble movements, until at last the giant fell ; whereupon the women came out and helped to strangle him with a long rope. Thus Tonga was delivered, and Matandua, being the only survivor of the chief's lineage, became the chief of the land.

“The Bean-stalk legend is still clearer: A Tongan lady granted her love to Tui Langi (King of the Sky), and had a son by him. When the child grew up into boyhood, the other boys reproached him for being ‘without a father.’ He went weeping to his mother, who comforted him by the story of his birth. When he heard this he set out in search of his father. At night he stuck his walking-stick of noko-noko (*casuarina*) into the sand, and lay down to sleep beside it. When he awoke in the early dawn he found it grown into a tree, the upper branches of which penetrated into the sky. He climbed the tree up to Langi, where he found his father, to whom he introduced himself as his son. Afterwards he came down again at Kandavu, in Fiji, by what means the legend does not say; but it is noteworthy that he appeared there in company with two men, ‘whose faces were white.’ It is possible that this may be a reminiscence of the arrival at Kandavu of two escaped convicts from Norfolk Island, who might have picked up some vagabond Tongan on the way. Supposing them to have been wrecked on the Kandavu reef, the Tongan might have concocted the tale of the Sky King to save himself from the usual fate of those whom the gods gave to the Fijians from the sea.

“This Fijian Jack was called at first Rávu rávu mai lángi (“The Slayer from the Sky”), a name which he earned by attacking the local gods and killing them by one blow of his fist. He went from island to island, thus establishing his superiority, until he settled at Lakemba, in East Fiji, having previously married Andi Mátá kámi kamitha, the daughter of Ndengei, the great serpent-god of the Kaurandra, Navitilevu. His son was called Tálíaitupóu, whom he made chief in his stead after some years, and then returned to Langi and took the chieftainship there.

“These myths are not purely Fijian. Lukemba, where I got them, is strongly tinged with Tongan colours, and that part of the group is a sort of hybrid Polynesian, instead of Melanesian, as is Fiji proper. It would therefore be erroneous to give the legends as Fijian. I may add that, even if my suggestion as to the coming of Rávu to Kandavu be correct, the fact that he ‘concocted’ the legend would not mean that he *invented* it: that is not at all likely. But if he knew



of a similar myth in his native land, it is likely enough that he might adapt it to his own case, and make himself the hero of it."

I have not leisure at present to offer any comments upon these two Fijian folk-tales, farther than to observe that in the first the hero's successful encounter with the giant belongs rather to the St. George-and-the-Dragon cycle than to the northern legends from which our nursery tale of the renowned Jack was derived, while the single vulnerable spot in the giant's body at once recalls that of Achilles; and that the second tale is undoubtedly near akin to European stories of the wonderful bean-stalk.

Mr. Fison mentions in conclusion that the Fijians have also the Deluge legend; a curious tradition called "The Beginning of the Pigs," being an account of how pigs first came to Fiji; another, of the exchange of mosquitoes for *kekeo* (edible shell-fish); another, entitled "The Beginning of Death," in which occur a Speaking Tree and a Fountain of Life (but this, he remarks, is evidently from Tonga); a legend of the Island of the Blest, which vanishes as mortals approach it; and many other myths, legends, and traditions which are exceedingly interesting. It is to be hoped that Mr. Fison will ere long publish his collection of Fijian folk-tales, which could hardly fail to prove both valuable to students and entertaining to ordinary readers.

W. A. CLOUSTON.

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## THE WITCHES' LADDER.

Florence, May 9, 1887.

SIR,

I suppose that you have by this time received more than one explanation of "The Witches' Ladder" given in Part 1, vol. v. of the *Folk-Lore Journal*. Perhaps the following account of one may interest

your readers. I give it verbatim as it was related to me by a girl of this city.

“Eight years ago a child died here in Florence by witchcraft. It began to waste away. The parents took it about everywhere for cure or advice, but nothing did it any good. It withered and shrivelled up and died. Then they found one day in its bed *la stregheria*, or the witch craft, which had killed it. First there was a figure like that of a cock made of cotton, stuck full with feathers. With this was a long twisted cord also stuck full of feathers put in cross-wise.”

Here I attempted to draw the object according to the girl's description, but she taking the pencil from me made a more accurate likeness of the Witches' Ladder as given in the *Folk-Lore Journal*. She did not call it a ladder, but a *guirlanda*, or garland.

It is to be observed that in all African or Voodoo sorcery, *chicken's feathers* form an important part. Thus in the United States, if you bury, with the proper accompaniments, the breast-bone of a chicken under an enemy's door-step, he or she will waste away and die. Several travellers in Africa have observed that in many places, though the natives raise the hens they do not eat them, the reason is that they are for Voodoo.

I add to this the following instances of witchcraft in this neighbourhood :—

LA FOCCACCIA, *the Cakes*.—One day a witch came to a child and gave it some cakes. Soon after it began to waste away, and the parents knowing the cause took the witch and beat her. Then she gave the child certain other cakes, and it recovered.

IL COLTELLO, *the Knife*.—A child died here in Florence of witchcraft. They knew what to do. They took bread of which the child had eaten, and put it at midnight on a table, with a garment which the child had worn. This drew the witch to the window, where she fluttered in the air, and howled in agony till she died.

I BACCHI, *the Silkworms*.—A man had many fine silkworms, when all at once they died. He knew that a certain witch must have done it. So he called on her, and while talking said that his silkworms were all well, and that he wanted her to come and help him to take

care of them. Then he went home and found that half of his *bacchi* had come to life again. So he armed all his men and women with knives and sticks, and they laid in wait for the witch and beat her till she revived all the dead silkworms.

I heard the following repeated only about an hour ago, as I write, by a woman while telling fortunes by cards. It is manifestly an incantation, which had originally no connection with cards ;

Venti cinque siete !  
 Venti cinque diavoli !  
 Diventerete, anderete nel corpo, nel sangue, nell' anima,  
 Nel sentimenti del corpo !  
 Dall' mi amante non possa vivere,  
 Non possa stare ne bere  
 Ne mangiare, ne . . . . . ne . . . . . ne co uomini ne con donne non posas  
 favellare fiviche a la porta di casa mia  
 Non viene picchiare !

*English :—*

Ye are twenty-five !  
 Twenty-five evil spirits !  
 Become a part of, enter into the body, the blood, the soul  
 Into the feelings of the body !—  
 I cannot live away from my love  
 (Cause) that he may not stand or drink  
 Nor eat . . . . . nor speak to man or woman till at my door  
 He comes to knock !

Florence appears to be one of the most abundant fields for Folk-lore which I have ever examined, and Prof. Dom. Comparetti of this city possesses one of the best Folk-lore libraries in Europe.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES G. LELAND.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Building Superstitions.**—*A Human Sacrifice necessary to the Stability of an important Building.*—See *Folk-Lore Record*, vol. iii. pp. 282-3; do. vol. iv. pp. 124, 186; *Folk-Lore Journal*, vol. i. pp. 23-4, 92. The following extracts from the *Ceylon Observer* of 27th January, 1887, show that there has recently been a scare of this kind at Colombo, where new waterworks are being constructed. One correspondent says :—

“Have you heard the reports and rumours about the *human sacrifices*? It is reported all over Colombo for the last ten days that human sacrifices are being offered up—some say for the completion of the Maligakanda Reservoir (by Europeans). The rumour has spread to such an extent that many of the schools in Colombo are almost empty the parents refusing to allow their children to go out, as the sacrifices are all *boys* under twelve years, and a good many children are reported missing. The next rumour to-day is that a Buddhist priest has heard of an enormous treasure, and that he is secretly sacrificing 350 boys under twelve years of age before he can get at it. It is a fact that in one school in Colombo to-day there appeared only a seventh part of the scholars, and during the day some of these are taken away by their parents. The children are said to have a white powder as fine as snuff thrown in their faces, or that they are made to smell it, and are consequently made insensible and carried off. Unless something be done and the rumours put down, the schools of Colombo may soon get emptied, as the story is believed even by many very intelligent people who ought to know better, and by almost every native I have spoken to.”

Another :—

“The kidnapping scare is on the increase, and everybody believes it. All sorts of wild rumours are afloat. The Chettys lock them-

selves in at seven, and nothing can induce them to get out after that hour. I hear that the Moorman assaulted at Kayman's Gate has died. The fact seems to be that the Moorman was a quiet shop-keeper who bought some things in the market and asked a cooly boy to carry them home. The boy, whose mind was rather unsettled by the recent rumours, suspecting something, refused. The Moorman who wanted somebody to carry his purchases gave the boy a gentle tap on the back and pressed the boy to help him, who, thinking that he had encountered a real kidnapper, set up a frightful howl which induced the people in the neighbourhood to rush in and give the surprised Moorman a sound thrashing. Two hundred human beings are required, says rumour, to propitiate the deity, who is responsible for the crack in the Maligakanda Reservoir." J. P. LEWIS.

**The Evil Eye and the Evil Tongue.**—The influence of the evil eye is as well known in Shetland as in other parts of the world. But to rank an evil tongue in the same category of malefic potency is a refinement of superstition unknown to the folk-lore of the majority of people. "Nobody must praise a child or anything they set a value on, for if anything evil afterwards befalls it," this will be attributed to the tongue that spoke of it. This was called "forespeaking," and persons so forespoken could only be loosed from their enchantment by being washed in a water of which the concoction is kept a profound secret.—"Shetland and its People," by Sheriff Rampini, in *Good Words* for 1884, p. 748. See also Gregor, *Folk-Lore of the North-east of Scotland*, under "Forespeaking."

In Ceylon, both Sinhalese and Tamil cultivators believe in the evil influence on their crops of the tongue as well as in that of the eye.

J. P. LEWIS.

**Laying a Ghost.**—A Newhaven despatch to a New York paper says:—In the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Birmingham early on the morning of the 18th ult., four middle-aged women and two men, the latter armed with spades and picks, entered by the side gate and halted in front of a newly-made grave. The men set to work, while the women wept, and opened the grave and hauled a coffin up. The

lid was taken off, and the remains of a beautiful young girl were revealed. The men stood aside, and the four women bent over the coffin, and deft fingers went rapidly through the dead girl's hair and shroud, and all the pins that could be found on the remains were removed. Then a needle and thread were procured, and the shroud and hair sewn back into their places. The lid was then screwed back on the coffin, and the remains were again lowered into the grave, which was at once filled up. It was learned that the women were of a very superstitious nature, and that they believed that if a corpse is buried with a shroud pinned up, instead of sewed, the soul will be confined to the grave for eternity, and the persons guilty of the mistake will be haunted till death by the ghost of the victim. A mistake was made in this case, and one of the women claims that she had seen the ghost for two or three nights successively, and she could stand it no longer; so she got the other women together, and between them they hired the men to disinter the body. The ghost has not been seen since.—*Bath Herald*, 13th March, 1886.

**Some curious Scottish Customs, temp. 1535.**—In a diary of Peter Suavenius, during his mission in England and Scotland, there is recorded that “there are trees in Scotland from which birds are produced; he is told it is undoubtedly true; those birds which fall from the trees into water become animated, but those which fall to the ground do not; the figures of birds are found in the heart of the wood of the trees and on the root; the birds themselves (which are very delicate eating) do not generate . . . . There is a place within a circuit of eight miles in which cocks never crow . . . . The Scots who inhabit the woods live like Scythians; they have no bread and live on raw venison . . . . In England there is a noble family named Constable, who formerly received their fee from the king of the Danes; now annually, at Christmas, the oldest member of the family goes to the seaside northwards, and cries out three times that if there is any one who will receive the rent for the king of the Danes he is ready to pay it; at last, tying a coin to an arrow, he shoots it as far as possible into the sea.”—See *Forty-fifth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records*, Appendix, p. 15.

G. L. GOMME.

**Arabic Proverbs.**—In *Hearne's Collections*, issued by the Oxford Historical Society, we read (p. 240):—"Some years ago Dr. Pocock made or at least began a translation of a curious MS. amongst his Collection of Arabick Proverbs; but it being not ever publish'd and nobody now knowing where it is; Mr. Marshal (Bachelor of Arts and student of Christ Church), an ingenious modest young gentleman and of considerable abilities in these studies, about 203 years since had some design of doing it anew and making it publick . . . but not finding, I presume, sufficient encouragement . . . the work was laid aside." Is it known where this MS. now is? G. L. GOMME.

**Story of King Alfred and the Cakes.**—In a Blue Book, *Report of Vice-Consul Carles of a Journey from Söul to the Phyöng Kong Gold Washings*, 1885 (C. 4522), occurs the following interesting passage (p. 5):—"A mountain in this neighbourhood [near the town of Cnhöl-wön] called P'öm-bök-san, owes its name 'Dough Hill,' according to tradition, to an incident in the life of one of the kings of Kao-kuri, in an early century of the Christian era, resembling the well-known story of King Alfred and the cake."

G. L. GOMME.

**The Hare in Folk-Lore).**—Mr. Black's summary of the folk-lore of the Hare is so interesting and so full that there is not very much left to say upon the subject; but I may perhaps be allowed to make one or two slight additions to the knowledge which he so pleasantly imparts.

In South Northamptonshire "the right fore-foot of a hare, worn constantly in the pocket, is considered a fine amulet against the "rheumatiz." \*

It would appear that the hare was at one time in some way associated with Easter observances in this country; for in the *Calendar of State Papers* (Domestic Series) is the following entry: "1620, April 2. Thos. Fulnety solicits the permission of Lord Zouch, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, to kill a hare on Good Friday, as huntsmen say that those who have not a hare against Easter must eat a red herring." †

\* *Notes and Queries*, First Series, ii. 37.

† *Ibid*, Fourth Series, viii. 23.

M. E. Rolland, in his invaluable *Faune populaire de la France*, devotes many pages ("Les Mammifères Sauvages," pp. 78-88) to the names, proverbs, and sayings, connected with the hare. From him we learn that the idea that it is unlucky to meet a hare prevails in France, Germany, and Lower Austria; the misfortune may be averted by returning three times and then resuming one's journey. "Quand on veut être beau ou belle pendant sept jours de suite, on doit manger du lièvre." Here is a French explanation: "Pourquoi les lièvres ont la lèvre fendue. Un jour un lièvre passait près d'une mare, toutes les grenouilles étaient au soleil; quand elles ont entendu du bruit, elles ont sauté dans la mare; le lièvre en a tant ri\* qu'il s'est fendu la lèvre." Mr. Gregor† tells that "in the north-east of Scotland hare-lip in the human subject is accounted for by a woman *enceinte* putting her foot into a hare's lair. If the woman noticed she had done so, and immediately took two stones and put them into the lair, the evil effects were averted."

There is an expression in common use in Ireland, which is sometimes seen in print, *e. g.* in "Father Tom and the Pope," one of the "Tales from Blackwood," where we are told that Father Tom by his astuteness "made a hare" of his Holiness. The term is commonly used when speaking of an opponent who has been worsted in an argument: "I made a hare of him, sir." The hare is popularly taken as a type of timidity—*Lepus timidus* is its scientific name—but not of stupidity; so that this expression is of some interest.

JAMES BRITTEN.

**A Charm.**—Mr. C. E. Doble, in the *Academy* of 2 August, 1884, writes as follows: Possibly the following charm has already appeared in print. I found it written, in a contemporary hand, between the end-papers of a copy of Gaigny's *Scholia on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Paris, 1539), which formerly belonged to the library of the Barefoot Carmelites at Milan.

Oxford, July 28, 1884.

✠ Vt mulier pariat ✠

*Dominus noster Jesus Christus stabat in monte oliueti cum discipulis*

\* "Il a ri de ce que lui, le poltron par excellence, avait fait peur aux autres."

† *Folk-Lore of North-east of Scotland*, p. 129.



suis, et audivit vocem mulieris parturientis, et dixit Johanni, vade et dic ad aurem dextram sic, Elisabet peperit Joannem, anna, peperit mariam, Maria me salvatorem mundi, sic pariat Ista domina sine dolore. o Infans siue sis masculus, siue sis femina, siue viuus, siue mortuus veni foras quia *Christus* vocat te ad lucem, Caspar te rogat, Melchior te vocat, Baldesar te extrahit, memento filiorum Edon qui dixerunt exinanite exinanite.

Dicatur ter a dextra parte  
mulieris plane cum vno *paternoster*  
et vna aue vero pro qualibet  
vice cum vna candella benedi  
cta pre manu deuote, et statim  
pariet deo gratias amen.

**Colic.**—Folk-lore on this complaint is very trifling. Black in *Folk-Medicine* names a charm of wolf's dung shut up in a pipe, used by Alexander of Tralles in the sixth century. At Towednack in Cornwall they advise you to stand on your head to cure it (p. 183).

Pepys tried a more agreeable method as a charm. He says:—

20 Jan. 1664-5. "Homeward, in my way buying a hare and taking it home, which arose upon my discourse to-day with Mr. Batten in Westminster Hall, who showed me my mistake, that my hare's foot hath not the joynt in it, and assures me he never had the cholique since he carried it about him; and it is a strange thing how fancy works, for I no sooner handled his foot but I became very well, and so continue" (vol. ii. p. 423).

22nd. "Now mighty well, and truly I can but impute it to my fresh hare's foot" (p. 424).

March 26. "Now I am at a loss to know whether it be my hare's foot, which is my preservation; for I never had a fit of collique since I wore it, or whether it be my taking a pull of turpentine every morning (p. 448).

J. G. FENWICK.

**Number in Folk-Medicine.**—(*Cure for Sweating Sickness*).—"Another very true medecine.—For to say every day at seven parts of your body 7 paternosters, and 7 Ave Marias with 1 credo at the last. Ye shal begyn at the ryght syde, under the ryght ere, saying the 'paternoster qui es in cœlis, sanctificetur nomen tuum,' with a cross made there with your thumb, and so say the paternoster full

complete, and 1 Ave Maria, and then under the left ear, and then under the left armhole, and then under the left the (thigh?) hole, and then the last at the heart, with 1 paternoster, Ave Maria, with 1 credo; and these thus said daily, with the grace of God is there no manner drede hym. Quod pro certo probatum est cotidie.”—(Addit. MS. 6716, f. 98.)

The above is quoted in the late Rev. J. S. Brewer's *Reign of Henry VIII.* vol. i. p. 614.

FREDERICK E. SAWYER.

**Extraordinary Case of Witchcraft in Waterford.**—To-day a woman called at the Manor Barracks, Waterford, and reported to Constable Eustace an extraordinary occurrence with the view of having the chief actor in it arrested. Mrs. Phelan stated that about an hour earlier a woman, whose name she did not know, called at her house and asked for permission to make a cup of tea, stating that she had only arrived in the city from visiting Knock, and that she was on her way to her friends, who resided in the country. Mrs. Phelan consented, and while the saucepan containing the water was being boiled she entertained her with some interesting accounts of incidents that had come under her notice while at Knock. Having done so she observed, “I can tell you what you suffer from, and I can cure you. Don't you suffer from pains in the head often?” Mrs. Phelan replied that she did, and occasional stitches in the side. “I do,” said the other; “and with palpitation of the heart?” “I am very bad with it,” was Mrs. Phelan's reply. “Very well, I will cure you for your kindness to me. What money have you in your pocket?” “I have 4½*d.*,” was Mrs. Phelan's reply. “I cannot cure you if you commence by telling me a lie. You have nearer 4*s.* 6*d.* than 4½*d.*” Mrs. Phelan stated that she had 4*s.* 6*d.* in her pocket, and that hearing the stranger tell her so she became alarmed and greatly frightened, confessed that she had such a sum. “If you wish to get rid of all you are suffering, you put that 4*s.* 6*d.* in my lap and keep your eye fixed on it, and while I am muttering the charm say a short prayer.” Mrs. Phelan stated she put the 4*s.* 6*d.* in her lap and kept her eye on it until the stranger, having gone through some form of silent devotion, took the 4*s.* 6*d.* in her hand, saying, “Look at it,” after which she stooped, and pulling a quantity of ashes from under

the fire-grate, went through the form of rubbing the coin through it, then lifting as much ashes as her hands could contain she threw them behind the fire, exclaiming, "Now it is gone, and all your pains and aches and palpitation are for ever gone with it." Mrs. Phelan admits that she immediately felt well. Within five minutes after performing the ceremony the woman left the house. Scarcely had she done so ere Mrs. Phelan stooped and searched the ashes, and afterwards raked out the fire in the vain hope of finding her 4s. 6d., but it was gone, and, feeling indignant at being so shamelessly duped, she rushed to the police and reported the swindle to Constable Eustace.—*Irish Times*, August 16, 1886.

**Mole-lore.**—Here are three items of mole-lore in the district of Columbia :—

1. A mole's feet cut off and hung around a child's neck will help it in teething. In some instances in Virginia these odd amulets have been handed down, I am told, for generations. They are equally believed in by coloured people of Maryland. "That's what the old-time people say" is the only explanation. The superstition comes into the district from both these neighbouring states.

2. Once the mole was an over-proud young lady. She is condemned to travel underground as a punishment for her pride. Unlike the former, this is told with a smile, and probably quite without belief. It will be readily recognised as a myth of wide dispersion. Perhaps the delicate fur and the grovelling habits of the little animal account for it.

3. Once the mole had eyes like other animals, but no tail. He met a creature which ridiculed him for his poverty in this latter respect. The derision preyed on his mind, and, when he met a being who could help him, he petitioned for aid. He was told that he must give up his eyesight. "So he sold his eyes for his tail." W. H. BABCOCK, Washington, D.C.—From *Science*, New York. 22nd April, 1887.

## NOTICES AND NEWS.

*The most pleasant and delectable tale of The Marriage of Cupid and Psyche, done into English by William Adlington, of University College, in Oxford, with a discourse on the fable.* By Andrew Lang, late of Merton College, in Oxford. London, 1887 (David Nutt). 8vo. Pp. lxxxvi. 65.

The version of this world-wide tale here reprinted is taken from the Golden Asse of Apuleius, as translated by William Adlington and printed in 1566. The story is quaintly told in its sixteenth century fashion, and it is delightful to possess a copy of this handsome and dainty reprint accompanied by introductory verses from five different writers, and by capital drawings of Psyche and Proserpina by Mr. W. B. Richmond and of Venus and the Seagull by Mr. Vereker Hamilton.

But it is Mr. Lang's "discourse on the fable" that creates the real interest of this book to folk-lorists. Plunging at once into his subject, Mr. Lang points out that nothing but the names of the hero and heroine and of the gods connect the legend with the higher mythology of the Olympian consistory, and that Cupid is in this story only the invisible bridegroom of so many household tales. He then proceeds to analyse the story, in order to get at the *incidents* essential to the plot. Grouping these incidents according to the ideas which they express, Mr. Lang then points out that three of them are moral observations of the facts of life which may occur anywhere, and anywhere may offer *motifs* for fiction; a fourth, the getting rid of a foe by putting him to perilous tasks, occurs in a state of society where opportunity serves; a fifth, that Hell may be visited by those who refuse to taste the dead man's meat, is found in savage and Greek myth; the sixth and seventh are found in widely scattered peoples in various degrees of primitive culture: that animals can assist their friends, and that the husband is not to be seen by the bride. Having established by

evidence produced from all parts of the world that the incidents in the Cupid and Psyche tale are almost universally human in early conditions of society, Mr. Lang pauses, and for the time rests content. How the Greeks fashioned the tale as we know it, how it became stereotyped into a deathless form, is a portion of the history of *märchen* which Mr. Lang does not feel called upon to investigate, because, as we suppose, though he does not explicitly say so, this belongs to a department of folk-lore dealing with its relationship to early literature.

It will be seen by this short summary of Mr. Lang's method that it materially differs from the school who declare themselves to be orthodox in their scientific exposition of *märchen*. Of course our readers well know that Mr. Lang is the pioneer of the new school, and that he has set his face against those who see in folk-tales nothing more than the personification of nature. Now what do these authorities say of the Cupid and Psyche story? Fortunately two distinguished scholars have in *The Academy* recently restated with sufficient clearness their exposition of this story. Canon Isaac Taylor says "the meaning of the tale is transparent" as a lunar myth, wherein Cupid is the dark side of the moon, who lies clasped in the arms of the slender Psyche, who is the bright and beautiful crescent moon. In the daytime Cupid vanishes, so does the dark side of the moon. The scar on the shoulder caused by the burning oil and the mark of Psyche's touch on the thigh are the spots seen on the moon. The disappearance of the bridegroom and the alteration of Psyche's form from being with child correspond to the later development of the moon; while its disappearance at the fourth quarter is the journey of Psyche into Hell. Thus the story is being enacted every month during the year, and we agree with Canon Taylor in his opinion that it is a lovely myth as thus expounded.

But there are fatal objections to this "scientific exposition." The Greek form of the story is only *one* form, appearing in its overshadowing force because of its place in literature where it has become stereotyped. Evidence to be adduced from it must depend upon the entire formula of the story, the sequence of events being as important as the events themselves. And then we have to ask what are we to do with those numerous instances where incidents of the Cupid and Psyche

story appear with other surroundings and set in other frameworks. Mr. Lang says they have much to do in determining the meaning of the Cupid and Psyche story. It is found that these *incidents*, apart from the form of the story, have parallels among most of the savage people whose stories have been collected and made known. An examination of them leads Mr. Lang to the conclusion that they form the true basis for working out the meaning of the story, and that their combination into any particular narrative which has happened to be recorded in literature is due to a variety of causes all of which lay outside the subject of the meaning of *märchen*. In this he is supported by what Captain Temple has recorded of India, where the practice of relating popular traditions is still alive. There the storyteller, having supplied himself with a goodly stock of incidents all well remembered by the people, evinces his skill, not by the relation of time-honoured legends in complete form, but by the various combinations into which he can weave incidents so as to form a thrilling or pleasing narrative. In examining the Cupid and Psyche story of Apuleius, therefore, we are so far as the story-form is concerned merely examining the accidental circumstances which gave it this particular form, and even if these may be granted to arise from the poetic imagination of early Greeks in personifying the lunar cycle we have not advanced much in the history of the story itself. Savages have the same incidents to relate of their own heroes: and Mr. Lang proves that these incidents are explainable by what we know of the customs and ways of savage people. Either the Greeks deliberately borrowed savage ideas wherewith to construct "a lovely myth" or they simply told their own traditions of previous stages of culture. If this be the true way to consider the incidents in the story of Cupid and Psyche we may lose some poetical fancies, but we gain a knowledge of far-off times and of very ancient facts in the childhood of human history.

There will probably be much more written and said upon this subject before it is finally settled, but we venture to think that Mr. Lang's method will in the end be fully recognised as the only one possible to explain adequately the phenomena which meet the student in his inquiry into the origin of folk-tales.

*Persian Portraits: a Sketch of Persian History, Literature, and Politics.* By F. F. Arbuthnot, M.R.A.S. London: Quaritch: 1887.

It is astonishing how little is generally known in this country, even by many who probably consider themselves as "well read," regarding the history and literature of Persia. To help to dispel this prevalent ignorance, which is discreditable to us as a great Asiatic power, is the design of this little book by Mr. Arbuthnot, whose former work, *Early Ideas: a group of Hindoo Stories*, ought to be familiar to most of our members. The author aims at nothing more than a sketch, nevertheless it is comprehensive in plan and lucid in style. The first chapter comprises outlines of Persian History, with useful tables of the several dynasties that have ruled over Persia. In the second chapter we have a sketch of Persian Literature, which Mr. Arbuthnot divides into seven periods, the first and last of which of about two centuries each, and the others of about one century each. The third chapter is devoted to the Greater Poets, at the head of whom is Firdausi, the Homer of Persia, and the fourth chapter to the Lesser Poets, with brief biographical notices and admirably selected translations of their compositions, together with an account of the different kinds of Persian poetry, the ghazel, the kasída, the masnaví, and the quatrain.

But of special interest is the fifth chapter, in which Mr. Arbuthnot furnishes a compendious description of twelve Persian story-books which have been completely or partly rendered into English, beginning with versions of the celebrated Fables of Bidpai, a work which has been translated into more languages than any other book, with the exception of the Bible. Then follow the *Gulistán* (Garden of Roses), the *Baháristán* (Spring Garden), the *Nigáristán* (Picture Gallery), the *Sindibád Náma*, the *Bakhtyár Náma*, the *Túti Náma* (Parrot-Book), *Shamsa-ú-Kuhkuha*, *Hatim Tai*, and the *Bahár-i-Dánish* (Spring of Knowledge). Specimens are given of the tales, &c. in all these collections, which are not only entertaining but calculated to induce intelligent readers to become acquainted with the books them-

selves, so far as they have been done into English. Mr. Arbuthnot's account (with copious extracts) of the story-book *Shamsa-ú-Kuhkuha* is particularly valuable, that work not having yet been translated in full, and being, we may say, quite unknown in this country. Some notion of its importance to story-comparers may be formed when we mention that one of the tales cited is a hitherto undiscovered parallel to the *fabliau* "Des Trois Dames qui trouverent un Anel," which is also the subject of an early Spanish tale. The book, we may add, is well printed in a bold type and most daintily bound.

Messrs. Macmillan and Co. will shortly publish a work on *Spanish and Italian Folk-Songs*, translated by Alma G. V. Strettell. It will be illustrated by photo-gravures, after sketches by John Sargent, Edwin A. Abbey, and W. Padgett. We understand that the majority of the Spanish songs will not consist of the ordinary "coplas" and "seguidillas" sung all over the country, but be examples of a kind of song which may be described as a cross between the Spanish and the Gypsy folk-song. These songs have hitherto received little attention, and we therefore look forward with much interest to the publication of Miss Strettell's book.

*A Collection of Indian Folk-Tales*, by the Rev. Charles Swynnerton, is announced by Mr. Elliot Stock. The volume will contain a large number of Stories gleaned from oral recitation by natives, and will be illustrated by native artists.

We are glad to learn from *The Athenæum* that "Steps are being taken to form a Folk-lore Society in Boston, U.S. Professor Child, Mr. Wentworth Higginson, Mr. William Newell, Mr. Justin Winsor (Librarian of Harvard University), Professor John Fiske, and other literary men of Cambridge, are interested in the enterprise. The work of the Society will consist in studying the survivals of European folk-lore among the white races in America, and collecting the distinctive folk-lore of the negroes and the aborigines. The immediate purpose of the gentlemen interested is to publish a journal, which will probably be issued quarterly."



SOME ACCOUNT OF THE SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS  
DANCES OF CERTAIN PRIMITIVE PEOPLES IN  
ASIA AND AFRICA, TOGETHER WITH THEIR  
SURVIVALS IN EUROPE.


BY MRS. J. C. MURRAY-AYNSLEY.

(Continued from p. 254.)

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CHAPTER II.

A DANCE EXECUTED BY CERTAIN HILL TRIBES IN ASSAM.

 HIS dance may be regarded as typical of a very early stage of society; it recalls the time when the warriors of a tribe were compelled to place their women in their midst, and form a protecting circle round them; or it may be held to represent the capture of the women of another tribe, the consequent exulting dance, and the shouts of victory of the men.

The following account has been furnished by the widow of a late high official in that province, who has frequently witnessed this dance. Being requested by the writer to give a detailed description of it, she says:—

“An interesting form of an aboriginal dance still takes place annually in certain villages in the Khassia and Jaintia hills. The most important one is held in the village of Non-Crem, about five miles from the civil station of Shillong. It generally takes place in May; but the precise date is fixed by the Seam or Raja of Non-Crem, and is often contingent on the state of his exchequer, as considerable sums have to be expended by him on soothsayers, on musicians, and on spirituous liquors, which seem to be freely provided for all comers.

As a matter of fact, however, and to the honour of the weaker sex, it is only the men who indulge in these potations, the women rarely if ever touching the strong liquor of those hills. The Seam of Non-Crem has a large palisaded enclosure set apart for his annual feast. It is quite circular, and the back of the Seam's house bounds it at one part. The proceedings are generally opened by the soothsayers beginning their auguries for the day by the breaking of eggs, and examination of their contents. A Khassia can do no action of his life without a certain number of eggs being broken over it. The special *raison d'être* of the dance is the display of all the unmarried girls from far and near over the mountains to choose or to be chosen by suitable *partis*. As the Khassia hills are essentially territories where women's rights prevail, it is rather a delicate question as to which of the matrimonially inclined individuals do the actual proposing part of the business. All female *royalties* choose their own husbands; and what is more, can calmly fix their affections on another woman's husband of their tribe, and compel him to forsake his own choice, and come and be married over again, *nolens volens*. It is therefore likely (as all family property descends in the female line, and as the man always goes to live with his wife's family after the marriage) that the ladies, even in the lower ranks of life, enjoy a perpetual leap-year. These annual dances are the occasions on which the Khassia maiden makes her *début*; and every ornament that family liberality or individual taste can supply or suggest is gathered together to assist in setting off the charms of the *débutante* to the greatest advantage.

The dress of the girls consists of wonderfully beautiful silk robes, hanging straight down from the neck and knotted on each shoulder: its artistic defect is the absence of all attempt at draping, the silk falling tightly without any spare folds. An embroidered border, and a heavy fringe, finishes off the garment at the ankles. The rich girls wear a crown, either of fine gold or silver, of most beautiful design, whilst their poorer sisters content themselves with a flower of the hibiscus, or a piece of sweet-scented daphne, stuck into the knot of hair at the back of their necks.

At the beginning of the proceedings, the musicians take up their position in the centre of the circular enclosure, and there they squat

round a most portentous punch-bowl, filled with a sort of rice beer, from which they freely imbibe.

As the day wears on, the always-barbarous music evoked from their bagpipes and drums gets still wilder, till the musicians drop off one by one, and finally sleep the sleep of the intoxicated through the summer night on the spot where they succumbed.

But to return to the earlier part of the day. The gaily-dressed girls, resplendent with their shining gold-coloured, or crimson-silk robes and brilliant necklaces of gold, coral, or silver, form a large circle round the musicians, whilst behind the girls, holding hands in a larger circle, the men go through their part of the performance. The dances of the men and of the women differ more than any one would suppose possible, as regards the different motions classed under the term 'dancing.' A well brought-up Khassia maiden of the superior class is taught that the very perfection of dancing is to go the round of the circle with the smallest possible amount of movement: not even an eyelid is to be lifted, her hands are to hang down by her side, and her feet are to be rigidly placed together, knees and ankle-bones touching each other. In this position she wriggles round the circle with a curious heel-and-toe motion, occasionally solemnly and slowly pirouetting round. When she comes to a stand-still, and drops out of the line, one has a curious feeling that her difficult machinery has broken down. Not a smile, not a glance, not an unauthorised movement of hand or foot even, jars on the social sensibilities of the Khassia matron, who, wizened and weird, watches the proceedings with the keenest interest, stepping forward occasionally to adjust flower or crown, or place a piece of betel in the mouth of her especial charge, the deadly slowness of whose movements renders all such delicate attentions comparatively easy. There seems to be no special order as to the time in the music at which a girl may turn round on her own axis. My impression always was, that they kindly did so to allow the bachelors in the outer ring the privilege of a good look at the matrimonial aspirants.

The men amply compensated for the unexcited quietude and repose of the girls by the wildness of their special performances. They jig,

they leap, they hop, they wave arms, legs, umbrellas, and *daos*\* about in the wildest confusion, accompanying their movements with the most savage war-whoops—signifying nothing.

As soon as their ample potations begin to take effect, the war-whoop is varied by curious grunting and groaning noises, which rise and fall in a rhythmical but very doleful cadence.

The men are often dressed in very comical style; they exhibit very much less idea of the external fitness of things than the other sex. Soldiers' old coats, ancient blue frock-coats, with brass buttons—recalling the immortal Mr. Pickwick,—even ladies' out-door jackets are gloried in by their fortunate possessors. It may be imagined that these form a very strange contrast to the waving plumes belonging to their ancestral type of head-dress, and to the costly coral and gold necklaces adorning their masculine throats. They also wave huge feather chowries (fans) in their hands; and, although some of the older men brandish *daos* round their heads, the younger generation may be frequently seen contenting themselves with the more peaceable blue cotton umbrella, of Manchester manufacture, which they deem a more highly fashionable weapon of offence and defence.

An old gentleman of high degree often figured as a prominent character at these assemblies: he used to gyrate and gesticulate in a manner which showed that he considered himself supremely superior to the rest in that in his case the national plumes had been replaced by an old tea-cosy, which adorned his head—one may term this the crowning result of civilised and domestic legislation!

It is said that many matrimonial alliances result from this one annual dance. The London chaperon, groaning under the burden of many balls, and few results, will probably be inclined to envy the duennas of the Khassia hills!

It is a very usual custom in those hills for the men to dance when one of their tribe is buried, but the women never do so."

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\* A *dao* is a kind of long knife in use in that district.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR DANCES OF THE HIMALAYAS, KULU, SPITI, AND LADAKH.

The Kulu *district* is about 150 miles in length; it extends from the Satlej river to the base of the Rotang pass. The Kulu *valley* or Kulu proper is traversed in its whole length by the Beas river, which rises on the summit of this mountain; the country between its western watershed and the Satlej is joined to it for administrative purposes.

The people of Kulu are not Buddhists, their religion partakes rather of Hindúism. Its inhabitants would appear to be a mixed race; it is not impossible that this valley was originally peopled from Upper Kunowar on the Satlej, and that it had since received accessions from the north (the people look as if they had a certain amount of Tibetan blood in them) and from India also, judging from the admixture of Hindúism in their religion. Each village in this valley possesses its own particular god, whose shrine has its especial attendants who are maintained out of the produce of certain lands set apart for that purpose. Rugonath, the principal god of Kulu, dwells at Sultanpore, the capital. Tradition says that this idol was stolen from Oudh, more than 200 years ago. The story of its acquisition runs thus: The then ruler of Kulu, Juggut Sing, having heard reports of the great wealth possessed by a Brahmin in his territory, sent to demand money of him. The Brahmin refused compliance, and on a second messenger being sent to him set fire to his house, whereby he and all his family were burnt to death. Shortly afterwards, the Raja found himself attacked with leprosy, but he dreamed that if he could only succeed in procuring the god Rugonath he would be cured. He accordingly sent a servant to the kingdom of Oudh, who contrived to steal the idol, but was pursued and overtaken when returning by its original owners, who would fain have carried Rugonath back to Oudh, but the god showed such a decided wish to go to Kulu that they yielded the point. The Raja's messenger was allowed to have him; and as soon as Rugonath appeared in the valley the Raja is said to have been cured of his terrible disease.

It is very probable that the annual fair which takes place at Sultanpore in the early part of the month of October is held in commemoration of the arrival of Rugonath; the gods belonging to every village in the valley are bound to present themselves at that place on this occasion, in order to pay him their respects. The attendants of each god and the people from the different villages are said all to live at free quarters during this fair, which lasts a week, their expenses being defrayed out of the various temple lands, which are held on this condition. The whole time is devoted to feasting and dancing; the women, no doubt, have their share of the former, but it is the men only who dance. In 1878, when we were there, the Raja was complaining that latterly some of the minor gods had ceased to pay their yearly visit to Rugonath.

The inferior gods are all conveyed to the scene of action in a species of palanquin decorated with gay coloured cloths and streamers, and adorned with flowers; each is borne along by its respective temple attendants; some of the palanquins are so small that they are carried by one man, who holds the shrine on his left arm, as one would carry an infant. Rugonath, however, is paraded about in a large car on wheels, which is dragged along by means of an enormous rope grasped by some 200 to 300 men.

The last day of the fair is the most exciting one; the people assemble, gods and all, on a natural plateau of ground of considerable extent situated to the south of the native city. The Raja is present on this occasion, and about two or three p.m. he seats himself in a tent placed in a commanding position on some rising ground, from whence he can overlook the whole scene. Just beneath him is a kind of natural arena of a perfect horse-shoe form, many rows of native women and children cover its sloping sides, the former wear an immense quantity of quaint silver ornaments, and, of course, all are attired in their best and gayest clothes. The whole population, both men and women, wear wreaths of double marigolds round their heads, and as necklaces also. As soon as they have deposited all the palanquins containing the inferior gods on the level space in the centre of and in front of the arena, the men begin dancing round and round their respective palanquins in a slow and regular measure to the accompani-

ment of horns and tom-toms ; each man puts his left arm round his neighbour's waist, and when they are tired certain solo dancers come forward, these latter move in a more animated and rapid manner ; it was thus, perhaps, that David may have danced before the ark.

When the excitement has arrived at its height, some of the temple attendants seize hold of various palanquins and dance them up and down violently, they also make the godlings in them salaam to each other, and to Rugonath ; finally, the Raja himself leaves his tent, goes down the hill and takes part in a grand procession of all the gods ; he grasps the rope attached to Rugonath's car at the place of honour, *i.e.*, nearest to this ponderous wooden structure, and assists to drag it a considerable distance. As soon as the car arrives at a particular point, a large bonfire is lighted, this is the conclusion of the festivities. After this the gods and their various attendants disperse to their different homes.

At other times also it is not at all an uncommon sight to witness the male sex in Kulu dancing together hand in hand, to the number of five or six perhaps, to the accompaniment of their own voices ; but they do not put as much energy into their movements as the people of the Spiti valley, whose dances we now propose to describe.

Spiti, a valley situated in the western Himalayas, is from 120 to 130 miles in length ; its population is a purely Buddhist one. This valley lies between the valley of the Satej and that of Lahoul. It has a mountain barrier at each end, viz. the Hangerung, a pass over 14,000 feet, and the Bara Lacha, 16,000 feet above the sea, which renders it impossible for its inhabitants to quit their country or to return to it during at least half the year, should they have wandered away from it in search of the means of subsistence. Very few strangers go thither, consequently the natives of this valley have very little intercourse with the outer world. Their character forms a marked contrast to that of the Hindú or the Musulman. They are what their surroundings have made them, a hardy, rude, and independent race of people. Though Spiti is under British rule its inhabitants are necessarily almost without European control. They have a head or chief of their nation, styled the Nono, whose office is hereditary. They are probably an almost pure Tibetan race. Their wants

are few and simple; their garments are woven from the wool of their own sheep, previously spun by themselves. Both men and women spin very deftly with the spindle alone.

We first came across some of the natives of this valley in 1878, at a time when we were snowed up for a week at a height of 15,000 feet above the sea, and not far below the summit of the Bara Lacha. On that occasion some sixteen or eighteen of them belonging to the musician class had been caught in a severe snow-storm on this mountain. Several tiny children were with them. About half the party had become snow-blind, and all were much exhausted. Fortunately we were able to give them some flour, &c., and thus supply their immediate necessities. In order to show their gratitude, the following morning some of these poor people came with their instruments, and accompanied the children as they danced barefooted on the snow in front of our tent. They all looked as merry and light-hearted as possible, notwithstanding the hardships they had gone through and were still enduring. Their provisions were at an end, and no more grain could be obtained without a further march of thirty miles. These people, both in type and feature, were totally different to any we had hitherto seen. It caused us to have a lingering desire to see and know more of them and their surroundings. We were unable to gratify it then, but three years later we once more found ourselves on the threshold of that portion of the Himalayas, and determined to follow the Satlej valley as far as possible, and make our way through Spiti to Lahoul. We accomplished it, though the route was not an easy one. We were repaid by seeing the singular geological formations in the Spiti valley, and visiting its inhabitants at home. In Spiti, as well as in Ladakh, a large proportion of the male population are Lamas, or Buddhist monks. The inhabitants of these two districts or provinces are somewhat similar in disposition; both are light-hearted, and in both the men and women mix freely together. The majority of the men in Spiti are either blacksmiths or musicians. The latter are assisted by their wives and children. A good many wander away from their own country for a time; they occasionally go even as far south as Delhi. The men play a kind of clarionette, the women a tambourine, and the children dance to their



music with the kind of slow movement of hands and feet which is customary in India, where they have probably learnt it; but in their own bleak and cold country, where rapid motion is almost a necessity, though they sometimes begin by dancing slowly, they frequently wind up with a general romp. The whole of Spiti, especially Losár, one of its largest villages, is subject (in summer at least) to violent winds, which begin to blow daily between the hours of 12 and 3 p.m., and continue through the rest of the day and night till about 6 a.m. It may be imagined that such a climate causes the people to enjoy violent exercise. They frequently dance for hours for their own amusement. Men and women dance together; all join hands and form a long line or a circle. They commence by singing, presently they begin also to dance to the accompaniment of their own voices, and the fun speedily becomes fast and furious. In a short time some of their number are much exhausted with singing, dancing, and laughing. They seat themselves on the ground, and beat time for the rest by knocking two stones together. The people who carried our loads when we were on the march frequently amused themselves thus. Sometimes they had already carried a heavy burden up a mountain for several miles, a feat which most would consider a good day's work.

During the four weeks we spent in Spiti we witnessed, on more than one occasion, from sixteen to twenty persons of both sexes dancing together to the sound of their own voices. Their music is for the most part in common time; it has a considerable amount of pleasing melody. Sometimes the dancers vary their accompaniments by giving four bars of singing and four bars of whistling alternately. They also perform four or five quite distinct dances.

In Kashmir, where the bulk of the population is Mahomedan under a Hindú ruler, the people look depressed, and seem to lack the energy required for dancing; but the inhabitants of Ladakh, or Western Thibet, as it is sometimes called, a province annexed to Kashmir by Goolab Sing, the father of the late Maharaja, are quite the reverse, they are always merry, both sexes look light-hearted. Unlike the people of Hindostan, the men and women appear to mix freely; they may often be seen talking together, and enjoying a good joke.

When entering Ladakh from Kashmir it is not until we get within

six or seven marches (or days) of Leh, the capital of Ladakh, that we come amongst a Buddhist population; the first monastery of any importance is at Lama Yuru.

Beyond turning a prayer-wheel when they see one, the people of that country seem to perform no acts of religion, but the Lamas (or monks) hold regular services several times a day in their monasteries at stated hours. The monks are said to form about one quarter of the whole population.

At their feasts or fairs (which occur pretty frequently in the various villages), besides the game of polo, which is said to have originated in Tibet, religious and secular dances are performed on such occasions, the former by Lamas only, the secular dances by men and women together, or by each sex separately; the women are also occasionally led by one man. The principal street of the native bazaar at Leh is long and narrow; nearly all the houses are two-storied. Before the game or the dancing begins all the merchants close their shops, and select the best points of observation from their upper rooms. Polo as played in Tibet differs considerably from our English game of the same name. There are six or eight players on each side; the one who has the ball puts his horse into a full gallop, and when he has ridden half the length of the course he throws up the ball with his left hand, and hits it in its descent with the stick in his right, a feat which must require considerable dexterity. As neither side wears distinctive colours or costume it is not easy for the uninitiated spectator to understand the ins and outs of the game. The space being narrow and confined the whole scene speedily becomes a confused medley of men and horses seen through a veil of dust. Secular dances follow the polo; those who take part in them sometimes form themselves into two long lines. Each dancer then holds on to the one in front of him, as in the game of fox and goose. The two strings of dancers wind in and out, occasionally they divide and dance opposite to each other, advancing and receding with a slow undulating movement, which gradually becomes more energetic as they warm to their work. An adjournment is then made to the court-yard of a private house behind the bazaar. Mock sword-fights take place there between two combatants, also sword-dances with two crossed weapons laid on the ground, and pre-

cisely like the sword dances which are performed at our Highland gatherings in the present day.

The religious dances are executed by Lamas only; they take place in this same enclosure. The monks are attired in a variety of dresses, all composed of the most magnificent Chinese stuffs; they are so stiff with embroidery that they almost stand alone. Each man wears a gigantic head-piece made of *papier mâché*, which comes down as far as his shoulders. Some of these masks (though properly speaking they are not masks, for they cover the whole head of the wearer) are ornamented with fruits and flowers, modelled four times their natural size, and painted in brilliant colours. They perform several different dances; in one, two men are dressed up to represent a Chinese mandarin and his wife; in another, the two actors who come last upon the scene wear masks resembling ferocious-looking dogs; one places himself against the entrance door, the other guards the door of exit. They remind one of the *dwar-palas*, or door-keepers, whose statues are frequently seen placed as guards on each side of the shrine of some old Hindú temple, as, for instance, at the so-called Seven Pagodas near Madras, and in other parts of Southern India.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR DANCES OF EGYPT AND ALGERIA.

To those who have seen much of Eastern life, the street scenes of Cairo are not very striking; but to any one fresh from Europe all is new and interesting. Many of the men of the higher and middle classes have adopted European costume; they retain, however, their national head-dress—the fez. Those belonging to quite the lower classes wear a long blue skirt and a fez; the women keep to their own national dress. When walking in the streets Egyptian females veil themselves, with the exception of the wives and daughters of peasant cultivators who come in from the country to dispose of their fruit and vegetables. Certain women (those of Circassian descent only, we believe) wear when out of doors a kind of black silk domino;

the lower part frequently flies open, and discloses beneath it a rich robe of silk or satin of a pale blue or pink colour, and round the head is wound a veil of the very finest book muslin, which envelopes the whole of the face except the eyes ; but the material is of such a transparent texture that all their features are distinctly visible.

One of the sights of Cairo is to witness the dervishes perform their exercises—they hardly deserve the name of religious ones, though they esteem them such. The name dervish\* is applied to a particular class of Turkish priests or monks who lead a very austere life, and profess extreme poverty, though they are permitted to marry.

This word was originally a Persian one: it signifies a beggar, or one who has nothing ; and because religious persons, particularly the followers of Mevelava, pretend not to possess anything, religious persons in general, and the Mevelites in particular, are called dervises or dervishes. The followers of Mevelava have now become exceedingly numerous ; their chief monastery is situated near Cognia, in Natolia (Asia Minor), where their general resides, and where the assemblies of the order are held ; the other houses are all dependent upon this, by virtue of a privilege granted to this monastery by Othoman I.

The dervishes affect a great deal of modesty, humility, and charity. They go bare-legged and open-breasted, and are said to burn themselves frequently with hot irons in order to inure themselves to suffering. They fast regularly on Wednesdays till after sunset, and on Tuesdays and Fridays they hold meetings, at which the superior of the house presides. The dancing dervishes perform their religious exercises in memory of Mevelava, the founder of their order ; who, as they pretend, turned round and round miraculously during the space of four days, remaining all that time without food or refreshment ; they also add that a man named Hansa, his companion, played all that time upon the flute as an accompaniment to his movements ; that at the expiration of this period Mevelava fell into an ecstacy, and when in that condition received wonderful revelations regarding the establishment of his order. They regard the flute as an instrument consecrated by Jacob and the shepherds of the Old Testament, and say that the latter sang the praises of God to its accompaniment. The

\* *Encyclopedia Britannica.*

dervishes profess poverty, chastity, and obedience, but it is doubtful whether they practise these virtues ; they are believed to be for the most part either fools, fanatics, or knaves : they are thought to be most usually the latter. There are two kinds of dervishes, the dancing and the howling ones ; they both go through their exercises every Friday, between the hours of two and three p.m.; by a little management both may be seen the same day. On these occasions the dancing dervishes are habited in high Persian-looking caps of drab coloured felt ; they wear tight-fitting white jackets, a sort of very full white petticoat is tied round their waist, and reaches nearly to their feet ; its circumference at the bottom is greater than that of the largest crinoline worn in the days when that fashion was at its height.

About a dozen or more men dressed in this style assemble in a domed building set apart for this purpose ; they dance in a round space in the centre, which is surrounded by a low railing. The dervishes commence by turning round slowly to the sound of music ; they move as if they were fixed on a pivot ; they keep their eyes closed, or nearly so, the whole time ; and their countenances wear an expression of total abstraction. Their gyrating motion is always from right to left ; they keep both arms outstretched ; one hand is held out palm uppermost, whilst the fingers of the other hand point downwards. One of their number remains stationary the whole time ; he stands upon a small square carpet ; he is dressed rather differently to the rest ; all their movements are directed by him. At a given signal from this man the others suddenly cease whirling round ; they form in single file, and march past him, as if for a general salute ; each man keeps his arms crossed upon his breast in such a manner that the left hand rests upon the right shoulder, and the right hand on the left shoulder. All pass in turn before their leader ; they bow low as they arrive opposite to him ; and at a given signal all once more take up their appointed positions as at the commencement, and resume their singular dance.

The howling dervishes perform in a domed building some little distance from that used by those above described ; they have no enclosed or railed-in space ; they range themselves in a semi-circle ; each man stands upon his own little mat, made of the skin of some

animal, and their movements are directed by one of their number who stands facing them, with his back to the wall. They begin very quietly at first ; they stand closely side by side, and rise up and down with a toe and heel action ; at the same time they draw in and expel their breath in a peculiar manner, giving vent to the most singular cries ; these sounds presently become much louder, the pace also becomes much more rapid ; and at length they sway their bodies so far forward that at each beat of a drum their long unkempt hair almost touches the ground. When the final signal is given for them to desist, some of the most energetic of the party (which numbers perhaps twenty) seem quite unable to stop themselves ; a couple of their companions seize them by the waistband to try and restrain them, but in vain ; they escape, and at length fall down on the ground, still continuing to make the same extraordinary noises. One of their friends then bends over them, whispers something in their ear, and they rise, seemingly quite composed, but looking physically much exhausted ; put on an over-garment, go out, and rolling themselves up in this, lie on a bench in the court-yard of the building. All the performers are not equally energetic. When we witnessed this scene, the youngest of the party (a boy, apparently about twelve years of age, and who, from the colour of his turban, evidently claimed to be a descendant of their Prophet Mahomet), when the rest were most violent in their noises and gestures, simulated these in a manner to give himself the least possible amount of exertion ; his lips moved in time, but no sound proceeded from them ; the movements of his body also, though the same were slow and languid compared to theirs.

The Mahomedan inhabitants of the city of Algiers are frequently termed Moors, to distinguish them from the Berbers and the Arabs proper, who form the rest of the native population of Algeria. Both these latter are doubtless purer races than the so-called Moors, in whom is believed to be a considerable admixture of Turkish blood ; the last rulers of Algeria before the French conquered it were of Turkish descent ; they had held the country from the time of the Emperor Charles V. The dress of the Moors is also essentially different to that of the Berber or the Arab proper ; the former wear a turban, or occasionally a fez, an embroidered jacket of some bright coloured cloth,

a braided waistcoat, and full trowsers of the same material reaching only to the knee ; whereas the Berber and the true Arab wear a long white cotton shirt, and over this the richer men put sometimes as many as three bournouses according to the season of the year, the first being always white ; the upper one of all is usually of brown wool, and much thicker in texture than those beneath. The women who inhabit the towns in Algeria veil themselves when they go in public, but the Berber women of Kabylia (a portion of the Atlas mountains) and the Bedouin women of the Sahara do not cover their faces. The dress of the two latter is very similar : it consists of a long piece of white cotton material which is folded round the limbs and bust, and kept in position by two brooches of the Runic form.

The student of ethnology will be interested and perhaps also surprised to learn that the dress of the women in the Kulu valley, and also that of the same sex in Kunowár in the Satlej valley (both situated in the Himalayas), is almost identical with that of the women of Kabylia, and of the nomad tribes of the desert, even to the form of the brooches which they wear ; only in the former case the material of their one garment is of wool, in the latter, of cotton.

The attire of the Moorish women of Algiers when at home consists of a bright coloured handkerchief on the head, folded in a peculiar manner ; they wear a kind of zouave jacket made either of satin or silk, it is either cut square or V-shaped in front, the sleeves reach to the elbow only ; and beneath the jacket is worn a long-sleeved full chemisette of muslin or lace. The full trowsers which complete this costume reach only to the knee, they are made of the same material as the jacket, white cotton stockings and black leather shoes complete the attire ; the shoes, of course, are removed before entering a room.

When a Moorish woman goes out of doors (which the richer ones only do when they go to the bath, or pay rare visits to their female friends) they put over their house dress a very long and full pair of white cotton trowsers, which are confined to the ankle by a draw-string, they also wear a *yashmák* or square of white calico or muslin tied across the face so that the eyes alone are visible, and over their head they place a long white scarf which falls down almost to the knees.

At Blidah, a small town about 40 miles distant from Algiers, the women arrange this head covering in such a manner that one eye only is visible. Their out-door costume appears to be such an effectual disguise that it seems to us that any man might pass his own wife in the street and not recognise her.

Both secular and religious dances are performed in Algeria; the former are executed by persons hired for the purpose, who are indispensable adjuncts at Moorish weddings; on these occasions the musicians are not unfrequently negro women, their instruments are a small drum composed of an earthen tube or a jar closed at one end by a piece of bladder, a pair of rude castanets, and a stringed instrument or two somewhat like the banjo in form. The musicians seat themselves cross-legged on the ground, the dancers are women who are attired as a Moorish lady would be when at home; their movements are slow, and resemble those of the nautch girls in the plains of India, yet there is a vast difference between the two styles; the Moorish woman, as a rule, takes longer steps than her Indian sister, she also waves her arms in a different manner, and she not unfrequently holds a gauze scarf in both hands, and uses it to assist her in forming various figures. It would appear, however, that at a distance from the capital, in the smaller towns of Algeria, the women who dance at weddings are not always hired performers, for once, when staying at Tenez, a small town about 100 miles west of Algiers, we chanced to pass a native house where wedding festivities were going on, and were invited to enter it. The gentlemen of our party were ushered into the men's apartment, and the lady was shown into an inner room on the women's side of the court-yard, which served as a sort of green-room for the dancers. Before she went out to dance in the court-yard, each woman was enveloped by her companions in a dark-coloured garment of printed muslin which covered her from head to foot, her hands even were not visible, the sleeves of this dress were very long and tied tight at the ends, so that the hand and arm were enclosed as in a bag, several of her friends assisted at her toilet, to the European observer her disguise looked impenetrable, and yet one woman came back again almost immediately, and throwing off her



costume exclaimed to the rest, "What a shame it was that her husband would not allow her to dance!"

The dances performed on this occasion were slow and undulating, very little motion was given to the feet, which never moved beyond the space of about one yard square, the movements were confined chiefly to the arms and the upper part of the body.

A year or two previously, when travelling near Bona, a place about 100 miles east of Algiers, we met with some wandering dancers; the performers consisted of a man who played a drum, and two little boys about eight or ten years old, who were dressed in red jackets and very full white trowsers reaching almost to the ankles; when they danced they too hardly moved beyond a space of half a yard square, but by a peculiar movement of the hips the lads gave their knickerbockers an incessant shaking motion.

Religious dances are also executed in Algeria; they are performed by a particular sect of Arabs who call themselves Aïssaoua (or followers of Jesus). This sect affirms that their prophet taught them that if they have only faith they can do all things, eat scorpions and other noxious insects, take live coals in their mouth, eat pounded or broken glass, swallow large pebbles, and stand upon the blade of a naked sword. They certainly do appear to perform all these feats—as far as we could see there was no deception in the matter. Some years ago, at one of these meetings, a man belonging to the Aïssaoua sect sat cross-legged on the ground close to the writer; he was not performing that evening, but apparently for his own amusement, or to keep his hand (or rather his digestion) in, in the space of a few minutes he chucked into his mouth and swallowed more pebbles than would fill a half-pint measure; few of these stones were smaller than a hazel-nut, some even larger; on astonishment being expressed by some of the foreigners present, he replied in fairly good French, "Ah, one must begin young to be able to do such things!"

Before commencing their performance, the leader of the Aïssaoua and his disciples seat themselves, cross-legged, in a circle on the ground; their hair is long and unkempt, and their bodies bare down to the waist. In their midst are placed several earthen pots, containing live coals. The leader puts a pinch of some kind of powder

on the lighted embers in each pot, and it immediately gives out a good deal of smoke. The men who are about to perform bend over them, and inhale the smoke, taking long and deep inspirations. In a very few minutes they appear to become almost intoxicated with the fumes; they dance about in a wild manner for some time, and as soon as they are wound up to the proper pitch of excitement they do the feats already described—they eat scorpions, broken glass, &c., and other equally extraordinary things.

It is said, that whenever there is any sickness in a Moorish house, some members of the Aïssaoua sect are sent for by its inmates, who believe that by this process the evil spirit which causes the disease is driven out of their dwelling.

The dances above-described as being common to Algeria are those of a people who possess a certain amount of civilisation—of a barbarous kind, it is true—(in the case of the Aïssaoua sect it does not go beyond learning to converse in a foreign language). In one part of the Sahara, dances are executed which we associate with very remote times, viz. funeral dances.

We are in the habit of picturing to ourselves the Sahara as being a vast and almost illimitable sandy plain; but such is not the aspect of that portion of it which we visited: it was rather that of a newly-harrowed field, out of which rise, here and there, hillocks of pure sand. Small tussocks of vegetation are scattered all over its flat surface: any plants there may be are of a fleshy or juicy nature; they form the only sustenance of the flocks of camels and sheep which migrate northwards every spring from the far interior of the desert to the Tell (as the land is called which lies between the Atlas mountains and the sea), whither the Bedouins bring them for pasture during the hot months of the year. There are also small encampments of these nomads, consisting of a certain number of families, who live together under the rule of their sheikh. Their food is for the most part, if not entirely, dried dates and the milk of their flocks. Water is generally such a scarce commodity with them that should any rain fall (a most unusual event) the women set to work to collect the precious fluid in skins from all the little hollows or depressions in the ground. Such communities remain for several years within a mile or

two of one spot: when the pasture immediately round their tents is exhausted, they move them a short distance only.

Biskra, a town situated on an oasis of considerable size, was, in 1866-7, the last permanent outpost occupied by the French in that direction. At that time it was at least a six days' journey from the coast; doubtless the railway has since rendered it more easy of access. Its main product is the date-palm: a small river flows through it, and a certain quantity of water is apportioned to each tree; what remains over (or possibly at certain seasons of the year the palm-trees do not need watering) is applied to the cultivation of a variety of barley; its stalks do not seem to attain a height of more than one foot, or eighteen inches at most.

A short day's journey from Biskra is another oasis, called Sidi Okbar, after a celebrated Mahommedan saint of those parts; this is a purely native village; no French troops were kept there at the time of our visit; Europeans could only go thither under the protection of and by the favour of the caïd, or Arab governor of Biskra, whose son was the sub-governor: it was under such conditions, and accompanied by the caïd's young nephew, that we made this expedition.

At the entrance to this village, in the midst of a grove of palm-trees, is a large open space, within which repose the remains of the deceased inhabitants of Sidi Okbar. As we passed by it so happened that a funeral was taking place in this cemetery. The grave had just been filled in, and the hired female mourners, who had accompanied the corpse to its last resting-place, were dancing on the surface of the newly-made grave; they were tearing their long black locks which flowed wildly over their shoulders, and uttering wild shrieks.

We have it on the authority of Dionysus of Halicarnassus that the Romans danced before their dead at funerals.

It is also worthy of remark that the mosque at Sidi Okbar contains some exquisitely carved wooden gates, which are said to be of Roman workmanship.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE DANCES OF GREECE.

The ancient Greek festivals were of four kinds :—

Firstly. In honour of the gods, to whom, besides the every-day worship paid them, some more solemn times were set apart.

Secondly. In order to procure some special favour from their gods.

Thirdly. In memory of deceased friends ; and

Fourthly. They were instituted as times of repose and ease for labourers.

In later ages, the number of festivals of the latter kind was much increased ; sacrifices were made to the gods on such occasions, and the people afterwards made merry amongst themselves. Games, processions, and many other ceremonies were introduced, in which were depicted the fabulous actions of their gods. The shops and the courts of law were closed on such days ; the labourers did no work ; even mourners laid aside their sorrow. Such feasts were generally celebrated at the public expense. They took place in various parts of Greece : two are known to have been celebrated at Mægara, a place about forty miles distant from Athens ; one of these feasts was styled *Alkathoia*, the other *Diokleia*. The former was instituted in memory of *Alcathous*, son of *Pelops*, who, when lying under suspicion of having murdered his brother *Chrysippus*, fled to Mægara, where, having overcome a terrible lion which had wasted that part of the country and slain many people, including the King of Mægara's son, *Alcathous*, managed so far to ingratiate himself with this monarch that the king gave him his daughter in marriage, and declared *Alcathous* his successor. The festival called *Diokleia* took place in the spring of the year, in memory of the Athenian hero *Diocles*, one of their archons, or chief magistrates, who died in defence of a certain youth whom he loved. Every year, on Easter Tuesday (old style) down to the present time, a festival is held at Mægara, which is possibly (from the season at which it occurs) a remnant of the old

Diokleia. All agree that this feast is a very ancient one, though its origin is now unknown.

Mægara is accessible from Athens either by steamer or in a carriage: the latter mode takes the traveller through the pass of Daphne, a low defile which separates the plain of Athens from that of Eleusis. From the top of this little pass there is a lovely and extensive view; the road skirts the bay of Eleusis for some distance. To the south is seen the island of Salamis, which from that point seems almost to join the Attic mountains, giving to the bay the appearance of a vast lake. Eleusis (best known to us as the place where religious mysteries were celebrated in Athenian times) is now only a small village; it is slightly raised above the shore of the bay, and distant from it about a quarter of a mile. The drive from Athens to Mægara occupies from four to five hours; it perhaps takes rather less time to go by steamer to the nearest point; in the latter case, after landing, it involves an hour's walk up hill to the village.

On the day of this annual festival the country people begin dancing at five a.m. on a mountain high above the village; at eleven a.m., when we arrived there, they had already descended to a hill to the left of the village, but still considerably above it. At one p.m. all retired to refresh themselves; they resumed their dancing on the *Place* of the village an hour later. On that occasion all the peasants wore their national costume; the men, what is commonly called the Albanian dress, the fustanella or voluminous white petticoat, a richly embroidered cloth jacket, leggings *en suite*, and a fez on the head. The women were attired in various styles, according to the district to which they belonged. Some of the wealthier ones were very richly dressed; all had a long white under-garment, reaching down to the ankles, and coming up close round the throat: it has long wide sleeves, the lower edges of these and of the robe are ornamented either with embroidery or with the so-called Greek lace; its depth varies according to the wealth or the industry of the wearer.

Certain women wore a kind of polonaise over this garment made of dark blue cloth, and bound with some red material. In the case of the youngest girls, this over-dress (which is open on each side) is

pinned or hooked back on both sides ; the older girls have one side only caught back, and the married women allow both sides to hang down naturally. All—both women, girls, and children—wear a thick belt round the hips, composed of many folds of dark woollen material ; some of them have very quaint and handsome old silver jewellery. Some women, who probably belonged to a different village to those above described, wore a zouave jacket of crimson velvet or dark-coloured cloth, richly embroidered in silver or gold, and a petticoat of some costly material ; others, again, had a skirt made of checked woollen stuff, kilt plaited from the waist downwards, and embroidered at the bottom to the depth of six inches. Their jacket was of a dark-coloured cloth braided with some bright colour ; it was made with a *basquine*, and was plain in front, but disposed at the back in large plaits, so arranged as to form volutes, like the pipes of an organ.

The head-dress of all the women was tolerably similar in character : it consisted of a small cap, in form like an ordinary pudding-basin ; it fits closely to the head, and is kept in position by a strap which passes under the chin. This cap is covered with coins which are pierced and sewn on to it ; those on the top are about the size of a quarter franc piece, then comes a row of half francs and of whole francs ; and lastly, if the wearer can afford it, a row of gold coins hangs down over the forehead. Some tie a yellow silk handkerchief over this cap, but the better dressed women wind a scarf of some very transparent material round their head ; its ends are covered with gold embroidery, and float behind them. The costumes alone make the scene at Mægara a novel and interesting one to a stranger ; its interest is greatly enhanced by the spectacle of the open-air dances performed by these peasants, which are believed to have come down to them by tradition from the most remote times. At least a dozen different sets of people may be seen dancing in various ways at the same time, to the accompaniment of their own native music and instruments. The men dance together, advancing in a long line with slow undulating movements, each with his left arm round his neighbour's waist, precisely in the same manner as the temple attendants of each god dance during Rugonath's festival in Kulu ; sometimes four or eight men perform

dances with quick steps; both the dance and its accompaniment remind one of the Scotch reel, and the music which belongs to it; another dance is very like the Highland sword-dance. Occasionally the women dance alone, forming two long lines advancing to and receding from each other. One man sometimes acts as their leader, and directs the figures; the procession winds and unwinds itself like the coils of a serpent. We have here an exact representation of one of the secular dances of Ladakh or Western Tibet. According to the code of etiquette observed by these Greek peasants, no man is permitted to touch the hand of a girl, therefore each of these latter carries in her waistband a small white silk scarf, embroidered at both ends with red and blue silk; when a man dances with her, she holds one end of this scarf and he the other. The greater the number of embroidered aprons a Greek peasant woman or maiden can show the greater is her presumed wealth or her diligence. We were told that a girl's value in the matrimonial market is estimated by this standard. On occasions like the one described above, the women and girls bring their whole stock of aprons with them: they go aside and change them between each dance. The movements of the women are necessarily slow, for they wear what we call Turkish slippers, which have no heels to them; but some of the men, when dancing with them, put a great deal of animation into their steps.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SECULAR DANCES OF SPAIN.

We have drawn attention to the great similarity which some of the secular dances of Greece bear to those of Asia. We will now turn to Spain,—a country which, in the physical aspect of its southern portion, and in many of the customs of its inhabitants, forcibly recalls Eastern lands and Oriental manners. So strong is the resemblance, that when travelling in the south of Spain it is difficult to imagine ourselves still in Europe; we think and speak of France, Germany, and Italy as Europe, and their inhabitants as Europeans, but we

involuntarily look upon Spain and the Spaniards as something apart—as a sort of further Europe, in the sense that Burmah and Siam are further India.

In its physical characteristics, this portion of Spain very nearly approaches that of North Africa, with which geologists believe it was once united : these two countries resemble each other in their vast dry and barren plains, bounded by sterile hills, or lofty rugged sierras ; the level districts are only amenable to cultivation, where irrigation is possible, and at the cost of considerable labour. The same likeness exists between certain Eastern customs and those of the people of some parts of Spain ; but it is not within the province of these papers to enlarge upon this point. We will now proceed to describe some secular dances.

The Boleras, the Seguidillas, and the Sevillanas are secular Spanish dances, whose names at least are very familiar to all of us, even though we have never seen them performed ; but probably few who have not visited Spain have heard of the fan-dance, which none but natives of that country could execute to perfection.

It is generally said that a Spanish lady can talk as well, or perhaps better, with her fan than with her lips : the closed fan repels the advances of the male sex, the half-open one gives the admirer a little encouragement, and when fully expanded the fan is a sign to the suitor that his lady-love looks favourably upon him. From this it may be imagined that the fan-dance is a most expressive one. At the commencement, a young lady is seen walking along with a fan in her hand ; her face is partially concealed by a white blonde mantilla. A richly-dressed youth, enveloped in a cloak, passes by ; he looks back, turns aside, and decides to follow her. The girl, by intuition almost, seems aware that some one is near : she baffles all the young man's attempts to see her face, by constantly changing the position of her fan, as she continues her promenade. This sort of game of bo-peep goes on for some little time ; the youth and the maiden walk up and down, each trying to circumvent the other, till at length the cavalier, in order perhaps to soften her heart, springs forward, takes off his cloak, and throws it on the ground for her to walk over. As soon as she has passed over it, he takes up his cloak, puts it on, and



by a rapid movement comes up with her ; he is then rewarded with a shy, but kindly glance ; no more concealment is necessary, the couple take a few turns up and down, and wind up by dancing the Sevillana (or a similar dance) together.

Gipsy dances belong more especially to the southern part of Spain. Many have conjectured that the gipsies came originally from Hindostán. In this, the only gipsy dance we witnessed, the movements of the girl who performed were exactly like those familiar to us in the pictures of the nautch girl of the plains of India ; neither in Spain, India, or Algeria does the dancer move out of a space of about one yard square ; in all these cases the motion is confined mainly to the upper part of the body, to which a writhing and undulating movement is given ; the arms, too, are thrown about in graceful positions ; the feet scarcely move at all.

For the sake of comparing still further the dances of the East and West, we will quote the following account of a Burmese dance, given by Dr. Clement Williams in his journal relating to an expedition which he made in 1863 through Burmah to Western China. He says :—"The performance which I witnessed at Bamó began by a song in chorus given by the whole strength of the orchestra ; their instruments consisted of cymbals, drums, and gongs. The cymbal-player filled well both the eye and the ear, accompanying his instrument with a fine full voice, and having each verse as he finished repeated by the chorus. He was a lithe, active young fellow, and threw himself in concert with the swells and falls of his song into endless attitudes and summersaults, never ceasing the well-timed accompaniment of his discs. The rapidity and grace with which he played them over and under his shoulders, backwards and forwards through his thighs, and yet springing and dancing all the time, was worthy of the highest praise."

Bamó, a place on the Chinese frontier, and the south of Spain, are a considerable distance from each other ; but yet, when in Seville in 1884, we twice saw a dance performed similar to the one described above by Dr. Clement Williams, and which he witnessed in Burmah.

In Spain this dance was given by the members of a society numbering about thirty persons ; they style their society "La

Giralda," after the name of the Moorish tower of the cathedral. These men were all attired alike in black velvet suits, with knee-breeches, black stockings, and shoes with silver buckles. They wore wide-brimmed, black velvet hats, turned up at one side, and trimmed with one large white ostrich feather; a short black velvet cloak hung jauntily on one shoulder, and completed their costume. Their musical instruments were tambourines, guitars, a kind of musical glasses, and the triangle. They began by giving some instrumental pieces in concert; then one man took the solo part of a song, the rest joining in chorus, after which they all ranged themselves at the bottom of a long and narrow room. Two of their number then removed their hats, and taking up their tambourines, which were small,—not more perhaps than eight inches in diameter—they danced up to the top of the room, which was seventy to eighty feet long: the rest remained stationary, and accompanied the dancers with their different instruments. The dancers exhibited great agility and skill; their movements were identical with those of the Burmese dancers; they used their tambourines precisely as the latter used their cymbals; the Spaniards stooped down to the ground and leapt up in the air, passing the tambourines over their shoulders, and between their legs, displaying marvellous grace in every movement.

In the amusements of the people who inhabit the Basque provinces in the north of Spain we can trace a resemblance to the dances of the people of Ladakh (a race who in language and religion belong to Central Asia), and to one of the Greek dances also. The Spanish dance called "el Torcico"—literally speaking, *eight of*, or figure of eight,—is executed precisely in the same manner as the dance already described in those two countries, in which the women are led by one man, and the whole number wind in and out, in snake-like undulations, keeping step together.

*Morescoes* was the name given in Spain to those Moors who had submitted to baptism, as well as to those who still kept to their profession of Mahomedanism. The former class were accused by the priests of mixing the customs and ceremonies of their ancient faith with that which they had been compelled to adopt.

King Philip II. issued an edict forbidding the *Morescoes*, under

pain of death, to use their national dress, to practice their national ceremonies, or to speak their vernacular tongue. Their baths, too, were to be destroyed, and the practice of bathing discontinued; their women also were to go about unveiled, and no Moor was to be allowed to wear arms or even to keep them.

It has been conjectured that the old English morris-dance, so great a favourite in the sixteenth century, was derived through Spain from the Moors: doubtless, if so, the Spanish dance called the *Morisco* had the same origin; it was popular in France in the fifteenth century under the name of "*Morisque*." In our own country it would appear to have become combined with an older form of dance, or rather pageant, which was founded on the history of Robin Hood and his outlaws. The writer perfectly well remembers when a child seeing this dance performed by the country people in Yorkshire at Christmas-time; Robin Hood, Maid Marian, and Friar Tuck were prominent figures; there was also a man on a hobby-horse. Shakespeare speaks of the fitness of the morris-dance for May-day, but a tract of the time of Charles I.\* says that the morris-dancer was sometimes employed at Christmas. "The natives of Herefordshire," this article goes on to state, "are celebrated for their morris-dancing; in the earlier part of the present century it was not uncommon in that county, and also in Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire about the same period. Miss Baker, in her *Glossary of Northamptonshire Words*, speaks of this dance as still met with in that county as late as 1854, and Halliwell, in his *Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*, also speaks of the morris-dance as still commonly practised in Oxfordshire, though the old costume had been forgotten, and the performers were only dressed with a few ribbons."

\* Quoted in Chambers' *Book of Days*, vol. i. p. 633.

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## CHAPTER VII.

## THE SACRED DANCES OF EUROPE.

In Europe sacred dances were a prominent feature in the worship of the people both in Roman times, in the early Christian period, and in the Middle Ages; they continue in Spain down to our own times. In all ages they were probably adapted to many purposes—thanksgiving, praise, supplication, and humiliation. At Rome there was an ancient order of priests called *Salii*,\* “priests of Mars, whereof there were twelve, instituted by Numa. (They wore) painted parti-coloured garments, high bonnets, and a steel cuirass on the breast. They were called *Salii*, from *saltare*, to dance, because, after assisting at sacrifices, they went dancing about the streets with a buckler in their left hand and a rod in their right, striking musically with their rods on one another’s bucklers and singing hymns in honour of the gods.”

After the introduction of Christianity two courses were open to the Church, either entirely to forbid the continuance of heathen forms and ceremonies, or to sanctify and alter them so as both to teach and interest the people. In many instances the latter course has been pursued: observances which were in themselves harmless have been retained, and a different meaning has been put upon them. Thus the solemn religious dances which the Hebrews and Pagan Romans executed on their great festivals were allowed in the primitive Christian Church. Scaliger, who astonished the Emperor Charles V. by his dancing powers, states that the bishops and clergy were the performers on such occasions, and remarks that the first churches which were erected after Christianity was firmly established by Constantine were built so that the sacred dances could be carried out. He adds “that the first bishops were styled *presales*, because they led the dance on feast days.” † Père Méneſtrier, ‡ in his *Traité des Ballets* (1682), says “that he had seen the canons and choristers on Whit

\* *Ency. Perthensis.*

† *Ency. Brit.*

‡ John Baptist Méneſtrier, a learned French antiquary, died 1654, aged 70.

Sunday take each other by the hand and dance while they sang hymns of jubilation. He also has pointed out several churches then existing in which the choir was constructed in a theatrical form." The same writer further observes "that the name of choir is still retained in our churches. The choir was formerly separated from the altar, and elevated in the form of a theatre;\* it had a pulpit on each side, in which the epistle and gospel were sung. At Rome the churches of SS. Clemente and Pancratius are the only two that remain in this antique form." "Spain," he continues, "has preserved in the church and in solemn processions the use of dancing to this day, and has theatrical representations made expressly for great festivals, which are called *Aules Sacramentales*." France seems to have had the same custom till the twelfth century, when Odo, Bishop of Paris, in his *Synodical Constitutions*, expressly orders the priests of his diocese to abolish it in the church, cemeteries, and public processions.† According to some of the Fathers the angels are always dancing, and the glorious company of the Apostles is really a chorus of dancers. "After the middle of the eighteenth century there were still traces of religious dancing in the cathedrals of Spain, Portugal, and Rousillon, especially in the Musarabian Mass at Toledo."‡ (A brief account of this ritual may not be unacceptable to our readers.)

"The Goths established their kingdom in Spain in A.D. 409; it was finally overthrown three centuries later. The religion of the Goths was that of the Eastern Christian Church. They followed the doctrines of Arius; both rulers and people were at times very intolerant to those in their midst who belonged to the Western or Latin Church. One of their kings named Theudis (567), though an Arian, showed complete toleration to every sect and religion. Sisebert, who ascended the throne in 612, was of the orthodox faith; his persecutions of both Jews and Arians were too horrible. In 653, by the interest of Dago- bert I. King of France, Sisenand, a soldier of great reputation, suc-

\* The choirs of many Spanish cathedrals are thus raised and enclosed by a wall or a high balustrade.

† Rees's *Cyclopaedia*.

‡ *Ency. Brit.*

ceeded in placing himself at the head of affairs, and assembled the Cortes or grand national council of the kingdom at Toledo, at which the king presided, assisted by the superior clergy and the nobles. The affairs of the Church seem to have been the first matter of discussion, and S. Isidore was commissioned to frame a missal and breviary for the Spanish Church, which should remedy the wants and irregularities of those in common use. This compilation formed thenceforward the ritual of the Gothic Church till the fifteenth century, and is styled the Musarabic Liturgy. This form is preserved in one place in Spain down to our own days; a small chapel in the cathedral at Toledo still continues to be served after the manner of the Goths, its priests and choir receive a special training to that end. This chapel had fallen much into decay, till during the reign of Philip II. of Spain (1556—1598) Cardinal Ximenes repaired and endowed it for ever, that the memory of the Gothic Christians might not be lost in Spain. This prelate, though austere in his own habits and discouraging any art of mere luxury, yet fostered any sculpture or painting which could be applied to the adornment of religious edifices. He patronised and employed several of the famous painters of his day, especially in the chapel of Toledo restored by him and consecrated to the Musarabic form of worship.

“ In 1080 a curious duel took place. The Popes had long desired to substitute the Romish ritual for that of the Gothic Church, but they found it difficult, nay, impossible, to wean the people from the faith of their ancestors. On the Archbishop endeavouring to establish the Roman mass-book at Toledo the people demanded the trial by ordeal of the ancient liturgy. Accordingly the king, the queen, the nobles, and clergy being assembled, a great fire was kindled in the public market-place of Toledo, and the two books were cast into the flames. The Romish ritual remained unconsumed, but the words in the book were obliterated by smoke; the Musarabic book came out as clear as it was cast in. The queen being dissatisfied with the result, the trial by duel was demanded, in which the champion of the ancient ritual was again victorious. The king then pronounced both equally good, but issued an edict that the ancient book should be used only in

those chapels which had continued in the possession of the Christians throughout the Moorish occupation, and decreed that all new and all reconsecrated churches should use the Roman liturgy." \*

In A.D. 589 the Third Council of Toledo † "forbade the people dancing through the vigils of saints' days, and in 590 the Council of Auxerre forbade *secular* dances in churches. In 1209 the Council of Avignon passed a similar decree. In 1212 processions danced round the churches in Paris, and women danced in the cemeteries. As late as the seventeenth century the apprentices and servants of York used to dance in the nave of the minster on Shrove Tuesday; on one occasion Dean Lake was almost killed when he tried to prevent their entering the sacred building for this purpose. By a curious tenure in Wiltshire the inhabitants of Wishford and Batford went up annually in a dance to Salisbury Cathedral; and, till the destruction of the cathedral at Liège by the French revolutionary soldiers, the inhabitants of Verviers, in Belgium, used to go thither annually on Whit Tuesday and dance under the corona in the nave, headed by a cross. The deputation consisted of certain magistrates and clergy.

To this day a dancing procession chanting a curious carol takes place at Echternach, in Luxemburg, on Tuesday in Whitsun-week; it is called the procession of the Jumping Saints (*Springende Heiligen*). It consists of a long train of pilgrims dancing three paces forward and then backward. The pilgrims are headed by the clergy, all dancing. They dance from the bridge over the Saur to the church, round the altar, and they separate at the cross in the cemetery. It is to this day a very popular pilgrimage; in 1869, there were 8,000 persons in the procession."

A religious dance is still executed at certain seasons before the high altar of the cathedral at Seville, viz. on the feast of the Blessed Virgin and its octave, at the festival of the Corpus Domini, and eight days afterwards; it also sometimes takes place on the three days of the Carnival, which in Spain is held on the Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday before Ash-Wednesday. The dancing begins immediately after vespers.

\* Callcott's *History of Spain*, vol. i. p. 296.

† See preface to Choep's *Christmas Carols*, by Rev. S. Baring Gould.

These dances are said to have been instituted during the reign of Philip III. of Spain (1598—1621) by the canons of the cathedral at Seville, in order to stimulate the people to better attendance at church, in which they had become very lax.

The chorister boys who took part in them were originally *six* in number, thence their name of "Los Seises," or the sixes; there are now ten performers, who are dressed in the costume worn by court-pages at the period when these dances were established.

It has also been stated that one of the popes threatened to have them abolished, on the ground that such dances must be irreverent, that on being remonstrated with by the dignitaries of the cathedral, who declared that the people would most strongly object to their being discontinued, his holiness insisted that the boys should be sent to Rome to dance before him, in order that he might judge for himself. The story goes on to relate that this was done, and the pontiff was convinced that there was no irreverence in this exhibition, and therefore decreed that these dances might continue so long as the costumes of the performers should last.\* No new ones have ever been provided, and yet up to the present time no such catastrophe has ever occurred as their wearing out; by means of a patch here, and a new sleeve there, as needed, the dresses are still serviceable, and doubtless will be so for some hundreds of years if necessary. The boys wear white shoes and stockings, knee-breeches and tight-fitting jackets of white satin (which has become cream-coloured through age), which are trimmed with gold lace. Over the jacket is worn a kind of tabard of crimson or blue satin, blue for the feast of the Blessed Virgin, and red on all other occasions; this has longitudinal stripes of gold lace, a ribbon streamer hangs before and behind each shoulder somewhat after the fashion of those on the gown of an Oxford undergraduate, a narrow white scarf crosses the body from the right shoulder to the left hip. The hats of the boys are of red or blue satin broad brimmed, and turned up in front, where is fixed a plume of feathers.

When the dancing is about to begin, the archbishop or bishop, the

\* I give the tale as it was related to me on the spot; even the name of the pope is wanting in my version. After much searching I have been unsuccessful in finding any historical confirmation of it.



clergy and the ten boys attired as described above, leave the coro or choir, the archbishop places himself on a seat on the right hand side of the choir railing, and facing the high altar, the clergy and the boys all kneel down (the former remain kneeling the whole time of the dancing), and after a short concerted piece has been played and sung by the members of the orchestra and choir the boys rise and sing a solemn hymn bareheaded to the accompaniment of a stringed and wind band. This ended, they put on their plumed hats, and commence dancing by first moving from side to side and then winding in and out to the strains of a very slow measure, singing the while the refrain of a hymn. Presently the music ceases for an instant, a more lively tune is started, eight out of their number make more rapid movements, the two youngest remain in the middle opposite to each other and keep up a slow balancing motion from side to side, all still singing.

In the next figure, the choristers produce their castanets, the dancing is quicker than before. After a brief pause, another verse is sung by them, the figure which preceded the castanet dance is repeated, and the whole winds up with a repetition of the opening dance and chorus.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### A RELIGIOUS DANCE PERFORMED ANNUALLY IN SOUTH ITALY.

We propose in this paper to give a brief account of the annual fête in honour of St. Paulinus, which takes place at Nola, a small town formerly in the province of Campania, but now in the district called Terra di Lavoro. Nola is situated about 35 miles from Naples, and is celebrated in history as being the only place which successfully resisted Hannibal after the battle of Cannæ, B.C. 216; the following year its inhabitants under Marcellus repulsed that invader. The Emperor Augustus died there, and it was at Nola that Tiberius entered upon his reign. Some of the most beautiful of the terra-cotta vases now in the Museum at Naples were found at or near this place.

The festival of St. Paulinus is held on the 22nd of June, if that day happens to fall on Sunday, if not, it is celebrated on the Sunday next ensuing. Very few foreigners have ever witnessed it, as it occurs at a season when most strangers have quitted Southern Italy. The writer is acquainted with the *locale*, but the following description of this fête is taken partly from a small work by Gregorovius (a well-known German scholar), who was once present at it, and partly from a discourse delivered by an Italian priest, Sac<sup>e</sup> Bendetto Trombetta.

“The festival of St. Paulinus derives a special and singular interest from the circumstance that the ceremonies and dances which attend it resemble in a remarkable manner the feast held in honour of Rugonath in the Kulu valley, a remote district of the Himalayas;\* in the former case the shrines contain images of saints, in the latter, of heathen gods.”

The line of railway between Naples and Nola passes through a fertile and highly cultivated district, as its name “Terra di Lavoro” imports.

In this province, as in parts of India, the land is very much subdivided, each holding comprises half a dozen acres at most, and each proprietor, as is the case in India, possesses his own *noria*, or Persian-wheel, by means of which he irrigates the land. In the part we are speaking of in South Italy, the ground is worked entirely by spade cultivation, the foot of the labourer is also brought into play, it is not an uncommon thing to see a man and a woman, both barefooted, walking each of them along a particular line or furrow, and with a peculiar motion of both feet perform the final harrowing or raking after the seed has been sown.

After about two-thirds of the distance between Naples and Nola has been accomplished the railway begins to run almost parallel with a low mountain range which is clothed almost to its summit with olive-trees; one or two fortresses or fortified villages exist on the highest points.

The town of Nola contains no architectural monuments worthy of notice, its cathedral is almost a ruin (it was in process of restoration in 1882-83), for during the revolution of 1860 certain men of bad character set fire to it in the hopes of being able to plunder its rich

\* See Chapter III. of this series, *ante*, p. 277.

treasury during the confusion ; the building was destroyed, but they did not succeed in carrying off any of the rare and valuable articles which it contained. Since that time these have been deposited with two different religious communities for safe keeping. Amongst other valuable objects is a jewelled mitre, said to have been brought from Constantinople by St. Paulinus. The people on the spot affirm that every one of these *mauvais sujets* has since either died a violent death or come to extreme poverty. Nola was probably a magnificent city in ancient times, for here and there are the bases of marble columns, and much defaced portions of Roman statues.

Saint Paulinus, whose history we are about to relate, was at one time Bishop of Nola ; he was a poet as well as a learned father of the Church. Nola is still proud of him. It is said that he was the inventor of church bells, their Italian name *campana* being taken from Campania, the then name of that province. The praises of St. Paulinus have been sung in a Latin epic poem by Severius di Rinaldis, but it does not concern us to know more than that Paulinus was born in the year 351 A.D., in the part of France afterwards known as Gascony, and that his father, a prefect of Gaul, was a heathen, and that he was brought up in his father's faith. Paulinus was instructed in Christianity and baptized by Delphinus, Bishop of Bordeaux. In his letters to his spiritual father he plays upon this name as the *Ichthys* or fish, the emblem of Christ. After he came to Italy, Paulinus still turned to his teacher, calling himself the son of the great fish, and his true dolphin ; it is thus that Paulinus hides his language under the veil of mystery.

The Greek and Roman predilection for the dolphin comes, as the Chevalier de Rossi (a well-known antiquary) observes, from the qualities attributed to that fish as a lover of music and of men, which is poetically expressed in the myth of Arion with his lyre, saved and borne on shore on the back of one of these graceful animals. Arion was the special patron of sea-ports ; the Greeks styled him "the most beloved of men" ; the dolphin was the symbol of the succouring friend, and of safety at sea to the storm-tossed mariner.

Whilst still at Bordeaux, Paulinus embraced Christianity, and became one of its most ardent supporters. He was made Consul,

and appointed to the administration of the province of Campania, but he removed the seat of government from Capua to Nola for no other reason than because Bishop Felix (one of the earliest bishops of Nola) was buried at Cimitile near this latter place, and that the miracles said to be performed at his tomb attracted large numbers of people. Before long, Paulinus laid aside his worldly profession, and chose the priesthood; after he became a priest his poetical genius and his knowledge of Church history brought him into notice; his holy manner of life also caused him to be much respected; and in time he was raised to the Bishopric of Nola, where he died in 431; he was buried near Bishop Felix, where his tomb is still shown.

In his day the Christian churches were places of resort for the faithful. Eating, drinking, singing, and even dancing in unseemly fashion were incidents at the vigils of the feasts of the martyrs; and Paulinus tells us how he covered the church of Saint Felix, at Nola, and its adjuncts, with pictures, in the intention of supplying the assembled folk with something better to occupy their minds. The pictures were not symbolic or dogmatic, but had a simple educational purpose unconnected with ritual.\* Even down to the present day Paulinus' memory is fresh in the minds of the people; this is not on account of his genius or the miracles which they believe him to have performed, but by reason of one good deed which is related of him. After he became a bishop, the only son of a widow at Nola was carried off into slavery, and taken to Africa. Paulinus, with true Christian self-negation, went thither, and in order to free the widow's son gave himself up to slavery in his stead. When his term had expired, and he was able to return home, all the people of Nola turned out of the town to receive him, and brought him back in triumph to his bishopric, with music, dancing, and rejoicing. This occurred on the 22nd of June in a certain year, of which the exact date is not known. It is the anniversary of this event which is still celebrated every year in Nola; an immense number of people from the furthest parts of old Campania go thither to take part in this feast. The sight must be a most curious one, judging from a rude coloured print purchased on the spot, on which are represented the *guglie* or

\* Paulinus Nolanus, *Poema di S. Felice natul*, ix. 541, *seq.*

shrines which are carried round the town on that day. "Le Guglie di San Paolino" is the popular name for these shrines, though this seems a misnomer, as the word *guglia* means simply an obelisk or needle, and these shrines or *guglie* (as we will continue to call them) are, properly speaking, high towers of a pyramidal form. When the important day arrives no less than nine such *guglie* may be seen advancing from different directions, all converging to one spot—the piazza in front of the cathedral. Each shrine belongs to a particular guild; they are covered with bright-coloured stuff, and are an enormous height; some of them are said to tower above the houses. When thus carried along in procession, every *guglia* requires about thirty men to bear it along; it consists of at least five storeys, supported on pillars; each storey is smaller than the one below it; on the platform at the base of each shrine is seated a band of musicians. Bright-coloured flags hang from every corner, and the whole is surmounted by a statue of St. Paulinus, or some other saint. Every niche has a gold back-ground, on which are arabesques in waving lines; in the spaces between the pillars are figures representing spirits, angels, saints, and knights in most gorgeous costumes; other figures hold horns of plenty in their hands; others, again, bunches of flowers, garlands, or flags. As each *guglia* moves along, the whole edifice flutters and rustles in the air, for these shrines, being carried on men's shoulders, are necessarily rather unsteady. Within the lowest storey, in the centre of the musicians, who make discordant sounds with trumpets, drums, triangles, and cornet-à-piston, sit young girls crowned with flowers. Eight of the *guglie* or shrines are about the same size, but the ninth, which is the largest of all, is over 300 feet in height (or 102 palms of their measurement, reckoning the palm at nine inches); this belongs to the corporation of the cultivators of the land. Every trade is represented at this feast by its *guglia*, which takes from four to six months to prepare; its cost is borne by the workmen themselves, and comes to between 16*l.* and 17*l.* of our money. Its separate portions are finally put together in the street near the house belonging to the master of its particular guild. In the lowest storey of the *guglia* belonging to the reapers or the agriculturists is a colossal figure of Judith, magnificently dressed, and

holding the head of Holofernes in her hand. Within other shrines are statues and images of holy men and patron saints. Their exterior is ornamented with all sorts of different emblems: angels carrying flags, others bearing harps, some with wreaths of flowers, cornucopiæ, and incense-burners. Sometimes the shrines have a golden cupola on this summit, or an arrangement in the form of a lily, and above this again is the statue of some saint. On the reapers' *guglia* this would be St. George with the Cross of Malta, and holding a white flag in his hand. Some attribute of its guild hangs down from the centre niche of each shrine; the reapers have a sickle, the bakers a gigantic cake or twist of bread; from that of the butchers is suspended a piece of meat, the gardeners exhibit a gourd, the tailors a white waistcoat, the shoemakers a shoe, the *pizzicagnoli* (those who sell eggs, butter, bacon, &c.) a cheese, and the dealers in wine hang out a bottle. A man walks before each shrine carrying its particular emblem: the gardeners send a youth who carries a horn of plenty, the eatingshop-keepers have two figures borne in front of theirs which have been conjectured to be St. Peter and St. Paul; each of these figures rests against a pillar covered with silver leaf, and on this pillar rests a small wine-barrel.

Let us now follow in imagination one of these shrines as it moves slowly along towards the principal square of the town, and picture to ourselves an innumerable surging mass of human beings, with the high tower in their midst; with its brilliant colouring and its countless flags of gold and silver paper; the balconies full of bright flowers and gaily-dressed women and girls, the whole scene illuminated by the dazzling rays of a Campanian sun.

Immediately following the principal *guglia* is a ship in which sits a boy dressed as a Turk, and holding a pomegranate flower in his hand. Both this and the ship-of-war, fully equipped, which comes after it, are drawn along by men; this latter rests upon a simulated sea: on the bowsprit stands a young man in Moorish costume, contentedly smoking a cigar, and at the stern is a figure of the holy Paulinus himself, kneeling before an altar. The most singular part of the whole spectacle begins as soon as all the *guglia* have arrived on the piazza in front of the cathedral; the bearers of the principal *guglia*

cause it to dance up and down, and backwards and forwards ; their movements are directed by a man with a staff, who beats time ; the puppet-figures move, and the flags and streamers flutter about ; the whole erection looks as if it must inevitably fall. It must be a wonderful sight. Nor does it end here ; for in like manner the other eight shrines are also made to dance ; sometimes they *set* to each other, as in our quadrilles or lancers. After this has continued some five or ten minutes perhaps the respective shrines are deposited on the ground, and the men and youths dance round them ; sometimes twenty persons will form a circle ; each man lays an arm on the shoulder of the man next to him, and thus placed they move round in a circle ; in the midst of the ring, so formed, two solo dancers perform very graceful steps. These latter occasionally take up a third man on their arms, and still continue dancing ; he too, though lying down flat, dances with all his limbs—his *cue* is to look gradually more and more fatigued and exhausted ; he at length appears to become quite giddy—he lets his head sink, and pretends to be dead. The outer circle of performers are also dancing all this time round this group in an animated manner ; presently the pretended dead man raises himself, smilingly holds up his head, and begins playing the castanets. Similar dances are performed before every shrine ; some of the men do gymnastics, one will balance himself on the heads of two of his companions, making various *tours de force* ; the large ship-of-war also does its part in this extraordinary scene.

Whilst this is going on in front of the west door of the cathedral, the bishop of Nola is saying mass at the high altar within the sacred edifice. The service and the dancing are brought simultaneously to a close ; the whole ends with a procession of clergy and monks, which parade through the town, followed by the *guglie* and their attendants ; the feast ends with the firing of guns and the letting-off of crackers and hand-grenades in every street.

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## CHAPTER IX.

## THE BACCHU-BER, A PYRRHIC DANCE OF THE HIGH ALPS.\*

Amongst the vestiges of the highest antiquity, which are found in each department, we will cite the Bacchu-ber, a Pyrrhic† dance, which is now only kept up at the bridge of Cervières, a hamlet of Briançon. It probably dates from the time when peoples of Grecian origin belonging to the confederation of the Caturiges founded the then new city of Brigantium. The dance which we are about to describe is performed at this place on the 16th of August, the fête day of their patron saint, accompanied by the voices of the women, who place the oldest females in their midst.

There are always nine, eleven, or thirteen dancers, all in their shirt-sleeves; and, armed with swords which are very broad and short, and not sharp-pointed, they execute the twelve figures described below to the accompaniment of the following air:—



\* Translated from a French work, entitled, *Topography, History, Antiquities, Customs, and Dialects of the High Alps*. By a former Prefect, Member of the Royal Society of Antiquaries in France. Paris, 1820.

† Pyrrhiche, and Pyrriche, a Greek war-dance of Doric origin, performed to



*Figure 1.*—The dancers form a circle. They hold the broad hilt of their sword in the right hand, and take the point of their neighbour's sword in their left hand.

*Figure 2.*—Each man puts his sword on the ground, so that its point may be in the centre of the circle of which it forms one of the rays.

*Figure 3.*—Each makes a salute towards the right, beginning with the choragus or leader.

*Figure 4.*—Each takes up his sword with the right hand, and grasps the point of his neighbour's sword with his left, as in the first figure.

*Figure 5.*—The dancers turn round in a circle, beginning with the left foot.

*Figure 6.*—Each makes one step to the left on his heel; then, still holding his own sword and his neighbour's also, makes a movement with his arms, so as to bring his *right* wrist beneath his *left* elbow, and his *left* wrist in front of his hip, and thus they execute a *pas de deux* towards the left.

*Figure 7.*—The whole of the eleven (more or less) dancers simultaneously place themselves as in figure 1.

*Figure 8.*—The dancers, led by the left-hand neighbour of the choragus, all pass beneath the uplifted sword of this latter. They defile with their arms crossed, without leaving hold of points and hilts. The choragus then turns round and takes up the same position as the rest.

*Figure 9.*—All make a movement of the heels, at the same time raising the left hand above the head, so as to place their neighbour's weapon on their right shoulder.

*Figure 10.*—The choragus, after returning to his previous position, moves into the centre, and always continuing to hold the hilt and the point of the two swords, he raises both hands to the level of his head;

the sound of the flute in rapid measure, the performers wearing their armour, and imitating by their motions the attack and defence of combatants in a battle. An imitation of this was introduced at Rome by Julius Cæsar, and also exhibited by succeeding Emperors.—*Dict. of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, by Anthony Rich, B.A. 1874.

the others all crowd round him, doing the same with their weapons. The choragus then puts the two swords which he holds one on each shoulder; the others place theirs upon them, and thus all the swords are crossed round his neck in a horizontal position. The dancers, when thus all grouped round the choragus, make several turns or movements to the left, and jump about in time to the music. The choragus then brings his two swords down in front of him, and stands with his arms crossed, holding always the point of the one and the hilt of the other weapon; the rest follow his example, and return to their positions as in the *eighth figure*.


*Figure 11.*—Five of the dancers perform the first figure, and three others, including the choragus, make a kind of frame with their blades; a trio opposite to them do the same, and all their swords are balanced on each other. The two frames are then separated, and the position, as in the eighth figure, once more adopted, with this difference, that one man belonging to each set takes up his position, as in figure 1, and six men, forming two groups of three persons, make a triangle with their blades, advancing and retiring; a third trio is formed which does the same, turning alternately towards the other two sets.

*Figure 12.*—All return to the position of the first figure, raising their hands above their heads, pirouetting on the left heel, and still continuing to hold the hilt of their own sword and the point of their neighbour's weapon, and winding up with a Pyrrhic salute. They preserve a grave demeanour during the whole ceremony, a great contrast to the impetuous movements and the noises which accompanied the Pyrrhic dances of the Greeks, in which they simulated real battles.\*

\* The Principal of Elizabeth College, Guernsey (a distinguished classical scholar), is of opinion "that the Pyrrhic dance was a *martial* dance, into which, at a later period, acrobats were introduced, and that it was imported into Rome by the Emperors, and was performed by *gladiators*, when, no doubt, it finally ended in a real sanguinary combat." "The Pyrrhic salute must have been" (he continues) "the same as that of the ordinary *gladiators*, who, before fighting, used to parade before the imperial chair, crying 'Ave! Cæsar, morituri te salutant' (Hail, Cæsar! those devoted to death salute thee). They presented arms as they marched past."

## FOLK-LORE OF RORAIMA AND BRITISH GUIANA.

EXTRACTED FROM J. BODDAM-WHETHAM'S "RORAIMA AND BRITISH GUIANA," BY MABEL PEACOCK.

 T is the fashion in many parts of the West Indies for sheep to accompany horses. They say it is healthy for sheep to live in the stables with horses, and they get so attached to one another that, out-of-doors, the former will not leave the latter as long as they can keep up with them.—(P. 31.) [Compare the preceding extract with the English custom of keeping goats in stables, and among flocks of sheep.]

“A fishing boat sailed by, in which was an enormous Jew-fish, at which the ‘Admiral’ pulled a very long face, and explained to us that, whenever a Jew-fish was caught, some one of high position in St. Thomas (in the West Indies) was sure to die, or perhaps was already dead. Strangely enough, next morning we noticed that all the flags were at half-mast, and heard that news had just arrived of the death in England of the head of one of the chief firms in the island.”—(P. 34.)

“The yellow flowers of the ‘cedar bush’ sprinkle the mountain-side (in St. Thomas), and a species of bitter aloe is common; from the latter an old black woman of the town makes a decoction which is positively declared to be a certain cure for lung disease. The fleshy leaves contain a jelly-like pulp; this, after being extracted, is washed seven times in pure water, and beaten up with eggs and milk. To effect a cure, seven wine-glasses of it must be drunk. In Mexico I have frequently seen the same medicine used, and have heard wonderful stories of its power, but there the number seven is not included in the recipe.”—(P. 37.)

“Morne Rouge (in Martinique) is one of the localities which the

negroes say is at certain seasons visited by the celebrated Dominican friar, Père Labat, who arrived in Martinique in 1693. He is said to appear in the guise of a lambent flame.”—(P. 65.)

“After the Warimambo (Guiana), we came almost immediately on some very steep rapids . . . . . Here one of the crew nearly lost his life, as he was swept off his feet by the strong current, and only just caught the rope in time to save himself from being carried over a dangerous eddy . . . . . He attributed his safety to the strictness with which the Indians had observed the proper respect due to a trogon that had flown over our heads in the morning; they have a superstition that, if on setting out on a journey they should turn their backs to this species of birds, ill-luck will surely follow.”—(P. 146.)

“Of game birds we bagged a paui, curasow, and two maroudis, a species of wild turkey. The Indians say that the maroudi obtained its bare red throat by swallowing a fire-stick which it mistook for a glow-worm.”—(P. 160.)

“A small accourie (*Dasyprocta agouti*) was the only four-footed creature we got. This little rodent figures prominently in Indian mythology. One of the legends runs thus: The inhabitants of the sky once peeped through a hole that they had been told not to approach, and on looking down saw another world. They therefore cut down long bush-ropes and let themselves down. After wandering about they became frightened and began to ascend the ladder, but an old lady of too ample proportions stuck in the hole, and, during the fighting and scrambling that ensued, the rope broke and many had to remain on earth. Then as they had no provisions they became very lean, but noticing that the accourie was always plump they set the woodpecker to watch its feeding-ground. But the woodpecker betrayed himself by his tapping. Then the alligator was told to watch, and he found out, but came back and told a lie, so they cut out his tongue.\* Then the rat was sent off, but he never returned and the people starved. They wandered off and left a little child behind, and when they returned

\* The Indians to the present day do not recognise in the alligator that shapeless fleshy mass, which is incapable of extension, as a tongue. Herodotus, too, who was a keen observer of the crocodile, repeats the idea that it is tongueless and for that reason was regarded by the Egyptians as an emblem of mystery.

after a long time, having lived on berries, they found the child alive and well, and surrounded by indian corn-cobs that the accourie had fed it with. Then the child followed the accourie after its next visit and discovered the maize-field, and the people were saved. In gratitude they kill and eat the delicate little animal whenever they have the opportunity.

“In their tradition of the Deluge, maize takes the place of the olive-branch. They say that only one man was saved in his canoe, and when he sent out a rat to discover land, it brought back a head of indian corn. The Caribs, in their account of the Creation, say that the Great Spirit sat on a mora-tree, and picking off pieces of the bark threw them into the stream, and they became different animals. Then the Great Spirit Makaanaima made a large mould, and out of this fresh, clean clay, the white man stepped. After it got a little dirty the Indian was formed, and the Spirit being called away on business for a long period the mould became black and unclean, and out of it walked the negro. All the Indian tribes of Guiana . . . . rank themselves far higher than the negro race, and the Caribs consider themselves the first of the tribes, calling themselves ‘the’ people, and their language ‘the’ language.”—(Pp. 171, 172.)

“As we ascended the river from Teboco, we had noticed on some distant hills a remarkable rocky peak which is called ‘the Caribisce’ from the legend stating that it is an Indian hunter who was turned into stone for daring to ascend the mountain. To-day from our camp we saw in the direction from which we had come, east, another curious peak rising like a gigantic thimble from a flat table-mountain. The name of this is Sororieng, *i.e.* Swallow’s Nest, and it is an object of much dread to the superstitious Indians.”—(P. 177.)

“Above all other localities, an Indian is fond of an open, sandy beach whereon to pass the night . . . . . There in the open, away from the dark, shadowy forest, he feels secure from the stealthy approach of the dreaded ‘kanaima’ (the ‘kanaima’ is a secret murderer who performs his work generally by poison); the magic rattle of the ‘peaiman’ (the ‘peaiman’ is the sorcerer and doctor of the tribe) has less terror for him when unaccompanied by the weird rustling of the waving branches; and there even the wild hooting of

the 'didi' (the 'didi' is supposed to be a wild man of the woods, possessed of immense strength and covered with hair) is bereft of that intensity with which it pierces the gloomy depths of the surrounding woodland. It is strange that the superstitious fear of these Indians, who are bred and born in the forest and hills, should be chiefly based on natural forms and sounds. Certain rocks they will never point at with a finger, although your attention may be drawn to them by an inclination of the head. Some rocks they will not even look at, and others again they beat with green boughs. Common bird-cries become spirit-voices. Any place difficult of access, or little known, is invariably tenanted by huge snakes or horrible four-footed animals. Otters are transformed into mermaids, and water-tigers inhabit the deep pools and caves of their rivers."—(P. 182.)

"Two of our Acawais would not eat the delicious pacu, although they did not refuse the ray, or the electric fish. In North America, too, the Comanche Indians will not eat fish that have scales, but are fond of those that have none. The different tribes of Guiana have various ideas regarding what food is fit and what is unfit to be eaten. For instance the Caribs will not touch large fish, nor will they eat pork. The Macusi consider the flesh of cattle unclean, but do not object to that of peccary and wild boar. The Warraees think roast dog a great delicacy, therein resembling the Cheyennes of North America."—(P. 184.)

"After crossing the river, the first part of our journey was to ascend the slopes of the Seroun mountains . . . The narrow trail wound in and out, and up and down, and over and under enormous masses of conglomerate rock, whose smooth and shapely sides, rising perpendicularly for sixty or seventy feet, were crowned by grasses and ferns. Under some of these were flowers and green branches that had been offered to the rock-spirits by the superstitious natives."—(P. 190.)

"The campanero (*Procnias carunculata*, bell-bird) is pure white, strange colour for a tropical bird, and from its forehead extends a long tube which it can inflate at pleasure, and which is covered with small white, downy feathers . . . . Our Indians, and others that we met, did not object to shoot one occasionally, but in Brazil the cam-

panero is greatly dreaded, as its call is believed to be the cry of a soul condemned to perpetual torments.”—(P. 192.)

“As the captain did not arrive at the appointed time with the woodskins, we amused ourselves with some amateur hair-cutting, which so delighted the natives that many of them insisted on being shorn of their long black tresses. These they carefully gathered, and after wrapping them in leaves buried in some retired part of the forest, so that no kanaima should get hold of them and exercise his incantations to the destruction of the late owner.”—(P. 204.)

“Before it was dark we heard the sound of a horn blown lustily from the river, and soon a woodskin appeared containing a man, woman, and child. It turned out that they lived near Roraima, and having heard from Captain David that we wanted a guide had hastened after us. The man’s name was Abraham . . . . . He declined to camp with us, but preferred going farther on, as he said that close by was the cave of a celebrated ‘water-māmā,’ near whom it was dangerous to sleep.

“The Indians firmly believe in the reality of these mermaids, or ‘water-māmās’ as they are called in Dutch-Creole; and where they are supposed to have their caves or nests there great danger awaits the traveller. Some are related to be extremely beautiful and possessing long golden hair, like the Lorelei, and whoever casts his eye on them is seized with madness, jumps into the deep water, and never returns. Others are hideous, snakes being twined about them, and with their long white talons they drag boats under the water and devour their occupants. On the Orinoco and Amazon similar creatures are supposed to exist, but these are capable of drawing their prey into their mouths at a distance of a hundred yards. In order to avoid such a calamity, the natives always blow a horn before entering a creek or lagoon in which one of these monsters may be living; if it happens to be there, it will immediately answer the horn and thus give warning to the intruder.”—(P. 211.)

“A very old lady with long white hair received us, and began to moan and beat her breast wildly. We asked what she was doing, and discovered that she was relating the difficulties of the path to Roraima.

. . . . . Already our superstitious carriers had lent too ready an ear to the terrors of Roraima as depicted by the son, and now the mother seemed disposed to add her store of legends and tales of witchcraft for general information. . . . . Before we left she made the entire party blow three times on her back for good luck, but whether the luck was for her or for us we never found out.”—(P. 217.)

“In the evening a party of Indians arrived. . . . . Like other Indians we had met and questioned, these people beat their breast and uttered various cries when they told us of the mountains to be crossed, and added their testimony to the spirits of Roraima.”—(P. 221.)

“Horn-blowing was a very useful accomplishment of our guide, as it kept us straight and frightened away the various evil spirits, from a water-māmā to a wood-demon.”—(P. 224.)

“We commenced with a short but very steep ascent, and after following a wretched path came to a mountain called Marikamura. Then we had a climb which, in length, far surpassed that of the previous day. . . . . About half-way up we met an unpleasant-looking Indian who informed us that he was a great ‘peaman,’ and the spirit which he possessed ordered us not to go to Roraima. The mountain, he said, was guarded by an enormous ‘camoodi,’ which could entwine a hundred people in its folds. He himself had once approached its den, and had seen demons running about as numerous as quails.”—(P. 225.)

“A wet evening made us retire early to our hammocks, and soon after a few shrill cries were heard issuing from the forest, and presently with hair streaming wildly and shaking a rattle the old sorcerer, whom we had met on the mountain, passed hurriedly along the road to Roraima. He looked neither to the right nor left, and quickly disappeared in the gloom.”—(P. 226.)

“No wonder . . . . . that such a spirit-dreading race should regard the weird and mysterious mountain (Roraima) with an awe which might almost be called reverential, were it not entirely inspired by fear. They (the Indians) believe that the magic circle which encompasses their ‘red-rocked night mountain,’ cannot be approached without danger, that he who enters it will never return, and that the



demon-guarded sanctuary on the summit will never be gazed on by mortal eyes.”—(P. 229.)

“Near where we had halted, we found the ‘peaiman’ looking very disconsolate under the shelter of leaves. For a consideration, he offered to charm away the evil spirits that would beset us, and declared that without his assistance we should be unable to cross the river that we saw below us. Not desiring his society, we declined his aid.”—(P. 230.)

“Our Indians were rejoiced to see us back again, as they had not expected that the mountain-demons would allow us to return.”—(P. 244.)

“Indians never eat eggs or poultry, and only keep hens as pets.”—(P. 250.)

“I had been anxious to visit the emerald mines of Muzo, not only for the sake of seeing the mines themselves, but in order to obtain some specimens of the rare ‘Morpho Cyprio.’ Afterwards at Panama, I saw two of these wonderful butterflies, and was not astonished at the belief of the miners of Muzo that the splendid insects feed on the emeralds, and so obtain their brilliant hue.”—(P. 311.)

“The natives of Panama have an odd legend, which accounts for the absence of feathers on the head and neck of these birds (turkey-buzzards, *Cathartes aura*), gallinazos, as they call them. It is said that after the Deluge, Noah, when opening the door of the ark, thought it well to give a word of advice to the released animals. ‘My children,’ said he, ‘when you see a man coming towards you and stooping down, go away from him; he is getting a stone to throw at you.’ ‘Very good,’ said the gallinazo, ‘but what if he has one already in his pocket?’ Noah was taken aback at this, but finally decided that in future the gallinazo should be born bald in token of its remarkable sagacity.”—(P. 334.)

NOTES ON THE FOLK-LORE AND SOME SOCIAL  
CUSTOMS OF THE WESTERN SOMALI TRIBES.

BY CAPT. J. S. KING.

I.—FORMS OF OATHS.



AMONG the numerous superstitions attesting the Pagan origin of the Somáli, may be mentioned two forms of oath in use among the Eesa and Gadabúrsi tribes :—

(A.)—*By the Stone.*

For this oath a special sacred stone is kept in the Fárih Mutallif family of the Hárlah sub-tribe of the Eesa; and when the tribe acquire any property by looting, or otherwise, one man's share of the spoil is set apart, in the name of the stone, for its hereditary keeper.

When making a solemn covenant, one of the parties hands the stone to the other, at the same time uttering the following formula in the Somali language :—

“Ahdigi Illáhi iyo ukútuki Amr Búr.”

Meaning—“God is before us, and this stone is from Amr Búr,”  
[name of a fabulous mountain].

The person receiving the stone, says :—

“Inan kú sarin akuädín, sidás kú kádi,”

Meaning—“I shall not lie in this agreement, and therefore take this stone from you.”

I never had an opportunity of seeing the original stone, but one shown to me in Zayla, and said to be its counterpart, was simply a smooth, dark pebble about the size of a pigeon's egg, such as are to be found on any shingly beach.

(B.)—*On a Hole in the ground.*

This oath, which also is considered peculiarly binding, is generally used when the Akils (elders) of several sub-tribes agree to join their forces and fight against another tribe.

A hollow is scooped in the ground, and the persons taking the oath place their right hands in the hollow, while uttering the formula :—

“ Balanki Illáhi iyo borántas.”

Which, freely translated, means—“ God is among us, and if we fail in this agreement we shall go to the grave, even as our hands are now in this hole.”

The above oaths are confined to the Eesa and Gadabúrsi tribes ; but a third, viz. that by the divorce of wives, is common to all tribes of the Somáli nation.

The person administering the oath says :—

“ Mahá hélu ka yahin ? ”

Meaning—“ What lawful wives have you ? ”

The other replies :—

“ Sadeh talákod egattai.”

Meaning—“ I have given them (by this act) the triple divorce (if I break the oath).”

The inhabitants of Zayla (a mixed race) commonly swear by the Sheikh Ibrahim Abu Zarbé, whose remains lie under a white-washed dome on the south side of the town, erected in A.D. 1741-2. Ibrahim was one of the forty-four saints from Hadhramant who landed at Berbera, sat in solemn conclave upon Auliya Kumbo, or Holy Hill, and thence dispersed far and wide for the purpose of propagandism. He travelled to Harrar about A.D. 1430, converted many to El Islam, and left there an honoured memory.

The expression, “ By Sheikh Ibrahim ! ” in asseveration is in every-day use in Zayla, and is to be heard as frequently as “ By Jove ! ” and similar phrases among us.

## NOTES ON CORNISH FOLK-LORE.

*Piper's Hole.*—It is interesting that Miss Courtney should record in her Cornish traditions the “Piper’s Hole” legend. This legend is very common round Ireland, in places where there are cliffs and caves, one of the latter nearly invariably being called the “Piper’s Hole or Cave,” into which a piper went to explore, and never returned; but at times he takes to play the pipes that can be plainly heard. Only the other day I heard of such a cave, which, as yet, I have not had time to visit. It is situated on the west shore of Lough Swilly, some six or eight miles of Rathmullen. The story is:—In the troubled times when the McDonnells first invaded the county, they made from Rathmullen, their headquarters, a raid into the country to the northward, and the inhabitants with their piper took refuge in this sea-cave. The invaders smothered the people in the cave (whose bones remain there till this day) except the piper, who went forward to explore, but never came back, and at the present day he at times is heard playing at Kerrykeel, some eight miles to the westward, and at other times at Rosnakill, some ten miles to the northwest. The origin of the legend in so many places seems to me to be due to natural causes, as at certain times when the wind is in a certain direction, or perhaps on account of some peculiarity in the atmosphere, you will hear in a cave a sound as if of bagpipes. There is somewhere in Ireland a place marked on the maps as the “Devil’s Mill.” Where it is, I cannot now recollect; but I think it is somewhere in the co. Wexford. I went to visit it, and was surprised to find that there was not the trace of any sort of mill on the stream. On looking up some of the natives, I learned that there never was a mill, and no one would presume to utilize the water, as it was pre-occupied, the devil having a mill there, the working of which could be plainly heard

when there was a flush in the stream ; this I afterwards verified, as, on a visit after rain, the rattle of the mill was quite audible, even before you got to the place.

*Children's Games.*—Miss Courtney's Cornish children's games bring back the hours of happy childhood, as many of them are quite familiar ; but, unfortunately, I have forgotten most of the rhymes. Our old nurse in the house before I was born was a Kilkenny woman Ann Lawless, *née* McCormick, by name, and she seemed to have had a nearly unlimited store of round games for children. I have remarked, when in Cornwall, the natives are very fond of introducing into the games loving and kissing ; our rhymes were more general, but otherwise the games are nearly identical. The words of "My daughter Jane" were somewhat like, but it was a prince, not a duke, that came to wed. The last verse of the rhyme was—

" Here is your daughter safe and sound,  
And in her pocket a thousand pound,  
And on her finger a golden ring—  
She's fit to walk with any queen."

I forget our name and rhyme for the game called "Pray, pretty maid ;" but the person in the ring, he or she, walked around with a handkerchief, repeating a rhyme, and at the end of it struck the person, he or she, wanted to come in. The Counting-out rhyme in general was,—

" Vickery vickery vay,  
The cock is lost in the hay,  
Hiram jorum cockty forum,  
Vickery vickery vay."

The oracle, however, was allowed a great deal of latitude, all that was expected of him being that he should begin with the regular formula. In fact, as a rule the favourite oracle was some one who could knock off a pithy or funny rhyme. I remember in a party of big girls and boys from sixteen years old and upwards, there was a young lady who was supposed to dispense with stays, and had a figure like a sack of flour ; another was very learned, and the third a Fenian ; the rhyme was somewhat as follows :—

“ Vickery vickery vaist,  
 I know a girl who has got no waist ;  
 Another is blue, another is red ;  
 A cock if he's killed must be dead.”

The best oracle was the boy or girl who could be most funny. Here I might mention a very popular rhyme game, when every one in turn made a couplet to the toast, “Vive la company,” in which they brought in some characteristic of some one present, such as the following:—There was a stout girl who was asked to dance, and said she was tired; her would-be partner answered, “Oh, never mind, I'll carry you.” After supper, when the rhymes were going round, hers was—

“ I drink to those who are jolly and sound,  
 Vive la company ;  
 I'll dance with the man who can carry round,  
 Vive la company.”

This twenty years ago was a favourite after-supper game with grown people in Munster. “Looby looby light” was a favourite game. I knew an old couple in Galway about twenty years ago who delighted to get a lot of young people together, and always ended off with, “Here we dance looby light,” the man enjoying the fun as much as the youngest child, while the wife played the piano. The words were:—

“ Here we dance looby looby,  
 Here we dance looby light ;  
 Put your right hand in,  
 Put your right hand out,  
 Shake it a little a little,  
 And then we will turn about ;  
 Then it was the left hand,  
 Then the right foot,  
 Then the left foot.”

Ending with—

“ Put your noodle in,  
 Put your noodle out,  
 Shake it a little a little,  
 And then you may turn about.”

The noodle business led to a bit of romping and accidental (?) knocking of heads together. We had also the game of “Fool fool,”

but with a different rhyme, and games allied to "Pig in the middle" and "Solomon's dog," but under different names, which I do not now recollect. "Hole in the wall" we called "Crow's nest," and it was played in two ways: one way like that described when the finger was put into a person's mouth and bitten, the blindfolded persons being asked to put their finger in the crow's nest, as the crow was out, and as soon as they did, it was sung out, "Oh, the crow's in," and their fingers were bitten. The other way was to make a nest of your hand, and ask, "Put your finger in the crow's nest, the crow's out." You were let to put it in a few times, and then the player suddenly sang out, "Oh, the crow's in," and stuck his thumb-nail into your finger. "She said and she said" was a general, not a love game, and before what she said a certain animal was mentioned, which was previously arranged, generally a cat or a dog. I remember a case when it was to be dog, and the "saying" was missed. When one confederate accused the other of misleading him, she said, "I did not say dog," and he replied, "But you did say Toby," Toby being the name of the family-dog which she should not have mentioned except before the saying. There used to be cunning deviations as to the plan to be followed to prevent the uninitiated finding out how it was done, such as putting the catch-word two or three questions before the right answer, and changing the animal to be named. Other games mentioned I could refer to, but as I forget particulars it is unnecessary. I am, however, surprised that Miss Courtney does not mention "Hunt the slipper," as I saw a game, if not it, nearly identical played by a party of the "Band of Hope" at Land's End the year of the meeting of the British Association in Exeter. I did not go near the party; as previously when I did, they wanted me to join in "Kiss in the ring," which, for certain reasons, I declined. By the way, this game is not mentioned, and to me it seems to be a great favourite, not only in Cornwall, but also in the Cornish settlements in Ireland, so numerous some years ago before the failure in the mining industry. Many a game of this have I seen both in Cornwall and the co. Cork, where the Cornishers most did congregate.

G. H. KINAHAN.

## MALAY FOLK-LORE.

## BIRDS.



THE NIGHT-JAR (*Raprimulgus macrurus*). One of the names given to this bird by the Malays is *burong cheroh*, and it is explained as follows:—

A woman was once engaged in making paddy by moonlight (this is done by pounding the grain with a wooden pestle in a large mortar and then winnowing it to separate the chaff from the rice. After the first winnowing the rice is pounded again, for the first process does not thoroughly clean it). She was pounding her rice for the second time in the process called *cheroh*, when for some reason or other, it is supposed in consequence of a quarrel with her mother, she was changed into a bird, and is now to be heard on moonlight nights repeating her monotonous “chunk-chunk-chunk,” which the Malays think resembles the sound of the pestle descending in the grain with the measured stroke.

BURONG “DIAM 'KAU TUAH.”—I have not identified the bird to which this name is given by the Malays of Perak (West Coast, Malay Peninsula). It has a curious call of six or seven notes, and the Malays discover in them the following refrain:—

“Diam 'kau, Tuah!  
Kris aku ada.”

The story is that this bird was once a man who lost his temper with his slave (Tuah by name), and threatened his life because the latter answered him. The Malay words mean “Keep quiet, will you, Tuah! I've got a *kris*!”\*

BURONG UNTONG,—also unidentified, is said to be a small white bird

\* Is this perhaps the red-wattled lapwing, the cry, of which, according to Dr. Jerdon, sounds like “Did he do it? Pity to do it?”—See Kelham's “Malayan Ornithology,” *Journal, Straits Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 12, p. 180.



about the size of a canary. It is called *burong untong*, "the bird of good fortune," because its nest, a very small and quite white one, secures a good harvest if it is found and placed in a paddy-granary. The nest is rare, and a genuine one will sometimes fetch as much as ten dollars in places where its virtues are believed in.

TINGGAL ANAK.—A small bird with a plaintive call of three notes, which the Malays interpret to be *tinggal anak!* "Good-bye! children." They believe that this bird never lives to see its young ones grow up. As soon as her eggs are hatched the mother-bird dies on the nest, and the young ones are reared on the maggots which breed in her dead body. It is in anticipation of her fate that she utters her mournful cry, which is always heard in the spring of the year when the young paddy is sprouting.

OWLS.—There are several kinds of owls, all of which, more or less, are believed to be the harbingers of sickness or death. Of one kind (*jampuk*), which often enters hen-roosts at night, the Malays entertain the extraordinary belief that it lives on the intestines of fowls, which it draws out with its claws *a tergo* without causing pain to the bird, all feeling being dulled by the use of a spell called *pe-lali*.

THE GREAT MALAY HORNBILL (*Onceros rhinoceros*, L.).—The Malays tell the following legend about this bird to account for the curious cry which it makes:—

A Malay, in order to be revenged on his mother-in-law who had offended him, shouldered his axe and made his way to the poor woman's house and began to cut through the posts which supported it. After a few steady chops the whole edifice came tumbling down, and he greeted its fall with a peal of laughter. To punish him for his unnatural conduct he was turned into a bird, and the *tëbang mentuah* (literally, he who chopped down his mother-in-law) may often be heard in the jungle uttering a series of sharp sounds like the chops of an axe on timber, followed by Ha! ha! ha! ha! \*

THE WHITE-CRESTED HORNBILL (*Berenicornis cornatus*).—Col. Yule in his *Glossary of Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases* has a note about the toucan, and remarks upon the coincidence observable in

\* See "Malayan Ornithology," by Capt. Kelham, *Journal, Straits Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* No. 9, p. 130.

the fact that, in Malay, the word *tukang* means "an artificer," and is said by Jerdon to be applied "in some of the Malayan isles" to the hornbills, while in South America *toucan* seems to be a Brazilian name for a Brazilian bird (*Rhamphastes* or *Zygodactyle*), which is also called by the Spaniards "*Carpintero*" from the noise he makes. Col. Yule also notices that Malay dictionaries show no application of the word *tukang* to the bird.

Dr. Jerdon was right, and I am in a position to assert positively that the word *tukang* is applied in Kedah (West Coast Malay Peninsula) to a species of horn-bill, which I believe to be the one named at the top of this note. Kedah Malays make buttons of the yellow beak or horn of the *tukang*, and believe that they change colour according to the state of health of the wearer. If he falls sick they become discoloured like a bruise and turn black on the approach of poison.

THE MALAY HERON (*Ruwak-ruwak*).--The bird about which the following beliefs are held by the Perak Malays is perhaps *Ardea Sumatrana* :—

The Malays say that its nest is never found. Should it be found the possession of it gives to the finder the power of making himself invisible (*alimun*). Having no nest or eggs, it is of course childless, and when this bird is heard calling in the swamps, Malays say sarcastically that the *ruwak-ruwak* is bathing her young one. If one goes near and looks, the bird will be seen to be dipping a twig or else its bent leg into the water, in the attitude of a native woman bathing a child on her knee, uttering its call all the time.

THE SPOTTED DOVE (*Turtur Tigrinus*).--About this bird, *burong-te-kukur*, which is a favourite cage-bird with the Malays, the following legend is related. There was once a maiden, who with her little sister lived with her parents far up country. Her father opened up a hill-farm for rice cultivation, and day after day used to go forth to his work accompanied by his wife. The elder girl importuned her parents to let her go too and help, but being just of a marriageable age she was kept at home according to Malay custom. So she was always put off with some excuse, being told first that she might come some day when all the trees had been pulled, then when the wood had been

burnt off the clearing, then when the paddy had been planted, and then when it should have been cut. When the paddy had been cut she asked to be allowed to go out, but was told to wait until the grain had been trodden out. This last disappointment was too much, and after her parents had left the house she took off her earrings and bracelets and put them down behind the door, and, having put her little sister in her swinging cot, she took the shape of a dove and flew to the clearing. She retained her necklace, and this accounts for the speckled ring which is on the neck of the *te-kukur* to this day. She found her parents busy plucking their paddy, and, alighting on a stump close by, she cooed to her mother. "Mother, mother, I have put the earrings and bracelets behind the door, and have left my sister asleep in the swing." This she repeated three times. The amazed mother running home found her daughter gone. Then she returned and with her husband made ineffectual attempts to catch the dove. In vain did they cut down the trees on which it successively alighted. It always flew away after repeating the same words, and does so to this day.

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## IRISH FOLK-LORE.

[Reprinted from *A Statistical Account or Parochial Survey of Ireland, drawn from the communications of the Clergy*, by William Shaw Mason. Dublin, London, and Edinburgh. 1814-1819. 8vo. 3 vols.]

(Continued from ante, VOL. II. p. 213.)

### *Parish of Culdaff (Donegal).*

An infant at its birth is generally forced by the midwife to swallow spirits, and is immediately afterwards suspended by the upper jaw with her forefinger: this last operation is performed for the purpose of preventing a disease called the head-fall.—(Vol. ii. p. 157.)

Of customs there are some which appear extraordinary, though not confined to the parish of Culdaff. One of these is elopement previously to matrimony notwithstanding the absence of all difficulties which might stand in the way of the union of the lovers.—(P. 159.)

In this and some of the neighbouring parishes a custom prevails for young women to assemble at spinning parties, to which each of them brings a wheel, for the purpose of enjoying society without impairing their industry.

Howling at funerals and holding wakes during two or three days previous to interment are customs regularly observed here. These wakes are often attended with unbounded mirth and festivity, which are not restrained by the presence of the nearest relatives of the deceased.

During the Christmas holidays they amuse themselves with the game of Kamman (derived from *Kam*, which signifies crooked), which consists in impelling a wooden ball with a crooked stick to a given point, while an adversary endeavours to drive it in a contrary direction.

On St. John's Eve (the 23rd June) bonfires are made at the tops of all the hills. This ceremony is denominated Beal-Tyn.—(P. 160.)

Near the village of Culdaff is a deep part of the river into which it is usual to plunge diseased cattle, and, at the same time, to pray to Saint Bodhan, who is supposed to intercede in their favour. There is no account of the canonization of this saint; nor are there any particulars known of his life; but Bodhan is an Irish term for an idiot, and superior sanctity is here generally ascribed to fatuity.—(P. 161.)

*Parish of Cloncha (Donegal).*

Near Malin Head is a small hollow in the rock which is filled with sea-water at every tide; it is reputed to possess a miraculous power of curing diseases. . . . The patron days of the place are St. John's Eve and the Assumption of the Virgin, and they are celebrated there by the most disgusting drunkenness and debauchery under pretence of paying adoration to St. Moriallagh, the patron of the well. This saint is not acknowledged in the calendar.—(P. 181.)

In this parish there are no books, MSS., nor documents of any sort relating to Ireland. Some old people, however, in the most

remote parts of it, occasionally repeat poetical fragments, like those translated by Mr. McPherson, and ascribed by him to Ossian. The Irish harp is unknown here; but some of the ancient national airs are occasionally sung. The mountain herdsmen often sing a very wild kind of air, somewhat similar to the celebrated "Rans des Vaches," the words of which are sometimes in the form of question and response.—(P. 182.)

*Devnish, county Fermanagh.*

A few paces to the north of St. Molush's house (a Gothic building, 30 feet long and 18 feet wide, entirely roofed and finished with cut stone) is his bed, which is a stone trough sunk level with the surface of the ground, 6 feet in length and 15 inches wide, with a rough bottom composed of three stones, in which people lie down and repeat some prayers in hope of relief from any pains with which they may be afflicted. About one hundred paces north of St. Mary's Abbey is St. Nicholas's well, to which many resort for relief, repeat some prayers, and leave a rag suspended on a bush near it.—(Vol. ii. p. 194.)

*Glenavy, Camlin, and Tullyrusk, county Antrim.*

There are three ancient sepulchral monuments and thirty-seven artificial mounds, commonly denominated Danes-raths. . . . Being found to contain excellent soil, they are now applied by the farmers to the purposes of agriculture in defiance of the displeasure of the fairies, the apprehension of whom had long contributed to preserve them.—(Vol. ii. p. 241.)

When they bring their children to be baptized, a piece of bread and cheese is wrapped up in the infant's clothes. If several children are brought to the font, the male is presented first. Pancakes are eaten on Shrove Tuesday; nuts and apples on Hallow Eve; and a goose on Christmas Day. Easter Monday is devoted to festivity; St. Stephen's Day to the pleasures of the field; and on Midsummer Eve bonfires are lighted.—(*Ibid.* p. 249.)

*Killuken, county Roscommon.*

In a field on the roadside from Carrick to Croghan, on the left hand, is a long stone set up obliquely. The common people call this Cloghcom, *i. e.*, the crooked stone, and say that it was thrown there

from the top of Skimore, in the county of Leitrim (a distance of about seven miles), by the Giant Fin-mac-Coole, the print of whose five fingers they say is to be seen in it.—(Vol. ii. p. 322.)

The most remarkable customs retained among the people are those of repairing to certain wells in the neighbourhood to perform what they call stations on certain days in the year.—(*Ibid.* p. 325.)

*Kilmactige, county Sligo.*

When the parents of a young man think it time for him to take a wife, they consider what young woman in the neighbourhood will be likely to answer the purpose, and, having determined on one, the party goes to make the match, as they term it, which is done by sitting up the whole night talking over the terms, drinking whiskey, and smoking. The match being concluded, the day is appointed for the marriage, at which time the parties assemble at the abode of the woman, when the priest attends, and a plentiful dinner or supper is prepared for the occasion, at which a large number of the friends are entertained, and abundance of whiskey distributed amongst them; this, with the accompaniment of a piper, enables them to pass the night in the utmost festivity. Dancing makes a considerable part of their entertainment, and is considered a necessary accomplishment amongst them. . . . Singing the old Irish songs makes also a principal part of their entertainment. . . . Things go on very well in the beginning of the night. As long as the reverend pastor holds the chair he keeps them to regularity and good order, but afterwards the scene shifts, and exhibits a chaos of tumult, vociferation, and drunkenness. Thus two or three nights are spent before the parties disperse.—(Vol. ii. pp. 361-362.)

Another source of idleness amongst them is the constant attendance given at the wakes and funerals of their neighbours; the neglect of which would be considered a crime of the blackest dye, and an offence not to be forgiven. It is also a custom amongst them that when any person dies in the village all work and labour is totally suspended by all those living in the village or within a short distance of it until after the interment; the intermediate space is usually employed in visiting the house where the corpse is exposed, smoking tobacco, or entertaining themselves with certain plays or tricks, which

are practised by the young folks, and which enable them to pass away the long night in the greatest mirth and hilarity. . . . Among the more wealthy people victuals are provided for those who come to the wake from a distance, and also a due proportion of whiskey, and abundance of tobacco and pipes; some of which is also brought to the burying-place, with which they regale themselves while the ceremony is performing.

The surest proof of the goodness of a man's life is the largeness of his funeral, and, therefore, great care is taken to have the remains numerous attended, so that hundreds, and sometimes thousands, are seen assembled to commit one poor putrifying body to the earth, whilst the air resounds with the melodious voices of a large assemblage of females, who, notwithstanding the doleful and melancholy cries uttered by them, are totally unconcerned about the deceased.—(*Ibid.*, pp. 365-367.)

## FOLK-TALES OF NORTH FRIESLAND.

HOW INGE OF RANTUM ESCAPED MARRIAGE WITH EKKE NEKKEPENN.

**T**HIS North Friesland tale, of a secret name, is in some respects similar to the German story of Rumpelstilz, the Swedish tale of King Olaf and the giant called "Vind och Veder" (see Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie*, Stallybrass's translation, vol. ii. p. 584; Simrock's *Handbuch des Deutschen Mythologie*, p. 56), and the Scottish legend of the green fairy who sings "like ony precentor;"

"Little kens our guid dame at hame  
That Whuppity Stoorie is my name."

(Chambers, *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, p. 74).

The Frisian tale has its scene in Sylt, a singular and weird island interesting to Englishmen above all others because thence Hengist and Horsa sailed to the conquest of England. Ekke the sea-god, or giant merman, fell in love with and captured a girl of Rantum to be his bride. She did not know who he was, and in answer to her entreaties he promised that if she discovered his name he would let her free. Long she wondered over this. At last one night as she wandered sadly over the grey sand, she heard a voice as if under one of the sand-mounds, singing:

“Delling welljik bruu;  
 Miaren well ik<sup>7</sup>baak;  
 Aurmiarn well ik Bröllep<sup>7</sup> maak.  
 Ik jit Ekke Nekkepenn;  
 Min Brid es<sup>7</sup>Inge fan Raantem  
 En dit weet nemmen üs ik alliining.”

Or in English :

“To-day I shall brew,  
 To-morrow I shall bake,  
 The next day is my wedding ;  
 I am called Ekke Nekkepenn ;  
 My bride is Inge of Rantum ;  
 And nobody knows this but myself.”

Right joyfully jumped up the girl, and called out “Thou art Ekke Nekkepenn, and I remain Inge of Rantum.” Never came Ekke to her again as wooer, but from that day to this, by storms and floods, he has unceasingly laboured to destroy Inge’s country. And Rantum now lies a mile under the sea, and still he labours on at lonely Hornum.

A stranger and probably more ancient version of Ekke’s wooing is also preserved in Sylt. Long, long ago, when the Frisians first came to Sylt, they found there a race<sup>7</sup> of little people, whom they drove to the empty waste to the north of the island. There these little folk, who wore red caps and had stone axes, who had no money but were always merry, who worked none and stole all they could, lived in hills and holes. They danced by moonlight on the mounds and sang. Their head was King Finn. His traditional home was an underground dwelling of the late stone age, which I visited a few days ago,



although I had no idea then that I was in so eerie a place. It is reached by a trap-door from the roof, but the ancient approach is by a passage twenty-seven feet long, through which a man could just crawl and no more. The dwelling is about fifteen feet long by ten wide, with a roof of irregular height, nowhere exceeding six feet. It is lined by twelve enormous blocks of Swedish granite. Such is the Denghoog, and here Ekke came to visit King Finn, who entertained him most hospitably and told him how he won his own bride, who now sat beside him in finest raiment, crowned with wild flowers and diamonds and with rings on every finger. Thus encouraged Ekke made sure he would get a bride from Braderup, a neighbouring village,—a long way from Rantum. Up he rose early in the morning and sat on his hill and saw the dawn in the east, and the moon in the west, and thought of such things as a love-sick sea-god may. And then there passed him a bright youth, Dorret Bundis of Braderup, one of three who had crossed on the ice from the continent some time before, and went to bathe in the bay beneath. Ekke had been himself so long out of the water that he felt he must bathe too; perhaps, says the Sylt tale, he wanted to make the lad's acquaintance or to teach him to swim. But sea-gods are "kittle-cattle," and Dorret seeing Ekke coming, ran away crying out. For this there was a particularly excellent reason, since Dorret was no boy at all, but a girl, who wore men's clothes to prevent King Finn and his underground folk taking a fancy to her. However Ekke caught her; she begged to get away and that he would keep her secret. At last Ekke promised this, if she would wed him in a year and a day. Dorret had no choice. She was in a peculiarly literal sense "between the devil and the deep sea," and she plighted her troth to Ekke. His joy knew no bounds, and he sang gaily on his lonely sand-hills,—

" Ekke must brew,  
 And Ekke must bake,  
 For Ekke will married be ;  
 Dorte Bundis is my bride,  
 I am Ekke Nekkepenn ;  
 And this knows no man but myself."

But this song by-and-bye all the Braderup people heard, and other

people, too, and so they learnt that Dorret was a maid, and Ekke's sweetheart. At this Dorret was very angry, and indeed played Ekke so many tricks—some of them ugly enough—as would suffice to rile the most patient lover, and Ekke was fain to consult Finn again. Finn was greatly annoyed, particularly at Ekke's irrepressible singing, and told him he was ever so much too stupid to be an earth-man. He bade Ekke swim off to Harnum and trouble the plain no more. At this the friends quarrelled, and Ekke seating himself on Finn's throne declared that so long as he sat there he was king of Finn and all his folk. The story here is abundantly interesting, but suffice it to say that Finn at last brings a tremendous sea-monster on the scene. "Oho!" cried Ekke. "It is my sea-wife, Ran. Come no nearer." And as she approached, he took a great leap into the sea, and was never more seen. So ends the tale of Ekke's wooing. The legends of Sylt are numerous and very interesting. My authority for the above is *Sagen und Erzählungen des Sylter Friesen*, by the late C. P. Hansen, of Keitum. I bought the book at Westerland, in Sylt. I have not seen it elsewhere. There is a kindred tale quoted in a note by Nork in his *Mythologie der Volkssagen und Volksmärchen*, p. 169, from Mullenhof's *Schlesweg-Holst. und Lauenb.*, p. 578. In Depenau dwelt a servant-maid who had a lover betrothed to her who visited her from time to time, but never said where he lived or what his name was. One morning as she was going a-milking, she heard some one singing jollily. So she peeped through a hedge, and there was a dwarf dancing and singing,

" And Margreit Dat never knows  
That I am Jack o' Thursday !"

(Hans Donnerstag.) Then knew the maid that her lover was really a dwarf. So when he came next to visit her, she said she would have no more to do with him, for he was one of the Underground Folks,—like Finn and his subjects in the Sylt legend I have given above.

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## THE MODERN ORIGIN OF FAIRY-TALES.



FROM the moment in which the general attention of scholars was directed to the treasures of the lore living among the people, theories were not wanting to explain the origin and importance thereof.

The fault inherent in every new undertaking, viz., of mixing the elements promiscuously, and attributing to every branch of the new study the same origin, was conspicuously felt in the new study of folk-lore. Once a theory was adopted, say for customs or myths, it was immediately applied to superstitions, tales, or charms, as if these were all of the same age, and derived from the same source. This *general* explanation is still in force, although, as I think each branch of folk-lore should be studied separately, endeavouring to prove the origin of each independently from the other; afterwards we may try to ascertain the relationship which exists between each. Thus a theory which holds good for *superstition*, is by no means fit for fairy-tales, &c. Just as *our* knowledge is a knowledge formed by many *strata*, one upon the other, so also the knowledge of the *illiterate* is not a homogenous element, but one which has been acquired during centuries, and it only appears to us to form one indivisible unity. There may be elements in folk-lore of hoar antiquity, and there may be on the other hand other elements relatively modern, which we can trace even to our own time, growing, so to say, under our own eyes, as, for instance, all the *popular etymologies* and the stories invented *afterwards* to explain them.

I thus entirely separate the inquiry into the origin of fairy-tales from all the other parts of folk-lore; the more so, as there is no more striking instance of quite opposite views and opinions, than those concerning their origin.

There is first, the *mythological* theory; then the theory of

*migration*; thirdly, the *prehistoric*, and I could add as many theories more as there are collectors of fairy-tales, each of whom has his own explanation and view of the matter.

In order to decide *this controversial point*, I will for once adopt the methods of chemistry, and ask: *Can we now-a-days make a fairy-tale?* Or, as the result obtained in this way might appear doubtful to some who would detect its artificial nature, I will put the question thus: *Can we watch the rise and growth of a fairy or popular tale in modern times, and pursue it from the time when it was no popular tale through all the vicissitudes and changes it underwent, till it became a genuine popular tale, gathered afterwards from the lips of the illiterate?* If we are able to do this, then I think we may well attempt to explain in a similar way all, or nearly all, other fairy-tales, especially when the conditions are the same as those of the tale studied.

The next step would be to ascertain how this change was effected? what parts were eliminated in this process, and what elements were introduced? The last question would then be: Is the story a genuine, national, aboriginal, or a foreign story, one introduced in historical times? and further, whence are the elements derived? Are they genuine, or do they owe their existence also to some other influence, which can be traced back to its origin and cradle?

Before I enter upon the fuller development of this my view, I will first meet the other now prevailing mythological or prehistoric one, which sees in the fairy tales chips from old mythology, preserved under this disguise, and thus helping us to reconstruct the forgotten faith of—of whom? Here begins the real difficulty, for nearly all the European fairy tales and some of their counterparts in different countries and amongst different races of mankind bear such a striking similarity that we must admit an absolute *mythological unity* for all mankind,—a thing which nobody can take seriously, seeing that the older an element is, the more it differs from primitive elements, in another country or at any distance of time. I take as a best example *language*, which, even in the different branches of the Indo-European race, offers such variety that the primitive unity passed *unobserved* for centuries, and only the philologist is able

to trace the European languages back to the same root. The fairy tales are, more or less, entirely the same, the changes being relatively slight, when compared with those which differentiate one language from another.

Unless we admit a remarkable stability for tales and mythology alone (amidst the great and sweeping revolutions the nations of Europe underwent in the course of centuries), and unless this unity of mythology is accounted for, the similarity, or, better, identity of fairy tales remains a puzzle.

But even admitting the unity of mythology, this could only serve to explain the fairy tales of the ancients, if we had any, which is not the case; whilst new nations arose in Europe out of the mixture and amalgamation during the great migration period and throughout the Middle Ages.

How could these new nations quite different in creed, as also in race (Turanians and Aryans) come by amalgamation to just the same mythological results and to the same system of mythology possessed by their predecessors?

To say again, as some do, that fairy tales are the primitive property of mankind is now impossible, since apart from the undeniable fact that, except two or three *Asiatic* tales (as Amor and Psyche, &c.), no old tale is mentioned in classical literature. I do not now speak of the Egyptian, as I am confining myself to the origin of European tales, which perhaps, when the mechanism of their development is shown, may throw some light also upon oriental tales. As I have said, we have no trace of ancient tales in Europe; on the other hand, the great similarity between the tales compels us to dismiss theories as to their primitive origin; and, instead of seeing in fairy tales remnants of old, forgotten mythology, I see in them the *last and modern* development of folk-lore. The modern origin explains why they are so much like each other, as in the case with the *fabliaux*, novels, and jests, current in Europe from a fixed date, and now common property of all nations, although brought to Europe at a well ascertained period and dispersed only during the last five or six centuries.

In fairy tales we not seldom come across supernatural personages,

such as dwarfs, hobgoblins, &c. These are the last refuge for the follower of the mythological theory, as these figures are said to be the old gods and goddesses dethroned and changed into satanical personages. As will be shown hereafter in my analysis of the constituent elements of the tales, far from being old or even aboriginal, nearly all are of foreign *Christian*, and thus also of modern, origin. Perhaps some traits may be older, but these are insignificant, and only a special inquiry made in the line of thought I shall indicate will help us to rescue them out of the surrounding sea of foreign elements.

The next system of explaining the origin of fairy-tales is that known under the name of *migration*, which attempts to derive *all* fairy tales from India *only*, where they originated, and whence they wandered unchanged from land to land till they reached the westernmost shores of Europe. The time of this migration is supposed to be about the tenth century. The foremost representative of this theory, the late Prof. Benfey, carried it out in his famous introduction to the German translation of the "Pantchatantra." Although I incline so far to the theory of *migration* as to believe that popular lore is in constant interchange between nations, I cannot accept the wide principle laid down by Benfey and his successors, that *everything* is imported, and that our European fairy-tales came as *such* and all of them, entirely developed, from India to Europe.

Benfey fell into the same fault of generalization, as the followers of the above-mentioned theory, of applying, namely, to the whole body of folk-lore the results true only of one branch; here novels and *fabliaux* can be traced back in historical and literary continuity to the Orient. But what may be true for these is not necessarily true also of tales, customs, superstitions, games of children, or nursery rhymes. For if we compare our fairy-tales with those of the *ancient* Indian literature, the alleged identity or similarity is far from being so clear as one would assume, accepting what was put forward by the followers of the migration theory. Such identity as exists is only with the *modern* collections of Indian tales, a fact which has hitherto been overlooked to the great damage of this study.

There might be found two or three old stories which can be compared with our tales; and if we limit the importation to this

number we shall be nearer the truth than by postulating the introduction of tales whose existence at that period and in the form they actually have is not proved.

Nobody will compare fairy-tales such as, say the Sleeping Beauty or Cinderella, with any story in the "Pantchatantra." No resemblance whatsoever can be traced; in vain do we squeeze all the European tales in Indian moulds, it is a fruitless attempt.

I do not hereby deny all Indian Oriental influence; the history of Lyndipa and Pantchatantra in the European vernacular would easily discomfit me; but we must accept many more influences besides this Indian one to explain the origin of fairy-tales, a question I am now approaching.

In the study of tales I make a decided difference between the *plot*, or story, and the *incidents*, or means by which the plot is carried out. The former is the skeleton, the latter the surrounding flesh, blended, not *born* together, that is, the tale is composed of *two* elements, one *stable*, ancient, and unchanged, to a great extent, at least, throughout the migration period, the other changeable, derived from various sources, and national. This element the former acquires in its journeyings in various countries and under various circumstances.

Let us now study the first element, the *plot*. When we compare different fairy-tales throughout the world, their similarity consists in the identity of this element. I make abstraction of the slight differences, omissions, interchanges, combinations of two, or three, to one, only too natural if one considers how these tales are propagated before they are fixed by a literary form. Is this *plot* ancient or modern? When speaking of the mythological theory, I proved that mythology could not be an ancient possession of mankind, seeing that it is the same in nations who are themselves modern, and that it could not possibly resist the influence of time and place, and remain unchanged amidst the great changes the world has passed through. But it is not even necessary to essay a psychological refutation of such an assertion, as closer inquiry into the nature of this element gives us a satisfactory answer, with but few exceptions; chiefly of the animal-fable class, it is a *regular story*, *novel*, or *fabliau*. Indeed,

these alone show when comparing those of one nation with those of another nation, a similar identity, the want of any radical change.

Once the plot of a tale is reduced to a *novel*, we have gained firm ground for further inquiry; we know, more or less, the epoch of *its* introduction into the lore of European nations, and can fix therefore the date of *tales* as *posterior* to the time when fable and *novel* were brought from the Orient, mostly in a literary form, *i.e.* as a book which was translated and widely circulated, and thus became in time common property of the nations.

Along with these novels there are immense stores of *tales* of far deeper influence and far greater popularity, but curiously enough not at all taken hitherto into consideration, whence popular fancy has drawn the richest materials, the best-known figures of fairy-tales and romance: I mean the great *hagiologic* literature of the Middle Ages, the lives and legends of the saints. Many of these offer most interesting material, and were indeed eagerly seized and worked up, the saints thereby becoming changed into heroes of tales from heroes of religion.

It is not difficult to recognize them under their disguise, once our attention is directed to this well-spring of folk-lore.

It is out of place here to enter into a detailed inquiry (which I hope to undertake somewhere else) to show further the enormous influence exercised by the canonical and uncanonical writings by the bible as we have it and by the apocalyptic and pseudo-epigraphical literature joined with the bible in the Middle Ages, full of wondrous and remarkable feats and adventures of the holy personages, be they patriarchs, apostles, or Christ himself, which entered into the soul and mind of the people, enriched their knowledge, and furnished them with the best means for further spinning out the tale.

To better understand how this literature could hold sway over the people, we must remember that for centuries the only instruction was that given by the clergy in the church, and that the books they had access to were religious books: the bible, the spurious writings already mentioned, and the legends of the saints; the same story or the same legend was thus read to the people from the pulpit year



after year, and century after century. Add to this the feasts on the *day* of the saint, the performances or drawings bearing on his life and death, and it is only to be wondered at that until now this influence could have been so totally overlooked; and that instead of searching for the right explanation through the medium of the literature and spirit which ruled Europe with such a lasting influence, it was rather sought in mythological or similarly airy speculations.

I find a third source of information, but more confused and not likely to have exercised any great influence in this direction, in the vague knowledge of the scattered remnants of classical antiquity, seen and acquired in those times merely through polluted channels and imperfect renderings. What penetrated even more was the romantic tale, tinged and changed by the medium it passed through; nevertheless it cannot be totally excluded from the summary of the multifarious elements which contributed, among other result, to the originating of fairy-tales.

None of these, however, make the origin of fairy-tales older, because they began to influence only *after* they were translated into the *vernacular*, and the homilies of the saints, as well as the tales of Greek or Roman mythology were understood by the masses, whether they were communicated to them from the pulpit or by the *troubadour* or *minstrel* singing the exploits of ancient and modern heroes in the popular tongue.

These are the manifold materials from which the elements of the tales are drawn, and yet the number of the latter is so small that we can reduce the whole extent of fairy-tales to some *eighty* formulæ, very much akin to the primitive elements of chemistry, which also form innumerable combinations, and produce new and unexpected results.

These tales, containing only the simple plot, are carried from land to land by many ways, especially by soldiers and caravans of travelling merchants; and whosoever has had the opportunity of seeing the life of the Orient, not through the mist of distance, but on the spot, will be astounded to notice how quickly news spread through Asia and Africa—how any great event which occurs in Europe, for instance, is immediately talked of in the bazaars of Kurdistan, as well as in

the interior of Africa. He will also see how these events grow till they reach a gigantic development, and how the garment in which they are wrapped changes from place to place, and from mouth to mouth. It is *active* folk-lore which can be thus pursued through the different shapes the story of a *historical* event assumes in a short time if spread over a wide surface. The soldiers who fought at Tel-el-Kebir or in Burmah, when returning home, will be also *authors* of wondrous tales, relating the adventures, the customs of the nations they fought, and they will always have a great and obliged number of listeners gathered around them.

Under these circumstances, if there is anything to wonder at, it is that that the number of *formulæ* is only such a small one, which, on the other hand, explains also their wandering so far. The stock being small, they were often repeated.

But for a novel or a story to become a fairy-tale one essential character had to be added, the *supernatural* element, something which is *extraordinary*, either such an object to be acquired, as water of youth, descent to hell, or the hero is helped by the interference of an unexpected and unaccounted-for assistance, coming from a part whence he never suspected it, thankful animals, saints, &c., or the hero fights a supernatural enemy (dragons, giants, ghosts, who haunt deserted houses) intermixed with various similar incidents.

This is the part I consider to be of a totally independent origin, and only later on blended together with the simple novel, or story or jest, changing it into a fairy tale (*conte*). This exists *previously* in the mind of the men who tell fairy-tales, and is derived from different sources, at different epochs, representing the *residuum* of the knowledge acquired by the upper classes, and which in time penetrates into the lower regions of society and imbues it with vague ideas and some outlines of real knowledge. This mixture is therefore different in different countries, and represents, when studied separately, the *national* and *local colour* assumed by the tale when accepted by the people.

To borrow a figure from the fairy tales, I should like to compare it with the mantle of the witch composed of thousands of patches, which when the charm is broken represent each a ground, or a house, or a

garden. So is it also with this *accidental* element, composed of thousands of patches, of which some may be older, others more modern; some taken from religious literature, others from romantic, and again others from classical literature.

Much more difficult is the study and investigation of this *composed* element; each part or parcel belong to a totally different origin than the next one, clustered only here by popular fancy round an equally different centre.

The most conspicuous amongst these elements are the fairies, and all that belongs to this aërial kingdom. They were and are almost generally considered to be of great antiquity, and in them the mythological school recognised the darkened reflex of the old goddesses dislodged from their Olympia or Walhalla, and changed to spirits of evil under influence of Christianity.

It would carry me now too far to enter here into any detailed research as to the origin of these beliefs among the peoples of Europe suffice it to say that in the form they appear in the tales and in the superstitions they are not older than the tenth or eleventh century, and can easily be traced back to their *oriental* and *Christian* sources. Not only they were not banished, but even they were actually introduced into Europe through religious movements, which however were not always in accordance with the ruling Church, and therefore persecuted. Whosoever has compared the northern elves with the Slavonic vilas, the neo-Greek *καλαί αρχοντισαί*, that is, the beautiful adies (the right translation of *faye*, hence fairie), and has followed out their connection with the legend of Herodias and her daughters, will see that they are of modern origin.

The zoological notions of miraculous animals together with other strange stories about curious dwarfish peoples (hence dwarfs and pigmées, &c.), are mostly due to the romantical history of Alexander the Great, and other similar works, as the *Letter of the priest John* and the *Image du monde*, together with the legends about St. Andreas in India and St. Macarius in his travel to the gates of Paradise. Of no less importance was the Physiologus with its tales of the peculiarities of animals, now-a-days the common property of all nations of Europe. Astrological and other superstitious creeds, as well

as medical cures and charms and amulets come on the crest of a mighty cultural wave, and the study of the decisions of the various *councils* in Orient and afterwards in Occident show us clearly their steady spread over the vast area occupied now by them, and the means employed to eradicate them, the lecturing and prohibiting from the pulpit have done more to propagate them, as they were thus brought continually to the knowledge of the masses.

I could easily increase the number of sources for the second and accidental element which enters in the composition of a fairy tale, showing clearly that it is independent of the former and is only *afterwards* used, when the change from *tale* (*conte*) to fairy-tale is undertaken.

This reveals to us the mechanism of how the construction is performed, and enables us now to study and pursue the origin of the fairy-tales from a point of view totally different to those accepted hitherto.

The proof of this historical *theory* as I term it would be to show that the *facts* correspond entirely with the *hypothetical* and *theoretical* statement.

We have at hand not only the positive, but also the negative proof, viz., that whenever the fairy-tale is divested of its array, it turns back to its original plot. I begin with this as it is, it does not want an elaborate development, and it gives us the clue for the assertion uttered now very often and not explained, that the fairy-tales are fast vanishing. Do they vanish indeed, or are they undergoing a change which can be detected only by an exact comparison between fairy-tales gathered from less cultured countries, with those gathered in countries where modern critical knowledge and better judgment as to the causes of natural phenomena is much more general? The difference to be observed between the two is, that we witness just the change noticed above. The accessorial element based upon medieval knowledge and vague poetical ideas gives way to more accurate and less fanciful descriptions. The fairy-tale loses its supernatural character and becomes again the fable it has been before. We need only compare the *Contes Lorraines* with Russian or Albanian fairy-tales to mark this decided and distinct difference.

Another proof lays in the fact that we very often cannot exactly draw the line which excludes a simple, witty tale from a fairy-tale, and there is *no* collection where apologues and fables are not published together with fairy-tales under the same heading. They are often enough invisibly passing from one into the other, and vice versâ.

The positive undoubted proof is lastly given by the fact I put at the beginning in form of a question, viz. that we can actually follow step by step the change from a tale or apologue or religious legend into a well-known and far-famed fairy-tale.

Some examples may now be adduced for it, and I confess that I feel rather the difficulty of a choice, as there are examples innumerable. If we read the *Lais* of Marie de France with the annotations of R. Köhler, or the *Gesta Romanorum* in the edition of Oesterley, or any of the great collections of the early romances, or the *History of Fiction* of Dunlop, in the German translation of Liebrecht, my views are then fully confirmed. I confine myself only to few of them, being ready to extend this investigation over the whole extant materials.

One of the very famous legends of the Middle Ages was the legend of *Amys* and *Amylion*, where two friends help each other to the utmost of their power, when one falls ill of leprosy, and as the angel says to Sir Amys in a vision: If Sir Amys, on the festival of the Nativity, would cut the throats of his two children, and anoint the leprous sores with their blood, the disease, which was incurable by all other means, would instantly disappear. Sir Amys follows the advice given to him, and cures his friend, but this act is rewarded by a heavenly miracle, for the slain children are revived. This story is based upon the old medical superstition as to the symbolical influence of blood; and the legend tells of a similar cure proposed to Constantine the Great, who, however, at the admonition of Pope Sylvester, refrains from this wicked deed, and is cured from leprosy through a bath in holy water instead of blood. Very numerous are the other parallel stories and legends current in the Middle Ages, till they are crystalized in the above-mentioned romance. From the romance it passed into the fairy-tale, where we meet regularly *two* friends, and not only *one*, as in the old legend. So we find it in Germany (Grimm, 6), Greece (Hahn, 22), Italy (Pentamerne, 39), Russia

(Affanasiev), Roumania (Ispirescu 10), cf. Benfey, 'Pantchatantra,' i. 415-418.) Comparing the fairy-tale with the story or romance, we easily detect the characteristic embellishments which produced that change. The exploits of one friend are now of a different fantastical character. The way how the other learns the fate to which he is doomed is not by means of an angel's voice, but he hears a bird (or something else) predicting it to him, and through a dream the cure is announced to the survivor; for the friend is not leprous, but transformed into stone. Closer inquiry shows further that the parallels in different countries are at variance just in the choice of the exploits or the prophetic bird, viz. the accessorial element is local and national.

Another example is the history of "Rhampsimit's Treasure," told by Herodotus, but unknown in Europe before the thirteenth century, when it became incorporated into the Syntipas, and thence spread over Europe, and became a richly developed fairy-tale. We can here positively ascertain the date of its first mentioning, and pursue it till it became a popular tale.

The whole group of persecuted mothers, whose children were substituted at their birth for animals, and afterwards restored, can easily be connected with the *Crescentia*, *Hildegarde*, and *Genevefa* group, and thus with the miracles of the Holy Virgin.

Another similar group is that where the children are lost immediately after their birth or in their youth; the mother is separated from the father until after manifold adventures they meet marvelously again.

Here we can trace the literary source back so far as to the first century A.C., for the biography of *Clement*, first (legendary) bishop of Rome and friend of St. Peter, is such a romantic story, preserved in his "Recognitiones," book vii. *seq.* The same story is afterwards attributed to another saint, Eustache Placidus, and as well in the Orient as in the Occident parallels to it are innumerable.

Comparing now these tales with each other, the same result will *always* be obtained, viz. that the literature of romance and novel, be it a religious romance or one of chivalry, has passed now-a-days to a great extent into the literature of fairy tales, and that, far from being the basis, the fairy tales are the top of the pyramid formed by the lore

of the people. They are the outcome of a long *literary* influence, as well as an oral one, which was exercised upon the mind and soul of the people during centuries.

The story of *Fortunatus* is the source for a great number of tales, where wonderful objects and the vicissitudes their possessors pass through are the chief contents.

To the Descent to Hell of the apocryphal writings (the Gospel of Nicodemus, the Apocalypse of St. Paul, &c.) nearly all the tales can be reduced, where the hero goes to the other world to bring something back and sees while journeying many puzzling things, to which answer is given there.

The biblical history of Samson, of Jephthah and his vow, and other recitals served also as a model for some tales.

At the head of numerous tales stands further *Belphegor*, ascribed to Macchiavelli and Brevio, the prototype for "the Doctor and Death."

The travels of the Prophet Elijah with a Rabbi, or an angel with a hermit, repeated in the theological literature over and over again, gave the idea to similar travels of saints or God himself in various tales.

Not a few of the novels even of Boccaccio or Cinthio were changed into tales, as, for instance, *Griseldis*, whose change into a Russian tale was followed out by R. Köhler, step by step, and so on. The examples can be infinitely multiplied.

M. GASTER.

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

**Couvade.**—In turning over the leaves of the English translation of Peter Bayle's *Dictionary*, vol. v. 1738, I have found some notices of this custom (pp. 346-347), which, as far as I remember, have not been noticed by folk-lorists. As the book is a common one, and the passages are wordy, no advantage, as I think, would be gained by a

reprint, but it will be well to put their existence on record. If they be reproduced, the French original, which I have not at hand, should be used.

ANON.

**An Agricultural Folk-tale.**—The following is from the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. xl. p. 19: it is a popular tradition of the Bábar tribe. “Once on a time they entered into an agricultural partnership with the devil, and gave him his choice of the roots or stalks of the harvest. The devil chose the stalks, upon which the Bábars sowed nothing but onions, carrots, and turnips. The devil, very naturally annoyed, insisted next harvest on getting the roots, so the Bábars grew wheat and sugar.” This story is also commonly related in Saxony and Silesia. The peasants made the same contract with Rübzahl the spirit of the Sudetic Range. In fact he got his name from the contract, for Rübzahl means “turnip counter.” He came to count his turnips and found that the peasants had sown rye.

G. L. GOMME.

**Iron Smelting Superstition.**—“The union of a man and a woman is always considered absolutely necessary for the operation, the general belief being that the iron ore would not melt unless the fire beneath be blown with a pair of bellows, worked by a man with his younger brother’s wife passing her arms round his waist from behind.” Banka in Bhágalpúr, India. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. xl., p. 29.

G. L. GOMME.

**The Folk-Lore of Ceylon Birds.**—A correspondent of the *Ceylon Observer* of Colombo, referring to the interest excited by Mr. Swainson’s work on *The Folk-Lore and Provincial Names of British Birds*, notes some points in the folk-lore of the birds of Ceylon, mostly obtained from natives. The devil-bird (*Syrnium indrani*) stands *facile princeps* for his evil reputation; his cry heard in the neighbourhood of villages is a sure harbinger of death, and the superstitious natives are thrown into great consternation by its demoniac screech. The legend about the bird is as follows:—A jealous and morose husband doubting the fidelity of his wife killed her infant son during her absence, and had it cooked, and on her return set it before her. She



unwittingly partook of it, but soon discovered that it was the body of her child by a finger which she found in the dish. In a frenzy she fled to the forest, and was transformed into a *ulania*, or devil-bird, whose appalling screams represent the agonized cries of the bereaved mother when she left her husband's house.

The hooting of owls in the neighbourhood of houses is believed to bring misfortune on the inmates. The magpie robin, though one of the finest of the song-birds of Ceylon, is similarly tabooed; it has a harsh grating screech towards evening, which is considered ominous. The quack of the pond heron flying over a house is a sign of the death of one of the inmates, or of a death in the neighbourhood. If the green pigeon (*Nila kobocya*) should happen to fly through a house, as it frequently does on account of its rapid and headlong flight, a calamity is impending over that house. Similarly with the crow. But sparrows are believed to bring luck, and are encouraged to build in the neighbourhood of houses, and are daily fed. The fly-catcher bird of Paradise is called "cotton-thief," because in ancient times it was a freebooter, and plundered the cloth-merchants. As a penalty for its sin it was transformed into a bird and doomed to carry a white cotton attached to its tail. The red wattle lapwing, the alarm bird of sportsmen, has the following legend connected with it:—It is said to represent a woman who committed suicide on finding herself robbed of all her money, amounting to thirty silver pieces, by her son-in-law. The cry of the bird is likened to her lament: "Give the silver, give the silver, my thirty pieces of silver." Its call is heard at all hours, and the stillness of night is broken with startling abruptness by its shrill cry. Another story about it is that when lying in its nest in a paddy field, or a dry spot in a marsh, it lies on its back with its legs in the air, being in continual fear that the heavens will fall and crush its offspring.

The story current about the blue-black swallow-tailed fly-catcher (*kawudu pannikkia*) and its mortal enemy, the crow, is that the former, like Prometheus of old, brought down fire from heaven for the benefit of man. The crow, jealous of the honour, dipped its wings in water and shook the drippings over the flame, quenching it. Since that time there has been deadly enmity between the

birds. The Indian ground thrush (*Pitta coronata*) is said to have once possessed the peacock's plumes, but one day when bathing the peacock stole its dress; ever since the *Pitta* has gone about the jungle crying out for its lost garments. According to another legend, the bird was formerly a prince who was deeply in love with a beautiful princess. His father sent him to travel for some years, and on his return the princess was dead. He still wanders disconsolately about calling her name. It is also said that the peacock, being a bird of sober plumage, borrowed the brilliant coat of the *Pitta* to attend a wedding, and did not return it. The disconsolate *Pitta* wanders through the jungle calling on the peacock to restore its dress—hence the cry, *ayittam, ayittam* (my dress, my dress). The cry of the hornbill (*Kandetta*) is inauspicious and a sure sign of drought. The bird is doomed to suffer intolerable thirst; not being able to drink from any stream or rill, it has the power only to catch the rain-drops in its bill to quench its thirst, and keeps continually crying for rain.

**The Witch's Ladder** (*ante*, pp. 1, 81, 257).—The following letters appeared in the *Guardian* of September 21 and 28:—

SIR—I was greatly amused, as, doubtless, were many of your readers, at the incident which occurred at the close of Dr. Tylor's learned paper read before the British Association on a so-called "witch's ladder" found at Wellington, Somerset, and was forcibly reminded of more than one similar ludicrous scene in English fiction. Two members rose and said that the "witch's ladder" was no "witch's ladder" at all, but a rope used for driving deer. The description given of the "ladder," as a rope in which feathers were fixed at right angles, reminded me of a passage in Virgil which would seem to confirm the view of the two sceptics:—

"Inclusum veluti si quando flumine nactus  
Cervum aut *punicæ septum formidine pennæ*  
Venator cursu canis et latratibus instat."—*Æn.* xii. 749-51.

The "*formido*" is explained by Connington as "the name of the cord with red feathers which the hunters stretched along the openings of the woods to drive the game into the net." It is again referred to

in the *Georgics*, ii. 372, and in Seneca, *De Ira*, ii. 12, "Cum maximos ferarum greges *linea pennis distincta* contineat et in insidias agat ab ipso effectu dicta formido."

The fact that Wellington is at no great distance from the stag-hunting district of Exmoor seems to point in the same direction. On the other hand, Somersetshire is, I am afraid, one of the most superstitious counties in England.

EVAN DANIEL.

St. John's Training College, Battersea, September 15, 1887.

SIR—I have but just seen your paragraph and the Rev. Evan Daniel's letter on this subject in the *Guardian* of September 14 and 21. Permit me to say that I was quite aware of the use of cords with feathers for scaring birds, &c., but that such cords did not seem to me to resemble closely the rope which I showed at Manchester. Those used by fowlers, of which drawings may be seen in old books on sport, are long feathered strings stretched horizontally like clothes-line. Those referred to by Virgil in the passage cited by Mr. Daniel (is *punicæ* a printer's error?) appear from other passages in the dictionaries to have been of this sort. The rope exhibited by me was evidently not for use in this way. What was new in the discussion was the statement that "sewels" of feathered cord, made to be carried in the hand for turning back deer, are still used in England; of these I hope soon to get some specimens, in order to ascertain how far they are like my rope. It has to be remembered that (as I pointed out at the meeting) the neighbours probably had something to go upon when they talked about the "witch's ladder" and the "new rope with new feathers," and thought that both it and the brooms it was found hidden with had to do with witchcraft. Their notion is strengthened by the fact that in another part of the same county the name of "witch's ladder" is given to a little straw ladder with feathers along it, which is made for purposes of sorcery, while it appears also that in Florence "a long twisted cord . . . stuck full of feathers put in crosswise" may be hidden in a child's bed to bewitch it. At any rate, these objects cannot be instruments for scaring deer.

E. B. TYLOR.

September 23, 1887.

Professor Tylor writes to us as follows:—You will have had my telegram that there was no paper. All I did was on the spur of the moment to exhibit the rope and feathers, and give the details about it which are already in the *Folk-Lore Journal*. You will have seen by the *Guardian* and other papers that two present claimed the object as a “sewel” or scare carried to turn back deer in the forests or parks. I said I knew that strings and feathers were used for scaring game, but did not take them to be the same as the rope and feathers, but I had not heard of the hand-ropes used for deer-scaring, and must get a specimen to see. After this came the correspondence in the *Guardian*. I don’t see the use of my saying more, until I can see the sewels from Hampton Court or elsewhere. My *Guardian* letter puts the case fairly, but now I remember I brought out a piece of evidence at Manchester which is not in the *Folk-Lore Journal*. It is that an acquaintance of mine, quite a discreet man, made inquiry of an old woman in Devonshire who is considered to know about such things. She said “Was it a new rope with stag’s feathers?” He replied that it was, and she said “Then it must be a wishing rope.” This is all I can tell you up to date.

E. B. TYLOR.

N.B.—A *stag* is a cock-bird, as a gander or cock of poultry.

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## NOTICES AND NEWS.

*Spanish and Italian Folk-Songs.* Translated by Alma Strettell.  
London, Macmillan and Co. 1887.

This is, on the whole, a charming book and does Miss Strettell infinite credit. Her metrical renderings of the short fantastic scraps of Spanish gipsy verse, which occupy nearly one-half of the volume,—veritable white-hot sparks of lyrical passion, beaten out from the

ardent soul by the hammer-stroke of circumstance,—are generally excellent and sometimes exceedingly happy. The following are characteristic examples both of the manner of the original and of the translator's method :

## SOLEARES.

The eyes of my dark beauty  
Are like the wounds I bear.  
Great as my desolation,  
[And] black as my despair.

---

## Yestereven.

The dead-cart passed me by ;  
A hand hung out uncovered,  
I knew her again thereby.

---

I look from the iron-barred casement,  
But nought to see is there  
Save dust and sand in the sunshine,  
Stirred by the languid air.

The extraordinary affinity in style and train of thought of the above and many of the Spanish pieces in the book to Heine's lyrical vein (or rather one phase of it), will at once strike the reader, showing how deeply the poet of the *Romanzero* and the *Book of Lazarus* was imbued with that folk-song feeling which is the essence of all great song-work.

Miss Strettell is scarcely so successful in the longer Jitano pieces. "Leave me, memory of sorrow," &c. for instance (p. 58), is hardly a happy rendering of the exquisite *Petenera*, "*Dejame, memoria triste.*" In the Italian translations the contrary is the case; the *Rispetti* are generally much more felicitously Englished than the shorter and wilder *Stornelli*, the sudden flower-like charm of which Miss Strettell does not quite succeed in preserving. It would, by the way, be interesting to compare her versions of the latter with the French prose translation of Caselli (Dr. Henry Cazalis). A prominent and interesting feature of Miss Strettell's book is the illustrations, consisting in twelve photogravures after drawings by Messrs. Sargent, Morelli, Abbey and Padgett.

*Ilchester Lectures on Greeko-Slavonic Literature and its Relation to the Folk-lore of Europe during the Middle Ages.* By M. Gaster. London, 1887 (Trübner), 8vo. pp. 229.

In his paper printed in this part of the *Journal* Dr. Gaster sets forth his theories as to the origin of Folk-tales and their relationship to Folk-lore, and therefore it is needless to explain the basis of his book. Folk-tales, he says, have nothing to do with custom or superstition. They must be studied separately, because they are of different origin. But is not such an assertion begging more than half the question? To those of the Society who accept the teaching of Professor Tylor and Mr. Lang in their study of Folk-lore we can safely assert that there is little in Dr. Gaster's book which will eventually disturb their tenets. The fact is, he has taken too narrow a ground. Because folk-tales are similar to Biblical stories, because others are really literary in origin, it does not follow that *the folk-tale* in its origin and *raison d'être* is literary in origin. We cannot subscribe in any way to Dr. Gaster's theories, though glad enough to welcome his book for two sufficient reasons. In the first place it points out facts which Folk-lorists are apt to overlook, and in the second place it gives us an almost unique account of Slavonic literature. Little is really known of this in England, and Dr. Gaster affords an opportunity of study which will be welcome to a large circle of students. Dr. Gaster's book ought to be studied side by side with the published works on Slavonic folk-lore, notably Mr. Ralston's well-known studies in Russian Folk-lore. In this relationship his learned dissertation cannot be otherwise than useful. But apart from the literary history which it contains and the suggestiveness of some of his conclusions, we think he has not yet even disturbed the position of the anthropological view of the science of Folk-lore.

## NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

25TH MARCH, 1887.

THE last Annual Report dwelt upon the necessity of having a greater amount of support from subscribing members, in order to put in hand the important work, *A Handbook of Folk-Lore*, which the progress of the study of Folk-lore has now shown to be necessary. The Council had hoped to have commenced this work last year, but upon considering the resources of the Society they deemed it wiser to apply themselves almost entirely to the effort of obtaining a larger number of members, and of ascertaining what increased measure of support the Society was likely to obtain. In consequence of these efforts the Council are happy to report that the roll of members has increased, the losses by death and retirement being 16, whilst no less than 40 new members have joined the Society. Further plans have also been suggested for bringing the Society more prominently before the notice of many residents in the country who take an interest in Folk-lore, and it is hoped that a continuance of the efforts in this direction will once for all place the Society upon a sure financial footing, and so enable it to turn its attention to the work that lies before it.

It has been deemed advisable in accordance with a long expressed opinion to secure permanent Offices for the Society's use, and the Council consider themselves fortunate in having secured adequate accommodation and a permanent address at 22, Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, at the rooms of the Royal Asiatic Society, where the Society's Evening Meetings have previously been held.

The Council now hope to inaugurate a system of meetings whereby the co-operation of members may be secured for furthering the objects of the Society, and particulars of any such meetings will be announced every quarter in the Journal.

The Council are happy to say that they have now commenced the *Handbook of Folk-Lore*. They are anxious to receive as much assistance as possible from any of the members in this work, and proofs of the several sections of the book as they are finished will be forwarded by the Director to such members as may notify to him their willingness to co-operate in the work.

During the past year the Council have been requested to sanction the translation into Spanish of Mr. W. G. Black's *Folk-Medicine*, one of the publications of the Society issued in 1883, and it has given them great pleasure to readily accord such sanction. Professor T. F. Crane, of New York, has suggested to the Society to undertake the publication of some recent studies he has made on mediæval stories, particularly an edition of the *Exempla* of Jacques de Vitry which is entirely unedited. The Council have expressed their willingness to accede to Professor Crane's proposal. Other propositions as to future publications are under consideration, and the Council do not forget their obligation to publish the *Denham Tracts* at as early a date as possible. During the past year the Council have issued Mr. Swainson's *Folk-lore of Birds*, and they hope the *Magyar Folk-Tales* will soon follow. This will bring the issue of the publications fairly up to date.



THE FOLK-LORE SOCIETY.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE for the year ending 31st December, 1886.

RECEIPTS.		£	s.	d.	PAYMENTS.		£	s.	d.
To Balance at Bank	...	...	132	8	8	By Printers on account	...	...	...
" Mr. Gomme	...	...	1	19	8	" Petty Cash	...	...	...
" Receipts on account of Subscriptions	...	...	134	8	4	" Balance at Bank	...	...	...
" Sale of Books, less Binding Account, &c.	...	...	253	12	8				
			29	14	7				
			<u>£417 15 7</u>						<u>£417 15 7</u>

## ANNUAL MEETING.

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The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on Friday, 25th of March, at 7.45 p.m., at the Royal Asiatic Society's Rooms, 22, Albemarle Street, the President, the Earl of STRAFFORD, being in the chair.

The Annual Report of the Council was received and adopted.

The Treasurer's Account for the year ending December, 1886, was received and passed.

A Special General Meeting under Rule X. was held for the purpose of varying Rule V. by the substitution of the words—

“A Council of twenty Members,” instead of “A Council of twelve Members.”

And the rule as amended was passed.

The Council and Officers for the ensuing year were elected, the Members of the old Council being re-elected, and the following new Members added to the Council, viz.: Dr. Antonio Machado y Alvarez, James Britten, F.L.S., Dr. Brinton, Mons. Loys Bruyère, Miss Burne, Signor Comparetti, Sir John Lubbock, Bart., Sir Henry Maine; K.C.S.I.

A vote of thanks was proposed and seconded to the Earl of Strafford for his services as President of the Society, and to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. J. Foster, for his exertions during the past year. These votes were carried unanimously.

Papers were read by Mr. W. F. Kirby on “the Forbidden Doors of the 1001 Nights,” and by Mr. Foster, on behalf of Dr. Gaster, on “the Modern Origin of Folk-Tales.”

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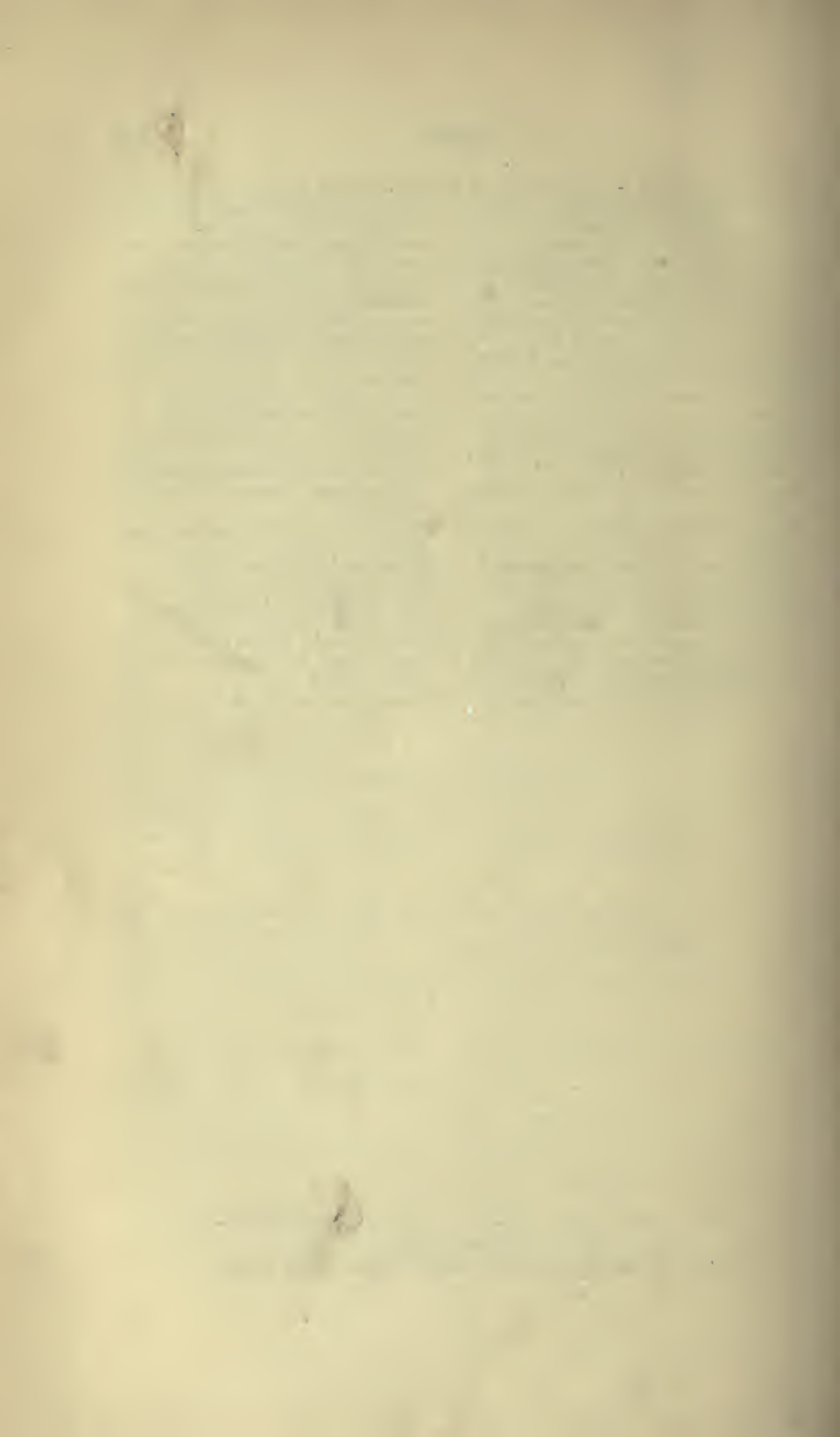
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