

A painting of a landscape. In the foreground, a large, gnarled tree with dense, dark foliage stands on a rocky outcrop. In the middle ground, a small town or village is visible, featuring a prominent white tower or church spire. A person on a horse is seen in the distance, riding across a field. The background shows rolling hills and a hazy sky. The overall style is that of a classical or romantic landscape painting.

Global Grey Ebooks

**NUMMITS AND CRUMMITS,
DEVONSHIRE CUSTOMS,
CHARACTERISTICS, AND FOLK-LORE**

SARAH HEWETT

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Nummits and Crummits by Sarah Hewett.

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Contents

Preface

I. Superstitions

II. Things Lucky and Unlucky

III. Charms

IV. Customs

V. Weather Lore and Wise Saws

VI. Nummits and Crummits

VII. Peculiar and Eccentric Devonians

VIII. Stories

IX. A Few Old Songs

Preface

This little book is made up of a few crumbs from the repositories of many Devonshire friends, to whom grateful thanks are tendered for their untiring helpfulness in supplying so much that is quaint and interesting.

The miscellaneous scraps here gathered shew but inadequately the humorous characteristics of our Devonshire folk, their dialect, and as some like to call it, "jargon," as drawn by themselves. They illustrate what the people actually believe in, say, and do, and shew the general trend of their minds. Their belief in the supernatural is unbounded. Neither age, social position, nor culture makes much difference: one and all are more or less wedded to the superstitions, beliefs, and traditions of their ancestors.

Apologies are offered to any one whose "Crummits" have been appropriated without permission or acknowledgment.

It was impossible to say from whom they arrived, as hundreds of newspaper and other cuttings came to hand anonymously, and being very precious morsels were reproduced. To each and all contributors most grateful thanks are given.

SARAH HEWETT.

3 Blundell's Crescent, Tiverton, Devon,

July, 1899.

I. Superstitions

I tell thee,
 There's not a pulse beats in the human frame
 That is not governed by the stars above us.
 The blood that fills our veins, in all its ebb
 And flow, is swayed by them as certainly
 As are the restless tides of the salt sea
 By the resplendent moon; and at thy birth
 Thy mother's eye gazed not more steadfastly
 On thee, than did the star that rules thy fate,
 Showering upon thy head an influence
 Malignant or benign.

ALL HALLOWE'EN SUPERSTITIONS.

I think I cannot do better than describe what actually took place at an old farm house, in the eighties, in South Devon.

I was invited to spend a few days with a family, consisting of a farmer, his wife, and seven grown-up sons and daughters. The farm was picturesquely situated on a south-western slope of the Haldon Hills, from whence extensive views of land and sea could be enjoyed.

Mary was the youngest and merriest of the family. She it was who acted as prime mover in all the fun, not that either of the others showed any reluctance to carry out her wildest suggestions. A brighter set of young folk it would be difficult to find, and it has seldom been my good fortune to meet their equals in high spirits and natural gentleness. Every one was thoroughly imbued with credulity in regard to omens and predictions.

Mary suggested that All Hallowe'en should be observed with due ceremony, as indeed it was. The amusements began with fortune-telling by cards, at which Maggie the eldest daughter was an adept. The fortunes were appraised as "not up to much," and as no one crossed Maggie's hand with a piece of silver, the cards were swept aside.

Then Jack, otherwise the family clown, brought in dishes of apples and nuts, bags of hemp seed, torn paper, large basins of water, scraps of lead, a melting ladle, large combs, small hand mirrors, and a printed sheet of capital letters, all of which were to be used as love-charms.

Just as the clock began to strike eleven, a move was made towards the fireplace, where from the bars of the grate Jack had already swept every vestige of ashes.

Simultaneously each girl laid a big hazel nut on the lowest bar of the grate, and sat silently watching the result. I noticed that perfect silence was religiously observed during each ceremony.

She, whose nut first blazed, would be the first to marry.

She, whose nut first cracked, would be jilted.

She, whose nut first jumped, would very soon start on a journey, but would never marry.

She, whose nut smouldered, would have sickness, disappointment in love, and perhaps die young.

After this, one of the girls took an apple, a comb, and a mirror, and retired to the brightest corner of the room, where she began to comb out her long tresses with her left hand and held an apple in the right, which she slowly ate. Her future husband was expected to look over her shoulder, revealing his face to her in the mirror. He did not, however, satisfy our curiosity by putting in an appearance.

Then one took a handful of torn paper and scattered it on the surface of a big basin of water, and after stirring vigorously, awaited developments. The number of pieces of paper which fell to the bottom indicated the number of years which would intervene before the operator's marriage. In this case twenty-one fell, and as Jenny was now twenty-eight, Jack thought there was small chance for her to have an establishment of her own at forty-nine, so she had better resign herself to her fate, and be content to become the unappropriated blessing of the family, for, said he, "How could you, Jenny, at that advanced age, dare to don white satin and orange blossoms? No, my dear, your future is sealed."

Then everybody insisted on Jack trying his luck, which he essayed to do by melting a few scraps of lead in the ladle and pouring it red hot into one of the basins of cold water. The letters formed, or the nearest approach to letters, at the bottom of the basin were supposed to be the initials of the future "She." The closest resemblance to letters which we could discover was an I, and an L. The question which now arose amid merry peals of laughter was to whom the initials I.L. could belong. Many names were mentioned and negatived as soon as suggested, Jack looking rather bashful, when from Jenny came the query—"Does not I stand for Ida, and L for Lang? Ida Lang is a very pretty name, and is owned by a very sweet girl."

Jack gave Jenny a look which could easily be interpreted "I owe you one for that, Jenny"—"Oh! oh! Jack," replied Jenny, "we are hoping that Ida Lang will not be an unappropriated blessing. She shall have my white satin and all the orange blossoms." There was a good deal more of this sort of chaff, but no offence was taken by the good-natured Jack, and things swung along amicably.

Next came Tom to try his hap with a pair of scissors. Tom in silence separated the capital letters, each falling into the basin of water without being touched by the hand. When all were free they were stirred and left to settle. The initials of the future one, were supposed to float on the water. Alas! poor Tom! in his case fifteen letters presented themselves. Here again was food for fun and conjecture. Many suggestions were made. Tom, perhaps was going to be a Mormon, or perhaps he was going abroad and set up a harem, and all sorts of other absurd theories. Mary at last came to the rescue, "Oh, I know," said she, "take G and M out and there you have Gertrude Morley, then tack all the rest on to the end of the name, and there you have certain degrees won by Gertrude at the 'Varsity. Gertrude is a Newnham student. Last autumn in the long vacation there was a young woman of that strain dodging across the hills, and on one occasion when she saw our Tom cantering towards her, her bike became fractious instanter, and poor innocent Tom had to dismount, tie Highflyer to a gate-post and assist the distressed biker. Of course, Tom couldn't help himself and had to lead Highflyer up the hill and push the bike too." Alas poor Tom! Then turning to her mother she explained that Tom was about to present her with a new daughter in the form of a Newnham girl so vastly clever, that she used up all the alphabet to shew how clever she was and the heaps of degrees she took, &c., &c. "I say, Tom, do you think Gertrude Morley, B.A., M.D., M.G.L.Q.R., will like taking my place in the house work, and be able to cry chuggie, chuggie, chuggie, every

morning to the dear little piggy-wiggies; perhaps though, instead of giving them barley-meal and milk, she'll sit them all in a row, in the bottom of the trough, and teach 'em Latin and Greek don't-cher-know; eh, Tom dear?"

Heedless of this affectionate raillery, everything drifted along smoothly, and four dishes of water were brought in and placed severally in three corners of the room, and the fourth, emptied of its contents, was placed in the fourth corner. Then four blind-folded operators were led into the room and placed back to back in its centre, the lights having been previously extinguished. Then all four fell on their knees and each crept at discretion to any, or all to the same, corner.

The empty dish portended celibacy or poverty. The dish of clean water, that the future one would never before have married. The dish of dirty water, that the future spouse would be a widow or widower. The dish of water with pebbles at the bottom, riches and honour.

Now the crucial movement was at hand. Each girl took possession of a big handful of hempseed. The front door was thrown wide open and securely fastened back to prevent the possibility of its being accidentally closed; the girls stood without. As the clock gave the first stroke of twelve off they started each in a different direction across the lawn, shouting:

Hempseed I sow,

Hempseed I throw,

He that's my true-love,

Come after me and mow!

The spirits of the future ones were expected to be beyond the shrubs ready to rush after the sowers, and unhappy would have been the maiden, who could not get over the threshold before the scythe of the reaper caught her. All the girls reached the hall unharmed: little Mary, looking a bit scared, said, as she wound her arms around me: "Oh, wasn't I just about startled? indeed, I was, for I thought I saw Dick Harvey right in front of me as I turned to come back, holding a bright new sickle over his head." I felt the child tremble, and then I enquired, "Who is Dick Harvey?" "Oh, nobody in particular, don't tell." Of course I have not told till now.

After supper we retired for the night. The next morning the girls told me, that sometimes they placed tiny scraps of bridecake, wrapped in tissue paper, under their pillows at night, hoping they would dream of "him:" at other times made a "dumb cake," and gave me a recipe for making one, which I append.

Jenny told me too, that one evening when visiting friends at Paignton, one of the party saw for the first time the new moon: she called all the young folk out on the balcony requesting each to bring a small handmirror, to turn their back to the moon, and holding up the mirrors to catch the reflection of the moon. As many reflections as were cast on the glass, so many years would pass before the marriage of the holder took place. One charming girl of the party told me: "I had three moons. Fancy that, my dear, and you know how very old I am now, and have three years of weary waiting yet."

That delightful family is broken up. The parents are both dead, and the children are scattered to the ends of the earth. Not one is left in England. Each member has carried the old songs, the old dialect, and the old folk-lore of the old country, into new homes, in new countries, and there in time a new generation will spring up, who will be taught the traditions of the past; and perhaps the incidents of that happy All Hallowe'en, spent amidst the uplands of dear old Devon, will form one of the pleasantest narrations.

Poor Dick Harvey never came to claim little Mary, for, very soon after that happy evening, news came of a great storm, and Dick, who was first officer of the ss. *Petrel*, was lost with all hands in mid Atlantic.

Everywhere throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, the festive and fortune-telling practices of this evening are observed in almost identical fashion. Gray, in *The Spell*, tells us that—

Two hazel-nuts I threw into the fire,
 And to each nut I gave a sweetheart's name.
 This, with the loudest bounce, me sore amazed,
 That, in a flame of brightest colour blazed:
 As blazed the nut so may thy passion grow,
 For 'twas thy nut that did so brightly glow."

Then we have in *Nut burning on All Hallow eve*, by Charles Graydon, the following—

These glowing nuts are emblems true,
 Of what in human life we view;
 The ill-matched couple fret and fume,
 And thus in strife themselves consume;
 Or from each other wildly start,
 And with a noise for ever part.
 But see the happy, happy pair,
 Of genuine love and truth sincere
 With mutual fondness while they burn,
 Still to each other kindly turn;
 And as the vital sparks decay,
 Together gently sink away:
 Till life's fierce ordeal being past,
 Their mingled ashes rest at last.

Burns, too, contributes a long poem on "Halloween," which gives us an insight into the manners and traditions of the peasantry in the West of Scotland in his time.

The old goodwife's well hoarded nuts
 Are round and round divided:
 And many lads' and lasses' fates
 Are there that night decided:
 Some kindle, couthie, side by side
 And burn together trimly;
 Some start away with saucy pride
 And jump out o'er the chimney—

Full high that night.

RECIPE FOR MAKING A DUMB CAKE.

In the preparation of a dumb cake, if perfection be desired, it is imperative to observe strict silence, and to follow these instructions closely.

Let any number of unmarried ladies each take a handful of wheaten flour, and place it on a sheet of white paper, then sprinkle it with as much salt as can be held between the finger and thumb; then, one must put as much clear spring-water as will make it into dough, which being done, each of the party must roll it up, and spread it thin and broad, and each maid must, at some distance apart, make the first letters of their Christian and surname with a large new pin, towards the end of the cake; if more Christian-names than one, the first letter of each one must be made. Then set the cake before the fire, and each girl must sit down in a chair, & far from the fire as the room will admit, not speaking a word all the time. This must be done between eleven and twelve o'clock at night. Each person in rotation must turn the cake once, and five minutes after midnight the husband of her who is to be wed first will appear and lay his hand upon that part of the cake bearing her initials.—From the *Norwood Gipsy Fortune-teller*.

If the cake be eaten, strict silence must be observed from the moment a slice is cut. The person walks backwards from the room, up the stairs, and after undressing goes into bed, still *backwards*. Stumbling and giggling are inadmissible. It is presumed that happy dreams of "the loved one" will occupy the hours of slumber.

OMENS AND DEATH TOKENS.

Addison says, "We suffer as much from trifling accidents as from real evils. I have known the shooting of a star spoil a night's rest, and have seen a man in love grow pale and lose his appetite upon the plucking of a merrythought. A screech-owl at midnight has alarmed a family more than a band of robbers; nay, the voice of a cricket has struck more terror than the roaring of a lion. There is nothing so inconsiderable which may not appear dreadful to an imagination that is filled with omens and prognostications. A rusty nail or a crooked pin shoot up into prodigies."

Belief in omens is not confined to the simple and uneducated, but permeate every social grade.

Omens are said to be "the poetry of history." Mary de Medici saw, in a dream, the brilliants of her crown change into pearls — symbols of tears and mourning. The Stuart monarchs held that their sorrows and misfortunes were foretokened. The learned Earl of Roscommon and Dr. Johnson were believers in spectres and supernatural agencies.

The mountaineer makes the natural phenomena which daily present themselves to him foretokens of weal or woe. Dwellers in low-lying countries, too, find signs in their surroundings to distress and disturb their peace of mind. Each is continually inviting bugbears to harass and worry him.

There is a strong belief that the robin, raven, magpie, owl, and a nameless white bird, by the manner of their flight, and other peculiarities of action, foretell the approaching dissolution of some member of the household which they visit. A robin sitting near a window, uttering a plaintive weep,—weep,—weep,—presages sickness and death; if he flies into an occupied bedroom, then, death is near at hand.

A remarkable instance of credulity in robin-lore came to my notice in 1891. The following was told me by an educated lady, whose temperament is in no way morbid or hysterical; but

is in herself bright, cheerful, and religious. The sight of a robin carries her memory back to some of the saddest days of her life. Here is her story:—

“In 1848 I was staying with my grandparents at Ashburton, in Devonshire. My grandmother, having a severe cold, went early to bed, and the weather being oppressively hot, the window was left open. Presently a robin, dishevelled and melancholy, flew into the room and perched on the towel-rail. No amount of persuasion could dislodge him, and at last all efforts to eject him were abandoned. He continued his sad weep,—weep,—weep,—for at least an hour, when he quietly flew out of the window. That night grannie died. Again, in 1851, a robin, just as unhappy and forlorn as the former one, flew into my father’s bedroom, exhibiting every sign of dejection. Nor would he be easily driven off, but sought the tester of the bed, where he continued his weep,—weep,—weep. That night my father died.

“Again, in the autumn of 1884, while on a visit to Dawlish with my husband and children, we often took our books and work into the garden. One evening, as usual, we were in the summer-house, the children playing noisily, when a robin flew into their midst, and hopped on the table, finally perching himself on the handle of my work-basket. A more pitiable dejected little birdie could not be imagined, his feathers were ruffled and touselled, and both wings drooped to his feet. There he sat, uttering his dolorous weep,—weep,—weep,—for several minutes; when we rose to go into the house he followed, sometimes fluttering along before us in the path, at others flitting from bush to bush close at our side. Even after we had closed the window we heard him on the shrubs outside, still pathetically uttering his doleful weep,—weep,—weep. The next morning my dear husband, who had gone along the Strand for a stroll while I dressed the children for a walk, dropped suddenly dead, and was brought home within a quarter of an hour after leaving the house. Can you wonder at my having a dread of a visit from a robin, after these pitiful experiences?”

THE WHITE BIRD OF THE OXENHAMS.

There exists in the family of the Oxenhams a tradition that a bird with a white breast is always seen fluttering over their beds, previous to the death of a member of their family.

The Oxenhams were an ancient family of considerable influence and importance, occupying and possessing large and valuable properties in the vicinity of Okehampton. But the glory of the house has departed, though there are still branches of it at the present time residing at South Tawton, who still retain the tradition of the white bird. Very recently (1892) an Oxenham has said that the bird appeared to him, and very shortly afterwards his father died. It therefore appears that this bird of ill-omen is a legacy in perpetuity, bequeathed at an ill-starred moment to his descendants by some unfortunate ancestor. There are numerous records of the appearance of this bird prior to 1700, but the most interesting is that which describes its visit to Sir James Oxenham, on the eve of his daughter Margaret’s nuptials.

The full text of a poem giving details of the appearance of the apparition, is given in “The Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art,” for 1896, which was sent by Miss E. Gibbs, of South Tawton, who copied it from the housekeeper’s commonplace book at Oxenham House.

For those who may be unable to procure the whole of the poem, I select one or two stanzas which may be interesting.

Where lofty hills in grandeur meet,
And Taw meandering flows,
There is a calm and sweet retreat

Where once a mansion rose.

There dwelt Sir James of Oxenham,

A brave and liberal lord:

Benighted travellers never came

Unwelcome to his board.

Here it goes on to say that Margaret was sole heiress to his property; she was wooed by one Bertram, who from a blow on the head became an imbecile. Margaret's grief was great, but "consoling time healed the heart with anguish grieved," and "soft vermilion of her cheek again begins to flow."

Then John the Knight of Roxamcave

Sought her fair hand to gain:

And he was handsome, young, and brave—

How could he plead in vain?

He fondly pressed his Margaret

To fix their nuptial day,

And on its joyful eve they met

With friends and kinsfolk gay.

How happy was Sir James that night,

Unburdened of his care.

For he believed, with fond delight,

That heaven had heard his prayer.

Then up he rose, with joy elate,

To speak unto Sir John,

And rapt desire, outspeeding fate,

In thought he called him son.

But while the dear unpractised word

Was forming on his tongue,

He saw a silvery-breasted bird

Fly o'er the festive throng.

Now John, and Margaret, and her sire,

With many a dame and knight,

Ranged round the altar, heard the friar

Begin the holy rite.

When Margaret, with terrific screams,
 Made all with horror start.
 Oh, heavens! her blood in torrents streamed,
 A dagger's in her heart.
 Behind stood Bertram, who then drew
 Away the reeking blade;
 And frantically laughed to view
 The life-blood of his maid.
 "Now marry me, proud maid!" he cried,
 "Thy blood with mine shall wed."
 Then dashed the dagger in his side,
 And on the ground fell dead.
 Poor Margaret, too, grows cold with death,
 And round her, hovering, flies
 The phantom bird for her last breath,
 To bear it to the skies.

TRADITIONS OF THE COURTENAYS OF POWDERHAM.

The countess Isabella is accredited with having planted the oaks of Wistman's Wood on Dartmoor. She, too, it was, who met a man on Bickleigh Hill, near Tiverton, carrying a basket containing seven of his baby children, to whom he intended to give "a swim in the river Exe at Bickleigh Bridge." On being asked by her what he was carrying, he replied, "Puppies not worth rearing." Presently he confessed that his wife had given him seven sons at a birth, and fearing the lack of food and raiment, he had determined to drown them. The countess adopted them, and provided for their upbringing out of the proceeds of her estates at Tiverton and Chumleigh.

THE DEATH-WATCH.

One often hears issuing from the rafters and woodwork of old houses sounds resembling the ticking of a watch. These clickings are produced by a small insect known as the "Death-Watch."

By nervous persons they are considered omens of death.

Mrs. Hagland, a laundress, living at Tiverton, came to me one morning in great distress of mind, and her simple story will give a better insight into the feelings of the superstitious than any thing I can say. I give verbatim her account of a very unhappy experience—

"I be zure zom'thing is gwaine tu 'appen til me, or mine, for all last night I kep' on hearing of the Death-Watch, aticking, ticking, ticking, ess, he kep' on ticking till he drawved me most mazed. He made me think of my poar bwoy Bill whot's out to zay, 'e tha' bin gone now for til or dree yer; I du zim 'tez a brave while ago I zeed 'n, but there God Almighty 'th tuked kear aw'n zo var and I 'opes as how He will 'et. I a'n't ahad ide-nor-tide aw'n zince he went away and I du zim tez a longful time agone that I zeed'n. Well, as I wuz azaying of, I yeard that Death-Watch aclicking all dru the night and du trubble me dreffel bad. Gi'th me the heart ache and I can't get no rest for thinkind aw'n; 'tez all day and ivvry day and all night tu. A

mawther's heart is a sorrowful thing tu car about, when her only cheel is zo var away, and out tu zay tu. I've a yerd the DeathWatch avore, and then my mawther died perty quick afterwards, but he diddent tickee zo 'ard and zo dismal-like as he did last night. It zimdd to me, as how he zed, 'tick! tick! tick! tick! wake up, Mawther! I be drowned! I be drowned!' Ah! Lord-a-massy! if he be a drowned 'twill break my heart. What duee think mum?"

Poor soul, she went away, crying bitterly. Bill never came back, and now she has gone to her rest, where there will be no more wakeful nights, or dread born of the love-calls of a common insect.

Swift ridiculed the foolish fancy of predicting death in this way, but ridicule, be it never so strong, does not kill belief in the supernatural.

A wood-worm

That lies in old wood, like a hare in her form,
 With teeth or with claws it will bite, or will scratch;
 And chambermaids christen this worm a death-watch
 Because like a watch it always cries click;
 Then woe be to those in the house that be sick,
 For, sure as a gun, they will give up the ghost.
 If the maggot cries click when it scratches the post
 But a kettle of scalding hot water ejected,
 Infallibly cures the timber affected.
 The omen is broken, the danger is over;
 The maggot will die, the sick will recover.

DEATH TOKENS.

If a corpse retains heat and flexibility it is said that others of the same family will die before the year is out.

If a sheet or tablecloth is returned from the laundry with a square fold in the centre, so, it is said to portend the death of the master or mistress of the house.

If letters cross in the post it is a sign of death.

SUPERSTITIONS ATTACHED TO THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

There are many superstitious customs attached to the marriage ceremony, some of which are supposed to endow the pair with blessings and an abundant share of the good things of life, while others bring only misfortune and disquietude.

Witches and pixies alas, are workers of evil, and beset the path of the bride and bridegroom to and from the church, plying their wicked tricks to the detriment of the unhappy pair. The days of the week, too, on which the ceremony is performed, influence their future, as the following lines testify:

Monday for wealth,
 Tuesday for health,
 Wednesday is the best day of all,

Thursday for crosses,

Friday for losses,

Saturday no luck at all.

Sunday is an exceptionally fortunate day upon which to enter the holy state.

One often hears:

“Happy is the bride that the sun shines upon.”

Among the customs bringing good luck to the pair, are pelting them with rice as they leave the church after the ceremony, and throwing old slippers at them, too, as they leave the house for the honeymoon.

Happiness can be insured by observing certain practices which have been in vogue for many centuries, as for example: it is necessary to carry sprigs of rue and rosemary and a few cloves of garlic in the pocket, to enhance the felicity of the pair. The bride also should carry a small packet of bread and cheese in her pocket to give to the first woman or girl she meets after leaving the church.

Dire calamities will overtake the couple if either of these cherished practices are omitted, though the perfume of garlic and rue added to the wedding bouquets seems incongruous.

Now follow the unfortunate omens and events attached to this momentous occasion. Should a raven hover over their path, a cat, dog, or hare pass between them, or should they encounter a toad, frog, or other reptile, then terrible misfortunes will follow them for all time. These creatures are supposed to be the embodiment of pixies, witches, and every species of evil spirit. Even his satanic majesty does not object to assume the form of an animal, to enable him to work certain ill on their future lives, and to assist in contributing his share to their distress.

In Devon, when a wife is of stronger will than her husband, the people say, “Aw ess, the grey mare in thickee ’ouze is the better ’oss,” and ascribe her masterfulness to her having visited and drank of the water of the well of St. Keyne, in Cornwall.

DIVINATION BY THE BIBLE.

A person wishing to know whether success or failure is to attend his future, should open the Bible at the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, begin with the third verse and end with the twenty-seventh: the verse he first chooses will be typical of his future fate, character, and success in life.

Another method practised by country folk on almost every occasion, is to open the Bible at random, and the words which first present themselves decides the future lot of the enquirer.

In Devonshire, many persons when they have lost anything, and suspect it to have been stolen, take the front door key of their dwelling, and, in order to find out the thief, tie this key to the Bible, placing it very carefully on the eighteenth verse of the fiftieth Psalm. (“When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.”) Two persons must then hold the book by the bow of the key, and first repeat the name of the suspected thief, and then the verse from the Psalm. If the Bible moves, the suspected person is considered guilty; if it does not move, innocent.

CLOVER AND ASH-LEAF SUPERSTITION.

An even leaved ash and a four leaved clover

Are certain to bring to me my true love

Before the day is over.

An even leaved ash and a four leaved clover are beneficent attractors of the opposite sex, for if one finds an even leaved ash and holds it flat between both hands, and repeats softly,

“With this even leaved ash between my hands

The first I meet will be my dear man.”

then placing it in the palm of the gloved right hand, say,

“This placed in my glove

Will bring my own true love.”

then remove it to the bosom and whisper,

“This even leaved ash in my bosom

Will give me, in the first man I meet

My true husband.”

ABOUT SALT

Salt, in country districts, is held as a sacred article, and the vessel used to contain it is considered hallowed and looked upon as a valuable possession. Dire calamities follow on spilling salt, and a charm is used to counteract the dread consequences. An old nurse once told me that if a plate of salt be placed on the breast of a corpse, it would help the dead to rest peacefully, as it kept evil spirits from tormenting the soul on its journey through the dark valley.

An old Devonshire friend has sent me the following lines, which he is in the habit of repeating when small matters go wrong in his household. I believe they were written by the poet Gay, from whom he must have learnt them when a child.

Alas, you know the cause too well!

The salt is spilt: to me it fell;

Then, to contribute to my loss,

My knife and fork were laid across:

On Friday, too, the day I dread.

Would I were safe at home in bed!

Last night (I vow to heaven 'tis true)

Bounce from the fire a coffin flew.

Next post some fatal news shall tell

God send my absent friends are well!

ONEIROMANCY.

Oneiromancy is the art of interpreting dreams. This kind of divination is still in use among the masses, and has been practised from the most remote ages. In rural districts there are to be found ancient dames whose interpretations of dreams are looked upon with reverence, and are a source of revenue to the old women.

At breakfast, it is not uncommon for members of a family to narrate their dreams, and seek the elucidation thereof.

“A dream is an ill-arranged action of the thinking faculties during a state of partial sleep, and is but a momentary impression, perfectly natural in its operation; the state of mind which causes it being produced by temporary functional derangement.”

If I dream of water pure,
Before the coming morn,
'Tis a sign I shall be poor,
And unto wealth not born.

If I dream of tasting beer,
Middling then will be my cheer—
Chequered with the good and bad,
Sometimes joyful, sometimes sad;
But should I dream of drinking wine,
Wealth and pleasure will be mine.

The stronger the drink, the better the cheer,
Dreams of my destiny appear.

The belief that dreams are indicative or symbolical of coming events is very common among the masses. Some persons look upon dreams as absolutely true mediums of revealing the secrets of futurity.

The following few examples shew “the stuff which dreams are made of.”

Ass. To dream one sees an ass labouring under a heavy burden, indicates that one will by diligent application to business amass a fortune.

Absent ones. To dream of these ill, or in trouble, shows they are in danger; if well, it is a sign they are prosperous.

Angels. A happy dream, showing peace at home, and a good understanding with your friends.

Baby. If you dream of holding a baby in your arms it signifies trouble.

Bells. If you hear them ring it is a good sign, foretelling luck in business and speedy marriage.

Bees. That you see a swarm of bees signifies you will be wise and highly respected. If they disturb or sting you, you will lose friends, and your sweetheart will abandon you.

Carriage. If you dream that you are shut up in a carriage and cannot get out, it shows that your false friends are scandalizing you; and you will suffer much at their hands.

Cats. Dreaming of cats shews that your female friend are treacherous.

Cards. If you dream you are playing cards it signifies that you will shortly be married.

Dancing. This is fortunate. You will gain riches, honour, and many friends. Your life will be long, happy, and prosperous.

The Dead. To dream of the dead brings news of the living.

Ducks. To see them in a pond swimming about is an omen of good luck.

Eggs. That you are eating eggs shews you will be delivered from great tribulation. That you break them when raw, shews loss of friends and fortune.

Empty Vessels shew that your life will be one of toil and privation.

Eating. Portends sickness and death.

Fish. To dream of fish shows that you will have an abundance of wealth and good things. Also that you will be successful in love.

Fire. To dream of fire shews that you will have hasty news.

Flowers. Always a good dream; is a sure sign of joy, success and prosperity.

Garden. To dream of being in a beautiful garden shews you will be rich and prosperous in love.

Glass. Broken glass foretells quarrels and family strife.

Gold; To dream of gold portends riches.

Hares. To dream of these implies great trouble in pecuniary matters and sickness.

Horses. Shews that your life will be long and happy. If kicked by a horse you will have a long and severe illness, and heavy misfortune.

Ivy. A sign that your friendships are true.

Inn. To dream that you are staying at an inn is a most favourable one. It shews that you will inherit a large fortune, be successful in all your undertakings, and will enjoy much happiness.

Jackdaw. Beware of danger and evil disposed persons.

Journey. If you are about to take one in your dream, you will meet with reverse of fortune.

Knives are always omens of some evil about to happen.

Kiss. To dream that some one is kissing you, is a sure sign that you are being deceived. To dream that you are kissing some one whom you love is a sign that your love is not reciprocated.

Larks. To dream of these birds is a good sign, as it denotes that you will overcome all difficulties that may come in your way, and you will speedily rise to a good position.

Lightning without thunder is one of the very luckiest dreams. To lovers it means happiness; to farmers, good crops; and to sailors, prosperous voyages.

Mad Dogs. In dreams these are omens of success. Magpies. That you will soon be married.

Nightingales. Nightingales singing are indicative of bright days coming and a release from all troubles and anxieties.

Nuts. Indicate the receipt of money.

Oats. Are lucky omens of success.

Onions. If you dream you are eating them you will find much money.

Pall. One over a coffin is prophetic of a wedding dress.

Parcel. If you carry one you should receive a foreign letter.

Quarrels. If you dream of them it is a sign that you will soon be very profitably engaged in a business matter.

Rain. Is an omen of misfortune.

Rats. Prophecy enemies near at hand.

Teeth. To dream of, are the most unlucky of all things. If they fall out it signifies much sickness, if they all drop from the gums, death.

Ships. Sailing in clear water are favourable omens, but if the water be murky, most unfavourable.

Silver Coins. Picking them up, unless there be gold with them, is significant of impecuniosity.

Ugliness. If you see yourself reflected as very ugly it is an omen of success.

Umbrellas. If you lose them it signifies losses in business.

Valentine. Dreaming of receiving one is a bad sign, illness and trouble will soon be upon you.

Violin. If you are playing on one in your dream, it denotes speedy marriage; unless a string breaks, then you will not marry at all.

Water. Dreaming of water, if it be clear will bring good news, if dirty, bad news is at hand.

Wedding. One dreamed of signifies a funeral.

Yachting in clear water on a sunny day is prophetic of very great happiness.

Yew-trees. You will hear of the death of an aged person in whom you have a vested interest.

In Mackay's *Popular Delusions*, 1869, occurs the following passage, which seems too good to omit.

“Dreams, say all the wiseacres, are to be interpreted by contraries. Thus, if you dream of filth, you will acquire something valuable; if of gold and silver, you run the risk of being without either; if of many friends, you will be persecuted by many enemies. The rule does not, however, hold good in all cases. It is fortunate to dream of little pigs, but unfortunate to dream of big bullocks. If you dream of fire you will have hasty news from a far country; if of vermin, you will have sickness in your family; if of serpents, your friends will become your bitterest enemies; if you are wallowing up to your neck in mud and mire, you will be most fortunate in all your undertakings. Clear water is a sign of grief; and great troubles, distress, and perplexity are predicted if you dream you are standing naked in the public streets and know not where to turn for a garment to shield you from the gaze of the multitude.”

To dream of walking in a field,

Where new-born roses odours yield;

If any of them you do pluck,

It shews in love much happy luck.

To dream of mountains, hills, or rocks,

Does signify flouts, scoffs, and mocks;

Their pains in passing ever shew

That she whom you love, loves not you.

Dreams of joy and pleasant jests,

Dancing, merriment, and feasts,

Or any dream of recreation
 Signifies love's declaration.
 Dreams full of horror and confusion
 Ending merrily in conclusion,
 Shews storms of love are overblown,
 And after sorrow joy shall come.

From Forty's *Norwood Gipsy's Fortune-teller*.

ST. MARK'S EVE

Repair to the nearest churchyard as the clock strikes twelve, and take from a grave on the south side of the church three tufts of grass, and on going to bed place them under your pillow, repeating earnestly three several times,

The eve of St. Mark by prediction is blest, Set therefore my hopes and my fears all to rest:
 Let me know my fate, whether weal or woe; Whether my rank's to be high or low;

Whether to live single or to be a bride, And the destiny my star doth provide.

Should you have no dream that night, you will be single and miserable all your life. If you dream of thunder and lightning, your life will be one of great difficulty and sorrow.

ST. JOHN'S EVE

Make a new pincushion of the very best black silk velvet (none other will do), and on one side stick your name in the very smallest pins you can buy; on the other side make a cross with some large pins, and surround it with a circle. Put this into your left-foot stocking when you take it off at night, and hang it up at the foot of the bed. All your future life will pass before you in a dream.—Mackay's *Popular Delusions*.

THE LEGEND OF ST. DECUMAN

Happy Decuman was born of a good family in the western part of Wales, of parents strict observers of the Christian religion. He, after he had passed his childhood at home, as he advanced in years, was of a very good disposition; and at length crossed the Severn unknown to all his acquaintance, especially to his relations, and to those who seemed to be more nearly concerned for his welfare; trusting in Christ alone for his protection. But not to mention anything more, he paid no freight and had no ship. This good man relying upon the mercy of God, not doubting but that He would protect him, bound shrubs together, which he found growing by the sea-side, and making use of such a vehicle committed himself to the ocean. Being by divine providence directed, he was carried to the opposite shore, near Dart's Castle.

There was in that part of the country in which he landed, a desert place (presumably Exmoor) beset with shrubs and briars, which were very long and large, and by the hollowness of the *vathes* was wonderfully separated. This place pleased him much: changing his native country for a sort of exile, the luxury of a palace for the dens of a desert. There he began to dwell and to live upon roots and herbs, leading the life of a hermit, and by such government in the above-mentioned desert, he lived many years.

It is said also that he had a cow, by the milk of which he was more kept alive than nourished, especially upon certain festival days. When the fore¹ happy Decuman had flourished in virtues of every kind, a certain man, but he, a man of Belial, enjoying the holiness of so great

¹ This word fore, in the very old original MS., evidently means aforesaid.

a Father, drunk with passion, rushed on, and in a brutish manner met him: and as he spoke and prayed, he sent the Saint to Heaven by cutting off his head.

But this also is not to be passed by in silence, for when he was beheaded with a certain sort of crooked hook, as 'tis reported, his body rose itself up and begun with its dangling arms to carry his head from the place where it was cut off even to a very clear well of water, in which he washed his head with his own hands as he was used to do; which well, even to this day, in memory and reverence of the Saint, is called the pleasant well of St. Decuman, useful and well for the inhabitants to drink. In which place his head together with his body being afterwards sought Father Cressy, in his *Church History*, lxxi, places his martyrdom in the reign of King Ina, a.d. 706, from the authority of Capgrave and the *English Martyrology*.

THE MISTLETOE CURSE

Mistletoe, a parasite chiefly found on oak and apple trees, was held in great esteem by the Druids, who affirmed that miraculous cures were effected by its means. They ascribed to it a divine origin, and bestowed upon it the name "Curer-of-all-ills."

The trees on which it grew, and the birds visiting their branches, were considered sacred, and were thought to be the messengers of the gods. When mistletoe was required in the performance of their sacred offices, great ceremony was observed in separating it from the limbs on which it grew; the priests using a golden sickle for the purpose.

Devonians believe that their county was cursed by these ancient religious fathers, and the mistletoe forbidden by them to grow in it. Why this curse was laid on Devon there is no record to show. A gentleman possessed an orchard, one half of which is in Devon, and the other in Somersetshire, the division of the counties being marked by a deep ditch. On the Devon side the apple-trees are free, while on the Somerset side this parasite grows in abundance. He has tried in vain to cultivate it on trees in the banned county.

LEGEND OF THE GLASTONBURY THORN

When Joseph of Arimathea came to England he visited Glastonbury, so the legend says, and being wearied with the long climb up the hill, halted and leaned on his stout black-thorn staff. The stick sank into the soft mud on the wayside, took root, grew, and bloomed on Old Christmas Eve. There it stands to this day and always repeats the operation each successive year. There is also a sacred spring at its roots, in which thousands of persons came to bathe on Old Christmas Eve, a.d. 1751.

This marvellous thorn has a rival in the grounds of Clooneaven House, at Lynmouth, N. Devon, where the little bush bursts into vigorous bloom for a few hours at Christmastide. Very soon its flowers fade and the plant assumes its normal condition until the following spring, when it puts on its pretty green dress like the rest of its species.

THE COW GHOST

At a hamlet near the parish of South Tawton, a small town on the borders of Dartmoor, there is an interesting story told of a ghost which assumes the form of a remarkably handsome Guernsey Cow, and appears at midnight promenading to and fro under the spreading branches of an avenue of elm trees. It is said that a lady having done some terrible deed of darkness was transformed into a cow and condemned to walk nightly in this avenue for seventy times seventy years, bellowing frantically in token of the agonies experienced by this unhappy creature during her long term of punishment.

THE CHAGFORD PIXIES

As a gentleman, late at night, was driving across the moor to Chagford, a village in mid-Devon, he was startled by the merry tinkle of tiny bells. Lights appeared in the meadows close at hand as of thousands of glow-worms shedding their luminous rays on every leaflet, while an innumerable company of small people tripped joyously to the sportive music. Every movement of this assemblage of fairies was distinctly seen by him. He reined in his horse, and watched for a considerable time their merry antics. He sat motionless, the better to catch the spirit of the sportive scene. The sward was crowded with myriads of sprites, some waving garlands of tiny wild flowers, roses and blue bells, others joining in the dance, while not a few bestrode the slender stalks of tall grasses, which scarcely bent beneath their feathery weight. All went merrily till the shrill crow of chanticleer rang out on the midnight air, when suddenly darkness fell and the gorgeous scene with its fantastically attired crowd vanished from the wayfarer's sight.

The villagers assert that on peaceful nights they often hear the echoes of delightful music and the tripping patter of tiny feet issuing from the meadows and hill sides.

By wells and rills, in meadows green
 We nightly dance our heyday guise,
 And to our fairy king and queen
 We chant our moonlight minstrelsies,
 When larks 'gin sing,
 Away we fling,
 And babes new-born steal as we go;
 And elf in bed,
 We leave instead,
 And wend us laughing, ho! ho! ho!

THE GHOST OF THE BLACK-DOG

A man having to walk from Princetown to Plymouth took the road which crosses Roborough Down. He started at four o'clock from the Duchy Hotel, and as he walked at a good swinging pace, hoped to cover the sixteen miles in about three hours and a half. It was a lovely evening in December, cold and frosty, the stars and a bright moon giving enough light to enable him to see the roadway distinctly zigzagged across the moor. Not a friendly pony or a quiet Neddy crossed his path as he strode merrily onward whistling as he went. After a while the desolation of the scene seemed to strike him, and he felt terribly alone among the boulders and huge masses of gorse which hemmed him in. On, on he pressed, till he came to a village where a wayside inn tempted him to rest awhile and have just one nip of something "short" to keep his spirits up.

Passing the reservoir beds, he came out on an open piece of road, with a pine copse on his right. Just then he fancied he heard the pit-pat of feet gaining upon him. Thinking it was a pedestrian bound for Plymouth, he turned to accost his fellow traveller, but there was no one visible, nor were any footfalls then audible. Immediately on resuming his walk, pit-pat, pit-pat, fell the echoes of feet again. And suddenly there appeared close to his right side an enormous dog, neither mastiff or bloodhound, but what seemed to him to be a Newfoundland of immense size. Dogs were always fond of him, and he of them, so he took no heed of this (to him) lovely canine specimen. Presently he spoke to him. "Well, doggie, what a beauty you are: how far are you going?" at the same time lifting his hand to pat him. Great was the

man's astonishment to find no resisting substance, though the form was certainly there, for his hand passed right through the seeming body of the animal. "Hulloh! what's this?" said the bewildered traveller. As he spoke the great glassy eyes gazed at him; then the beast yawned, and from his throat issued a stream of sulphurous breath. Well, thought the man, I am in for it now! I'll trudge on as fast as legs can carry me, without letting this queer customer think I am afraid of him. With heart beating madly and feet actually flying over the stony way, he hurried down the hill, the dog never for a moment leaving him, or slackening his speed. They soon reached a crossway, not far from the fortifications. When, suddenly the man was startled by a loud report, followed by a blinding flash, as of lightning, which struck him senseless to the ground. At daybreak, he was found by the driver of the mail-cart, lying in the ditch at the roadside in an unconscious state. Tradition says, that a foul murder was many years ago committed at this spot, and the victim's dog is doomed to traverse this road and kill every man he encounters, until the perpetrator of the deed has perished by his instrumentality.

There are similar legends of the doings of the Black Dog throughout the county, and many wayside public houses have "The Black Dog" for a sign.

SUPERSTITIONS ATTACHED TO CHURCH BELLS

In ancient times church bells were anointed with holy oil, exorcised, and blessed by the bishop, from a belief that when these ceremonies had been performed, they had the power to drive the devil out of the air, to calm tempests, protect from lightning, and keep away the plague.

The passing bell was anciently rung to bespeak the prayers of all Christian people for a soul just departing, and to drive away the evil spirit who stood at the bed's foot to hinder its passage to the other world.

Men's death I tell by doleful knell,

Lightning and thunder I break asunder,

The winds so fierce I do disperse,

Men's cruel rage I do assuage.

A very frequent inscription on church bells in the fifteenth century, was *voce mea viva depells cuncta nociva*.

This is a proof of the belief that demons were frightened away by the sound of bells. In a Cornish belfry the following rhyme is found suspended a-against the wall.

Therefore I'd have you not to vapour,

Nor blame the lads that use the clapper,

By which are scared the fiends of hell,

And all by virtue of a bell.

One often finds a list of rules displayed on the wall of the belfry. The following are quaintly interesting.

Whoever in this place shall swear

Sixpence he shall pay therefor.

He that rings here in his hat

Threepence he shall pay for that.

Who overturns a bell, be sure
Threepence he shall pay therefor.

Who leaves his rope under feet
Threepence he shall pay for it.

A good ringer and a true heart
Will not refuse to stand a quart.

Who will not to these rules agree
Shall not belong to this belfrie.

Drewsteignton, Devon. John Hole, Ch: Warden.

The following are the rules, orders and regulations found in the belfry at Brushford,
Somerset.

Let awful silence first proclaimed be!

Next let us praise the Holy Trinity.

Then homage pay unto our valiant King,
And with a blessing raise the pleasant ring.

Hark! now the chirping treble rings it clear,
And covering Tom comes rolling in the rear.

Now up and set, let us consult and see
What laws are best to keep sobriety.

Then all consent to make this joint decree—

Let him who swears, or in an angry mood
Quarrels or strikes (although he draws no blood),

Or wears his hat, or spurs, or turns a bell,

Or by unskilful handling mars a peal,

Pay down sixpence for each crime!

(This caution shall not be effaced with time).

But if the Sexton's these defaults should be,

From him demand a double penalty.

Whoever does his Parson disrespect,

Or Warden's order wilfully neglect

By one and all be held in foul disgrace

And ever banished this harmonious place.

Now round let's go with pleasure to the ear

And pierce with pleasing sounds the yielding air,

And when the bells are up, then let us sing

God save the Church, and bless Great George the King.

A.D. 1803. June 7th. Robert Gooding, Churchwarden.

The spelling in the original of the following notice is a little "mixed."

I.H.S.

This is the belfry that is free
 For all those who civil be,
 And if you wish to chime or ring
 There is no music played or sung
 Like unto bells when they're well rung.
 Then ring your bells well if you can,
 Silence is best for every man,
 But if you ring in spur or hat,
 Sixpence you pay be sure of that
 And if a bell you overthrow
 Pray pay a groat before you go.

1756, All Saints, Hastings.

THE SEVENTH SON.

Many persons believe that a seventh son can cure diseases, but that a seventh son of a seventh son, and no female child born between, can cure the King's Evil.

SUNDAY.

In the West of England, Sunday is reckoned to be the day for leaving off any article of clothing, as then those who so divest themselves will have the prayers of every congregation in their behalf, and are sure not to catch cold.

It has also been remarked that rooks never attempt to build their nests on Sunday, even though there are but a few twigs necessary to complete them.

Some persons object to cut their nails, or turn a feather bed on Sunday.

II. Things Lucky and Unlucky

For every ill beneath the sun

There is some remedy, or none.

Should there be one, resolve to find it,

If not, submit; and never mind it.

It is difficult to define accurately the word ‘unlucky’ as understood by people in general. It conveys to their minds an indistinct supernatural and distressful affliction, of an awful character, and for a long time a troubled restlessness and fear of approaching evil embitters every moment of their lives, until the haunting dread wears itself out.

It however leaves behind a highly-strung nervous feeling which springs into activity at the smallest provocation.

The following examples of people’s belief in Devonshire, concerning luck, will perhaps be of interest.

IT IS LUCKY

To stumble on ascending stairs, steps or ladders: it indicates speedy marriage.

To find a cast horse-shoe.

To see the new moon over the right shoulder *if* one is out of doors.

To see a pin and pick it up will bring the very best of luck.

It is lucky:

To break a piece of pottery on Good Friday, because the points of every sherd are supposed to pierce the body of Judas Iscariot.

To wean a child on Good Friday.

To carry crooked coins in the pocket.

To receive the right hand of the bishop on one’s head at confirmation.

To sow all kinds of garden seeds on Good Friday. Beans and peas sown on this day yield better crops.

To plant all kinds of ornamental shrubs on Good Friday.

To see a company of fairies dancing in the adit of a mine, as it indicates the presence of valuable lodes.

To pay money on the first of January, as it insures the blessing of ready cash for all payments throughout the year.

To spit over the right shoulder when one meets a grey horse.

To meet a flock of sheep on the highway when on a journey.

To throw a pinch of salt into the mash when brewing, to keep the witches out.

To rest bars of iron on vessels containing beer in summer. They prevent “souring of the liquor” in thundery weather.

To have crickets in the house.

It is lucky:

To see a star on the wick of a candle.

“There’s a star in the candle to-night,

One bright little spot shining clear,

To make our heavy hearts light,

By shewing that a letter is near.”

To carry a badger’s tooth in the waistcoat pocket: it brings luck at cards.

To have white specks on one’s finger nails shews that happiness is in store.

These specks are sometimes called “gifts.”

“A gift on the thumb is sure to come,

A gift on the finger is sure to linger.”

Or they may be thus enumerated:

“A gift, a friend, a foe,

A lover to come, a journey to go.”

To be born on a Sunday; because you can see spirits, and tame the dragon who watches over hidden treasure.

To bite a baby’s nails before it is a year old instead of cutting them, as it ensures its honesty through life.

To put the left stocking on first.

To put the right foot first, because it ensures success.

To fell trees at the wane of the moon, and when the wind is in the North.

It is lucky:

To be the seventh son of a seventh son, for he can, by passing his hand over the glands of the neck of a person suffering from King’s Evil, cure the disease.

On first hearing the cuckoo in spring one should run in a circle three times with the sun, to ensure good luck for the rest of the year.

If one hears the cuckoo to the right it portends good fortune, but to hear his voice on the left is a sure sign of impending misfortune.

On hearing the cuckoo’s note in April run as fast as possible to the nearest gate, and sit on the top bar to drive away the spirit of laziness. Who neglects to do this will be weak for a year, and have no inclination to work until the ensuing spring when the harbinger of spring again returns.

To possess a rope by which a person has been hanged ensures good luck.

On opening a new business, or entering upon any new commercial enterprise, the first money taken should be turned over from hand to hand and spat upon, to insure good luck in all future dealing.

IT IS UNLUCKY

To have an empty pocket (even a crooked coin keeps the devil away).

To buy a broom in May

For it sweeps all luck away.

To pass under a lean-to ladder without first crossing the middle fingers over the front ones.

“This superstition,” says the *Weekly Western News*, Plymouth, “originates from an old coarse joke formerly frequent among the lower class. It took its rise from the fact that at the gallows at Tyburn the culprit had to walk up a ladder, there being no platform. The ladder was afterwards withdrawn and he was left suspended.”

To break a salt-cellar.

To spill salt at table without throwing a pinch over the left shoulder.

To help one another to salt.

To kill a robin.

To tread on a cat’s tail.

To kill crickets.

To omit to inform the bees of the death of a relative, by tapping at each hive with the key of the front door. It is necessary too, to say to each hive as one taps “Maister is dead,” or “Missus is dead,” as the case may be.

To forget to put the bees in mourning, by placing a scrap of black crape or cloth on the top of each hive.

To neglect to communicate any great social or political event to the bees.

(The bees resent the omission of these ceremonies, and in consequence cease work, dwindle and die).

To give a friend a knife; as it cuts all love away.

To sneeze before breakfast.

To turn a feather-bed on Sunday.

To cut one’s nails on Sunday.

To speak while the clock is striking.

To put a pair of boots on a table.

To put bellows on a table.

To stir the leaves in the teapot before pouring out the tea.

To have a kitten and a baby in a house together. The kitten should be sent away in order to secure good health to the baby.

To cross knives.

To kill a swallow.

To pass another person on a staircase.

To break a looking-glass, for it brings seven years of trouble, or the loss of one’s best friend.

To kill a small red spider, because this insect is supposed to bring money in its track, hence it is often called the “money-spider.”

To begin new undertakings on a Friday.

To wash clothes on Good Friday. This must be studiously avoided to prevent any member of the family dying before the year is out.

To return, or to look back when leaving the house to start on a journey, or even when going for a short walk. If compelled to return one should sit down and rest for a few minutes before making a fresh start.

To eat any kind of fish from the head downwards, as it is against the grain.

To whistle while underground, because it will awaken the evil spirits which inhabit the caves of the earth.

To be born with a blue vein across the nose.

To decorate a house with peacock's feathers.

For a miner to meet a snail when entering a mine, as it betokens calamity, or probably the exhaustion of the lode on which he is then at work.

To see one magpie in a field, or flying across the road. Four magpies seen at one time presage death.

To reveal a child's Christian name before it is presented at the font for baptism.

To receive the left hand of the bishop on the head, at confirmation. It conveys a ban instead of a blessing.

To burn bones, as it will bring pains and aches to the person who does so.

To put an umbrella on a table.

For a cock to crow at midnight, or a dog to howl between sun-set and sun-rise.

To change houses, or enter into service, on Friday.

To see a new moon through a glass window, or door, or over the left shoulder.

The advent of a comet is supposed to forebode disaster and national calamity.

An eclipse of the sun shews God's displeasure.

An eclipse of the moon, that the Devil was abroad working mischief.

To see a pin and let it lie, you'll need that and hundreds more before you die.

For a child to refrain from crying when presented at the font for baptism. It is thought the more it yells and screams, the quicker the evil spirits will quit it.

For an unmarried person to be sponsor at a baptism: for "First to the font, never to the altar."

To see a coffin-ring in a candle: it shews that some member of the household, or a very near relation, will very shortly die.

For a bird to flutter against the window-panes.

For a robin to fly into a room and utter its weep! weep! weep!

For a bride to take a last peep at the mirror before starting for church.

To look back after starting on a journey. (Remember Lot's wife.)

To cut a baby's nails or hair before the child is a year old.

To look into a mirror at dusk, or night-time, unless the room is well lighted is not pleasant: for there is a dread of something uncanny peeping over the shoulder; such an apparition would portend death.

To bring into a poultry-farmer's house a small bunch of primroses when these flowers first come into bloom in the early spring. The number of chicken reared that season, are supposed to agree with the number of primroses brought in. (I once saw a little girl severely punished for this offence in South Devon.)

To hear the melancholy ticking of the "Deathwatch," in woodwork, is an omen of death.

"Because like a watch it always cries click,

Then woe be to those in the house that be sick." To see a raven hovering over a house is ominous of evil.

To take eggs from robins' or wrens' nests. Should this be done, cows feeding in the neighbourhood will yield discoloured milk, for

Robin Redbreast and Jenny Wren

Are God Almighty's cock and hen.

To transplant parsley.

To sit down at table as one of thirteen.

To put the left foot first in starting to walk, as it indicates too much caution and brings disappointment.

For rooks to desert their rookery without any apparent reason. This forebodes ill-luck to the owners of the property. The heir will be kidnapped, or lost, and until the rooks return to their quarters, will not be brought back.

If thou be hurt with the horn of hart,

It brings thee to thy bier,

But tusk of boar will leeches heal,

Thereof have lesser fear.

Who kills a spider, Bad luck betides her.

To lose a mop or a broom at sea. Children bring good luck to a ship.

To whistle on board ship, as it raises storms, and enrages the devil, who in retaliation brews tempestuous weather and causes shipwrecks.

Save a sailor from the sea,

And he'll become your enemy.

It is said if one's nose itches, that one will be kissed, cursed, vexed, or shake hands with a fool. To elude the three former ills one generally invites the nearest person at hand to give a friendly grip. This appears to be rather rough on the friend.

Fishermen are exceptionally superstitious and believe that ill-luck attends certain practices: for instance, they would never think of turning a craft against the sun, or of mentioning rabbits, hares, or pigs, while aboard, nor will they lend anything from one boat to another.

It is unlucky:

If the first herring brought aboard for the season is found to be a “ melt,” then a disastrous time in the fishing world is to be expected. If on the other hand the first brought in is a roe,” then hundreds of mease (600) will be caught and full purses the result.

Fishermen consider it most unlucky to throw a cat overboard, or to drown one at sea.

Whoso the wren robs of its nest,

Health loses in a day;

The spoiler of the swallow’s house,

Will ail and pine for aye.

And he who with his ruthless hands

Shall tear the robin’s cot,

In his coffin shall have a guilty mark—

A deep red gory spot.

When unfortunate at cards you should rise from your chair, twist it round on one of its legs four times. This action is supposed to change the luck for the better.

If one’s right ear gets very hot it shows that one’s friends are speaking in laudatory terms of one.

On the other hand, if one’s left ear burns, then the friends are “ picking holes in one’s jacket.”

Let left or right burn at night, then all things are well, both in and out of sight.

UNLUCKY DAYS.

Certain days in each month are supposed to be un fortunate, upon which no new enterprise should be undertaken. If one makes a bargain, plants or sows in the garden, or begins a journey on either of these days, misfortune will quickly follow.

Days of evil strife and hate; Cruel wrath and fell debate, Planets strike and stars annoy, Aspects, aught of good destroy, Shun their calends, Heed their power.

Nought begun in evil hour E’er went well. Spirits o’er Those days preside, Who sport and gibe, With human fate;

Omens of hate, Wrath and debate.

EVIL DAYS.

January, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 9th, nth.

February, 13th, 17th, 19th.

March, 13th 15th, 16th.

April, 5th, 14th.

May, 8th, 14th.

June, 6th.

July, 16th, 19th.

August, 8th, 16th.

September, 1st, 15th, 16th

October, 16th.

November, 15th, 16th.

December, 6th, 7th, nth.

III. Charms

Where is the Necromancer? let him bring
 His treasury of charms, rich syrups, herbs
 Gathered in eclipse: or when shooting stars
 Sow earth with pearls; or, let him call his sprites
 Till the air thickens, and the golden noon
 Smote by his wings, is turned to sudden midnight.

—*Croly*.

West Country people generally, and Devonians in particular, are exceedingly superstitious, in spite of all that has been done for them in the way of higher education, and the enlightening influence of the press. Dwellers in the hilly parts of Devon, on Dartmoor and Exmoor, and in the villages bordering upon them, are as deeply imbued with faith in witches, as their forefathers were in the days when Alfred was king.

According to tradition there are three kinds of witches.

The Black Witch, who is of an intensely malignant nature, and responsible for all the ills that flesh is heir to.

The White Witch, of an opposite nature, is always willing, for certain pecuniary considerations, to dispense charms and philtres, to cancel the evil of the other.

The Grey Witch is the worst of all, for she possesses the double power of either “overlooking” or “releasing.” -

In cases of sickness, distress, or adversity, persons at the present time (a.d. 1898) make long expensive journeys to consult the white witch, and to gain relief by her (or his) aid.

The surest method of escaping the influence of the evil eye, is to draw blood from the person of the witch. Shakespeare, in *Henry VI*, says:

Devil or devil's dam, I'll conjure thee:

Blood will I draw. Thou art a witch.

A country man told me recently that he had “raped old mother Tapp's arm with a great rusty nail two or three times,” till he made the blood flow freely. “She can't hurt me again arter that,” said he.

The mode of applying charms and medicaments has been handed down to us from the remotest ages. The witch doctor cured through the imagination. “Conceit will kill and conceit will cure,” said a celebrated Harley Street physician to a medical student who one day applied to him for advice. It certainly is the case with regard to talismans. Playing on a patient's will and feelings, has stronger power in curing disease than we are inclined to credit. To the powerful influence of strong-minded, unscrupulous persons over those of weaker constitution may be attributed the success of the nostrums prescribed. Added to the physical presence of the charm, the hypnotic persuasion of the operator compels the patient to believe that a cure has been effected through the charm.

Pinches of powdered plants, scraps of inscribed vellum, dried limbs of loathsome reptiles, juices of poisonous herbs, blood, excrements, and gruesome compositions all blend together to make up the witch's charms. Who among the weak in mind, the uneducated, and the frivolous could resist falling a victim to the seductive attraction of a talisman, whose virtues would secure health, wealth and happiness? Much of a witch's success depended on the unremitting persuasive force she exerted on her patients to stimulate them to believe implicitly in her. This once attained, her influence became unlimited. The degree of strength exerted affected the progress of convalescence. For mercenary reasons the witch took care that a cure was not too quickly brought about.

I have interviewed many a believer in the efficacy of charms, and from them obtained curious examples of miscellaneous articles claiming miraculous powers to heal. Besides the sale of charms the white witch cures diseases by "striking" and blessing. The following are a few examples.

TO SECURE LUCK AT GAMES OF CHANCE.

Suspend by a silken cord around the neck, a section of the rope with which a person has been hanged.

TO CURE SKIN DISEASE.

Place the poison found in a toad's head in a leathern bag one inch square: enclose this in a white silk bag, tie it round the neck, allowing the bag to lie on the pit of the stomach. On the third day the patient will be sick. Remove and bury the bag. As it rots so will the patient get well.

TO CHARM AWAY HOUSE FLIES.

Gather and dry as much of the herb Fleabane as you can find. Each morning during the months of June, July and August, burn a handful of the herb in the rooms. The smoke will drive the flies from the house.

TO REMOVE WARTS.

Take an eel and cut off the head.

Rub the warts with the blood of the head.

Then bury the head in the ground.

When the head is rotten the warts fall off.

TO HEAL BURNS.

The witch repeats the following prayer while passing her hand three times over the burn:

Three wise men came from the east,

One brought fire, two carried frost.

Out fire! In frost!

In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

TO BRING CREAM TO BUTTER.

Come, butter, come,

Come, butter, come,

Peter's waiting at the gate,

Waiting for a buttered cake.

Come, butter, come.

CHARMS FOR TOOTHACHE.

(1)—Carry a dead person's tooth in the left waistcoat pocket.

(2)—Bite a tooth from the jaw of a disinterred skull.

(3)—“As Peter sat weeping on a stone our Saviour passed by and said, ‘ Peter, why weepest thou? ’ Peter said unto Him, ‘ I have got the toothache.’ Our Saviour replied, ‘ Arise and be sound.’ ”

And whosoever keeps this in memory or in writing will never suffer from toothache.

(4)—Mix

Two quarts of rat's broth.

One ounce of camphor.

One ounce essence of cloves.

Dose—Take one teaspoonful three times a day.

TO CURE THE COLIC.

Mix equal quantities of elixir of toads and powdered Turkey rhubarb.

Dose—Half a teaspoonful fasting for three successive mornings.

TO CHARM A BRUISE.

Holy chicha! Holy chicha!

This bruise will get well by-and-bye.

Up sun high! Down moon low!

This bruise will be quite well very soon!

In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

TO STAUNCH BLOOD.

As Christ was born in Bethlehem and baptized in the river Jordan, He said to the water, “Be still.” So shall thy blood cease to flow. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.—
Amen.

TO FRUSTRATE THE POWER OF THE BLACK WITCH.

Take a cast horse shoe, nail it over the front door, points upwards. While nailing it up chant in monotone the following:

So as the fire do melt the wax

And wind blows smoke away,

So in the presence of the Lord

The wicked shall decay,

The wicked shall decay.—

Amen.

TO INSURE GOOD SIGHT.

Fennel, rose, vervain, celandine and rue,
Do water make which will the sight renew.

TO KNOW IF ONE'S PRESENT FIANCÉ WILL BE TRUE.

Procure from a butcher a bladebone of a shoulder of lamb divested of all the meat. Borrow a penknife from an unmarried man, but do not say for what purpose it is required. Take a yard of white ribbon, and having tied it to the bone, hang it as high in your bedroom chimney as you can conveniently reach. On going to bed pierce the bone with the knife once, for nine successive nights, in a different place each night, repeat while doing so, the following:

Tiz not this bone I means to stick,
But my lover's heart I means to prick,
Wishing him neither rest nor sleep,
Till unto me he comes to speak.

At the end of nine days your sweetheart will ask you to bind a wounded finger, or to attend to a cut which he will have met with during the time the charm was being used.

TO CAUSE A FUTURE SPOUSE TO APPEAR.

Whoso wishes to see the spectre of a future husband can do so by performing the following rite. Retire to bed just before midnight, as quietly as possible. Remove the left garter, and tie it round the right stocking, while doing so repeat the following:

This knot I knit, to know the thing I know not yet
That I may see, the man that shall my husband be,
How he goes, and what he wears,
And what he does all days and years.

During the night, the future "he" will appear dressed in his ordinary attire, carrying some badge of his trade or profession.

TO DISCOVER THE INITIALS OF YOUR FUTURE HUSBAND.

On October 28th, the day dedicated to Saints Simeon and Jude, is the most propitious on which to use the following incantation for the discovery of the future one's initials. Take a fine round apple, peel it in one whole length. Take the paring in the right hand, stand in the centre of a large room, and while waving the paring gently round your head repeat:

St. Simeon and St. Jude on you I intrude,
By this paring I hold to discover.
Without delay, tell me I pray,
The first letters of my own true lover.

Then drop the paring over the left shoulder and it will form the initial of your future husband's name; if it break up into small pieces you will die an old maid.

TO SEE ONE'S FUTURE HUSBAND BY CHARMING THE MOON.

On seeing the new moon, make the sign of the cross three times in the air, and once on your forehead. Clasp both hands tightly together and hold them in a supplicating attitude, uplifted towards the moon. Then repeat:

All hail, all hail, to thee,
 All hail to thee, new moon,
 I pray to thee, new moon,
 Before thou growest old,
 To reveal unto me,
 Who my true love shall be!

Before the moon is at full the suppliant will see her true love.

TO CURE ZWEEMY-HEADEDNESS.

Wash the head with plenty of old rum. The back and face with sour wine; wear flannel next the skin, and carry a packet of salt in the left-hand pocket.

CHARM FOR A THORN IN THE FLESH.

Our dear Lord Jesus Christ was pricked with thorns. His blood went back to Heaven again, His flesh neither cankered, rankled, nor festered, neither shall thine, M. or N. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.—Amen, Amen, Amen.

THE HALF-CROWN CHARM FOR THE CURE OF KING'S EVIL.

After morning service in the parish church, the nearest male relative, in the case of a woman; or in the case of a man, the nearest female relative, stations him or her self, on the right-hand side of the porch, holding his or her hat, into which young men (or women), between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one, drop a penny to the number of thirty. The pennies so collected are changed for a silver half-crown. The centre of this coin is cut out, and the outer ring is suspended as a charm to the neck of the afflicted person. The centre piece is reserved until the next funeral takes place, when it is dropped into the grave just before the coffin is lowered into it.

TO CURE INFLAMMATION.

Scour the inflamed part with strong brine, afterwards wash with plenty of soap, plenty too of hot water. Eat much *raw* beef for nine days.

A white witch professed to be able to restore a lost sum of money by the following incantation.

Flibberty, gibberty, flasky flum,

Calafac, tarada, lara, wagra wum.

Hooky, maroosky, whatever's the sum,

Heigho! Presto! Money come!

In the name of the Father, the Holy Ghost, and Son. Amen! Amen!

The word "Abracadabra" written on parchment was given by an Exeter white witch, to a person who desired to possess a talisman against the dominion of the grey witch, pixies, evil spirits and the powers of darkness! It cost a guinea, and was sewn up in a small black silk bag *one inch* square. This was hung round the neck and never removed. Should it by chance fall to the ground, all its properties for good would be lost and a new charm must be procured from the same white witch, or dire misfortune would overtake the owner. In "Reminiscences and Reflections," of an old West Country clergyman (the Rev. W. H. Thornton, rector of

North Bovey), the word “Abracadabra” occurs on page 44, in connection with a meeting of spiritualists, held in London in 1848.



CHARM FOR PROTECTION FROM ENEMIES.

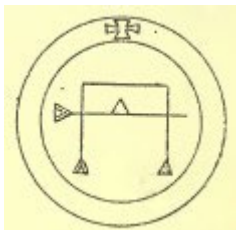
This talisman should be made of pure cast iron and engraven at the time of new moon.



Before suspending it round the neck fumigate it with the smoke of burnt Spirits of Mars (a mixture of red saunders, frankincense, and red pepper), or a ring of pure gold might be made, with the characters engraven on the inside. The size and form of this talisman is immaterial so long as the proper time for making it is observed and the prescribed incense is used before it is worn. In any form it will protect one from enemies, and counteract the power of the evil eye.

CHARM FOR OBTAINING LOVE AND FOR SUCCESS IN ALL UNDERTAKINGS.

Whoever wears this charm, written on virgin parchment, and sewn up in a small *round* silken bag continuously over the heart, will obtain all the love he or she may desire, and will be successful in every undertaking.



For amulets against ague one must use chips of a gallows. These chips must be sewn into silken bags and worn near the heart.

TO DESTROY THE POWER OF A WITCH.

Take three small-necked stone jars: place in each the liver of a frog stuck full of new pins, and the heart of a toad stuck full of thorns from the holy thorn bush. Cork and seal each jar. Bury in three different churchyard paths seven inches from the surface and seven feet from the porch. While in the act of burying each jar repeat the Lord's prayer backwards.

As the hearts and livers decay so will the witch's power vanish. After performing this ceremony no witch can have any power over the operator.

TO DISPEL VAPOURS AND DRIVE AWAY EVIL SPIRITS.

St. John's Wort, or Devil's Flight, gathered on St. John's Day or on a Friday, dried and placed in a closely-covered jar and hung in a window, will protect the house from thunderbolts, storms, fire, and evil spirits.

If the flowers and leaves are dried and ground into powder and then placed in a silken bag and hung round the neck, the person will be successful in love, and be cured of the *vapours* and all mental afflictions. To insure perfect immunity from these ills, it is necessary to operate in July, on the evening of the full moon.

TO PREVENT FLEAS FROM ENTERING A HOUSE.

When you first hear the cuckoo in the Spring, take some of the earth from the place on which your right foot is standing, and sprinkle it on the threshold of your front door; but speak of it to no one. Neither fleas, beetles, earwigs, or vermin of any sort will cross it.

TO CURE TOOTHACHE.

Cut your toe and finger nails, take these parings, wrap in tissue paper, and insert the packet into a slit made in the bark of an ash tree before sunrise. You will never have toothache again as long as you live.

TO CURE SORE THROAT.

Read the eighth Psalm seven times for three successive mornings over the patient.

TO ASSIST CHILDREN IN TEETHING.

Make a necklace of beads cut from the root of henbane and place round the child's neck.

TO CURE KING'S EVIL.

Bake a toad and when dried sufficiently to roll into powder, beat up in a stone mortar, mix with powdered vervain. Sew in a silken bag and wear round the neck.

TO COUNTERACT THE EVIL OF SEEING BIRDS OF ILL OMEN.

One should repeat seven times the following: "Clean birds by sevens, unclean birds by twos, The dove in the heavens, is the bird which I choose."

TO CURE BLEEDING OF THE NOSE.

Take one or two fine old toads, place them in a cold oven, increase the heat until sufficiently fierce to cook the toads and reduce them to a brown crisp mass. Remove from the oven and beat them to powder in a stone mortar. Place the powder in a box and use as snuff!

TO CURE DROPSY.

Take several large fully-grown toads, place them in a vessel in which they can be burned without their ashes becoming mixed with any foreign matter. When reduced to ashes, pound

them in a stone mortar. Place the ashes in a wide-mouthed jar, cork closely and keep in a dry place.

Dose.—One teaspoonful of ashes in milk to be taken at the growing of the moon for nine mornings.

TO CURE DIARRHOEA.

Take a stale Good-Friday cross-bun and place it in a hot oven to dry. By grating when hard into powder, and, when required, mixing it with cold water and taken as a medicine, it will cure diarrhoea.

When Good-Friday comes, an old woman runs

With one, or two-a-penny hot-cross-buns.

Whose virtue is, if you'll believe what's said,

They'll not grow mouldy like the common bread.

TO CURE ITCHING.

To cure itching in the palm of the hand—

Rub it on the eye,

'Twill go by-and-bye;

Rub it on wood,

'Twill sure to come good.

TO CURE SCIATICA OR BONESHAVE.

Take a pail of clean river water, dipped from the down-flowing stream, a pair of shears, a large key, and a new table knife. Dip the knife into the pail of water, draw it back upwards, downwards and across the hip three times each way. Then dip the key into the water and proceed as before. Then dip the shears into water, shear the hip as though it were covered with wool. Return the water left in the bucket to the river and sing—

As this watter goeth to zay,

So flow boneshave away.

TO CURE BARNGUN, OR RINGWORM.

Barngun is cured by blessing, and the outward application of clotted cream, thus: Take three *locks* of wool—one white, one grey, one black—dip them into a basin of clotted cream, and when thoroughly saturated, take each lock and rub in succession each infected spot on the skin. Hang the wool on sprigs of white thorn against the wind to dry. Repeat this process five, seven, or nine times, as the case may require. While lubricating the sores chant in monotone the following: There were three angels come from the west, to cure Simon Fluke (or other) of the barngun, white barngun, red barngun, black barngun, aching, sticking, pricking, barngun, all sorts of barngun, barngun-bubee, ill will I prove 'e. I stick thee up on thees yer thorn, there thou shalt die, and never come near'n no more, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.—Amen.

A CURE FOR RHEUMATISM.

An ancient Devonshire superstition is the potato-cure for rheumatism, which should be applied in this way.

Take a freshly dug early grown kidney potato, wash it free from soil, and ask a member of the opposite sex to yourself, to place it unobserved in a pocket of one of your garments. Having once worn the tuber you can change it yourself into another pocket at will, but it must be worn continuously, not intermittently, or its charm will be lost. It is believed that as the potato hardens the rheumatism will leave the system. A common practice among agricultural labourers, is to carry one in every waistcoat pocket until its looks like a small grey stone, and has become quite as hard.

A CHARM TO CURE WHOOPING COUGH.

Bring an ass before the door of the house, into whose mouth thrust a slice of new bread, then pass the sick child three times over and under the animal's body, and the charm is completed.

A CHARM WHICH PROTECTS FROM THIEVES AND ENEMIES.

Say daily at sunrise:

In the power of God, I walk on my way

In the meekness of Christ, what thieves soe'er

I meet The Holy Ghost to-day shall me keep.

Whether I sit, or stand, walk or sleep,

The shining of the sun

Also the brightness of his beams, shall me help.

The faith of Isaac to-day shall me lead;

The sufferings of Jacob to-day be my speed.

The devotion of the holy Lamb thieves shall let,

The strength of Jesus's passion them beset,

The dread of death hold thieves low,

The wisdom of Solomon cause their overthrow.

The sufferings of Job set them in hold,

The chastity of Daniel let what they would.

The speech of Isaac their speech shall spill,

The languishing faith of Jerom let them of their will.

The flaming fires of hell to hit them,

I bequeath, The deepness of the deep sea, their hearts to grieve

The help of Heaven cause thieves to stand.

He that made the sun and moon bind them with his hand

So sure as St. Bartholomew bound the fiend,

With the hair of his beard.

With these three sacred names of God known and unknown.

Miser, Sue, Tetragrammaton, Christ Jesus! Amen.

TO BRING SPIRITS TO YOU.

Anoint your eyes for three days with the combined juices of the herbs, dill, vervain, and St. John's-wort, and the spirits in the air will become visible to you.

A CHARM TO STOP BLEEDING AT THE NOSE.

Say *nine* times with great faith these words:

Blood abide in this vein as Christ abideth in the church, and hide in thee as Christ hideth from himself. The bleeding will presently cease.

A CHARM SUNG BY WITCHES WHILE GATHERING HERBS FOR MAGICAL PURPOSES.

Hail to thee, holy herb,

Growing on the ground,

All on Mount Calvary

First wast thou found.

Thou art good for many sores,

And healeth many a wound;

In the name of St. Jesu!

I take thee from the ground.

The muttering of this charm, while concocting drugs or simples, balsams or elixirs, contributes marvellously to their efficacy.

ANOTHER REMEDY FOR STAUNCHING BLOOD.

Take a fine full-grown toad; kill him, then take three bricks and keep in a very hot oven until they are red-hot. Take one out and place the toad upon it; when the brick is cold remove the toad; then take the other bricks and place the toad on them successively until he be reduced to powder. Then take the toadashes and sew them up carefully in a silk bag one-and-a-half inch square. When one is bleeding place this bag on the heart of the sufferer, and it will instantly stay the bleeding of the nose or any wound.

TO DISCOVER IF ONE WILL EVER MARRY.

On Christmas eve go into the yard and tap smartly at the door of the hen-house. If a hen first cackles, you will never marry, but if a cock crows first then you will marry before the end of the coming year.

ANOTHER CURE FOR WARTS.

Take as many small stones from a running stream as you have warts, put them tightly into a clean white bag, and throw them into the highway or street. Then wash each wart in strong vinegar seven successive mornings. Whoever picks up the bag of stones will get a transfer of the warts.

TO CURE A FEVER.

Write on parchment the following and bind it over the heart of the patient.

“In the name of St. Exuperus and St. Honorius, fall-fever, spring-fever, quartian, quintain, ago, super ago, consummatum est.” While fixing this charm to the patient, repeat three Paters and three Aves. The patient will recover after wearing the charm nine days.

THE HERRING-BONE CHARM TO CAUSE DEATH.

Sew into a garment which is worn next to the skin a long thin herring-bone. As the bone dries up, or withers, so will the person wearing it gradually pine away and die.

PLANET RULING BY AN EXETER ASTROLOGER.

A lady wishing to verify the statement that C. of Exeter “ruled the planets, thereby foretelling interesting facts in connection with the future,” sent him five shillings, stating at the same time, the hour, date, and year of her birth. The following are a few extracts from the reply, which consisted of eight closely-written pages of foolscap paper.

A Female.

Born, June 13th, 1874.

At 7 hours 13 minutes, p.m.

At the time of this birth the 19th degree of the sign Libra ascended the Eastern Horizon, and the 26th degree of the sign Cancer culminated, and Venus who rules or governs the ascendant was posited in the sign Taurus in the eighth house. Saturn was posited in Scorpio retrograde.

This is a sign of a trine with Saturn. Mars and Mercury were in conjunction in Pisces in the ninth house. The moon was in Sagittarius applying to a trine with the Sun in Aries in the seventh house.

The above configuration of the planets shews the native to be over the middle height, with a fine well-proportioned body, neatly compacted, moderately fleshy, but not stout, or corpulent; brown hair and good complexion, tending to sanguine. Fine brown eyes, with tender expression. Of cheerful disposition; merry and mirthful, persevering in all undertakings, loves neatness in dress, never guilty of extravagance or unworthy action. Of high intelligence and graceful carriage.

As regards husbands. The native will do well to be cautious in selecting her husbands. The first will be respectable, fond of wine, often intemperate, careless in business. Tall, stout, and of a passionate disposition, careless in money matters, but generous at times. Fond of the pleasures of the table, and will die suddenly. The second husband will be tall, handsome, with a good complexion, hasty tempered but soon appeased, generous, free spirited, will be possessed of substantial means, fond of manly sports and exercises, highly cultured and intellectual. The native must temporize with him, and will then easily get her own way in most things.

She will always have pecuniary worries, and must therefore be very careful in all money matters. At forty she will lose a relative, but will not be much prejudiced thereby. She must never make a friend of, or trust any dark woman older than herself. She will have many friends and be popular amongst her acquaintances. At about fifty-four or sixty-eight she will have great trouble, a bad illness, or some untoward event is likely to occur.

The “native” died when about thirty. She married a very tall, pale, thin man, who survives her.

IV. Customs

MOTHERING SUNDAY.

In many parts of Devonshire and other western counties, the fourth Sunday in Lent is observed as a holiday, under the title of Mothering Sunday. Servants, apprentices, and young working-folks in general visit their parents, and between them make up very happy home parties. The previous Saturday is a busy day, for the mother is looking forward with great pleasure to the morrow's meetings and festivities. She busies herself in preparing the materials for a good dinner for the joyous youngsters, and gives them the very best she can afford. Of course the *mothering-cake* is her chief care. It is big and rich, and must be well baked, sugared, and ornamented with fanciful designs. The dinner on Sunday consists of a hind quarter of lamb with mint sauce, a well-boiled suet pudding, seakale, and cauliflower, wheat furmity, with home-made wines. The day is one of mirthful enjoyment, mutual congratulations, and benevolence. The remains of the feast are usually distributed amongst needy neighbours who are unable to purchase these delicacies for themselves.

The custom arose from the practice of our Roman Catholic ancestors going in procession on Mid-lent Sunday, from the most distant parts of their parishes, to visit the Mother Church; and, according to the custom of the times, much of the day, though nominally set apart for a religious service, was devoted to festivity and mirth. Instances of such perverted institutions are to be met with in the saints' festivals, the wakes, the revels, the church-ales, and fairs, many of which are still kept up in country villages, to say nothing of the more riotous festivities of Lent, Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas.

I'll to thee a simnel bring,
Gainst thou go a-mothering;
So that when she blesseth thee,
Half that blessing thou'lt give me.

THE HOBBY HORSE.

A form of amusement popular in Devon and Cornwall is that of the Hobby Horse. This practice of assuming the forms of animals and counterfeiting their actions is of ancient date and probably formed part of the Roman *Saturnalia*.

The hobby horse consists of a compound figure. The head and tail of a horse, with a light wooden frame for the body (generally a couple of very slender hurdles joined at the top bars) is attached to the shoulders of a couple of strong youths, one in front with his head covered with a horse-faced mask, and another at the back who cleverly conceals his head under the frame.

The frame covered with trappings reaching to the ground hides the feet of the actors and prevents the discovery that the supposed horse has none. Thus equipped the men prance about, imitating the curvettings and motions of a horse.

As the hobby horse perambulates the streets and capers about, the village band preceding it, the children strike at it with whips and sticks; uproarious shouts of laughter rend the air, and a great deal of rough play is indulged in.

MAY DAY.

From the time of the Roman evacuation of Britain, a.d. 410, May Day festivals have been observed throughout the country. The Saxons retained the worship of Maia, the mother of Jupiter, on the first of the month, and from this custom the month derived its name.

This popular festival was observed with the joyful ringing of bells, music, dancing, and mummings. Every building was covered with a profusion of floral decorations. Kings and queens did not object to join the members of their Court, civic dignitaries, and the populace, in the enjoyment of May Day gaieties. The makers of the fun adorned themselves with wreaths and festoons of flowers. Girls, wearing a profusion of flowers, danced around the Maypole to the wild strains of fifes and drums. Men visited the beer shops, where they imbibed more than was good for them.

As the custom grew old, abuses crept in, and what was once a picturesque and innocent recreation degenerated into frantic drunken revels, which were a scandal and a nuisance.

There were, and still are, numerous superstitions attached to the merry month of May. Marriages taking place in May are supposed to bring ill-luck to the contracting parties. Cats born in this month are regarded as unpleasant creatures to have about one, as the practice of bringing into the house snakes, toads, and other objectionable vermin is ascribed to them.

May-dew, collected before or close upon sun-rise, is looked upon as an infallible beautifier of the complexion. Young girls arose early to wash their faces in it with the hope that their charms would be increased. On returning from the fields they would gather branches of hawthorn bloom, and suspend it over the entrance to the house, to protect it and themselves from the spells of witches and the evil eye.

On the first of May, persons were sent on ridiculous errands, and on their return, empty handed, were derisively addressed as May guze-chicks, or May goslings.

The old-fashioned demonstrations of mirth and hilarity have dwindled to feeble exhibitions of ill-dressed dolls, decked with wild flowers, carried in the hands of village children from house to house, where the occupants reward them with a few sweets or pence. Then the children sing the following words.

Round the Maypole Trit, trit, trot,
 See what a Maypole
 We have got,
 Fine and gay,
 Trip away,
 Happy is our New May-day.
 Good morning, merry gentlefolks!
 We wish you a happy May;
 We come to show our May garland,
 Because 'tis the first of May.
 Come kiss my face.
 And smell my mace,
 And give the little children
 Something!

At Helston, in Cornwall, the May-day festivals are still observed with all the old-time spirit and enthusiasm.

THE ASHEN FAGGOT.

The custom of burning the yule log is observed in large country houses, at the present time, on Christmas Eve, but where the fireplaces are contracted and slow-combustion grates the vogue, small branches of green ash, are cut fresh from the plantation. These sawn into lengths the width of the grate are tied into faggots with four or five strong binds of bramble canes. Very large faggots, which are intended to be burnt in old-fashioned kitchen fireplaces, are bound with chains. The bramble binds are a source of much amusement, for soon after being placed on the dogs, they burn through, one by one. Before they begin to light and burn, each of the youngest members of the family choose a bind, and whose is first burnt through will be the first to marry. It is customary for the company to drink a quart of cider at the bursting of each bind, so that by the time the whole have given way, there has been a large consumption of that beverage. It soon begins to influence the flow of spirits and induces a hilarious state of mind, increasing in strength as the night advances.

ROODMAS DAY.

This is a festival of the Romish church, designed to commemorate the finding of the Cross upon which Jesus suffered, by St. Helena.

On the first Monday after the third of May, this festival is annually held at Bovey Tracy. It is known as Roodmas Day. A procession is formed and the perambulation of the bounds of the parish takes place. Huge garlands of flowers are carried on the points of staves, and every available space on the house walls is decorated with a profusion of blooms.

GOOD FRIDAY DOLES.

A practice obtains at I deford, near Newton Abbot, of picking up alms from the donor's tomb on Good Friday on each succeeding year. The rector and churchwardens stand at one end of the flat table-shaped monument, and there place the coins upon the surface, while the recipients of the charity come one by one to the other end of the tombstone and pick up the money. This custom has been uninterruptedly in force for more than three hundred years.

OAKAPPLE DAY.

Oakapple Day, otherwise King Charles' Day, was instituted to commemorate the escape of Charles U, on May 29th, 1657, from the hands of Cromwell after the battle of Worcester, by concealing himself in a tufted oak in the woods of Boscobel.

This day was, in the early part of the century, observed at Tiverton, in a rough and boisterous fashion. Doubtless Tiverton was not the only town at which the holiday was kept, but certainly no place could exceed it in mad revelry or wild enthusiasm. Diredlly the day began the bells of St. Peter's Church clanged out furiously, awakening the inhabitants and warning the young folk that it was time to bestir themselves. Quickly donning their oldest garments the men turned out and started to collect faggots of greenery from every available hedge and wood. The fronts of public buildings, shops and dwelling houses were profusely decorated with branches of oak, from which depended scores of oakapples previously gilded or covered with silver paper. Every man wore oak sprigs and a small oakapple in his button-hole and his hat was encircled with a wreath of oak leaves. Woe betide him who neglected to adorn his house or his person.

Charles and Cromwell were both befittingly represented.

The Royalist party was distinguished by its proud bearing and smart attire, while the roundhead party was expected to look the reverse of gentlemen.

Charles, enthroned in a gaily-decorated chair was borne on the shoulders of four stalwart men through the principal streets, and great homage and profound respect were paid to him.

On the reverse, Cromwell was represented by the coarsest and most repulsive-looking scoundrel the town could produce. He was naked to the waist, and gloried in a long shaggy tail made of a hempen rope much frayed at the end. With this he belaboured any mischievous urchin who dared to interfere with his progress. Around his waist was tied a huge bag filled with soot. Himself and attendants were thickly daubed with oiled lamp-black and other disgusting compositions. At noon, when Charles had triumphantly made his procession through the town, the mischief began. Cromwell so managed his affairs that the two parties met each other at the bottom of Bampton Street, just opposite the entrance to the "Three Tuns Hotel." Now the gambols began, Cromwell plentifully besmeared all on whom he and his followers could lay hands, and carried them off to imprisonment till later on. Of course, in the general scrimmage that ensued, prisoners were captured on both sides, to be ransomed by their own friends at five o'clock, when the street entertainments ended and wilder orgies at the public houses began. The money collected was spent in mad carousals and jollifications. No women could venture into the streets; if there were any brave enough to do so, it was at the peril of their lives. Next day many a head ached, and vows were registered that "Never no more wid any body git up tu theyse zoart o' May games agen."

This barbarous pastime has now entirely died out, and is only held in remembrance by Blundell's scholars, who, in hopes of getting a half-holiday, decorate the masters' desks and chairs with oak boughs before morning school. Let us hope that the headmaster does not turn a deaf ear to their silent prayer.

A HARVEST CUSTOM.

A very old custom, that of crying the neck at the end of corn harvest, still obtains in some parishes in the west of England.

When the last sheaf of wheat is cut at the end of August, the reapers take the very last handful of straw and plait the ends together, tying them with lengths of bright-coloured ribbons; then, lifting it high above their heads, wave their sickles frantically, and shout:

We-ha-neck! we-ha-neck!

Well aplowed! well asowed!

We've areaped! and we've amowed!

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

Well-a-cut—well abound!

Well-a-zot upon the ground!

We-ha-neck! we-ha-neck'

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

There are many variants of the cry, but the above seems to be the one in general use. At Paignton, the farmer's name is introduced, thus:

A-neck! a-neck! a-neck!

Whose neck?

Varmer Ferris'es! Varmer Ferris'es

Its all a-cut!

And all abound!

And all ataken from the ground,

Hip! hip! whorrah! whorrah!

There are some slight differences in performing the ceremony. I have seen this done in the neighbourhood of Newton Abbot, at a farm situated on the western slope of Haldon. All the reapers (between twenty and thirty) formed a semicircle, with the farmer in their midst, and the ladies of the family close at hand. The head man held the "neck" above his head, and waved it quickly to and fro, and gave the first shout of "a-neck! a-neck!"

The rest took up the cry and waved their sickles.

After this the cyder-firkin was passed round from mouth to mouth. Then a start was made for the farmer's kitchen, where a substantial supper of beef, pork, vegetables, figgy-pudden, cream, junkets, and gallons of cyder awaited the hungry reapers. When justice had been done to the viands, tobacco and long churchwardens (clay pipes) were produced. More and much cyder at last provoked merriment and indescribable tumult. Some recounted their experiences in winter by flood, snowstorm, and hurricanes. Others their interviews with the Dowl on lonely hills, their wanderings over swampy meadows in the footsteps of Jack-o-lantern. Others their efforts to resist the evil eye, and the malignant devices of the witch. Some sung delightful old songs (specimens of which will be found at the end of this book); and not until the daylight streamed through the diamond-shaped window-panes did they seek their beds. I should say that the wives and elder children of the men were also partakers of the harvest-supper. The neck is carried into the house and hung over the centre of the kitchen table for a year, and when replaced by the new neck it is given to the best beast in the stall.

The word a-neck is said to be derived from the Celtic language, and means "saved." Others claim for it an Irish origin, as the word "anaie" in that country means "save thou me." While another suggestion is that the custom may have been derived from the Jewish ceremonial of the wave offering mentioned in Leviticus xxiii, 10, and following verses, and introduced by the early Hebrew settlers in Britain. A long correspondence was carried on in August, 1898, in the *Western Morning News*, on this ceremony, from which I glean that the practice is identical in every part of the county, but there are differences in the mode of its performance.

GIGLET MARKET OR FAIR.

At many towns and villages in Devonshire, on the first Saturday after Christmas-day, and at Ladyday, it was customary, up to a recent date, for women and girls desirous of being hired as domestic servants to repair to the "fair-field" of the district and stand in rows on exhibition. Persons in need of servants would then make a tour of inspection and select such as appeared suitable to their requirements.

This custom prevailed until a few years ago, at Holsworthy, Okehampton, and South Molton.

After the business of the day was over a revel or pleasure fair was held, known as "The Giglet Fair" and "Giglet Market."

At Okehampton Giglet Fair, bachelors were allowed, without the ceremony of introduction, to approach, make love, and propose to the "giglet" of their choice. It frequently happened that the joy bells, in a few weeks, announced the success of their venture.

THE DIVINING ROD.

The Divining Rod is known also as the Dowsing Rod, Moses's Rod, and the Virgula. It is simply a twig of this form—V, each limb being from ten inches to twelve inches long, cut from a cherry tree, hazel, or white thorn. The operators are named dowsers, diviners, water-witches, or water-finders. Great interest is attached to the rod, as used for the purpose of discovering subterranean water-springs and lodes of ore. Its mysterious properties have been exemplified in numberless instances. The satisfactory finding of water by its aid was recently shewn at Tiverton, Plympton, Plymouth, Chumleigh, and many other places, which caused much correspondence for and against the "art" in the *Western Morning News* and other west country newspapers. In Cornwall, too, the dowser has pointed out spots where valuable lodes of metals have been unearthed. One case in particular may be quoted at Great Briggan, when the late Captain Trelase was the diviner.

The *modus operandi* is very simple, The waterwitch holds the thin arms of the twig between his fingers and thumbs with the point projecting outwards, while he walks steadily over the suspected spring or lode. If there be water or mineral below, the hazel turns upwards with a sudden jerk, if there is neither, it remains passive. It is said that the operator experiences peculiar sensations in his limbs as the twig vibrates, and that his face assumes an agitated expression. All persons are not *sympathetic* and the twig lies inert in their hands, but with a *born dowser* the rod very soon puts on vitality, and frequently completes a circle breaking short off at the points. Hundreds of persons pooh-pooh the whole thing and condemn it as a trick, and are surprised that in these days of scientific attainments people should be found weak enough to pin their faith to the virtues of a twig. Despite opposition and ridicule the search for water by this means is popular throughout Devon and her sister-counties.

LUCK MONEY.

In old fashioned markets it is customary to give luck money on an animal being sold by the farmer himself. The practice is gradually dying out, as auctions are taking the place of private contracts. In some places a penny merely passes from the seller to the buyer, a practice arising, probably, from some superstitious belief. In some districts a shilling or half-a-crown is given as luck-money. In others again, a man will deal and give a certain sum for a cow or a horse with the proviso that five or ten shillings shall be returned for luck or chap money. The origin of this custom is unknown. Sometimes, when engaging a servant, a shilling is given to clench the bargain. This is called earnest money.

PECULIAR WEDDING CUSTOM.

A peculiar wedding custom observed at Lynton, North Devon, is that of chaining the bride at the gates of the churchyard. Young men stretch pieces of rope, adorned with flowers, or chains of twisted hay and straw decorated with ribbons and flowers, across the gateway, effectually preventing the exit of the bridal party. Thereupon the bridegroom scatters broadcast handfuls of small coins. The chain is immediately dropped and a rush made for the money leaving the bride free to proceed on her way. Sometimes, where special honour is paid to the bride, several chains are encountered on her way to her old home, and the bridegroom has again and again to pay his footing as a husband.

THE DAISY.

The daisy is popularly looked upon as the emblem of modesty. In the days of chivalry in Europe the daisy played an interesting part in many a love affair. When a knight was an accepted lover, his lady allowed him to engrave a daisy on his arms; when he proposed and she would neither say "Yes" or "No," she wore a crown of field daisies, which meant "I'll think about it." Readers of Faust will remember how Margaret, as she walked in the garden, plucked off the petals of an aster, one after another, saying, half aloud "He loves me, he

loves me not— he loves me—not—he loves me—not—he loves me!” This old-world custom is still in vogue among the lasses of sunny Devon.

V. Weather Lore and Wise Saws

The ancients observed with profound attention the natural phenomena of their time, the study of which helped them to make fairly accurate forecasts of the weather, and taught them to begin farm work and domestic affairs at the most favourable moment. They walked as it were hand in hand with nature, learning to interpret her subtle operations by marvellous intuition.

The flight of birds, the voices and actions of animals, the development of vegetation, all lent their aid to predict atmospheric changes.

Then the following traditions and proverbs were popular, and have been handed down from the earliest times.

If Christmas Day on Monday be,
 A great winter that year you'll see.
 And full of winds both loud and shrill;
 But in summer, truth to tell,
 High winds there shall be, and strong,
 Full of tempests lasting long;
 While battles they shall multiply,
 And great plenty of beasts shall die.
 They that be born that day, I ween,
 They shall be strong each one, and keen
 He shall be found that stealeth aught;
 Though thou be sick, thou diest not.

If New Year's Day happen on a Saturday the winter will be mean, the summer hot, the harvest late, garden-stuff good and cheap, honey, flax, and hemp abundant.

If the weather be dry and bright on January 26th, the year will be generally of the same type. St. Paul is the guardian saint of this day.

If the day of St. Paul be clear,
 Then shall betide a happy year,
 If it do chance to snow or rain,
 Then shall be dear all kinds of grain,
 But if the wind then be aloft,
 Wars shall vex this realm full oft,
 And if the clouds make dark the sky,
 Both beasts and fowl this year shall die.
 When midges in January play and fly,
 Treasure your fodder for beasts in July.

A January spring is nothing worth. January freezes the pot upon the fire. If the grass grow in January, it grows the worse for it all the year. Lock your grain in the granary.

As the days lengthen so does the cold strengthen. If the weather on Candlemas Day, February 2nd, be bright and dry, there will be a long continuance of cold wintry weather, or,

If Candlemas Day be dry and fair,

The half of the winter is to come, and mair,

If Candlemas Day be wet and foul,

The half of the winter is gone at yule, or,

If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,

Winter will have another fight,

But if Candlemas Day be clouds and rain,

Winter is gone, and will not come again.

If a storm comes on February 2nd, spring is near; but if that day be bright and clear, the spring will be late.

When drops hang on the fence on February 2nd, icicles shall hang there on March 14th.

There is always one fine week in February.

When it rains in February it will be temperate all the year.

All the months in the year curse a fine Februeer. or,

If in February there be no rain,

The hay won't goody, nor the grain.

All other months of the year

Most heartily curse a fine Februeer.

February fill dyke, be it black or be it white; but if it be white, the better to like.

If bees get out in February the next day will be rough and rainy.

When the cat in February lies in the sun, she will creep under the grate in March.

Remove all Christmas decorations before Candlemas Day.

Down with the rosemary and the bays,

And down with the mistletoe,

Instead of the holly now upraise

The bright green box for show.

or,

If so the superstitious find,

One tiny branch just left behind,

Look! for every leaf there may be,

So many goblins shall plague thee.

If the eighteen last days of February be wet, and the first days of March, you'll see that the spring quarter, and the summer too, will prove to be wet, and danger will ensue.

February and be ye fair,

The hoggs will mend, and nothing pair;

February and be ye foul,

The hoggs will die in the pool (Scotch).

If March comes in like a lion, it goes out like a lamb, and *vice versa*.

March winds and April showers,

Bring forth May flowers.

Dust in March brings leaves and grass.

A peck of March dust is worth a king's ransom.

As many mists in March so many frosts in May.

On the first of March

The crows begin to search.

The black army (fleas) arrives on March 1st.

Much March dust, and a shower in May,

Makes the corn green and the fields gay.

A damp warm March will bring much harm to the farm.

Snow in March is bad for fruit and grape wine.

If it does not freeze on the 10th of March, a fertile year may be expected.

When flies swarm in March, sheep come by their death.

March dust and March wind, bleach as well as Summer's sun.

March flowers make no Summer bowers.

March borrows three days of April,

The first brings sleet,

The second brings snow, and

The third is the worst day that ever blew.

In a very old magazine I found the following, which leads one to suppose that the cuckoo arrives in March:

In March the guku begin'th to sarch.

In Aperial he begin'th to tell,

In May he begin'th to lay,

In July away he do fly.

A dry April is not the farmer's will.

In April wet is what the farmer would get.

Till April is dead, change not a thread.

What March does not want
April brings along.
When April blows his horn,
'Tis good for hay and corn.
On the first of April crows are still sitting.
April floods carry off frogs and their broods.
The cuckoo comes in April.
When the cuckoo comes to the bare thorn,
Sell your cow and buy you corn;
But when he comes to the full bit,
Sell your corn and buy you sheep.
If it thunders on All Fools' Day,
There will be good crops of corn and hay.
Fogs in April foretell a failure of the wheat crop for next year.
One should look for grass in April on the top of an oak, because grass seldom springs well
before the oak puts forth its leaves.
Fine warm weather from Easter to Whitsuntide produces much grass and cheap butter.
As the weather is on Ascension Day, so will it be the entire autumn.
If it rains on Good Friday and Easter Day,
There'll be plenty of grass and a little good hay.
April and May between them make bread for all the year.
April rains for men: May for beasts.
Button to the chin till May be in.
Marry in May you'll rue it for aye.
No wind is colder than a May wind.
For a warm, wet May
The parsons do pray,
For then death-fees Come their way.
A May wet
Was never kind yet.
A cold May is kindly
And fills the barn finely.
A cold May is good for corn and hay.
For an East wind in May it is your duty to pray.
A snowstorm in May,

Brings weight to the hay.

The more thunder in May the less there will be in August and September.

By the first of May young crows will have flown away.

May, come she early, come she late,

Still she'll make the cow to quake.

A May flood never did good.

Shear sheep in May you'll shear them all away.

He who bathes in May, will soon be laid in clay.

A swarm of bees in May is worth a stack of hay.

In May the cuckoo sings all day.

Change not a clout till May be out.

Who doffs his coat on a Winter's day, will gladly put it on in May.

A dry May and a rainy June,

Puts the farmer's pipe in tune.

A misty May and a hot June,

Makes the harvest come right soon.

A dripping June brings all things in tune.

A swarm of bees in June is worth a silver spoon.

Before St. John's day we pray for rain, after that we get it anyhow.

The change which takes place in the voice of the cuckoo is thus quaintly described by a sixteenth century poet—

In April the coo-coo can sing her song by rote,

In June oft time she cannot sing a note;

At first koo-koo! koo-koo! sings till she can do,

At last kooke-kooke-kooke; six kookes to one koo.

If July ist be wet and rainy, it will continue so for four weeks or more.

He, who in July the cuckoo's voice doth hear,

Will die before he comes next year.

A swarm of bees in July is not worth a fly.

If it rain on July 10th it will rain for seven weeks.

Ne'er trust a July sky.

All the tears St. Swithen can cry (July 15),

St. Bartlemy's mantle can dry (August 14th).

St. Swithen's day if thou be fair,

For forty days 'twill rain na mair,

St. Swithen's day if thou be'st fine,

For forty days it will remain.

St. James' day gives oysters,

St. Swithen's day gives rain.

He who eats oysters on St. James' day will lack money to the year's end.

A shower of rain in July, when the corn begins to kern, is worth a plough of oxen, and all belonging thereto.

Very hot July, August, and September, breed hard frosts and intense cold for the next January.

If the deer rise up dry and lie down dry on St. Bullion's day (July 4th), it is a sign there will be a good goose harvest.

Dog days bright and clear,

Portend a happy year;

But if accompanied with rain,

For better times all hopes are vain.

A heavy rainfall in the middle of July shows that St. Mary Magdalene is washing her handkerchief to go to her cousin St. James' fair. St. Bartholomew brings the cold dew (August 24th).

Dry your barley in October

Or you'll always be sober.

Warm October, cold February.

The 28th of October was anciently accounted as certain to be rainy.

October's brew

Will fuddle you.

There are always nineteen dry days in October.

If October bring heavy frosts and winds, then will January and February be mild.

For every fog in October a snow in the winter, heavy or light according as fog is heavy or light.

As the weather is in October, so will it be in the next March.

Full moon in October without frost, no frost till full moon in November.

If the first snow fall on moist, soft earth, it indicates a small harvest; but if upon hard, frozen soil a good harvest the following year.

When it freezes and snows in October, January will bring mild weather; but if it is thundery, and heat-lightning prevail, the weather will resemble April in temper.

October should be a fill-dyke.

Crows groping greedily come back again,

With October's wind and rain.

In December keep yourself warm, and sleep.

The worse weather for the rider, is the better for the bider.

If it rain on a Sunday before the mass, it will rain all the week more or less.

Mackerel skies and colts' tails

Make big ships carry little sails.

Many a cloudy morning

Brings forth a sunny noon.

Leap year never brings a good sheep year.

Hail brings frost on its tail.

When beans are in bloom brew not your ale.

When elder is white, brew and bake a peck.

When elder is black, brew and bake a sack.

When the sloe-tree is white as a sheet, sow your barley whether it be dry or wet.

Ash before oak, there will be a soak,

Oak before ash, there will be but a splash.

No one so surely pays his debt

As wet to dry, and dry to wet.

A Saturday's new moon once in seven years is once too soon.

If the moon on a Saturday be new or full,

There always was rain and always will.

When the new moon is on her back, or shows her horns, it is a true sign of rough, boisterous weather, accompanied with heavy rain.

Winter's thunder and summer's flood,

Bodes to old England nothing good.

East wind and west the sign of blast,

North and south the sign of drouth.

He who by the plough would thrive,

Himself must either hold or drive.

When the wind is in the east,

It's neither good for man nor beast.

When the dim form of the full moon can be seen in the lap of the new moon, it is considered by some to be a sign of rain. By sailors and fishermen it is supposed to presage tempestuous weather.

I saw the new moon late yestreen,

With the old moon in her lap:

And if we gang to sea master,

I fear some dread mishap.

When the wind is in the north, hail comes forth,

When the wind is in the west, look for a wet blast;

When the wind is in the south, the weather will be fresh and good,

When the wind is in the east, cold and snow comes most.

Who ploughs deep while sluggards sleep,

Will have corn to sell and to keep.

'Twill show what the day will do,

Will show what the day will do.

Every wind hath its weather.

Autumn is wheezy, sneezy, freezy;

Winter is slippy, drippy, nippy;

Spring is showery, flowery, bowery;

Summer is hoppy, croppy, poppy.

North wind brings hail, South wind brings rain, East winds we bewail. West winds blow
amain, North-east wind is too cold, South-east wind not too warm, North-west wind is far too
bold, South-west wind doth no harm.

When the wind is in the east,

The fisherman likes it the least;

When the wind is in the west,

The fisherman likes it the best.

No weather is ill, if the wind be still.

A west wind north about,

Never long holds out.

When the wind is in the west,

Then the weather's always best.

A western wind carries water in its hand.

A northern air brings weather fair.

When the wind is in the south,

'Tis in the rain's mouth.

The southern wind

Doth play the trumpet to his purposes

And, by his hollow whistling in the leaves

Foretells a tempest, and a blustering day.

SIGNS OF RAIN AS PREDICTED BY THE HABITS OF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.

If a heron or bittern flies low, the air is becoming charged with water vapour.

When kine view the sky, stretching up their heads and snuffing the air, moist vapours are engendering, the cause of their doing so being their sensibility of the air's sudden alteration from dry to wet; and sudden rain will ensue, though at that time the sun may be shining brightly.

The chattering of swallows and their flying low about lakes and ponds denote rain.

The much croaking of frogs in the ditches and pools, &c., in the evening, foretells rain in a short time to follow.

The sweating of stone pillars denotes rain.

Ants moving their eggs denotes rain, for by a secret instinct of nature finding the air changing into much moisture, they carry them to a place of drier security.

Crows flocking in large flights, holding their heads upwards as they fly, and cawing louder than usual, is a sign of rain, as is also their stalking by ponds and rivers and sprinkling themselves.

The frequent dropping and diving of waterfowl foreshows that rain is at hand.

Peacocks crying much denotes rain.

Cattle leaving off to feed and hastening to shelter under hedges, bushes, trees, outhouses, &c., shows sudden showers are coming.

Expect rain if the stalks of clover stand upright; if the flower of the convolvulus closes; if the flowers of the sorrel and of the African marigold close; if the flower of the pitcher-plant turns upside down; if the flower of the cinquefoil expands.

Fine weather is preceded by the opening of the flowers of the sorrel or the closing of the cinquefoil, and the standing erect of the flower of the pitcherplant.

A foot deep of rain

Will kill hay again;

But three feet of snow

Will make it come mo'.

When hemp is ripe and ready to pull,

Then Englishman, beware of thy skull.

The kingfisher builds its nest in holes in the banks of a river. Should it become dislodged and float down the river and out on the surface of the sea without capsizing, then there will be a long spell of fine weather.

In some parts of the country this bird is used as a vane, not exposed to the action of the wind, but stuffed and suspended in a room by a thin string, its bill always indicating the point from which the wind blows.

Into what corner peers the halcyon bill?

Ha! to the east—yes—see how stands the wind.

“The antients supposed that it built its nest on the ocean, and hatched its young at the winter solstice. To account for the preservation of the nest and young birds amidst the severity of the season, they imagined that the bird had a power of lulling the raging of the waves during the period of incubation; and this power was believed to reside in its song,” so says the author of *Chambers's Information for the People*, vol. u, page 447.

A gentleman who once visited the west country thinks the following fairly represents the chronic conditions of Devonshire weather:

One unlucky Friday, with sorrow and pain
 I proceed to record it, it came on to rain,
 It rained on the Saturday, rained on the Sunday,
 It rained every hour of the day on the Monday.
 On Tuesday it rained cats and dogs as they say,
 And Wednesday was also a very wet day,
 On Thursday and Friday, especially the latter day,
 It rained very hard, but my gracious on Saturday
 The rain was most dreadful, a great deal more bad
 Than that of any other day we had had.

Anti-Pluvius, Western Morning News, Feb. 17th, 1899.

TRUE SIGNS OF RAIN.

The hollow winds begin to blow,
 The clouds look black, the glass is low,
 The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
 The spiders from their cobwebs creep.
 Last night the sun went pale to bed,
 The moon in halos hid her head;
 The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
 For see a rainbow spans the sky.
 The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
 Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel;
 Hark! how the chairs and tables crack,
 Old Betty's joints are on the rack.
 Loud quack the ducks, the peacocks cry, .
 The distant hills are seeming nigh;
 How restless are the snorting swine,
 The busy flies disturb the kine.
 Low o'er the grass the swallow wings,
 The cricket too, how loud it sings;
 Puss on the hearth with velvet paws,
 Sits smoothing o'er her whiskered jaws.
 Through the clear stream the fishes rise,

And nimbly catch the incautious flies;
The sheep are seen at early light,
Cropping the meads with eager bite.
Though June, the air is cold and chill,
The mellow blackbird's voice is still;
The glow-worms, numerous and bright,
Illumed the dewy dell last night.
At dusk the squalid toad was seen,
Hopping and crawling o'er the green;
The frog has lost his yellow vest,
And in a dingy suit is dressed.
The leech disturbed is newly risen,
Quite to the summit of his prison;
The whirling winds the dust obeys,
And in the rapid eddies plays.
My dog, so altered is his taste,
Quits mutton bones, on grass to feast;
And see yon rooks, how odd their flight,
They imitate the gliding kite,
Or seem precipitate to fall,
As if they felt the piercing ball.
'Twill surely rain I see with sorrow,
Our jaunt must be put off to-morrow.
From an Almanac published 1844.

VI. Nummits and Crummits

GOOD OLD DAYS AT STOCKLEIGH POMEROY IN 1815.

Meal Times.

A wee-bit and breakfast,

A stay-bit and dinner,

A nummit and a crummit,

And a bit arter supper.

Could our forbears ever have known the *joys* of hunger?

Meal Hours—a.d. 1515.

To rise at five and dine at nine,

To sup at five and bed at nine,

Will make a man live to ninety-nine.

Our meal-hours and time of rising in the morning have considerably changed in the course of three centuries. As our ancestors rose at five they needed the “wee-bit” especially in the winter season. Persons of quality would sometimes dine as late as ten and supper was at five or six in the evening, and all the family were in bed at nine. They sounded the curfew, which warned them to put out their fires at six in the winter and between eight and nine in the evening during the summer time.

CAT-LATIN.

Servants, when desirous of hoodwinking their mistresses or each other, resorted to a curious method of speech.

They added “us,” or “vus ” to every word. This jargon was styled cat-latin; as—

“Whenvus thevus catvus isvus outvus, thevus, micevus allvus playvus.”

The above will give the reader some idea of this ridiculous custom. I am told that it has not quite died out in the far west even up to this date (1898).

LULLABY.

When a child gets tired or a little out of temper, and the nurse wishes to amuse it, she dandles it on her knee, and sings—

Vather and mawther

And uncle Jan, Went to

Market Pin tap a black ram,

Off val'd vather,

Off val'd mawther,

And away raw'd

Uncle Jan!!

All up! all up ' all up!

Eat the fat ram

And hang Uncle Jan!

All up! all up! all up!

Huraw for Uncle Jan!

A COOMBMARTIN "CRY."

One day as a tourist was walking through this village he heard a man make the following announcement— Thes es tu gie notice that down by tha say (sea) liveth a old dummun that zills gude zoura (vinegar) dree appince a nuggin, what Cume² vokes liketh tu lappee kale wi'.

SIGN IN A WINDOW BY THE WAY-SIDE NEAR TIVERTON.

If this should catch the eye

Of any passer-by,

Who should happen to be dry,

I hope he'll not be shy,

But just step in

And wet his throttle,

With prime ginger beer

A penny a bottle.

A SIGN AT ANSTEY'S COVE, TORQUAY.

Picnics supplied with hot water and tea,

At a nice little house down by the sea.

Fresh crabs and lobsters every day,

Salmon peel, sometimes red mullet and grey;

The neatest of pleasure-boats let out on hire,

Fishing as good as you can desire.

Bathing machines for ladies are kept,

With towels and gowns all quite correct.

Thomas is the man who supplies everything,

And also teaches young people to swim.

SALE OF EFFECTS AND A WIFE!

Received of Edward Salter the sum of four pounds ten shillings for goods received and chattels, a bay mare, and also Mrs. Smale, as parting man and wife.

Agreed before witnesses,

October 17th, 1810.

² Coomb folks like to eat with cabbage.

" Kale "

is the local
name for cabbage.

Witness the mark of

Edward Snow

James Worth

Mary Salter

Edward Salter

Settled the whole concern by the mark of John Smale

£4 10s od.

THE SEQUEL.

On Thursday, May 15th, 1811, the buyer made application to the Plymouth magistrates, stating the circumstances of the case, and that John Smale wanted his wife back again, notwithstanding that he the said buyer liked her very much, and did not wish to part with her.

The magistrates told him he had no legal claim to the woman, and advised him to give her up to her husband, to which he very reluctantly consented.

In these good old times when a man grew tired of his wife, it was not an unfrequent practice to put a halter round her neck and offer her in the nearest market place for sale, she tamely submitting to the indignity. Possibly she was glad to obtain release from an unamiable spouse by such easy means.

The reader will smile, and say: "Ah! perhaps so," but such things do not happen in this more enlightened age. It seems that history repeats itself, as evidenced by the following story taken from the *Western Morning News*, March 9th, 1894.

ANOTHER CASE OF WIFE SALE.

As recently as September, 1873, the following attempted sale of a woman took place in Devonshire.

At---a young woman, the wife of a man named Phillips, who was said to have left her and his creditors together, and gone to Australia, was the interesting article submitted at the sale of his goods and chattels to competition. The wife's conduct seems to have had a great deal to do with Phillips's disappearance. On Saturday, Phillips's goods were sold, and the wife claimed a portion of the proceeds, and told the auctioneer he must either share the money with her or sell her. This seems to have called forth the sympathy of a bystander who volunteered to take the role of auctioneer. A halter was borrowed from a neighbour, and the woman was led into the market-place accompanied by a crowd of persons. No bidders, however, seemed to be amongst them, and the woman was obliged to be content. This disgraceful scene was witnessed by a very large number of spectators.

COPY OF A LETTER

Sent to Mr. Martin, the energetic secretary of the Devonian Club in London.

Frithelstock Moor,

Taddiport,

Nath Debben,

Febreer 28th, 1889.

Zir Stafford and genelmen all,

I pull'th my vorlock tu e ivvery wan I did 'ope I shtide abin able tu bin long w'e tu dinner tu-day. I'm blamed ef I bant that vext I can't tell what tu du wi' m'zell, tu thenk that that canky-tempered old twoad ov a wive ov mine want let me come tu Linnun and A' a bit and a drap wi' yu chaps tu-day. Niver mind sose! durned ef I want be upzides wi' she avore long. 'Er'll be wanting a fine new rory-tory gown avore the year be out, but by Gor I 'er shall want. I'll be dalled ef 'er shall get wan though I've agot the dibs sure 'nough, but I'll stick tu they. Zee ef I dawnt.

I wuz 'opping tu 'ave some figgetty pudden and lots more o' that zoart ov trade, a purty gude bust aw't altogether, but there—tidden wan bit ov use tu grizzlee ort more awver't, so I want say 'nuther word 'bout et thease time.

I cude a-told-e a glide many zide cracking stories about wan and tother old Debbenshur vokes down theyse pearts ov the country, but if yu staps to rayde thease letter dru and dru 'evore yu begin'th til ayte, yer mayte'll be cold, and yu'll be famished tu death, zo yti'd better putt'n aside till yu've a mapped up all they butivul junkets I yer Mrs. Martin 'ave amade vor 'e.

I mind'th purty well Squire Nathkit's gramfer what used tu live tu Pynes, he waz Cappen ov the Yawmen Cathery. They varmer's zins what weared urd jackets and vound their awn 'osses. Well, when theyse sodgers was out til practice down tu Exmouth, zome o'the stupid twoads got tarnashun wopper-eyed and by gor I ef they didden vail tu fighting. Jist then Cappen Nathkit corned along, and zaid, ses 'e— “ What be yu fellers adding ov? Vighting be 'e? Aw zes 'e, I'll tellee 'bout that then—lukee zee yer yu baggering twoads, I'll be blamed if I'll 'ave any *fighting men* in my regiment—git out o't, I tellee.” That there's so true as the gospel, I tellee tez then!

Well, now yers another little dialogue. There was wan Varmer Short who'd got a purty big varm down 'Aldon way.—Now 'e and a few more was what I calls rigler guzzlers they was. I've yerd tell as 'ow vower aw'm cude drink out a hogshhead of cider tu wan zitting and not veel no woss vor't arterwards. They was what vokes now-a-days cal proper busters they wuz.

Then again there's thicky young ozeburd ov a squire up Topsham way, who stid'th hard how he can candiddle his ma, by gwaine ratting wi' all the grums and ramscallions of the parish, instayed of gwaine 'ome til dinner and zitting up til table clayne and tidy-like wi' the quality. Mayhap I'd better not zay nort more about he, cuz tidden vitty for the likes o' me til zay ort agin my betters.

Burn me! if I ctidden tellee amazing sight ov't, all about the murchy of wan and tother o'm, but I mid hurt their veelings, zo I'll stap!

I be veeling cruel wisht, and zomething like a vinnied cheel, cuz I be afoced til bide home while yu fellers be up there feysting away like cockfighters. Howzimever I 'opes yti'll val til galyantly and 'ave a glide feed, but dawntee vor gracious sakes ayte too much of that payse zoup and tabbioka pudden, vur that trade'll upzit 'e. If they gives 'e flicker-mayte and squab pie yu'll like they, vor they'm butival aytmg. Now they waiter-chaps be cute uns, they'll gie e guzeberry wine and tellee tez Madam Quicko's best shampain. Dawntee, now dawntee, drink too much o't, vor if so be yu dti 'tweel make 'e tosti-cated, and yu'll be so maze headed as a sheep, and besides yti'll vail all about the rawds gwaine 'ome along, and spowl all they fine cloths. They'll be caughted all awver, and all the brishing in the wordle wunt git the muck and pillum out o'um.

So no more at prisint from your afecshunate zarvint, Wilyum Hodge.

STONES FOR THE MONTHS.

In love's calendar there is a special gem or stone for each month in the year: and what true lover should be without this necessary information?

January is represented by the garnet—constancy.

February is represented by the amethyst—sincerity.

March is represented by the bloodstone—courage.

April is represented by the diamond—innocence.

May is represented by the emerald—success in love.

June is represented by the agate—long life.

July is represented by the chameleon—contented mind.

August is represented by the sardonyx—married happiness.

September is represented by the chrysolite—clearness of intellect.

October is represented by the opal—fortunate.

November is represented by the topaz—fidelity.

December is represented by the turquoise—prosperity.

ORIGINAL VERSE BY A PARISH CLERK, AT PLYMOUTH.

Let us zing to the praise and glawry of God this ves o' my awn composing:

Mount Edgecombe is a pleasant place,

Right o'er agenst the Ham-o-aze,

Where ships do lie at anchor,

To guard us agin our foes. Amen.

At the beginning of the present century the small boys of Chagford made the streets resound with shouts of this quaint old rhyme:

Old Harry Trewin

Had no burtches to wear,

So he stawl a ram's skin

Vur to make en a pair:

Wi' the woolly zide out,

And the fleshy zide in,

They sticked purty tight

To old Harry Trewin.

VII. Peculiar and Eccentric Devonians

CARABOO OR PRINCESS JAVASU.

This clever unscrupulous woman was born of poor but respectable parents at Witheridge, North Devon, on November nth, 1792. Her father, Thomas Wilcocks, was a shoemaker. His daughter Mary, being of a wild disposition, objected to the restrictions of school life, hence she received little or no education, and at eight years of age was employed in spinning wool. The manufacture of woollen yarns was at this time the staple industry of the district. Athletics had a strong attraction for Mary, who, before she was eighteen years of age, excelled all the village youths in cricket, playing at bowls, swimming, and fishing. As a domestic servant she was invaluable, and this must be said to her credit, that whatever she undertook she did well and intelligently, giving undivided attention to the minutest details. From her sixteenth to twenty-second year she lived in service at Witheridge, Exeter, Taunton, and in the neighbourhood of London. Fond of finery she applied all her wages to the purchase of smart attire, and when on a visit to her parents she made great display of it, to the disgust of her father who said, "twadden vitty vor the likes o' she to be fettled up in such fal-lals and fantisheeny clothes." When he insisted that a certain smart white frock should be taken off, Mary refused to obey him, whereupon a quarrel arose which ended in her father taking the matter up in a furious temper, and beating her severely with a leathern strap. After this she decamped and was never seen again at Witheridge. While living with Mrs. Hillier, a fishmonger at Billingsgate, she met a man called Bakerstendt or Bickerstein, whom she is supposed to have married after only two months' acquaintance.

Whether she was married to this foreigner, or whether he seduced and afterwards deserted her, has not been clearly ascertained. There is little doubt, but that it was from him, who had probably associated with Malays or was acquainted with their language, that she picked up the Eastern words and idioms she used, as well as that knowledge of some Asiatic customs which so effectually enabled her to effect her imposition.

A year after her marriage (?) we find her living at Bristol with Eleanor Josephs. At first she did not pretend to be a foreigner, until one day she dressed herself in a turban, and went into the streets shouting at the top of her voice an unknown lingo. This was her first attempt to palm herself off as a stranger in a strange land.

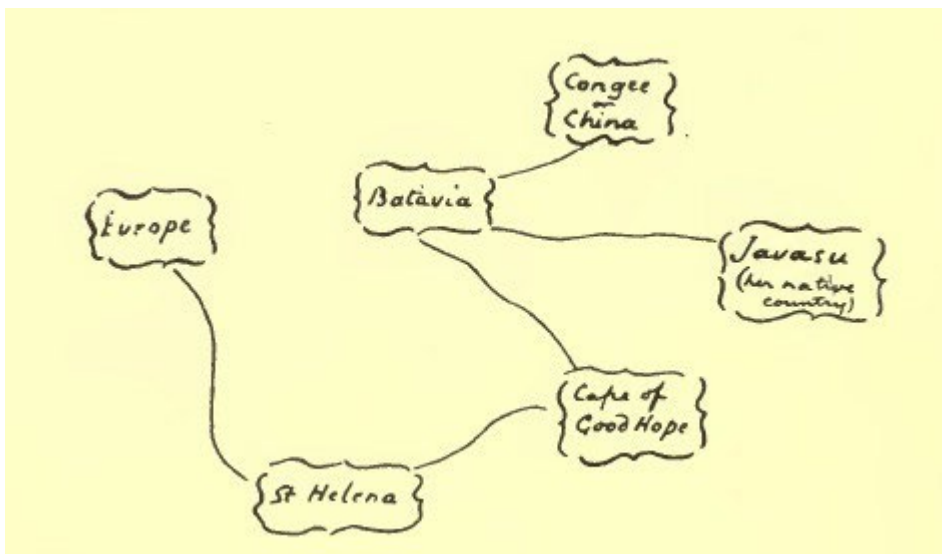
On Thursday evening, the 3rd of April, 1817, the overseer of the parish of Almondsbury, near Bristol, called at the residence of Mr. Samuel Warrail, a magistrate, to inform him that a young woman, speaking a foreign language, had entered a cottage in the village, and made signs that she wished to sleep under its roof. A manservant in the house knew several languages, therefore the woman was brought before him, but appeared not to understand a word he said. Her dress consisted of a black stuff gown, with a white muslin frill around the neck, a black cotton shawl fantastically arranged about her head, and a red checked shawl loosely and tastefully put on her shoulders in imitation of Asiatic costume.

The general impression from her manners and person was attractive and prepossessing. In height about 5ft. 2in., she had a small head, low forehead, black hair and eyes, short nose, pink cheeks; wide mouth, white gleaming teeth, lips large and full, a small round chin, and an olive complexion. Her hands were well formed, and so white that one would suppose they were unaccustomed to labour. Age about twenty-five years.

When offered food she covered her face with her hands, and appeared to repeat a prayer, bowing her head at the conclusion.

Mrs. Warrail took compassion on her loneliness and received her into her house as a guest. Upon being shewn books of travel, she intimated that the one descriptive of China was the country from which she came. Mrs. Warrall began to have suspicions that the woman was an impostor, and talked very seriously to her, begging her to speak the truth of herself. She pretended not to understand a word, and addressed Mrs. Warrall in her own tongue. Mrs. Warrall wrote her name upon paper, pronouncing it several times as she placed it before her, hoping that the woman would reveal her own, which she did by crying out “ Caraboo! Caraboo! ” pointing to herself.

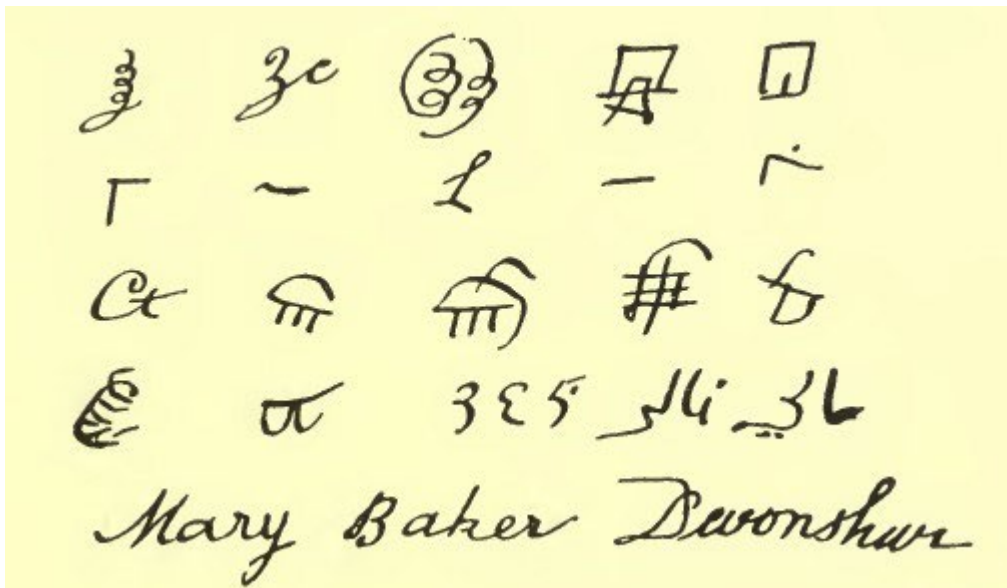
Upon some furniture being shewn to her, inlaid with Chinese figures, Caraboo made signs that they belonged to her country. She then drew the following chart of her voyage to Europe:



Her father's country was Congoe (China), her mother's was Batavia, her own, Javasu, of which she was the princess. Hereafter she was known as Caraboo, or the Princess Javasu. For several months she lived this picturesque lie. One gentleman who had made several voyages to the East Indies took great interest in her, and in the warmth of his anxiety to discover her history probably assisted her to emphasise more distinctly the imposture on the good people of Bristol and Bath.

She marked time by tying knots on a string in a peculiar manner, and by this means pointed out the periods and distances of her voyage. She said that in Congoe they wrote with a camel's hair brush or pencil and Indian ink. Here are a few of the signs she employed, which are simply Arabic characters which she might have found among Beckerstein's papers.

The gibberish language in which she made herself understood, was aided by gestures and animation of countenance which it is impossible to describe. It is singular that during her residence at Knowle, Bath, and Bristol she was never heard to pronounce a word of English. She had an astonishing command of countenance and complete self-possession. A gentleman tried to move her by flattery: he drew his chair close to hers, looked steadily and smilingly in her face, and said: "You are the most beautiful creature I ever beheld. You are an angel."



Not a muscle of her face moved, no blush suffused her cheek, and her countenance was a blank.

The bubble, however, was on the eve of bursting. Dr. Wilkinson, of Bath, determined to probe the mystery, and after making exhaustive enquiries about her, of persons with whom she was known to have lodged previous to her arrival at Almondsbury, discovered that she was none other than the veritable daughter of Thomas Wilcocks, the Witheridge shoemaker.

After this, the exposure of the deception practised on Mrs. Warrall was speedy and decisive. Mrs. Warrall went alone into a room with Caraboo, and told her of the damning proofs she had obtained of her being an impostor. She again tried in her gibberish to interest her benevolent friend by saying, "Caraboo, Toddy Noddy," etc., but could not succeed. Hereupon she acknowledged the cheat and begged that her parents should not be sent for. This was promised on condition that she would make a clean breast of the whole imposture and give details of her former life, to which she readily acceded.

A passage in the "Robert and Ann," under the care of Captain Robertson, was at once procured for her, and taking the name of Mrs. Mary Burgess, she sailed for, and lived many years at, Philadelphia.

The day before leaving Bristol she wrote the following letter to Mrs. Warrall, which shewed that Caraboo was not insensible of the great kindness and attention to her comfort and happiness which Mrs. Warrall unweariedly gave her.

This is a verbatim copy:

"Hon. Madam,

Friendship thou charmer of the mind thou sweet deluding ill the brightest moments mortals find and sharpest pains can feel fate has divided all our shares of pleasure and of pain in love the friendship and the cares are mixed and join again the same ingenious author in another place says tis dangerous to let loose our love between the eternal fair for pride that busy sin spoils all that we perform.

Mary Baker."

After several years residence in America she returned to England, and settled at Bristol, about the year 1849, where she and her daughter earned a precarious living by selling and applying leeches, still retaining the assumed name of Mary Burgess, *alias* Baker. She died at Bristol in 1864.

A vocabulary of a few words with their meanings made use of by Caraboo:

Alla Tulia - God

Samen - Heaven

Tarsa - Earth

Manjintoo - Gentlemen

Largor - Ladies

Juxto - Doctor

Kala - Time

Anna - Night

Mono - Morning

Vellee - Bed

Apa - Fire

Savee - Rain

Ake Brasidoo - Come to breakfast

Ake Dosi - Come to dinner

Ake Sacco - Come to supper

Pakey - Child

Savoo - Knife

Fosi - Fork

Toose - To swim

Mosha - A man

Raglish - A woman

Noutee - An orange

Zee - Tea

Archee - Potato

Mo - Milk

Suso- Sugar

Smachi - Cayenne

Tamah - Fowl

Rampue - Pigeon

ODE TO MOLLY BAKER *alias* PRINCESS CARABOO.

The two following Jeu d'esprits appeared during the period when this imposture formed the topic of general conversation at Bath and Bristol.

Oh Molly, what a wag thou art—
 So effectually to play the part
 Of wandering, friendless Caraboo,
 Bespeaks a talent few could boast
 Even from juggling India's coast—
 But prythee tell me—can it all be true?
 If thou when heathen Greek inditing,
 Didst rival Rapier in his writing—
 (So versatile thy nature,
 And sweetly plastic every limb)
 Like Roland *fence*, like Dolphin *swim*,
 Thou art indeed an interesting creature.
 Wert thou with all the men so shy,
 As ev'n thy beauteous hand deny
 In common salutation?
 Was there no tender *tete-a-tete*,
 Thy admirers thus to fascinate,
 Who puffed thy beauty through the nation?
 Thy sloe-black eyes, and teeth so white,
 (By Nature formed to charm or bite?)
 With lady-airs in plenty—
 Like opiates all the senses lull'd,
 Of reason and of vision gulled,
 Th' all-knowing Cognoscenti.
 When to the house-top prone to stray,
 And would'st to Alla-Tullah pray,
 Had'st thou no high priest near thee?
 I mean not that imperious sun
 Of reckless Juggernaut; but one
 Well pleased to assist, and hear thee?
 But where did'st learn (for Heaven's sake)
 To swim or dive, like duck or drake

When water-dogs pursue?
 And when for pure ablution quipp'd,
 Lurk'd there (as when Godiva stripped)
 No peeping Tom—or wanton Makratoo?
 Plague on that meddling tell-tale Neale,
 Eager thy history to reveal,
 And mar the pleasing fable:—
 Too sudden came the *denouement*
 Which proved thou art from down-along,
 Where dumplings grace each table.
 “Drat her pug-nose, and treacherous eyes,
 Deceitful wretch;” the doctor cries,
 (No more inclined to flattery)
 “When next I meet her (spite of groans)
 I’ll rive her muscles, split her bones
 With my galvanic battery.”
 But heed him not—for on my soul
 Whether at Bristol, Bath or Knole,
 I admired thy Caraboo.
 Such self-possession at command,
 The by-play great—the illusion grand:
 In truth—’twas everything but *true*.
 Then Molly take a friend’s advice
 (To make thy fortune in a trice),
 All wand’ring gypsy tricks resign—
 Fly to thy proper forte—the stage:
 Where thou in this half mimic age
 Princess of adtors would’st unrivall’d shine.
 From the *Bristol Mirror*, June 21st, 1817.

The following squib was circulated after the exposure of this arch-impostor’s deceptions, throughout Devon and Somerset.

CARABOO.

Oh! young Caraboo is come out of the west,
 In Frenchified tatters the damsel is dressed
 And, save one pair of worsted, she stockings had none,

She tramped half unshod, and she walked all alone:
 But how to bamboozle the doxy well knew;
 You ne'er heard of gipsy like young Caraboo.
 She staid not for river, she stopt not for stone,
 She swam in the Avon where ford there was none:
 But when she alighted at the gate,
 The dame and the doctor received her in state.
 No longer a gipsy, the club of *bas-bleu*
 To a princess converted the young Caraboo.
 So boldly she entered the W-----hall,
 Amongst linguists, skull-feelers, bluestockings and all.
 Sure never a hall such a galliard did grace,
 When she fenced with the doctor, so queer her grimace.
 But her host seemed to fret—though the doctor did fume
 Should any to question her titles presume.
 And 'twas currently whispered the best they could do,
 Was to send up to London the young Caraboo.
 The hint was enough;—as it dropt on her ear
 It ruined her hopes; it awakened her fear.
 So swift to the quay the fair damsel she ran.
 “Oh! take me, dear captain, away if you can.”
 She's aboard—they are off; “
 Farewell, Dr. Rampoo,
 They'll have swift ships that follow,” quoth young Caraboo.
 There was bustling 'mong dames of the W----- clan,
 The blue-stocking junto they rode and they ran,
 There was racing and chasing from Bath to the sea,
 But the bright Queen of Javasioo ne'er could they see,
 What a hoax on the doctor and club of *bas-bleu*,
 Did you e'er hear of gipsy like young Caraboo?
 Then spake the sage doctor, profoundly absurd,
 While the sly Caraboo answered never a word:
 “Art thou sprung from the moon, or from far Javasioo,
 Or a mermaid just landed, thou bright Caraboo? ”
 To these questions sagacious she answer denied,

Though hard was her struggle the laughter to hide,
 But since they decree me these titles so fine
 I'll be silent, eat curry, and taste not their wine;
 With this imposition I've nothing to do,
 These are fools ready made, said the young Caraboo.
 She looked at a pigeon—the dame caught it up;
 Caraboo had a mind on a pigeon to sup;
 She looked down to titter—she looked up so sly—
 With the bird in her hand, and the spit in her eye:
 She dressed it—she ate it—she called it Rampoo.
 This proves, swore the doctor, she's Queen Caraboo.

H. C. S.

Notes and Queries, June 3rd, 1865.

BAMPFYLDE-MOORE CAREW.

The King of the Gipsies.

Bampfylde-Moore Carew was the son of the Rev. Theodore Carew, rector of Bickleigh, Tiverton, Devon. Born, July 12th, 1690. At the age of twelve he was entered as a pupil at Old Blundell's School, Tiverton, where he formed the acquaintance of the sons of the best families in the county. At first he gave close application to study, and bid fair to make his mark in the world. His father had every reason to hope that at some future time he would succeed to the family living of St. Mary, Bickleigh.

Blundell's scholars at this period possessed a fine pack of fox-hounds, and Carew took frequent opportunities to indulge in sport at the expense of his studies. Besides strength of body and vigour of mind he possessed agility of limb, and a voice of such depth of sound that he could give the loudest halloo to the hounds of any man of his day. Dogs were attracted to him in a marvellous fashion, and in after years this mutual sympathy proved disastrous to our hero, who on this account suffered imprisonment several times.

It happened one day that a farmer coming to Tiverton market saw Carew standing at the school gateway, and knowing the latter's fondness for sport, acquainted him with the fact that a deer, with a collar around his neck, was harbouring in a field on Exeter Hill; whereupon Carew, Martin, Escott, Coleman, and a crowd of other Blundellians started to hunt it. This happened just before corn-harvest. The chase was hot and lasted several hours; they ran the deer many miles across fields of ripening grain, doing great damage. The deer proved to be a tame one, the property of Col. Nutcombe, of Clayhanger. Persons who sustained damage to their corn, complained to the headmaster of the havoc made. The culprits were so severely threatened that several absconded, Carew being one of the number. They made for a small wayside inn at Brickhouse, on the Bampton road, situated about a half-a-mile from the town. Here they fell in with a party of gipsies and remained in peculiar anti (Eccentric 2Debonian0. 151 their company the whole night, engaging in the wildest orgies. In the morning they were admitted as Romany members, each taking the necessary oaths and going through the requisite ceremonies.

It may be interesting to the reader to know that a recruit goes through various rites and takes certain oaths before being admitted a member of the fraternity.

A new name must be assumed, after which he takes the following oaths—

I, Bampfylde-Moore-Carew (or as the case may be), do swear to be a true brother; to obey the commands of the tawny prince; to keep his counsel; not to divulge the secrets of the brotherhood; will never leave the company; and observe and keep all times of appointment by night or by day, in every place whatsoever.

I will not teach anyone to cant, nor will I disclose our mysteries to them.

I will take my prince's part against all that shall oppose him or any of us.

I will not suffer him, or any of us, to be abused by strangers, but will defend him or them to the death.

I will not conceal aught I win out of private houses or elsewhere, but will give it for the benefit and use of all the company, &c.

Carew was an actor of the highest type, as is evidenced by the numberless opportunities he embraced to personate the leading men of the neighbourhood in which he found himself. By assuming the garb of a peasant, a beggar, an old woman, a soldier in distress, a maimed sailor, or whatever guise his fertile fancy dictated, he successfully deceived even his nearest relatives and wrung from them entertainment, gifts of money, clothes and any commodity he demanded.

On the death of Claude Patch, the king of the gipsies, Carew was, by a large majority of the brotherhood, elected his successor. He at once took up the government, but ran his kingly power on totally different lines from the former sovereign. Instead of living in idleness and luxury, depending on the members of the tribe for support, he started off on a round of adventure.

The knavish tricks and deceptions he successfully practised on his nearest relations and most intimate friends would be too numerous to chronicle in these pages. *A Life of Bampfylde-Moore Carew*, can, I think, be obtained at any bookseller's, and to lovers of humorous incidents would prove amusing.

Carew married about the year 1720, a Miss Gray, daughter of an apothecary, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, at Bath.

They had one daughter who married a Westcountry squire, by whom she had a numerous family of promising children.

After a life of beggary, adventure, and imprisonment, Carew returned to his birthplace at Bickleigh, where he resided two years previous to his death in 1758.

JOANNA SOUTHCOTT.

Joanna, daughter of William and Hannah Southcott, was born on April 10th, 1750, at Gittisham, Devonshire. Her father, a farm labourer, honest and hardworking, could give Joanna no better education than was to be had at the village dame's school: here she read the Bible with much attention and committed to memory as much as possible. In after life, during her "preaching days," she was thus enabled to apply texts of scripture to prove the truth of her doctrines.

Few persons have excited so much curiosity, or obtained more notoriety than Joanna Southcott. She aspired to be the mother of a second Messiah, going so far as to predict the date on which he should be born.

She affirmed that the “angels rejoiced at her birth,” in consequence of which it was her duty to turn her mind to religious subjects and to preach redemption to every soul. In 1790, she was employed as a workwoman in the shop of an upholsterer in Exeter. The master being a Methodist, many persons of that persuasion visited him: with these people Joanna easily ingratiated herself, and was by them held in great esteem. Under such conditions she began to expound her religious views and would enter into controversy with ministers, who were amongst the guests of her employer, taking upon herself the *role* of religious dictator. By declaring that she had visions of an extraordinary character she added to her importance, as she was supposed to be inspired beyond a common degree of human nature.

Considering herself “called of God,” she determined to take up the ministry as her future vocation. In 1792, she began her declarations, that, “the Lord had visited her and entered into a sacred covenant, the conditions of which He would reveal to her alone in a vision.”

To such a depraved state had she arrived, that she blasphemously declared that God appeared to her, not in “the beauty of Holiness,” not in “the Majesty of His Power,” not in “the Greatness of His Mercy,” but sometimes in the shape of a cat; and once as a “cup,” which she kicked to pieces.

After these mad assertions she called together a meeting of her followers, that these wonderful delusions might be discussed and explained. The whole assembly witnessed the following document:

I, Joanna Southcott, am clearly convinced that my calling is of God, and my writings are indited by his spirit; it is impossible for any spirit but an all-wise God that is wonderous in working, wonderous in wisdom, wonderous in power, wonderous in truth, could have brought round such mysteries so full of truth, as is in my writings: so I am clear in whom I have believed, that all my writings come from the spirit of the most High God.

Joanna Southcott.

Signed in the presence of fifty-eight persons (including Methodist preachers) who assented to the truth of the statement.

Joanna, in 1792, assumed the titles of “The Bride;” “The Lamb’s Wife;” “The Woman clothed with the Sun;” and intimated that in process of time she would become the mother of Shiloh, the second Messiah!!

From this time innumerable converts attached themselves to her, each of whom contributed to the *ways and means*, making Joanna’s finances ample for a luxurious mode of life.

One day, while sweeping out her employer’s shop in Exeter, she found a seal with J. S. engraved upon it; this she annexed, and hundreds of its impressions in wax were sold and worn as charms by her devotees. These “beatitudes” were purchasable at from twelve shillings to a guinea each.

The Joanna Southcottians swore never to shave until Shiloh came, and in consequence their beards grew to an enormous length. They were known as “The Bearded Men,” and were a terror to children.

Mrs. Sabatier of Exeter, was so shocked at Joanna’s strange errors and blasphemies that she addressed a letter to her, in the hope of leading her to see the folly and wickedness of her teaching. She requested replies to the following questions.

1st.—Does the voice reveal things, or enforce doctrines such as could not possibly have been discovered without the aid of this new revelation?

2nd.—Are all these things utterly free from error or contradiction?

3rd.—Are they of general importance and evident utility?

4th.—Have any events followed these predictions that lay beyond the reach of human forecast?

To these queries Joanna sent an incoherent reply: her letter will give a fair idea of the mental capacity of the writer, as well as a pretty accurate idea of the woman's religious teaching.

Exeter, *June 20, 1799.* Unnown Friend,

I shall answer your faithful letter with That Sincerity it deserves. I am a Constant member of the Church of England, but the Cruel usage I have met with from the Arch Deacon Moor, and some other Ministers made me not frequent St. Peter's. I have written to them Several letters, of the Greatest Blasphemy, that ever was wrote, if it was not, of God, for which they never reprov'd me neither would they here Me, to Know on what Grounds I had for my faith or fears. Now to your enquiries. The wind bloweth were it listeth, ye here the Sound thereof, but cannot tell from wence it cometh, or wither it goeth. So is every one born of the Spirit. Your first enquiry I answer possitively, it is impossible for Man by learning to find out what has been revealed to Me by the Spirit of inspiration concerning the Mistrys of the Bible. Your Second enquiry I answer. It is all to one purpose, what God designed at first, it is explained to Me, he will accomplish at last. Now cometh the fullfillment of the Gentiles, and the calling of the Jews, by the fullfillment of the Revelations, will the Jews be called Chaptr 12, 19, and the last. Thirdly, they are of general importance to all Mankind, they for the Condecension of the Lord to explain why he has done all things is explained to Me. Fourthly, I answer to the events that has followed. In 1792 I was fore told what was coming upon the whole earth, perfect As I then wrote, it has followed in this Nation and others, and they, for the End is not yet. Another thing. I am told what is in the Hearts and thoughts of Men Concerning Me. And how Ministers would act before I send them a letter. In 1792 I wrote of the Dearth of Provisions, the Distresses, of the Nations, and the War with France and Spain, it is too tedious mention all the particulars. I put in the hand of the Revd. Mr. Pumroy, in the beginning of 1797, what would happen in Italy, and perfect as it has happened, in England ever since. I may say no great event has happened, but what I am told of it before, and what is to happen before Christ peaceable Kingdom is established. I am at a Losst to account for the words saying others write for me. Do you mean I cannot write at All? All my writings are in my own hand, but when I send to Ministers, I have some one to copy them out for Me, as I cannot Write a fair hand for others to read. I believe I have answered most of your enquiry s as far as a Letter will permit, if you think proper to make known yourself, I am willing to lay every truth before you, and how these things came to me at first.

I am your sincere Friend,

Joanna Southcott.

P.S.—Please direct at Mr. Taylor's Cabinet Maker Exeter.

As late as 1860 a few of her disciples were living at Exmouth, Sidmouth, Sidbury, Sidford, and Exeter, each expecting Joanna's return to life and the fulfilment of her expectations.

On Monday, December 20th, 1814, Joanna died in London. A post mortem examination proved that a tumour was the cause of death. A prophecy of hers published in 1792, declared that the mother of Shiloh, previous to his birth, would be as one dead for four days, and at the end of that period would revive and the babe would be born.

In the *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, for November 19th, 1898, I read the following paragraph, which seems to me to be an interesting link with the past.

“An elderly man who calls himself ‘Judge Milton,’ and ‘The Promised Shiloh,’ has again made his appearance in the Wakefield district. The old man contends that he is entitled to house property near East Ardsley, built by the late Prophet, John Wroe, a leader of the followers of Joanna Southcott.”

Perhaps the following may be interesting, as shewing specimen of *the Hymns* used at Joanna’s Meetings.

I have said already, thou shalt have a son,
 Ere he can speak, all this shall sure be done,
 Great peace in England after this shall be
 Because the remnant shall believe in me, &c.
 The woman clothed with sun,
 Should make all nations quake,
 For now the mystery I’ll explain,
 The Revelation break.
 It is the Son that shall be born,
 Fatal to those that do him scorn;
 Because that I’ll uphold his land,
 That doth depise the Infant’s birth.

Collected from *Notes and Gleanings*, Exeter, 1892, and *Memoirs of Religious Impostors*, by Dr. M. Ackin, LL.D., London, 1821, and other sources.

THE NORTH DEVON SAVAGES.

Although much has already been written about the North Devon Savages, a short though painful narrative of their habits and manners may not be uninteresting.

The Cheriton family, fifty years ago, resided in the parish of Nymet Rowland, a hamlet sixteen miles from Exeter, situated in the very centre of the most picturesque part of our fair county.

The Doones mentioned by Mr. R. D. Blackmore, in *Lorna Doone*, had no connection whatever, with Devonshire, nor were the Gubbings, of whom Mr. Baring-Gould writes, in any way connected with the Cheritons, who owned a small freehold farm, valued at about £1500, which had been their inheritance for a great many years.

In the early days of their possession they were respectable, hardworking yeomen, living on and cultivating their estate to advantage. Then a son married badly, and the children of this union grew up idle and dissolute, consequently the farm was neglected and in a short time it fell into a low state of cultivation. Each successive generation sank lower in the social scale till a condition insensible to shame was reached.

The family lived in a most disreputable way. Their language was, as Tickler in his *Devonshire Sketches*, says, “too horribly foul for repetition: they poured forth copious streams of the dirtiest and most obscene words conceivable.”

A correspondent, who when a young man lived in the neighbourhood, tells me that no one could beat them at rough language, horseplay, and filthy discourse. They were a disgrace to the neighbourhood and a nuisance to their neighbours. One day, when passing the house, he was accosted by a woman of the tribe, who called him disgusting names, pelted him with mud and stones, performed indescribable offensive acts, and finally chased him brandishing a hay fork, with which she would have undoubtedly assaulted him had he not beaten a hasty retreat.

The fame of these people spread through and beyond the county. Many inquisitive persons went to Nymet Rowland to get a peep at the "Savages." One man, more curious than the general public, approached too near the house, and was at once pounced upon by a couple of Amazons, who demanded a reason for his visit. "Ladies," said he "I have lost my way, will you be so good as to put me on the right road to Dartmoor?" "Aw, ess, til be sure, replied Miss Cheriton, "come thease yer way an' I'll shaw'e.

She took him into the adjoining yard for the ostensible purpose of directing him, and the unsuspecting wayfarer, venturing too near the edge of the horse pond in following his guide, was suddenly thrust into the filthy liquid, as a "There, thicky's the way til Dartymoor and be---til you," fell on his ears.

The farmhouse and outbuildings were originally trim and well kept, but had been gradually allowed to reach the last stage of dilapidation. The thatch was stripped from the rafters, and the rooms below received all the rain which fell, the wind played havoc with, and carried away every scrap it could dislodge. The windows had long been denuded of glass, and in winter were stuffed with bundles of hay or straw to protect the inmates from the severity of the weather; the air had free passage from basement to roof. A person standing in what was at one time the kitchen, could see the clouds passing and the birds flying above the roof. The doors were nowhere. The living room was almost destitute of furniture, and in place of seats a hole had been dug in the lime-ash-floor in front of the fireplace, which was on the hearth. Into this hole the legs of the members of the family rested as they sat on the bare floor around the fire.

In this hovel resided as many Cheritons, men, women, and children, as could find resting-places; the surplus members of the family found shelter and repose in holes cut into hayricks and woodstacks.

The patriarch of the tribe, Christopher Cheriton, slept at night, and reclined during the greater part of the day in solitary state, within the friendly shelter of a cider cask well bedded up with hay and dried ferns. A more primitive state of things could not possibly be found anywhere.

Their land being freehold no one dared interfere with the family so long as they kept upon their own ground. Many strong efforts were made to clear them out of their holding but without success, and for many years these disgraceful conditions continued.

Over their social life one would wish to draw a curtain, for they regarded not the holy rites prescribed by the Church, nor the authority of bishops, archdeacons, or civil laws. They had all things in common, and multiplied into a large family without marriage. Their conduct, habits, manners, and language, made them a terror and a nuisance to their immediate neighbours. Their misdeeds were the cause of their making frequent appearances before the magistrates in the local police courts. The surrounding farmers, after a time forbore to summon them as their ricks, stacks, barns, and homesteads were fired. By whom? None could tell, though pretty shrewd guesses were levelled at the Cheritons. Their larder was at all seasons well filled. Game and every portable kind of dairy and farm produce found a way to it, brought thither by the sons, who were noted poachers and purloiners of other men's belongings.

They baked three kinds of bread, namely, black or barley bread for the men servants, whole wheaten meal bread for the family, and white bread for the children.

The only persons who dared venture to visit them with impunity, were Lady Portsmouth and the Revd. and Mrs. Gutteries. This was in 1870-3.

A former rector of this parish, a tall robust man, standing six foot, two inches, in his stockings, whenever he passed the premises was assailed with showers of stones and inexpressibly revolting abuse.

The property has long ago changed owners, and of the fate of the Cheritons very little is known. The old folks are dead, and the younger ones have emigrated or married, thus breaking up a family notorious for evil in all its forms.

VIII. Stories

Here are a few stories which have been told me by old persons in various parts of the county. Some are extracted from newspaper reports, and for permission to use them I am indebted to the kindness of the editors of the *Tiverton Gazette*, the *Devon and Exeter Gazette*, the *Western Morning News*, the *North Devon Herald*, and the *Yorkshire Weekly Post*.

The exucutors of the late Mr. Elias Tozer (better known as "Tickler," author of *Rambles on Dartmoor*) have allowed me to glean from his pages. To very many generous private correspondents too, I am under great obligations for the large amount of information, and many singular narratives which they have voluntarily sent me.

One or two trifling incidents are recorded from personal observation.

I think in themselves they give one a clear insight to the quaint characteristics, the modes of thought, and bent of imagination of our rustic friends.

With few exceptions Devonians are free-spirited, shrewd, genial, daring, laughter-loving and kindly.

They are ever ready to believe in the supernatural, and repeat (sometimes, I fear, exaggerate) their own ghostly experiences.

An old man living in South Devon, once told me that as he was one night returning from Starcross to a farm about two miles off, as he passed Easton Wood he had "zeed the devil hiszel azitting pon tap o' a gaet-pawst. Th' eyes aw'n was like two gert glazing tay sassers, and I urned fit to break my neck till I got purty vur from he," he said.

A day or two after this, I met the old man's son of whom I enquired for his father.

"Aw' mum," said he, "'e idden vitty 'et, a'n't agot awver th' fright he got tuther night. He zeth 'e zeed th' evil wan, up in Easton Wood, wi eyes blazing like a bull's-eye-lantern. He hissed and tised to 'n. There was hundreds of little devils dancing all about in th' blue hell-flames. Poor old father was that scared that 'e cant tell a 'awk from a 'andsaw (heronshaw). Poor old father, 'e es in a brave fizz 'et."

"Yes," I replied, "don't you think if you could persuade him to *pass by* 'The Ship,' at Cockwood, instead of *going in*, he would see less of the old one?"

"Ess'm, mayhap 'e widden zee th' dowl again if he stapped gwaine there."

One sees by this, how very different the son's tale was from the father's. The whole thing was wonderfully elaborated, and there is no doubt as it journeyed through the taprooms of Cockwood, Starcross, and Dawlish, it still farther grew in hideousness of detail.

The marvellous tales of supernatural visitations, death omens, apparitions, charms for healing the sick and the bewitched, with cursings and blessings, would fill many volumes. I can only furnish a few examples and hope they may prove interesting to the reader.

One dear old country woman, who was never tired of telling me all the witch lore she could collect, one day, said, "Ave I askeed ee missus by telling ee thease yer discoose? If zo be I've a gallied ee, I be main put about, but whot I du tell 'e is true. Ess fy tez I Ess by gor missus! Ess fy!"

A BISHOP'S ADVENTURE. *April*, 1872.

Dr.--recently held a visitation at Torrington, North Devon, and while his carriage was being harnessed for the return journey to Barnstaple, intimated that he would walk on. The bishop took the old hilly road, which is now but little used, and the coachman, unaware of this fact, drove off, *via* Bickford, quite in another direction. For five miles his lordship trudged on, and becoming fatigued, and seeing no sign of carriage, on arriving at Newton Tracey he asked a respectable publican and farmer there to give him a lift. Boniface had a cart, but the cart was unlicensed, and he pleaded this objection against complying with Dr.-----'s wish. But the bishop was equal to the emergency; he was desirous to proceed, and would pay the cost of a license. This anxiety aroused the publican's suspicions, who rejoined that if his visitor "would zit down and take a drap ov zummut 'e wid go til Barum and get a lishens." But for this preliminary the bishop could not wait and urged his host to harness his cart at once, and take out a license on reaching Barnstaple. More convinced than ever of the character and occupation of the pedestrian, Boniface broke out, emphasizing his denunciations with strong expletives. "I know thee. Thee art wan ov they supervisor fellers that be alwes agwaine about the country, a-trying tu trap poar men awver their lishenses and their carts." The astonished prelate mildly endeavoured to assuage the wrath of the irate publican, by the statement that he was the Bishop of Exeter. "Tez a d---lie and nothing of the zort," retorted the other, "yu want til trick me, zames yu did my neighbour tother day. Why, Bill Smith was afined five pound and yu wan'th tu git me intu the zame box, but I'm burned if yu du." So the bishop had again to sally forth, until he was picked up about four miles from his destination by the carriage, which had meanwhile been sent out in quest of him from Barnstaple. The publican chuckled over his own cuteness in doing the supervisor, and to a friend who called a few days later, he narrated the incident with great glee. "I knawed," said he, "who the chap was J He was a-dressed up like a zort of genelman varmer with a pair of black gaiters and breeches, and a rummy zort of a hat 'pon his head; but he didden git awver me, I cude zee by the twinkle of his eye he was wan of they excise chaps and he wanted to zar me zames he did Bill Smith. He, poor blid, was fined five pound tuther day for just a-taking his missus who'd been bad for just a little bit of a turn round a bit." Shortly after, Boniface learnt the true state of the case, when he said, "Bless my sawl, what a fule I've abin, mayhap if I'd dued what his lordship axed me, he mid a-made me Dean of the Katheydral! "

Slightly altered from report in the *Tiverton Gazette*.

SALLY THE GUZE.

Before a West-country bench, Samuel Scrane was charged with stealing fowls from Mr. Grose, geese from Mr. Lambshead, ducks from Mr. Vellacott, and pigeons from Mr. Cobbledick.

Prosecutors proved missing the poultry, and Lambshead positively identified his grey goose.

The following amusing statements were made in Court.

Lambshead: Yer 'onour I elide swear til my dear old grey guze.

Magistrates' Clerk: How could you do that?

Lambshead: Cuz if I cal'th she, her'll knaw my voice and answer me back.

Magistrates' Clerk: By what name do you call her? Lambshead: Why, zir, her rayle name is Sarah, but zometimes us cal'th 'er Sallie; her knaweth uther wan of her names, and cometh when her's called, like a dog wid.

Magistrates' Clerk: Did you call her?

Lambshead: Cal 'er? Ess, I did, and 'er knawed me direckly. And 'er answered me back wi'a zoart of a tissy. That's 'er language you must know. Why 'er spoak so natteral as a curschin wid—that's zo var's 'er cude.

Magistrates' Clerk: Tell us more about it, Mr. Lambshead, exactly what you did and what Sarah did. We find this most interesting.

Lambshead: Well, sir, I went to Scrane's 'ouze and when I corned there Scrane's wife zed to me, zed she, " Well, Lambshead, what's want yer? " " Well," zed I, " I wants my guze, Sallie." " Well, than," zed she, " 'er bant yer. I ant a zeed nort o' thee old guze Sally, and be damned tu ee." " Well, zed I, yu mid be civil I zim, and dawnt use noan o' yer cussing tu me, ver I'll be d---d if I'll stand cussing and thieving intu the bargain. Zo, I jist made so bold as to walk strite dru th' ouze intu backouze, and there, I zeed amazing sight of poultry, and ruckied down in the far cornder was my poor old Sally, lukiing so wisht as Simon Fluke's owl. The very minute 'er zeed me up er jumped and hissed and tised fit til bust 'erzel with joy. So I zed, " Sallie, Sallie, m' dear, be that yu? Then 'er died slap across the 'eads of all the rest of the ducks and vovls that was there, and corned and crawped down by my veet like a dog wid. I cudden 'elp crying, I cudden, so I tuked her up in my arms and was gwaine til car 'er away with me when Scrane's wife corned and hailed her away from me and scat 'er vore intu the yard. Well, I urned arter 'er and cald til 'er: Sallie, Sallie, Sallie, come yer my purty! and 'er rinned and flapped 'er wings til me in a minute, 'er did, and I walked strite away out tu the gate and old Sallie arter me atissing and drawing abroad her wings fit to bust 'erzel, I tellee!

Magistrates' Clerk: This seems far too ridiculous, for belief. Did any one witness the mutual recognition between you and the goose.

Lambshead: Whativer be telling about, sir? You spayketh so fine there's no understanding aw'ee, but I spose you be axing, who 'twas zeed my guze, Sallie, recognise me? Why then, when I went to Scrane's 'ouze, Billy Chubb and Nick Stradles went with me and they both aw'm zeed Sallie rin til me.

Magistrates' Clerk: Did you, Chubb, see the goose when she recognised Lambshead?

Billy Chub: Ess, by Gor, I did, and twas a sight for sore eyes, I kin tellee, for when thickee old gen-nelman went vore and caled she, 'er urned til 'n a hissing and a tissing as if twas 'er father. When us loked into the back-ouze nobody ctide tell wan guze from 'tother, but the very instant 'er master spoke, 'er up and urned tu'h and rubbed 'er 'ead agin his legs so loving as a cheel. Mr. Lambshead mutched 'er down awver 'er head and neck and 'er was so plaized as punch, 'er was.

Lambshead: There now, zir, didden I tellee so? 'tez so true as the Gospel, tez; I've ah'ad she for purty nigh ten year and I widden take ten pound for 'er. Why, my old 'oman lov'th 'er so well's 'er du inny of our chillern. I mayns til take 'er 'ome wi' me and keep 'er so long's 'er liv'th, ess fy! Er'll sit in the chimbly cornder warm and comferble-like.

Magistrates' Clerk: I wish to see this goose. Lambshead: I'll fetch 'er vore, sir.

Hereupon the goose was produced and placed in a far corner of the Court. When Lambshead called Sallie, Sallie, she rushed towards him clearing every impediment. Whereupon Scrane was convicted of the theft, and Lambshead left the Court with Sallie comfortably tucked under his arm.

Somewhat modified from report in *Western Morning News*.

ECCENTRIC NORTH DEVON PARSON.

Passen F. B. was asked to officiate at R. A., seven miles east of Southmolton, for the Rev. J. S., in the days when “all kinds of music” made up a village choir. The psalm was given out, and the musicians began to tune their instruments. Unfortunately, the fiddles and the bass-viol would not be obliging, and some time elapsed before they were in accord. Impatient at the delay, the passen leant over the reading desk and throwing his arms wildly over his head, shouted at the very top of his voice, “Hark-away, Jack! hark-away, Jack! Tally-ho! Tally-ho!”

WANTED A PUP.

A country vicar, once went to fill the pulpit of a colleague who was temporarily absent from his parish. After the service he thought he would gauge the effect of his discourse by the opinion of that very fair index of public feeling, the clerk. “Well, Rogers,” he said, “did you like my sermon?” “I did, sir,” was the reply. “I hope it was not too long?” he anxiously enquired. “No yu wadden til long awver ’n,” rejoined Rogers. “Well, then,” said the vicar, “I hope I was not too short.” “No,” answered Rogers, “ner’et til short nuther, yu was jist about right.” The vicar felt relieved, and said, “I am glad of that because, to tell you the truth, while I was writing that sermon my dog got hold of four folios and destroyed them, and I was afraid it would be too short.” Rogers scratched his head and for a moment was very thoughtful, and then said, confidentially, “Lor! now, zir, did ’er ate um all up? I warndee yu widden mind letting our passen ’ome yer, have a pup of your dug widdee now? for he du mappery a darned sight til long til plaise us, most times.”

THE ANGRY CHOIR-LEADER.

The following is interesting though perhaps a little startling. Just sixty years ago, string instruments did duty in the village choirs before the introduction of harmoniums and American organs. The leader of the particular choir, of which I write, was an old man of iron will. He kept the village inn, and in his sanded public parlour, the four or five fiddlers met once a week to practice the psalms and hymns for the next Sunday’s service. He played the bass-viol, and was master of the choir. The group of fiddlers with their quaint everyday working costumes in that old room, lighted by two or three tallow dips in upright iron-candlesticks, would have made a capital model for an old Dutch panel picture. On Sunday they occupied with the choirmen and children the gallery at the west end of the church, and from this position the master of the choir gave out the psalm or hymn which was to follow. The clerk had nothing at all to do with that part of the service.

One Sunday morning the clerk was suddenly taken ill, and a substitute had to be hastily found. He came from C., some four miles off, and arrived only after the church was filled and the service had actually begun. He could, of course, know nothing of the psalms or hymns appointed for the day, but thinking it would be perfectly safe, he burst forth with “Let us sing to the praise and glory of God the old hundredth Psalm; ‘All people that on earth do dwell’” The old leader in the gallery was fairly taken aback at the strange intrusion and substitution of another psalm for the one which he and his men had prepared. Stuttering with annoyance, he jumped up and shouted out, “D---n”—ahem—“All people that on earth do dwell! My soul shall magnify the Lord, 85th Psalm,” and before the parson and congregation could recover from their astonishment, the bows of the fiddles swept across the strings, the voices followed, and all were on the right road.

THE PARSON AND CLERK ROCKS, AT DAWLISH.

On the south-east coast of Devon, about twelve miles from Exeter, lies the picturesque town of Daw-lish. It possesses a long stretch of sandy beach, which encloses a small bay of the English Channel. At the southern extremity may be seen two rocks, lying a short distance

from the mainland, known as the Parson and Clerk. The story of these rocks, as told by the gossips of Dawlish is as follows:

A certain bishop of Exeter fell sick, and thinking that the pure air of this charming village would restore his lost energy took up for a time his residence there.

An ambitious priest, whose aim was to succeed to the See in the event of his superior's demise, frequently rode to Dawlish accompanied by his clerk to make enquiries after the condition of the dying bishop. The clerk was usually the priest's guide; but one night, in a tremendous storm, while crossing Haldon they lost their way, and worn out with the long journey found themselves miles out of the beaten track, The priest boiled over with rage. He abused the clerk, and exclaimed "I would rather have the Devil himself, than you, for a guide." At this moment a horseman rode by and volunteered to pioneer them to Dawlish. They thanked him and jogged comfortably along at his side, unmindful of time, distance, or invalid. The storm still raged and the long ride had sharpened their appetites, therefore, as they approached a brilliantly-lighted mansion, they gladly accepted the stranger's invitation to partake of his hospitality. They enjoyed a sumptuous repast, and indulged freely in the good wine provided so lavishly by their host.

In the midst of their merriment news was brought that the bishop was dead. The priest was eager to be off to secure the first chance of promotion, now that the bishop was out of the way. So master and man mounted their steeds and made ready to depart. But the horses were not anxious to go. They were whipped and spurred but all in vain. "Devil take the brutes," exclaimed the priest in his rage. "Thank you, sir," said their host, "Gee up." The horses did "gee up!" with a vengeance, and galloped madly for the cliffs: then over they went, that of the clerk first, then followed the parson and his steed plump on their backs—and there they are to this day—looking sea-ward (sea), monuments of disappointed ambition.

ROMANTIC INCIDENT IN A WESTCOUNTRY WORKHOUSE.

The workhouse at Taunton has been the scene of a romantic incident. On October 13th, 188—, a middleaged man belonging to a neighbouring parish, arrived at the workhouse, his object being to find a housekeeper. Seeing the master, he said he had just lost his wife, and was in an awkward fix, as he had a situation and a cottage, but no one to cook his "grub." At the time of the conversation an inmate of the house, a widow, who had been allowed to store her furniture in an outhouse at the Union, was scrubbing the dining-hall floor, and to her the master put the question: "Would she like to interview the man with the view of becoming his housekeeper?" An affirmative answer was readily given, and the couple were left alone to settle the terms of the engagement. At the end of a half-an-hour, they requested the attendance of the master, who found them addressing each other familiarly as Willie and Annie. They asked him to draw up an agreement, setting forth that Willie would support Annie and her two children in return for her services as housekeeper. To please them the master complied, and Willie and Annie at once attached their signatures. Then in the presence of the woman, Willie, addressing the master, confessed to having a liking for Annie, and after much coy beating about the bush, he unbosomed himself, thus: "Well, ef 'er's aminded I'll go down an' gie notice to git married zo zoon's can be." With the hesitation of etiquette the engaged housekeeper, who, in a business-like fashion, had pocketed the agreement, said she would like to have until Monday to consider the proposal. After affectionately embracing the lovers parted. On Saturday, the object of this spontaneous passion, took to the master of the house a letter which she had received from Willie, and which was so affectionately worded that it might well be termed a love-letter. On Monday, Annie having consented, the couple and the two children drove off in a wagon, which Willie had brought for the purpose, the

woman's furniture being taken away in the same conveyance. Before leaving, they thanked the master very warmly and intimated that they were going to be married without delay.

From *Tiverton Gazette*.

WANTED—A WIFE.

That the "tender passion" lingers in old age, and flourishes amid uncongenial surroundings, may be proved from the following letter of a veteran of eighty, sent to a Devonshire Board of Guardians.

To

Mr. Mashell Governor, Master and Esq. Sir, and Gentlemen of the Committee.—

I, Abram Stiles have been your servant now 8 years, and desire to thank you all for your kindness to me, and now Gentlemen, I am going to say I have buried my Wife 14 year, and have been a poor Wanderer sence; as I have not got a soul Living on earth that I can speak to, but Gentlemen sence I have been to the old Woman with my papper there is a female that noticed me as soon as I went, and she said, ¹¹I believe that man is come to be my Husband." I never spoke for sometime until I looked at her and said, " Do you reelly thenk so? " She said, "Yes, at Least, I Hope so." I said, " Well if you will Consent to be my Wife I will pledge myself to make you a Happy Husband if the Gentlemen will allow us to be married." We shall be very happy I am sure as we are Both their servants, and quite satisfied we are able and willing to do anything that Comes in our way, and we desire nothing in this world but to marry and live Happy together. The female is 63 years of age, and I am turned 80 years and Both well and hearty able and willing to do anything that Comes and now Gentlemen we pray you to grant this our only Hope of our Blessed Comfort; we also desire to continue in our Situations, as we do not Desire any change. We are perfectly satisfied with our positions and desire to be thankfull. Gentlemen I will appear before you on Friday next.

We remain,

Your Humble Servants,

Abram Stiles, 80 years old.

Amy Gloyns, 63 years old.

Despite this very pathetic appeal the Guardians did not sanction the union of the happy pair.

Tiverton Gazette, Nov. 1893.

MR. NOAH.

Waiting at a railway station, not far from Crediton, on the London and South Western Railway, I overheard the following conversation between two country men. Being much amused I laughed heartily, when a strange woman sitting at my side on the form, remarked to the friend sitting next to her. " Ot ivver aileth she? poar blid I rakkon 'er's ago crackee! "

Here is the dialogue:

Farmer Tom: Gude marnin' til 'e maister Tapper, be yti agwaine arresting than?

Farmer George: Ess I zim, I be agwaine tu du zom-njat tu't, tweel clear up a bit I 'opes bimbye and chell try tu car the wets tartarnune (this afternoon).

Tom: Shudden winder ef tweedden clear up: hike's off us 'ad 'ad 'nuf rayn latterly.

George Well, ess, thort us wuz in vur 'nuther vlid. I jist rakkoned ol' Maister Noah wuz up tu zome ov es anticks again, an' wuz agwaine tu gie us 'nuther vlid 'pon's awn count. Darned ef I weedden shelten ef cude come crass 'n.

HALLELUJAH!

An otter took refuge from the hounds under the stump of an overhanging tree on the banks of the Exe at Bickleigh, near Tiverton. The hounds, foiled in their desire to catch the animal, set up a most glorious baying, whereupon the Rev. J. B-----, a noted son of Nimrod, exclaimed, "Tell about music du ee? Tell about your oratorios! Did ee ivver yer a sweeter Hallelujah than that m'bwoys? No tanoby. All the arguns in the wordle wunt bayte that! I'll be burned if they will! What say you, sir?"

SIMONSBATH.

In the centre of the extensive forest of Exmoor, lies the picturesque little village of Simonsbath, which is reputed to be ten miles from everywhere. Here in ancient times the limpid Barle, as now, flowed lazily in summer towards its sister stream the Exe, which it joins in the vicinity of Dulverton. Slowly wending its way through the country of the Red Deer, it forms many a deep pool, sheltered by clumps of alder, while its banks are rich in king fern and bracken. Simon, the king of the western country, often came to disport himself, with his followers, in the refreshing waters. One day, the sovereign ventured too far from his attendants and being seized with cramp sank, and was drowned before assistance arrived. Hence the name of the hamlet—Simonsbath.

IX. A Few Old Songs

PURTY JANE.

'Twuz down by the river I fust met my purty Jane,
 Upon a zummer's eveling when the zin wuz on the wane,
 Her little veet they twinkled as her trip'd o'er meaders bright,
 And my heart 'e whisper'd zoftly,
 "Bill, did'st ivver zee such zight? "

Not nivver in my born days did I zee a maid zo fair,
 Her made my heart go pity-pat and her riz on end my hair.
 And I axed her vur to come back but her cudden then, her zed,
 And on her sped like lightning, across the level mead.
 I yerd the birds a-zinging, as I corned up dru the lane,
 And I thort they zed " Bill! Bill! thee shet have thy purty Jane,"
 Ah! 'twuz music sweeter var, than I ivver yerd avore,
 It often gied me comfort digging peat pin tap the moor.
 Wan Zummer Zinday morning when the bells wuz ringing sweet,
 I meet my love a-coming up old Chagford's pleasant street,
 I tuked courage there and then, and I up and told my love,
 And her zed, " Dear Bill, I'll have thee," and her spoke jist like a dove.
 But her nivver lived to do it vur her pined away and died,
 Jist on the day, her zed her'd be my bonny little bride.
 Now often when I'm walking down in yonder meaders bright,
 I zee her right avore me, like an angel in the light.
 And I yer her sweet voice zaying " Bill, Bill, be not afeared,
 Thee shet zee in heavenly places thy loving little maid,
 Oh! 'tez that which gives me peace as I walks in in field and lane,
 Vur if I live a true life, I shall zee my purty Jane.
 Elias Tozer, Exeter.

THE TRUE LOVERS.

Lord Level he stood at his own castle gate,
 Combing his milk-white steed,
 When up came Lady Nancy Bell

To wish her lover good speed—speed—speed,
 To wish her lover good speed.
 “Where are you going, Lord Lovel?” she said,
 “Oh, where are you going?” said she,
 “I’m going my Lady Nancy Bell,
 Strange countries for to see—see—see,
 Strange countries for to see.”
 “When will you come back, Lord Lovel?” she said,
 “When will you come back to me?”
 “In a year or two, or three at most,
 I’ll return to my Lady Nancy—cy—cy,
 I’ll return to my Lady Nancy?”
 But he hadden been gone but a year and a day
 Strange countries for to see,
 When languishing thoughts came into his head
 Lady Nancy Bell to see—see—see,
 Lady Nancy Bell to see.
 So he rode, and he rode on his milk-white steed,
 Till he came to Kenton town,
 When he heard St. Andrew’s Church bells ring,
 And the people all mourning around—round—round,
 And the people all mourning around.
 “Oh, what is the matter?” Lord Lovel, he said,
 “Oh, what is the matter?” said he,
 “A Lord’s Lady is dead,” an old woman said,
 “And some call her the Lady Nancy—cy—cy,
 And some call her the Lady Nancy.”
 So he ordered the grave to be opened wide,
 And the shroud to be turned down,
 And then he kissed her clay-cold lips,
 Till the tears came trickling down—down—down,
 Till the tears came trickling down.
 Lady Nancy died as it might be to-day,
 Lord Lovel he died as to-morrow,
 Lady Nancy, she died out of pure, pure grief,

Lord Lovel, he died out of sorrow—sorrow— sorrow,

Lord Lovel he died out of sorrow.

Lady Nancy was laid in the cold churchyard,

Lord Lovel was laid in the choir;

And out of her bosom there grew a red rose,

And out of his a sweet brier—rier—rier,

And out of his a sweet brier.

They grew and they grew to the church steeple top,

And then they could grow no higher,

So there they entwined in a true-lovers-knot,

For all true lovers to admire—mire—mire,

For all true lovers to admire.

Sung by Mr. Ted Ward, at a harvest supper, September, 1893.

The following appeared in an Exeter newspaper, in May, 1844, and was attributed to the pen of Mr. Henry Baird, a popular writer of poems in the Devonshire Dialect, generally known as Nathan Hogg. John and Moll Chawbacon's visit to Exeter, on the occasion of the opening of the Great Western Railway, May 1st, 1844.

Lor Johnny! lor Johnny! now whatever is that?

A-rinning along like a 'oss upon wheels,

Tez so bright as your buttons, and so black's your hat,

And jist listen, Johnny, and hear how he squeals!

Dash my old buttons, Moll!

I'll be darned if I know,

Us was fools to come yer, and run into danger.

Let's be off, he spits fire, lor! do let us go.

And he holds up his head like a guze to a stranger,

I be a bit frightened, but let us bide yer,

And hark how he puffs, he coughs, and he blows,

He idden unlike the old cart-oss last year,

Brokenwinded—and yet only zee how he goes '

He rinn'th upon ladders, with they things like wheels,

Or hurdles, or palings put down on the ground.

But why do they let him stray out of the fields?

'Tez a wonder they don't clap en into the pound,

He can't be alive, John! I don't think he can;

I bant sure of that Moll, for just look now,
 He breathes like a 'oss, or a snivelled old man,
 And hark how he's bust out a-coughing. Good now!
 He never could draw all they waggons d'ye see
 If he lived upon vatches, or turmets or hay;
 Why they waggons be filled up wi' people—they be;
 And do 'e but look how they'm laughing away,
 And look to they chillern a rinning about
 With their mouths full of gingerbread there by the shows
 And see to the scores of fine ladies turned out
 And gentlemen all in their best Sunday clothes,
 And look to the house made of canvas so smart,
 And the dinner sot out wi' such bustle and fuss.
 But us brought a squab-pie wi' us in the cart,
 And a firkin of cider, so that's nort to us.
 I tellee what tez, Moll—this yer is my mind,
 The wordle's gone mazed so sure as you'm born,
 Tez so true as I'm living—and that they'll find,
 With their hosses 'pon wheels, that don't live upon corn.
 I widden go homewards by and by to the farm,
 Behind such a creature, when all's said and done—
 We've travelled scores of miles, but we never got harm,
 For there's nort like a market cart under the sun.

YOUNG ROGER OF THE VALLEY.

Young Roger of the valley,
 One morning very soon,
 Put on his best apparel,
 His hose and Sunday shoon;
 And he a-woeing went,
 To bonnie buxom Nell,
 Says he, "My dear, can you fancy I?
 For I likes thee wondrous well,
 For I likes thee wondrous well."
 "Young man, you are quite mistaken,"

The damsel quick replied,
 "I'm not in such a hurry,
 To be a ploughman's bride,
 For I do live in hopes
 To marry a farmer's son."
 "If this be so," said Roger, then, "Sweet mistress I have done."
 "Go take your farmer's son,
 With all my honest heart,
 Although my name be Roger,
 Who ploughs, and drives a cart,
 I need not tarry long, I soon can get a wife,
 There's buxom Joan 'tis very well known,
 She loves me like her life."
 "And what of buxom Joan,
 Can't I please thee just as well?
 What! though your name be Roger
 And mine be bonnie Nell?
 For I have fifty shillings."
 The money it made him smile;
 He drew his chair and said,
 "My dear, I'll chat with you awhile."
 "If you have fifty shillings,
 Why need we longer stay;
 But only say you're willing,
 And let's appoint the day.
 For I have fifty more-----
 The money a cow will buy,
 We'll join our hands in wedlock's bands,
 And who like Nell and I?"
 From the *Western Morning News*.

THE OLD MAN'S SONG.

Twuz zixty years and more, when fust I meet my Grace,
 Among her father's apples that shined jist like her vace.
 Us courted fifteen year, aw! twuz a happy time,

And then us was a-wedded, us both was in our prime.
 Us wuz married in a church upon a Zummer's day,
 When all the birds wuz zinging and ivvery thing wuz gay,
 There wuz father there, and mawther, and likewise uncle Ben,
 Aunt Jane and cousin Phylie and Bob and Betty Venn.
 A cruel lot ov youngsters, from all the country round,
 Broft down all zorts of things our happy hearts to cheer.
 And when the ring wuz on, and the clerk had zed "Amen,"
 Who duee think fust jumped vore? Why, rough old uncle Ben.
 And he keesed Grace rayther zmaert, I didden much mind *he*,
 But twadden quite zo proper in Young Varmer Wil-yum Lee!
 I keep'd me veelings down, which wuz rising purty vast,
 I zed, " dear Grace, I 'opes he'll be the last."
 Her squeegeed my arm and meaned tweed be,
 I also dued the zame,
 And then us went to dinner; and arterwards

Us lived like turtle doves all dru many happy years.
 And reared up thirteen chillern: ov cuse they broft their kears;
 But then they've turned out well and all be glide to me.
 As their mawther on her death-bed, charged um vur to be.
 Vor when the birds wuz zinging, as 'pon our wedding day,
 Jist like a little babby, her calmly passed way,
 And zometimes when I comes yer there breathes about the place,
 Such blessed memories ov her, I zim I zees her vace,
 And clasps her hand, and yers her voice, a zaying unto me,
 "Cheer up, dear Jeames, be not cast down, Thee zune shall come to me."
 Elias Tozer, Exeter.

DADDY FOX.

Daddy Fox walked out one moonshine night,
 He prayed to the moon to give him some light
 For he had a long way to travel that night,
 Before he got home to his den O, den O, Den O, den O.
 For he had a long way to travel that night,

Before he got home to his den O.
 As he passed by a farmer's yard,
 The ducks and the geese they were all afeared,
 "The best of your fat shall grease my beard,
 Avore I get home to my den O, den O, Den O, den O,
 Avore I get home to my den O."
 He seized the old grey goose by the neck,
 And slung her all across his back,
 The goose cried out with a tribly, tribly twack,
 And the blood came trickly down O, down O.
 Down O, down O,
 And the blood came trickly down O.
 Old Mrs. Flipper Flopper jumped out of bed,
 And out of the window she popped her head,
 Saying, "Jan, Jan, Jan, The grey goose is gone,
 And the fox hath gone home to his den O, den O, Den O, den O,
 The fox hath gone home to his den O."
 Jan rinned away to a very high hill,
 Blew up his horn both loud and shrill,
 "Blow on," said the fox, "'tis pretty music still,
 But I am away to my den O, den O.
 Den O, den O,
 But I'm safe away to my den O."
 Then he dropped the goose to ease his pain,
 Hadn't put her down long when he took her up again
 For he heard the sound of the hounds O, hounds O,
 He heard the sounds of the hounds O.
 When he arrived unto his den,
 Where he had little ones nine or ten,
 The fox and his wife they were in great strife,
 They tore up the grey goose without fork or knife,
 And the little ones nuzzled the bones O, bones O.
 Bones O, bones O, The little ones nuzzled the bones O.
Sung at Tiverton, at a harvest supper, by John Vinnicombe, 1856.

THE WEST COUNTRY MAN.

There was an old man in the West Country;
 A *blatch* in his lease the attorney found,
 Twas all for the felling of five ashen trees,
 And building a house upon his own ground.
 The old man, he would to London go,
 To shew the King great part of his woe,
 To shew the King great part of his grief,
 And likewise to ax'n for some relief.
 Now when the old man to London came,
 The King he was to Windsor gone,
 "Why if he had known that I was acoming,
 He widden have gone so far from home."
 When the old man unto Windsor came,
 The gates were locked, and all secure,
 "Why let's knock away with my oaken club,
 There's room for me to get vore, to be sure."
 "Yer sarvint, Maister Nobles!" shew me the king,
 "Whot's *this* the King you sheweth to me?
 I zeed a chap to Barnstaple fair
 Looked more like a king than thicky chap there."
 "Yer sarvint, Mr. King!" the old man said,
 "A *blatch* in my lease the 'torney' hath found,
 And it's all for felling of five ashen trees,
 And building a 'ouze pin tap his own ground."
 The King he took the lease all up,
 And signed it with his hand so free.
 "Why, if us cude a-had it a-dued at home,
 Us needn't a-comed to thee."
 The old man took the lease all up,
 And for to go home was also willing,
 But to make the King some sort of amends,
 He took out his purse and gave him a shilling,
 The King he thanked the noble soul,
 And paid him down ten pounds in gold,

And every year for the sake of the sport,
 Ten pounds were paid from Windsor Court.
 The old man took the lease all up,
 And for to go home he now was quite willing, '
 "But if I'd a-knowled thee'd agot so much money,
 The devil-a-bit wid I a-gied thee a shilling."

For this and the following song I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. W. H. Whiteaway, of Sunnyside, Exmouth, who is good enough to allow me to insert them here. He says, "these songs I give to you, from memory, as I can remember hearing them sung over sixty years ago."

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, FAIR MAID?

"Where are you gwaine fair maid, I pray? "
 And old man asked a maid, one day.
 "Looking for poppies so bright and red,
 Father," she said, " I'm hither led."
 "Fie! fie! " did the old man cry,
 "Poppies all know
 In the field, and not in the grove, do grow."
 "Tell me," again the old man said,
 "Why are you wandering here, fair maid? "
 "The nightingales' song so sweet and clear, Father," said she, "I came to hear."
 "Fie! fie!" was the old man's cry,
 "Nightingales all people do say
 Warble by night, and not in the day."
 The sage looked grave, and the maid looked shy,
 When Lubin jumped over a stile hard by,
 The sage looked graver, and the maid more glum,
 Lubin, he twiddled his finger and thumb,
 "Fie! fie! " did the old man cry,
 "Poppies like *these*, I own are rare,
 And of such nightingale's songs beware! "

THE OLD MAN WHO LIVED IN A WOOD.

There was an old man who lived in a wood,
 As yu may plainly zee,

He zed he cude du more work in a day,
 Than he's wive cude du in dree.
 "If that be the case," the old 'ummon zed,
 "If that be the case," zed she,
 Then yu shall bide at home til-day,
 And I'll go and drave the plough.
 But mind yti milk the cherry cow,
 For fear that her shude dry,
 And mind yu tend the sucking pigs,
 That lie in yonder sty.
 And mind yu watch the speckitty hen,
 For fear that her shude stray,
 And mind yu wind the wisterd yarn
 That I spinned yesterday."
 The old 'ummon her taked the whip in her hand,
 And went to drave the plough,
 The old man, he taked the milking pail,
 And went to milk the cow.
 But Cherry, her kicked, and Cherry her dinged,
 And Cherry her widden be quiet,
 Her gied the old man a kick in the leg,
 Which made he kick up a riot.
 He went to watch the speckitty hen,
 For fear that her shtide stray,
 But he forgot to wind the yarn,
 His wife spinned yesterday.
 Then he swared by the zin, the mune and the stars,
 And all that wuz in Heaven,
 That his wife cude do more work in a day,
 Than he cude do in zebben.

BARNSTAPLE FAIR.

There are several versions of this song extant. A very charming one was a favourite with the late Dr. Stoneman, of Ilfracombe. Many persons remember how he would "bring the house down" with applause when he sang it in the Concert Room, but although I have advertised and tried to obtain a copy from private sources, I have unfortunately failed to get one. I am

indebted to the kindness of Mr. Lawrence, editor of the *North Devon Herald*, Barnstaple, for the following very amusing example:

Oh, Devonshire's a noble county, full of lovely views, Miss!
 And full of gallant gentlemen for you to pick and choose, Miss!
 But search the towns all round about there's nothing can compare, Miss!
 In measurement of merriment with Barnstaple Fair, Miss!
 Then sing of Barum's merry town, and Barum's merry Mayor, too,
 I know no place in all the world, old Barum to compare to!
 There's nothing happens in the year but happens at our fair, Sir!
 'Tis then that everything abounds that's either new or rare, Sir!
 The Misses make their start in life its gaities to share, Sir!
 And ladies look for beaux and balls to Barnstaple fair, Sir!
 Then sing of Barum's merry town, and Barum's worthy Mayor, too,
 I know no place in all the world old Barum to compare to!
 The little boys and girls at school their nicest clothes prepare, Ma'am!
 To walk the streets and buy sweetmeats and gingerbread so rare, Ma'am!
 Their prime delights, to see the sights that ornament our Square, Ma'am!
 When Powell brings his spangled troop to Barnstaple Fair, Ma'am!
 Then sing of Barum's merry town, and our indulgent Mayor, too,
 I know no place in all the world old Barum to compare to!
 If milk be scarce though grass be plenty, don't complain too soon, Dame!
 For that will very often happen in the month of June, Dame!
 Though cows run dry while grass runs high, you never need despair, Dame!
 The cows will calve and milk you'll have to Barnstaple Fair, Dame!
 Then sing of Barum's wealthy town and its productive fair, too,
 And drink the Corporation, and the head of it the Mayor, too!
 If pigeons' wings are plucked, and peacocks' tails refuse to grow, friend!
 In Spring; you may depend upon't in Autumn they will shew, friend!
 If feathers hang about your fowls in drooping style and spare, friend!
 Both cocks and hens will get their pens to Barnstaple Fair, friend!
 Then, friend, leave off your wig, and Barum's privileges share, too,
 Where everything grows once a year, wings, feathers, tails, and hair, too!
 If Winter wear and Summer dust call out for paint and putty, Sir!
 And Newport coals in open grates make paper-hangings smutty, Sir!
 And rusty shops and houses' fronts most sadly want repair, Sir!

Both shops and houses will be smart to Barnstaple, Fair, Sir!
 And Barum is a handsome town, and everyday improving, Sir!
 Then drink to all who study its improvement to keep moving, Sir!
 King George the Third rode out to Staines the hounds to lay the stag on,
 But that was. no great things of sport, for mighty kings to brag on,
 The French, alas! *go a la chasse in von po shay* and pair,
 But what's all that to Button Hill? To Barnstaple Fair?
 For we will all a-hunting go, on horse, or mule, or mare, Sir!
 For everything is in the field to Barnstaple Fair, Sir!
 To Button Hill, whose name to all the sporting world sure known is,
 Go bits of blood, and hunters, hacks, and little Exmoor ponies;
 When lords and ladies, doctors, passons, farmers, squires prepare,
 To hunt the stag with hound and horn to Barnstaple Fair,
 Then up and ride for Chillam Bridge, or on to Bratton town, Sir,
 To view the rouse, or watch the Yeo, to see the stag come down, Sir!
 There's nothing else in jollity and hospitable fare, Sir!
 That ever can with Barnstaple in fair time compare, . Sir!
 And guests are very welcome hospitality to share, Sir!
 For beer is brew'd, and beef is bought to Barnstaple Fair, Sir!
 Then sing of merry England, and roast beef, old English fare, Sir!
 A bumper to the town and trade of Barum and its Mayor, Sir!
 Boiled beef, roast beef, squab pie, pear pie, and figgy pudden, plenty,
 When eight or nine sit down.to dine, they'll find enough for twenty, •
 And after dinner for dessert, the choicest fruits you'll share, Sir!
 E'en walnuts come from Somerset to Barnstaple Fair, Sir!
 Then sing of Barum's jolly town, and Barum's jolly Mayor, too,
 No town in England can be found old Barum to compare to!
 I will not sing of Bullock fair, and brutes whose horrid trade is
 To shut our window blinds, and block up all the ladies,
 Nor of the North walk, rush and crush, where fools at horses stare, Sir!
 When Mister Murray brings his nags to Barnstaple Fair, Sir!
 But sing of Barum's jolly town and Barum's jolly Mayor, too!
 No town in England can be found, old Barum to compare to!
 The " Ball " one night, the " Play " the next, with private parties numerous,
 Prove Barnstaple people's endless efforts, Sir, to humour us,

And endless, too, would be my song, if I should now declare,
 All the gaities, and rarities of BARNSTAPLE FAIR!
 Then loudly sing “ God save the King,” and long may Barum thrive O!
 May we all live to see the “ Fair,” and then be all alive O!

BARBARA ALLEN.

In Totnes town where I was born,
 There was a fair maid dwelling,
 Made every youth cry “ Well-a-way,”
 Her name was Barbara Allen.
 All in the merry month of May,
 When green buds they were swelling,
 Young Johnny Gale on his death-bed lay,
 For love of Barbara Allen.
 He sent his groom unto her then,
 To the town where she was dwelling,
 “You must come to my master dear,
 If your name be Barbara Allen.
 For death is printed on his face,
 And o’er his heart is stealing:
 Then haste away to comfort him,
 Oh! lovely Barbara Allen! ”
 Though death be printed on his face,
 And o’er his heart is stealing,
 Yet little better shall he be,
 For bonny Barbara Allen.
 So slowly, slowly she came up,
 And slowly she came nigh him,
 And all she said, when up she came,
 “Young man, I think you’re dying.”
 He turned his face unto her straight,
 With deadly sorrow sighing,
 “Oh! lovely maid, come pity me,
 I’m on my death-bed lying.”
 “If on your death-bed you do lie,

What needs the fate you're telling:
I cannot keep you from your death.
Farewell! " said Barbara Allen.
He turned his face unto the wall,
And deadly pangs he fell in,
"Adieu, adieu, adieu to all!
Adieu to Barbara Allen! "
As she was walking o'er the fields,
She heard the bell a-knelling,
And every stroke did seem to say,
"Unworthy Barbara Allen."
She turned her body round about,
And 'spied the corpse a-coming,
"Lay down, lay down, the corpse," she said,
"That I may look upon him."
With scornful eye, she looked down,
Her cheeks with laughter swelling,
Whilst all his friends cried out
" For shame, Unworthy Barbara Allen! "
When he was dead and in his grave,
Her heart was struck with sorrow,
"Oh, mother! mother! make my bed,
For I shall die to-morrow.
"Hard-hearted creature him to slight,
Who loved me so dearly;
Oh! that I'd been more kind to him,
When he was alive and near me."
She, on her death-bed as she lay,
Begged to be buried by him,
And sore repented of the day,
That she did e'er deny him.
"Farewell," she said, "ye virgins all,
And shun the fault I fell in,
Henceforth take warning by the fall,
Of cruel Barbara Allen."

Sung by John Snow, of Tiverton, at a supper party, A.D. 1869.

RAISING THE ANCHOR.

We'm out of the 'arbour, good-bye to the mud,
 Heave ho! shake out the sail,
 The 'arbour's avull and the tide's aflood
 Aw, whistle my lads for a favouring gale.
 There's Polly and Mary azide o' their ma,
 Heave ho! shake out the sail,
 And Bess in her arms like a little white lamb,
 Aw, whistle my lads for a favouring gale.
 There's two little forms at the end o' the pier,
 Heave ho! shake out the sail,
 And a luke in all eyes is the way as we steer,
 Aw, whistle my lads for a favouring gale.
 Oh, Jim has a bit of a ball in his throat,
 Heave ho! shake out the sail,
 He is wiping his nauze wi' the sleeve of his coat,
 Aw, whistle my lad for a favouring gale.
 Oh, Jess is his lass, her's a piping her eye,
 Heave ho! shake out the sail,
 And Jim he can't du it, no not if he tried,
 Aw, whistle my lads for a favouring gale.

Heard at Plymouth, 1892.

The following, which appeared in a recent number of the *Western Morning News*, is from the pen of the late Dr. Puddicombe, of Moreton. The subject, Jan Pook, was post boy at the Saracen's Head, Two Bridges, Dartmoor. The poem gives a clear idea of the habits of the convivial souls who inhabit and divert themselves in that neighbourhood.

JAN POOK.

Jan Pook wuz a post-boy,
 The vokes where he stapped Zed a hardier 'osebird,
 There nivver wuz drapped.
 He cude laugh, he cude zing,
 He cude smoke, he elide tell,
 And whativver he dued,

He alwes dued well.
He wuz loved by his guv'ner,
Samuel Cann, Of "The White Hart," in Moreton,
A merciful man,
Who trated his 'osses,
And customers, too,
And trated Jan Pook,
When he'd nort else to do.
Jan Pook druv a party
To Princetown one day,
Returning wherefrom,
On his empty post shay,
To the "Saracen's Head,"
He pulled up for a wet,
Refreshment 'es zel
And his osses to get.
Jan dranked wey some miners
Until, as he zed,
The liquor he dranked
Had got into his head.
When he started again,
To his home to return,
What arterwards happened,
You'll presently learn.
Es likker 'ad warmed en to that there degree,
That he vailed vast asleep, and his osses you zee,
Forgetting the whip, stapped and grazed 'pon the road,
But how long they bided there nobody knowed.
Jan dreamed 'bout some pixies
And other strange folk,
When the miners corned up,
All alive for a joke.
They unharnessed his osses,
And drove mun away,
Leaving Jan vast asleep

On the porch of the shay.
 When the zun in the East wuz beginning to rise,
 Jan Pook, half awake,
 Vailed to rubbing his eyes.
 “Who be I? Where be I? ” Zed Jan in a maze:
 “Here’s a drunken old zun-Of-a-gun on a shays.
 If I be Jan Pook, I may zay to my cost
 A pair of post osses I’ve sartinly lost.
 If I baint Jan Pook
 ’Tez a fortinite day,
 For I’m burned if I aint
 Been and found a post shay.”

Moral.

Don’t drink wey no miners,
 Now mind what I zay,
 Don’t nivver pull up
 To no Saracen’s Head,
 Spurn alcoholic drinks
 Vur the rest of your days,
 And you’ll not lost no osses,
 Nor vind a post shays.

THE DEAR LITTLE LETTER.

It is only a dear little letter, In my hand that I tenderly hold, From one who is dearer—far
 better Than treasures of silver and gold. Many days my heart has been sighing, This mark of
 affection to see, And now there’s no use in denying, I’m as happy, as happy can be.

Chorus.

It is only a dear little letter,
 Its coming I’ve waited to see,
 A dear little, sweet little letter,
 A dear little letter for me.
 It is only a dear little letter,
 But its pages are filled with kind words:
 Tells of one who is dearer—yea, better
 Than the music and warblings of birds.
 Oh, they waken glad mem’ries to cheer me,

As I sail o'er the wide, open sea,
 And the sweet thoughts of one bringeth memory,
 I am as happy, as happy can be.

Chorus.

It is only a dear little letter,
 And it breathes of a heart that is true,
 Its makes my lone heart feel the better,
 As this world I am journeying through.
 It tells of a heart's sweet devotion
 That will cling now and ever to me,
 My mind it is in a commotion,
 I'm as happy, as happy can be.

CHILDREN'S SONG FOR ALL SOULS' DAY.

Soul Day! Soul!

The Roads are very dirty.

Our shoes are very thin,

Pray good missis and master,

Pop a penny in.

An apple, a pear, a plum or a cherry,

Or any good thing to make us merry,

If you haven't an apple, a pear will do,

If you haven't a pear, good money will do,

One for Peter, two for Paul,

Three for Them as made us all.

Soul Day! Soul!

The cock sat up in a yew tree,

The hen came cackling by,

We wish you a merry Christmas,

And a fat pig in the sty.

Soul Day! Soul!

THE KNIGHT KILLED THE SQUIRE.

The knight he killed the squire,

The squire being dead,

And witnesses being by,
'Twas brought in Wilful Murder,
The knight was condemned to die.
He was condemned to die
According to the Law,
Though all had expectation,
That the judge a free pardon would show.
She was but a poor servant,
A poor servant maid,
“If I shall be admitted, Admitted sir,” she said,
“I’ll come before the judge,
And there I’ll end all strife.
For like a love-sick lady, I’ll go and beg his life.”
She borrowed rich attire,
Rich rings she had manifold,
Likewise she had around her neck
A costly chain of gold.
Now all things being ready,
She with her footpage came,
Just like some noble lady
Of honour birth and fame.
When she came before the judge,
She on her knees did fall
For mercy, and for mercy,
For mercy she did call.
“Take mercy on a virgin,
And grant to me my love,
May the Heavens light you from above.”
“Fair lady and fair lady,
Fair lady he must die—”
And the lady wrunged her hands,
And bitterly did cry—
“For the law must be fulfilled,
And blood for blood must pay.”
“My life shall be his ransom,

To set my true love free.”
 “ How can you die to save him?
 Such love I never knew,
 ‘Pity but what you could have him,
 So bid your tears adieu:
 This moment I will quit him,
 All for the lady’s sake.”
 She said “ I am no lady,
 These clothes are none o’ mine,
 These riches, rings and jewels I quickly must resign,
 They are my master’s daughter’s,
 I borrowed them also.
 To prevent thy awful ruin
 And fatal overthrow.”
 “And to thy master’s daughter,
 Two hundred pound I’ll give,
 My best respects I’ll pay to her,
 The longest day I live.
 To make you satisfaction,
 I will make you my bride,
 I have more cause to love you,
 Than all the world beside.
 I have more cause to love you,
 Than anyone beside.
 Thou hast saved my life,
 And hast prolonged my days,
 Through all the lands and nations,
 To you I will sing praise.”

Recited on January 1st, 1898, by Fanny Litson, at a tea party, given by R. H. Taylor, Esq., Lynton, North Devon, to aged persons.

THE DEVIL AND THE TAILOR.

’Twas in King Henry’s time,
 And he was a good old king,
 There were three rogues turned out of doors,

Because they would not sing.
 The first he was a miller,
 And the second he was a weaver,
 And the third he was a little tailor,
 Three thieving rogues together.
 The miller, he stole corn,
 The weaver, he stole yarn,
 The little tailor he stole broadcloth,
 To keep these three rogues warm.
 The miller was drowned in his dam,
 And the weaver was hanged in his yarn,
 But the Devil flew away with the little tailor,
 With the broadcloth under his arm.

THE STAR IN THE CANDLE.

There's no star in the candle to-night,
 Nor one little ray shewing clear,
 Still to make our heavy hearts light,
 By shewing a letter is near.
 But although there's no star there to-night,
 There is one eye that ever looks down,
 Whose might can change darkness to night,
 Who ne'er on afflictions will frown.

A ROBIN TAPPING AT THE WINDOW PANE.

When the snow was falling, falling,
 On a bitter winter night,
 I, and little Mary watched it,
 Wrapping all the world in white,
 Came a little Robin Redbreast,
 Hungry, shivering, and in pain,
 And we heard him gently tapping,
 Tapping on the window pane.
 Little Mary oped the window,
 Bitter blew the wind and strong,

Warmed and fed the little stranger,
And he paid her with a song.
Robin learned to love my Mary,
Mary loved him back again,
Ev'ry day we heard him gently,
Tapping at the window pane.
Mary died and left me lonely,
And we laid her in the clay,
And the snow that falls upon her,
Mourning, weeps itself away.
Robin went and lay beside her,
Sang his last expiring strain.
When at night I dream of Mary,
Comes an echo on the pane:
Robin's gone to sing with Mary,
In my dreams I hear the strain,
And I wake and hear the echo.
Tapping on the window pane.

THE END

I'm Julie, the woman who runs [Global Grey](#) - the website where this ebook was published. These are my own formatted editions, and I hope you enjoyed reading this particular one.

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