A SECOND MANX SCRAPBOOK

W. WALTER GILL

AUTHOR OF
"A MANX SCRAPBOOK"

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Islanders

" A true . . . Folklorist scorns nothing, because he never can tell where his honest gleanings may not come in, what lacuna they may not supply, what literary tendency they may not illustrate, what parable they may not suggest. He feels that there is danger in letting any fragment go by ; nay, something almost like, literary treason in consulting his own case, taste or prepossession, anything but the simple bits of what, to others, may appear rubbish, and even to himself, at times, superfluous."

(T. E. Brown to A. W. Moore, Brown's " Letters," Vol. ii., page 171.)

CHAPTER I

RETROSPECTIVE

WITH the reviewers of *A Manx Scrapbook* I have no quarrel. They have been uniformly favourable - more favourable than conversant, except in one or two cases, with the topographical folk-lore of an obscure corner of the Kingdom. The shortcoming is excusable. One point raised in a notice of the volume may be adverted to, however, since it involves a misconception frequent among interested strangers and short-term visitors to the Island ; namely, that the Manx language is in a state of holding-on similar to that of Irish a few years ago, and could be similarly revived-in so far as the latter tongue has been revived, for it is rumoured that many modern Irishmen are living in a world more full of Irish than they can understand. But the Isle of Man is not, as my friendly critic in The Irish Statesman of 7th December, 1929, opined, as Gaelic-speaking proportionately as the County Louth, however little that may be. Manx is not even losing ground, languishing, or on the verge of extinction. As a means of communication it is dead, and has been dead for a generation. Therefore nothing in my line of inquiry, it is regrettable to have to say, could be " salvaged from genuine old native speakers of far more authentic quality than the waifs and strays that have survived among an anglicized and largely indifferent generation," because anything that the few score of old native speakers have to confide they prefer saying (knowing they can say it better) in English. The lapse of time since they spoke the language freely, and the weight of years which hinders them from travelling about and meeting other native speakers, have obliterated much of the Manx they knew in their youth. The exceptions could probably be counted on one's fingers. " The Manx is gettin' forgot at me now" is a confession I have heard many times from men and women who spoke it before they spoke English, if not very long before. Still more usual is the reminiscence that though the aged one's parents spoke Manx to each other (especially when they didn't want the child to know what they were saying), they would never let him learn it. And when its native obstinacy carried it as far as the schoolroom and the playground, there was often a zealous master lying in wait for it with a cane.

Next to the pleasure of enlightening others comes the duty of correcting one's-self. Possessors, therefore, of the first *Manx Scrapbook* (for borrowers I care nothing) are respectfully invited to take notice of the following

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

Page 23. Ballig Well is a mile and a quarter from the sea, not " a quarter of a mile."

Page 43. Chibber Hidee is a wishing-well. Walk round it seven times and drop in a coin.

Page 55. A " t " has dropped out at the end of line 116 ; read Phunt.

Pages 60 and 74. To wells dedicated to St. Bride add **Chibber Vreeshey**, at the foot of *Curragh Vreeshey* near the Whallag, Malew.

Page 1104. Ronsdale. For " Seal's Valley " read " Stony Valley " (Norse).

Page 106, line 28. Cashel Vanannairt is in Co. Roscommon.

Page 115. Magher Rowley. Bane in field-names often signifies " fallow."

Pages 115, 116, 93, 94. Bully. This nickname is more likely to be a shortened form of " bohiley," the Manx bochilley, radically " a herdsman," but used as a general term equivalent to " lad."

Page 134, line 6. Thie Lhionney means, of course, " Ale-house."

Pages 135 and 265. Earlier forms of Dal y Veitch show that the name can have nothing to do with " hospitality," as suggested. See Mr. J. J. Kneen's *Place-Names of the Isle of Man*, page 521.

Page 1145. Loob ny Kesh. The reference to kessagh should be omitted.

Page 175, line 115. " 1513 " should read " 1515." Page 1811. Kassagh has no connexion with ceisach. It is the Scotch Gaelic casach ; " the outlet of a lake," according to McAlpine, but, more radically, a place where water collects, from cas, " foot."

Page 186, line 9. There are two or three inland rocks called Carrick.

Page 188, line 23. To "the Whitestone Bank" add " Ballakesh Bank."

Page 198. *Cashtal Ree Gorry*. This picturesquely- named tumulus did not fall with the cliff, as stated, but was dug away by a tenant of the land, Mr. P. G. Ralfe tells me.

Page 198. The Buggane. The suggestion of Byooghane should be ignored.

Page 211, line 23. The slip of mountain-ash was left planted in soil, that it might grow.

Pages 213 and 427, near top. Read Cyonk y Sthowyy, " Hill of the Staff."

Page 215. Crosh ny Kaire Thorne and the meaning of the name. Paterson, Manx Antiquities, 1863, mentions a four-bossed cross in Bride parish. Lost ?

Page 222. Douglas as a river-name. One of Archdeacon Rutter's songs, written in 1643, alludes to " the Dhoo-glass," which a translator into Manx has rendered as Awin Dhoo (Dark Water). See *Manx Ballads*, page 130.

Page 247. Ramsey. The alleged " Ramswath " in the Grant of 1235 is a transcriber's error for Ramsaych. For this information I am indebted to Mr. P. G. Ralfe, of Castletown.

Page 262, line 12. " Kyrkecust." The facsimile of the Boundaries shows that the word so often printed thus is really " Kyrkc'st," i.e. Kyrkcrist.

Page 267. Paris Gill lies East, not North, of Ballaskella.

Page 304, line 4. The name " Jimmy Phil's Mill " belongs to one nearer Laxey.

Page 310. The Claram. Real " which is also used for the third thwart." - 64_ 11

Page 319, line 18. " Granite " should of course be " limestone."

Page 340. For Crolt y Kenna read Thalloo Kenna, " Kenna's land."

Page 351. For Ballaeonnell, Malew, read Ballaeannell. Ballacannell is just over the Arbory boundary.

Page 366. An apology is due to the parish of Marown for the accidental omission of its description.

Page 408, line 17. For " of " read " or."

Page 439, last paragraph. The resemblance between the Louisianan legend and that of the Manx " Tehi Tegi " is heightened by a tradition (also recorded in Bullock's *History*) that Tehi Tegi lured her victims by singing to them-a point which Waldron does not mention.

Page 451, second paragraph. For " Miss " Watson read " Mrs."

Page 508. Joe Vullagh-better Ghaw Vullagh, " Summit Cleft," is an opening in the cliffs close to Amulty, Mr. P. G. Ralfe informs me.

Page 513, line 15. For the name *Edremony* (The Rowaney) reference may also be made to Joyce's Irish *Place-names*, vol. iii, s.v. Adramoney.

Pages 526 and 155. Mr. P. G. Ralfe tells me that Purt y Kinnish is another name for Soldrick, not for Cass ny Hawin, and that " Jackdaw Cave" there has given it the further title of " Jackdaw Harbour."

Page 527. Crogga Well. The name of "Gout Well " and the quotation from Symson are Miss Cookson's errors. The Gout Well is at Largs in Scotland. See Train's Isle of Man, vol. ii., page 60.

Page 529, fifth paragraph. " Three-rooted " should rather be " three -stemmed," in the allusion to Yggdrasil.

CHAPTER II
INTRODUCTORY

§ 1. Some Generalities.

ALFRED NUTT, in his Presidential Address to the Folklore Society in 1898 (Folk-lore, vol. ix.), on " The Discrimination of Racial Element in the Folk-lore of the British Isles," said :-" Of all the Gaelic-speaking countries the Isle of Man has probably the largest admixture of Scandinavian blood. The commingling of the two most imaginative and romantic strains of our mixed population would, one must think, have produced a specially rich folk-literature. Yet as a matter of fact if such ever existed it would seem to have utterly died out. Man has retained customs and superstitions in fair abundance and vitality ; stories of the saga type, anecdotes, that is, about supernatural and half-supernatural beings, are fairly numerous, but romantic tales and ballads have disappeared. The only cause I can detect is severance from the main streams of Gaelic traditional literature." The Isle of Man, he continued, is a remarkable exception from the close community in subject-matter and treatment found throughout the rest of the Gaelic- speaking area of the United Kingdom.

The lore of the Island is an excellent illustration of his more general remark, that little difference is visible between the practices and beliefs of the Celt and those of the Teuton. The question is now, he avers, " Aryan or non-Aryan, substratum or top- dressing ? " Implied in this question, it may be added, is another: How much did the "Aryans " adopt everywhere from civilizations that preceded them ? The answer must surely be : Very much. But these wider questions must remain untouched in the present work, which is chiefly one of collection, and only in a minor degree of criticism and comparison, of the Islanders' " customs and superstitions, anecdotes about supernatural and half -supernatural beings," and the sub-cerebral reflexes called visions and premonitions.

In the early light of the world She sat remotely at the top of the Irish Sea, gazing into its polished silver mirror and combing out her golden locks to its winds ; rapt, yet ready to glide from her rocky perch and vanish at the sight of a distant sail. Did the mirror give her a glimpse of her present plight ? Most likely not. If it had done so, she would never have let herself be captured and tamed.

For the Isle of Man is in like case with Cornwall and parts of North Wales. Not only have her beauty and charm attracted the holiday - making and the residential stranger, but her own people have discovered in them a source of easier profit than the natural industries of the Island ever afforded. This misorientation has accelerated and accentuated the social changes which no country, however small and politically unimportant it may be, can hope to escape. The total effects may be less conspicuous in the national soul than in the face of the land, but they are not less destructive of its unique qualities.

These agencies notwithstanding, a leaven yet remains, for good and for less good, of the antique spirit, and some of its signs can be read in the present volume. They are, for the most part, but trifling indications of what lies beneath the surface, for as the scenery is in scale with the size of the Island so are its stories of the supernatural. It has produced nothing like " Tadhg O'Kane and the Corpse," for example, nor anything which owes, as that tale does, somewhat to conscious art in the telling. Nor is brevity compensated for by poetry or colour. Manx folk-lore wears neither the glittering spangles of Irish fancy nor the silken textures of

Hebridean romance ; yet here and there a patch of either is apt to relieve the soberness of its homespun.

In order that these fragments should not become posthumous fragments, a fate to which more valuable material of all kinds is everywhere prone, they have been sifted out of note -books and some attempt has been made to classify them. The previous volume of this series particularized many haunted spots and their haunters ; in the earlier chapters of the present collection the visions, being of a different kind, are arranged, not topographically, but in accordance with their own character and content. This method has been more troublesome, and the truth of Sir John Rhys's complaint in the Manx section of his *Celtic Folklore*, that " it is difficult to arrange these scraps under any clearly classified headings," will be borne in upon the reader of these less authoritative pages also. One subject insists on overlapping another. Second Sight appears in the particulars of some of the cures performed by witches and charmers. The witches have been credited with certain habits of the fairies. The fairies again are not always clearly distinguishable from guardian spirits, or from evil spirits which have never been humanly embodied, or from the spirits of the dead. Nor are intelligent spirits fully differentiated from the automatic phenomena more commonly termed ghosts.

What a story-teller calls a ghost may turn out to be the manifestation of an intelligence which evinces a moral intention-a ghost in the Shakespearian tradition. For example : a farm-labourer was walking home in the small hours to Dalby from Peel, whither he had journeyed to get some medicine for his sister. He was a man who was sometimes given to drinking, but he was sober enough that night, for the public- houses were closed before he started from Dalby. On his way back he was followed from Shenvalley to near Dalby (a distance of three miles) by a " ghost " which kept singing hymns and exhorting him to lead a better life. As he passed Ballahutcheon, on the outskirts of Dalby, the invisible one tried to push him up the steps leading towards the house, but he resisted, and was then allowed to go home without further molestation. In earlier life he had had some discreditable connexion with Ballahutcheon, and the inference was that the " ghost " wanted him to make amends. Is such a manifestation as this to be classed as a ghost, a guardian spirit, a working of the conscience, or a mere phantasy of the brain ?

In a more general way, although some portion of the great mass of superstition is admittedly the ruins of various systems of religious worship, ritual and ceremonial,* much remains which can never have been other than incoherent. This is probably the oldest element of all, a parasite of pagan faiths, both dead and living, as well as of Christianity. It is the fetichistic and spiritualistic naturalism which still survives vigorously in modern life, and it has been mixed into every other kind of superstition, including the misapprehensions of the Spiritualists.

The exceptional experiences of Second Sight are at least as real to the seers as the experiences of their and our ordinary lives, and their visions, premonitions and dreams which are afterwards borne out by events must have greater significance for us, spiritually and psychically, than the visions of haunting spectres. With the latter there is more room for pure hallucination, for optical illusion, for practical joking, and for other sources of error, apart from the quite honest transformation into personal experiences of tales heard in early childhood ; a transformation which is occasionally to be suspected in elderly narrators.

The obvious weakness of stories of the Sight and of visionary experiences in general, considered as evidence, is that most of them rest on the testimony of a single individual. On

the other hand, their striking resemblances in all ages and countries show them to be founded on the facts of human psychology ; and many weak threads make a strong texture.

Each of us spins spider-like his own life-web , or we are flies entangled in the universal web, and Death is the spider. We are unhappy performing animals, or temporarily - embarrassed angels. We are the bubbles on a rushing river, or the maggots in a rotten cheese. Whichever of these fascinating alternatives best represents the philosophical truth (and something might be said for each of them), we must assume, to be in a position to discuss these matters, that we are to some extent separate from each other and from our surroundings-that we exist at all, that is to say. On the other hand, if we are, in the conscious life between birth and death, unexplored islets in an uncharted sea, at the least we are peaks of a single submerged continent, and basically united ; hence arises our occasional ability to communicate with each other through a medium other than that of the senses. It is with these obscure communications that Chapter III. will be found to deal. I trust that no one will interpret them as evidence for any long continuance of what is called " the personality " after death, for in my opinion they will not bear that interpretation.

As regards the contents of Chapter V., trials for, or inquiries into, Manx witchcraft may still remain to be discovered which will upset the assumption there put forward, namely, that the witches have never been more than spell-binders and peddlers of cures and charms ; that they never were, as in Teutonic tradition, mirk-riders hurtling through the gloom over house-tops and tree-tops to secret assignations with the Evil One.

To what extent, it may be asked, do the beliefs and practices recorded in Chapters IV. and VII.- the divinations and customary observances, the superstitions concerning animals and plants, and so forth-which were living a generation or two ago, survive to-day ? The answer is: as regards the practices, hardly at all. As regards the beliefs it is more difficult to speak definitely, for such ideas lurk in a twilight of the mind which is darkness by comparison with the dazzling stream of impressions now reaching the consciousness of even the most remotely-dwelling country-folk. But though I have usually confined myself to the past tense in these pages, vestiges of the old habits of thought do still cling to the shadowy under-aide of Manx mentality. Those who harbour them may not fully realize their presence. Ideas of this kind hibernate, or lie buried alive, without quite ceasing to exist. They have faded into ghosts, many of them, but ghosts which are capable of walking on occasion.

An amusing instance of their obstinacy was related to me by a friend a few months ago. An enlightened Andreas man, to testify to his freedom from the trammels of religious faith, solemnly burnt his Bible in the presence of witnesses. The dreadful news spread quickly through the Island. When he was in Douglas one market day the mob beg followed him about, shouting " Burnt the Bible ! Burnt the Bible ! " Half furious and half frightened, he halted in Strand Street, drew a circle around him with his stick, and stood inside it, the eye-witness tells me, defying the children to do their worst. An appreciative crowd gathered round, and for the rest of his life his nickname was " Burnt-the-Bible."

If I had collected more continuously and aggressively I would have been able to reproduce a larger amount of material, but it would not have been anything like proportionately larger, and might have been, in parts, less trustworthy ; for often the quarry is shy and easily scared. It is, perhaps, needless to add that all such inquiries, except those touching upon warnings and prophetic dreaming, bring less and less to light as time goes on. A native collector who devoted himself to the work a couple of hundred years ago, or one who wrote then out of the

fulness of his personal knowledge and experience, could have given us a dozen volumes of the size of the Englishman Waldron's. And would we not have been grateful for their illumination of much that is now obscure by reason of its fragmentary state ?

A moderate quantity of folk-lore, both explicit and implied, could be collected from Kelly's and Cregeen's early 19th-century dictionaries of the Manx language; Cregeen especially is rich in proverbial wisdom. His naivety is extreme, but not wholly regrettable ; when his definitions leave us puzzled, and his etymologies and archaeology, like Kelly's, leave us flabbergasted, we can study his freely-interspersed proverbs, or enjoy his declaration that " this, and the two words following, I have never seen or heard, but as the language stands in need of them and the words are purely Manks and appropriate, I have inserted them." Possibly there were occasions when Kelly was less candid.

As a specimen of the folk-lore lurking in Kelly's columns take his first definition of *Scuit* : " a small pipe or gun made of elder tree." What for ? He tells us no more. But it was-perhaps still is-a boys' pastime to gouge the pith out of pieces of elder bough and use them to blow water, flour or meal at each other, as the Malays (or was it the Dyaks ?) blew poisoned darts through their sumpitans.

Under *Rueg*, again, though he gives more details, they are only enough to apprise us of some tradition which has perished. a

Who was the *Eric ny Moaney* who appears in Kelly's work, and how came her name to be immortalized, more or less, in a dictionary ?

Who was the *Fer Driaght* in the Manx proverb which Cregeen cites under *Sheayn* ? " Peace (or blessing) on thy house and on thy lodging, the Chain-man is at thy door,"

What is hereafter set down is supplementary to the previous collections of others, which are quoted only in occasional comparisons and elucidations. That the personal experiences and the scraps of old traditions and practices of which I have availed myself were imparted to me in full sincerity and good faith I have no doubt whatever. What I have doubted I have omitted. Concerning the other half of my duty to the reader I can say that I have reported them with equal fidelity. If the tellers' own words have not often been given fully and literally, the chief reason is one that will be familiar to anybody who has made such a collection. It is the reason, likewise, why the words of extempore public speakers are not reported verbatim.

In quoting and alluding to passages which cast light on Manx matters I may have carried the practice of reference-giving to the degree of a fault and a nuisance, but no one is obliged to look up any of the sources indicated. If a reference is of use to a single reader its insertion is, I think, justified.

Finally, readers have a right to know how far a writer believes in the marvels he records. To see a humorous side to one here and there is not to contemn it ; while only a degree less cheap and easy than the facetious attitude of mind is the non-committal or ironical pose that is so often affected towards such matters. To put it broadly, my personal opinion is that many of these things have been seen and heard, and will be seen and heard again ; that all of them have been believed in; and that faith in many of them will awake from its present slumber. Concerning the visions other than those due to telepathy and to Second Sight in its strictest

definition, and including much seeing of fairies, the explanation I would offer is, in brief, this : that both the dead and the yet unborn consist of a homogeneous substance of which we, the living, are constituted. This our eyes, when externalizing it in visionary experiences, break up into, or apprehend as, human-like and animal-like figures. These are certainly " seen." But then comes the too-familiar question, are they " real " ? Do they exist ? That I must leave to others to decide, if they can. Though I think I know the signification of the verb "to see," I am not at all sure of that of the verb " to be." And after all has been said, a definition defines, not the thing itself, but merely the mental grasp of the definer ; just as do, from age to age, the explanations of the Universe vouchsafed to us by Science.

§ 2. The Islanders.

Folk-lore, as Leland noticed in Italy, tends to run in families ; one household will have more to impart than twenty others. It is an inheritance which becomes a mental habit. The same is even truer of the visionary faculty and of psychic powers in general. Where I have met with these in the Isle of Man they have hardly ever occurred alone ; several members of the family have been thus endowed in various ways and in different degrees. These gifted ones, some of them the valued friends of many years, cannot decently be paraded here, even behind a veil of anonymity ; I can only thank them for what they have been generous enough to confide to me. Of other personalities something may be said which will convey a notion of the kind of vessel from which various descriptions of Manx folk-lore may still be drawn.

Under the King's representative, Manx society consists of two classes, a middle and a lower, which merge into each other without any clearly-marked boundary-line. Many of the better-class families which are no longer engaged in agriculture are nevertheless not removed from the land by more than a couple of generations. On the other hand, the crofter and the farm labourer of to-day live in much better circumstances than they did even a couple of generations ago. They are still " of the soil," certainly, but that is an expression which had more significance up to a century ago than it has now, when both tenants and " boys " change their farms every few years. As life was then lived, how could the folk of the land, and not the Manx land only, help clinging to the spot in which they had been born and reared ? It was the instinctive physical clinging of the young child to its mother, for they and the land were made up of the same elements. Their food was drawn by their own efforts out of the soil beneath their feet, save what they drew out of the neighbouring sea ; and over fires of the peat, ling and gorse grown on their soil they cooked it. Their coats and breeches, bodices, petticoats and stockings were made of wool from its sheep, dyed with its plants and woven with their own hands ; the carranes which protected their feet were made of the hides of their own goats and calves. They dwelt within the soil as well as upon it, for their houses were walled with sods and floored with beaten clay. They mended their nets and tools by the light of candles of pith from its rushes caked with the tallow of its animals, and they slept on beds of its ling and straw. Like the nets which caught their fish and the linen which covered their living bodies, the shrouds they were buried in were woven of flax grown in their own fields, soaked in their own wells and pools, and prepared in their own houses ; and their dead bodies helped to nourish the soil which had nourished them in life, for burial was formerly more strictly local than it is now.

By virtue of these ancient intimacies with the earth of their Island the country people were as sib to it as its rabbits, almost as firmly rooted as its bushes, save for the seasonal calls to the fishing. They were less foreign to their own particular corners of it than the water of the streams and springs for which it was but a stage of a long journey between sea and sky.

Though several years have elapsed since I met some of the subjects of the following sketches, most of them are, I believe and sincerely trust, still living. If any are not, it is because they have trespassed too far beyond the allotted span. All, with the exception of the last, were pleasant to know, and their age was the index of their charm ; for the Manx character ripens and mellows strikingly in its autumn. Though in youth and middle life Manxmen may not discover greater qualities of solidity or attractiveness than are native to other parts of the Kingdom, many of them do in the course of time, especially in the country districts, develop or revert to an almost childlike sweetness and innocence whose outward and visible sign is the candour of their whiskers. If at the start they are handicapped with a slightly heavier burden of original sin than the surrounding nationalities-I do not assert positively that it is so-eventually they overhaul their brother-pilgrims both Celtic and Saxon, and if they could live to be old enough they would surely catch up with the Saints themselves. Withal they are shrewd, sturdy fellows, well able to stand up for themselves wherever Fortune may be pleased to cast them. The naivety of old age towards God and the world is commoner in the men than in the women. In either it is a grace which is likely to be accompanied by a respectful and affectionate remembrance of old times and old ways. With it there is the shy reticence of a child. A slight droop of the head or a faint flutter of the eyelids is the only signal which tells an inquiring stranger that he is on the track of something. He may win to it with patience, or he may not.

§ 3. Some Personalities.

IN MEMORY.

Between twenty and thirty years ago I was fortunate enough to pass a good deal of time in the company of a Manxman of the old school, who had been born and reared in the South of the Island, had spent most of his life in England building houses, and was finally settled again on Manx soil, there to end his days in peace. I learned to know him for a thoroughly sincere, upright, kindly and God-fearing man, generous in prosperity and cheerful in adversity. His word on any matter of which he possessed first-hand knowledge I accepted absolutely—with the always needful allowance for human fallibility. He was, in short, a specimen of the best type of elderly Manxman. When days were dark for him and life a harder struggle than befitted his age, he could often be heard coming down the hill after evening milking, tired with his twelve hours' labour—for he had but little help—singing away like a schoolboy on the first day of the holidays, except that he usually sang a hymn.

In the course of our long talks in stable and cowhouse, in hayfield and cornfield, on the high sheep-runs and in his riverside garden, and by his fireside after work was over for the day, I came to learn his opinions on most of the subjects which occupied his thoughts, and enjoyed listening to his stories, both Manx and English in subject, as much as he enjoyed telling them. Though English newspaper-topics provided a good deal of material for his discourse, the keenness and detachment of his mind were equally evident in discussing matters which interested me more deeply. To his personal reminiscences and to the traditions he had received in youth from his elders I owe a number of items which are scattered through these pages.

A MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS.

John, son of the gilly of Christ, is a man who has been used to solitarines for the greater part of his life, keeping sheep on hills where only sheep and birds are to be seen, or a rarely- met

shepherd like himself. The thatched house of two rooms and aloft, where he lived alone after his sister's death, was reached by a green track, the offshoot of an offshoot from a narrow, unmade roadway. Around it lay half a dozen small fields that showed traces of having borne meagre crops at some previous period. Above the house the brown mountain land stretched away to an undulating sky-line; downwards the two patches of window-pane looked over a low wall into the distant river-valley, and thence up to the bluffs of the farther side with their backing of the central hills.

John is short, thick and sinewy, as tough as an old thorn-tree, and a seer of visions and signs. While alone, he coped cheerily with the loss of an arm; but it must be acknowledged that he took better care of his sheep than of himself and his home. His way of living was primitive, and there was at times something startlingly primitive in his talk. On the vehement flood of his monologue, which might be tactfully guided but could hardly be stemmed once it gathered way, surprising turns of expression and hints of an older order of things came flying past like dëbris whirled down by a mountain torrent. A blunt question was either swept unconcernedly aside or answered in terms that often left the questioner more puzzled than before. Now, alas ! poor John has grown stone-deaf. Neither questions nor diplomatic interventions are of any avail, and we too are poorer. [? John Mylchreest]

A MAN OF THIS SEA.

To a racial type that is plentiful in the South of Man, of Ireland and of Wales, as well as in Cornwall, belongs another friend, equally exceptional in a more comprehensible way. He is a native of a Southern port who has spent much of his life since his twelfth year on deep waters, and though now retired is never truly happy, he says, save when cruising about the Island and doing a little fishing. His greatest joy is to get clear of the land in his yawl and pass the day alone or with a friend under the open sky. The remoter seas are still in his eyes, and visionary power has always lain not far behind them, ready to take control and show him the unseen, and to put him into touch with his loved ones, distant or dead, in hours of crisis. For him this faculty has been a blessing, and not, as for some, an affliction. Even when saddening in its immediate effects, it has been a source of spiritual nourishment for his unobtrusive but fervent piety.

A WOMAN OF THE NORTHERN GLENS.

Though Mrs. B. is well over eighty, she is straight, slim and tall, looking a dozen or fifteen years younger than her real age, and the edge of her mind is only just beginning to dull. An ordinary exterior conceals an unquestioning faith in much that has passed, not only out of credence, but out of remembrance. A saying she once heard, that Manannan dwelt always alone among the windy mountains, seemed to perplex her mind. She felt it more fitting that he should have lived at ease in the shelter of one of the glens. Glen Aldyn, she thought, would be the kind of place he would have liked. She had once been in Glen Aldyn, and it had evidently impressed her.

She recalls the wonders of her young world lovingly and wistfully, with a depth of feeling in her tones when she speaks of them ; but she will not revisit the home of her childhood because she would find all the places she knew changed and all the people gone whom she remembers. When she has leisure she goes off by herself for a long walk among the lanes and fields ; we never know, they say at the house in the town, where in the world she gets to or what time she'll be back. Though brought up to the Gaelckh and still able to sing " Kiree fo

'Niaghtey," she had never heard of the tragedy that inspired the song, for she had been reared on the other side of the mountains. When I told her how Nicholas Raby had died broken-hearted at the loss of his sheep two hundred years ago, she was as grieved as a child might have been.

A WOMAN OF THE SOUTHERN HILLS.

When I discovered Miss G. she was eighty-seven, keen-eyed and handsome yet, extremely clear-headed, active and cheerful. She was then living alone in a thatched cottage sheltered by trees; it stood just on the wavering line where the swarthiness of the Southern mountains meets the green of cultivation. From her windows one's gaze swept over grey-green fields and white farmhouses to Baie ny Carrickey and the open sea beyond it curving up to the clouds. On clear nights the lighthouses of the Irish coast could be seen winking fitfully, and the fainter spark of one in Anglesey, besides the strong seaward beams wheeling from Langness on the left, and the fixed lights, facing landward, which marked Port St. Mary harbour to the South-West. From the wind's unwearied shiftings between West and South the little house was screened by an evergreen hedge of mixed growths rising in a curve to form a porch. It was six feet thick, and looked and felt solid enough to be leaned against or sat upon by an elephant without showing a dent.

Miss G. spoke fluent Manx, quoted long slices in both Manx and English from the works, printed and unprinted, of Tom the Dipper, lived largely on barley-meal porridge, and was descended, though she did not know it, from the ballad-famed masters of Raby in Lonan. She wore a white sun-bonnet and her skirt was of loaghtyn wool spun by her mother forty years back and woven for everlasting at Ballakilpheric not far away. When she took me to see the *beetchagh* or chamber formerly kept open for the travelling beggarmen to spend a night in when they came that way, she needed no help in climbing its steep flight of unrailed and dilapidated steps. Yet she thought in her heart that if she couldn't get some person to come and live with her next winter she would have to go to some friends she had in Crosby, and it would not be easy to find anyone to come, for all the young ones were wanting now to be where there was more going on. By "young ones" she seemed to mean those under sixty. And having suppressed an inclination to offer my services, it was in the distant village that I found her a year later—in bed, alas! and with strength and memory failing. Secondary to the human pity of it there was other loss, for in her young days she had gone much about the rough country in the North of Rushen and Arbory, and consequently was richer in topographical knowledge than women commonly are.

A TRAVELLING TAILOR.

Almost within the presence of South Barrule lives a small gnome - like man with bright, occasionally mischievous, eyes peering attentively over the crisp white bush which covers the lower half of the ivory face. He has been a tailor by trade, but an extra drop of mercury in his make-up, a lovable light-heartedness or a forgivable light-mindedness, has kept him from putting by against his old age. Through working in other people's houses, as tailors used to do, he has at least amassed a considerable hoard of old-time gossip, and it is regrettable that he did not enter more of this in the " diary " which records his bygone business affairs. His beloved " big fiddle " now lies with broken strings on the shelf. The last place where I heard him play "her" was near the top of Barrule, on which an amateur religious service was being held on the first Sunday in an August of ten years ago—a Christianized revival of an old custom.

His Manx is highly esteemed by foreign students of the tongue ; in his habitual English his mind is seen zigzagging from point to point like a butterfly. From a panic terror of death he can pass (with the help of a few steadying words) to an amused account of some mid-Victorian escapade of his own or another's, to an affectedly incredulous description of a local buggane or fairy, or to the foolish doings at a wishing- well when he was a young man. He knows he ought to disapprove of such frivolities, for did he not play his 'cello in chapel? Yet when he forgets himself for a moment an undercurrent of innocent delight in them is apt to take hold of him. He never did anything wrong himself or saw anything strange—no, no, it was always the others; but he emits gleefully scandalized chuckles out of that immense drift of snowy whisker. [? this sounds like Tom Taggart of Kerrowkeil]

AT THE END OF THE ROAD.

How many of these old standards live alone ! Another recluse well advanced in years (he is old enough to have worn carranes as a. boy, and his father always wore them) dwells solitary among the trees clustered about a ford at the bottom of what would be called a coombe in the West of England and is not exactly a glen in the Isle of Man. In the great green groove curving from the mountains to the sea, walled in on both sides by steep, rough, and partly abandoned fields, stands his lifelong home. His floors are flagged, his furniture is more antique than himself, and his wood fire, subdued by its own ashes, smoulders day and night in the cavernous chimney-mouth. The rumble of the river just beneath his low-walled terrace and the rasping of boughs against his gable blend in my memory with his histories of the surrounding farms and their tenants past and present. One of these farms his ancestors held for generations, and lost ; his sole connexion with the land about him is his surname preserved in the names of places. He meditates on these matters in his loneliness, and is glad when he can speak of them to a friend at his hearth-side, or in the short rambles which his age permits.

A DWELLER BY THE TIDES.

Mrs. X. lives with her family just above high-water mark. One not very familiar with gypsy physiognomy might take her for a true Roman, but probably it was from one shore or the other of the Mediterranean that her forefathers migrated, some thousands of years ago. She has a keen appreciation of the value of English summer-visitors and of the fearsomeness of Manx ghosts. From natural ability and long practice upon the former she tells stories about the latter right well—even a little too well ; but not all her anecdotes are dished up for foreign consumption. On a winter night, with the sea roaring just outside her three-foot- thick walls, the flavour of her talk undergoes a change, perhaps without her knowledge. [? is this Mrs Dinah Moore - Wentz describes her as living near Glen Meay]

A DWELLER IN THE DEAD PLACES.

A man not yet old, slight and ruddy, neatly clothed, civil spoken so far as he was intelligible, but with an undefinable obliquity in his looks and bearing-the disquieting impression he has left in my mind may have distorted this outline of him. He lodged in the one or two rooms that remained habitable in a gaunt and forbidding ruin ; this had been the largest house, possibly the Captain's, in a group of mines and miners' dwellings abandoned now for more than a generation. Against the dark, barren hills of the South bristle their skeletons of buildings and chimneys, while the rusted and rotten débris of the industry litters the levelled earth at their feet and protrudes corpse-like limbs out of its tainted soil. To the man who had

chosen to live amid this wreckage the underground galleries of the old workings seemed as familiar and congenial as the face of the world above. The whole locality, indeed, above and below, had its epitome in his ruinous and subterranean mind. If he were to imagine a Creation it would surely be like this ; or if the place were to develop a human mentality it would resemble his own.

Though I have placed him after my shanachies, he is material for folk-lore rather than a transmitter of it.

In conclusion, for their highly-appreciated items of information on a large number of different topics my grateful acknowledgments are due to the following friends, two of whom I shall never see again : the late Richard E. Corrin and his family; Captain Walter Cowley, word of whose death has just reached me ; Mr. James Mylchreest ; and, once again, Miss Mona Douglas. The names of other helpers will be found in conjunction with the material they have contributed ; still others, whose aid has been less specific or less substantial, must remain unnamed but not unthanked.

My frontispiece, like that of the first *Scrapbook*, is the kind gift of Mr. William Hoggatt, R.I., of Port Erin. In addition to its intrinsic qualities as a work of art (which have necessarily suffered in reproduction from the original water-colour) it appeals to me by its suggestion of the aspect of the Island that chiefly matters.

For the use of the photographs facing pages 357 and 383 I have to thank Mr. P. G. Ralfe of Castletown, in whose delightful monograph, *The Birds of the Isle of Man*, they originally appeared.

Acknowledgments are also due to Messrs. Macmillan for permission to make extracts from their collected edition of the poems of T. E. Brown.

Footnote

* From these ceremonies and rituals are derived acts of a more prosaic nature also. If the modern military salute was an obeisance to a god in ancient Crete, as may be seen on a piece of pottery in the Ashmolean Museum, and if our friendly hand-grasp was elsewhere a gesture of allegiance to a chosen deity, as is depicted on antique medals and coins, which of our common daily practices may not own as remote and honourable a source ?

CHAPTER III

SECOND SIGHT AND ASSOCIATED FACULTIES

" The Matter of this Collection is beyond human reach we being miserably in the dark, as to the oeconomy of the invisible world, which knows what we do, or incline to, and works upon our passions, and is sometimes so kind as to afford its a glimpse of its praescience." (John Aubrey, in the Dedication of his " Miscellanies," 1696.)

§ 1. Their Nature and Operation.

THE subject-matter of the present chapter consists of the relations human beings have with each other through abnormal channels, of communications with the dead, and of death-warnings. These contacts may be defined as the under-side or the over-side of ordinary human intercourse, according to preference. I do not know that they have ever been satisfactorily explained. In place of the response of the conscious intelligence to sense-impressions, knowledge is acquired through some intangible medium in which we may be imagined to live and move like fish in water. Nevertheless, this knowledge seems to its recipient, in most cases, to reach him through his physical senses, though in an unusual and profoundly disturbing way. It is therefore properly termed a secondary sight or hearing, touch or smell ; secondary, that is, from the usual standpoint, yet often more impressive than any normal vision and audition. Second sight and its concomitant kind of hearing differ again from the sights and sounds which can be deliberately evoked from the memory by an effort of the will; they are an unwilled activity of the unconscious mind. Independently of the percipient's wishes, the visions and the sounds imprint themselves on his perception of their own accord, as it seems. So also does the content of a day-dream or a brown study, but these lack the prophetic value which usually belongs to a seer's vision. His visionary experiences, though akin to ordinary dreaming, are not, as a rule, preceded by a suspension of outward consciousness ; they are not dependent on sleep ; but they bring with them a sleep of their own, inasmuch as they are vivid enough to obliterate external impressions and fill their place. While the seer sees he is blind to his surroundings. And naturally so, since that part of the brain which normally fashions images out of the stimuli supplied through the sensory nerves is then occupied with impressions reaching it through a different channel.

The sound of hammer or pick blows in a colliery can be heard through the solid wall between two connected galleries before it is repeated through the medium of the air along the galleries. The duplicated sounds in this case are broadly analogous to the visionary scene or symbol and its later fulfilment.

Second Sight is a sight within the mind which makes use of the physical eyes. The scene or symbol viewed by the seer may represent either a simultaneous but distant event or one which lies in the future or the past. The same distinction applies when the knowledge of an event reaches him through his hearing.

With these involuntary perceptions can be coupled the visions which are induced by artificial means, and visions occurring during sleep which are easily distinguishable from ordinary dreams. All these, when authentic, are functionings of the same faculty. Dr. Johnson, who was an incarnation of common sense, discussed the Second Sight which he met with in the Highlands as a fact and not as a vain superstition. He defined it as " an impression made either by the mind upon the eye, or by the eye upon the mind." Possibly he intended by this to include the two branches of foreknowledge-that acquired by actual vision, and that which

comes through a symbol. If, however, he meant to offer two alternative definitions of Second Sight, the former, " an impression made by the mind upon the eye," is the preferable one ; for though we might at a pinch concede the possibility of some mirage-like projection upon the retina when the image seen is that of a living person or of an event in progress at the time, to see something in the past or the future does not admit of a purely physical explanation, any more than do the prophetic images or pictures seen by clairvoyants in the shapes taken by natural objects, in globes of beryl, bowls of water, pools of ink, or any substance which acts as a focus.

The last-mentioned mode of supernatural vision involves some conscious effort, or at the least a deliberate expectation of a visual message. To seers of this positive type perception often comes indirectly, in the form of a symbol which requires interpretation. It may be that the second half of Dr. Johnson's definition, " by the eye upon the mind," was framed to include this complementary branch of the faculty.

Between Second Sight and other kinds of supernatural vision which is not due to hallucination it would be difficult to draw a sharp line. Each is an effect of the unconscious mind acting upon the senses ; each suspends normal consciousness, or greatly narrows its field, while in operation ; certain varieties of each can be induced by suggestive conditions and formalities. One quality, however, characterizes Second Sight which is absent from the seeing of " apparitions " and fairies : its visions are reflected from actual occurrences in the world of humanity. They are revelations of something which has, has had, or will have, a substantial existence, and they carry a meaning and a message which relate to human affairs.

Yet the sympathy existing between Second Sight and other kinds of supernatural vision is apt to cause confusion of the one with the other. Take for an example the case of the man who saw the fairies working a railway in Santon twenty years before the first Manx line was laid down.[1] What was essentially an experience in Second Sight took the form of a fairy spectacle. The gift of the Sight has indeed been attributed to the fairies, as well as to the Devil.

Second Sight and its allied faculties testify to a power possessed, probably, in a latent state by all human beings and irregularly active in a few; a power which in varying degrees frees the mind from the limitations of time and space, and enables it to range up and down the chain of coexistent causes and effects. The ability to prophesy at large, though akin to ordinary clairvoyance and clairaudience, is more continuous and of a higher order. Of this fuller illumination St. Columba gave one of his disciples a lucid account. " Some there are, though very few, to whom Divine grace has granted this : that they can clearly and most distinctly see, at one and the same moment, as though under one ray of the sun, even the entire circuit of the whole world with its surroundings of ocean and sky, the inmost part of their mind being marvellously enlarged."[2]" From his youthful years," says his biographer, " he began to excel in the spirit of prophecy, to foretell things to come, and to announce to those who were present things that were happening at a distance ; though absent in body he was yet present in spirit, and could perceive things done far away " ; [3] powers which St. Adamnan illustrates by a text from i Corinthians vi. 17: " He who cleaveth unto the Lord is one spirit." And, truly, it may be said of all these abnormal sense-impressions and subjective sources of knowledge that the more deeply they are probed the more surely they are found to converge towards a common impersonal centre.

Columba's gift, which was the efflorescence of a highly spiritual nature, came much nearer to being continuous and controllable than that of the ordinary seer ; but it is interesting to observe how prominent among the wonderful traits recorded of him in the 6th and 7th centuries are two kinds of foreknowledge characteristic of modern Manx and Scottish Second Sight ; namely, the foreknowledge of another's death, and of the imminent arrival of a stranger. His spiritual illumination (if we may credit Adamnan here) once even enabled his disciples to dispense with the drudgery of proof-reading.

These psychical or mediumistic communications of ordinary seers, then, crystallize into visions differing from those which picture fairies, phantoms, and the forms of things unknown. They are the impinging of human beings, alive or dead, upon a living subject through the physical senses functioning in an unusual way. The knowledge of circumstances or events, inaccessible to the seer's ordinary consciousness, which they convey, reaches him rather through the soul than through the intellect ; or, if the equation will pass, through the stomach rather than through the brain. Like visions of creatures populating a non-human world, these intimations through a channel outside the normal senses have been in continuance for innumerable centuries ; they are the occasional results of a permanent faculty of the human mind. Whether they are more active in the Isle of Man than elsewhere, and whether their activity is increasing, decreasing, or constant through the superficial changes in social life and mental outlook, would need too much space to discuss. Considered from the personal side, such subjective and evanescent experiences stamp themselves on the memory for the rest of the percipient's life, and become part of it in a degree that is only equalled by the most violent impressions from without. The more nearly, it would seem, an experience comes to being purely physical, the more fleeting is its impression on the mind.

Of the supernormal faculties the Sight, in particular, is often found, in varying degrees of fullness, in persons of comparatively low intellectual powers, rarely in those capable of much abstract or analytical thinking.[4] A devout temperament is its most congenial soil, and it does not appear in persons of evil or perverted will. It is commoner in men than in women, so well as one can judge, an unexpected feature in an instinctive and self-acting function. Though it is far from being confined to the Islands and Highlands of Scotland,[5] it seems to have been and still to be most prevalent there and most dramatic in its manifestations; and perhaps it is to the Scottish strain in their ancestry that some of the Manx people owe that power of prevision which comes to them in sleep, or in waking moments when the mind is open to influences other than those of the superficial workaday world. Higden's Polvchronicon tells us how a native Manx seer could transfer his vision to a foreigner. It is the Scottish method likewise. In a story of which the circumstances belong to the Isle of Lewis in the year 1662 or 1663, a Lewis man sets his foot on that of a man from the East of Scotland, and so enables him to see the predicament of a vessel then about a hundred miles away, in which he is financially interested; " but when the countryman's foot was off he saw nothing."[6] I mention this illustration of a well-known practice because it reverses the more usual method of creating a link of sympathy which was used in the Isle of Man, where the stranger's foot was placed on that of the seer. The 17th-century writer, the Rev. John Fraser, from whose treatise on Second Sight the Lewis story is extracted, was a friend of William Sacheverell, a name familiar to those who read Manx history. Sacheverell collected many anecdotes of the Sight in the Isle of Man, and the two men, Fraser says, compared notes on the subject. It is safe to say that they might have used each other's notes, names and places excepted, without misrepresenting either of the regions concerned.[7]

An early 16th-century Welsh manuscript quoted by Rhys (*Celtic Folklore*, page 330) says: "In this island [Man] one beholds in the light of day people who have died. . . . And if strangers desire to see them, they have to stand on the feet of the natives of the land, and in that way they would see what the latter had seen." The passage on which this is based can plainly be recognized in Blundell's *History of the Isle of Man*, chapter xxii., where he quotes from " Caxton " in reference to an old Manx law-custom, viz. the setting by the plaintiff of his foot on the defendant's foot. Of this Blundell says : " Whence it had first beginning I know not, but I find it in another case to have been a very ancient ceremony practised in the Isle of Man, but very superstitiously, for both Ranulf of Chester, and Caxton in his description of England, hath written, ' that in the Island of Man, oftentimes even in the daytime, the Islanders did see men that had been dead, either without a head, or the body entire, and what manner of Death they died. But Aliens, to see this Sight, were to sett foot upon the foot of a Manksman, or otherwise they could not see these Sights that the Natives did see.' " (" Ranulf " is Ralph Higden.)

The *Teutonic Mythology* (pages 1107 and 1112) has some remarks which shed a little light on the Manx usage, though in Germany it is not merely the particular vision which is thus transmitted, but the visionary power as a whole. Seers in that country " can impart their gift to him that treads on their right foot and looks over their left shoulder ; this was apparently a very ancient, even a heathen, posture ; it was a legal formality in taking possession of cattle. . . . The first child christened at a newly-consecrated font receives the power to see spirits and coming events, until some one shall from idle curiosity tread on his left foot and look over his right shoulder, when the gift will pass away to him . . . even to the dog the gift descends, if you tread on his right foot and make him look over your right shoulder."

In a story current in Guernsey the foot-on-foot nexus is used for a different purpose. A man who has the power of flying invisibly to and from his daily work takes a friend as well, after bidding him place a foot on one of his, clasp him tightly round the waist, shut his eyes, and speak no word.[8]

In the legend of the Breton St. Yves, he shares his miraculously keen hearing with a disciple by allowing the latter to place a foot on his own.

A Cardiganshire story adapts the idea to the familiar theme of the fairy house situated beneath the dwelling of the human folk. The fairy-man gets the farmer to put his foot on the fairy's own foot, to enable the man to see how the slops from his house went down the chimney of the fairy's house, " which stood far below in a street he had never seen before."[9]

In addition to the natural inheritance of a tendency towards visionary and prophetic inspiration, there are traces in folk-lore that initiation by external yet supernatural means was understood to be possible. The Manx people in former times held a belief, of which a memory still lingers, that once in several years the rising sun flashed on the world a momentary ray or tincture of his light which was charged with a special potency. If a glimpse could be caught of this portent it conferred on the lucky beholder some benefit in the nature of Second Sight or divinatory power, or occult knowledge of some kind. As it was necessary that the sun should be seen in the very act of rising, it may be supposed that it was coming up out of the sea, and I take the belief to have resulted from the acquaintance of a race of fishermen and herdsmen with the natural phenomenon generally called " the Green Ray " or " the Green Flash." A number of letters on this subject appeared in *The Times* during the second fortnight of August, 1929, during the course of which a scientific explanation of the "

ray " was put in simple terms by one of the correspondents. It can be seen when conditions are favourable at either sunrise or sunset, and is due to refraction of light from the sun just below the horizon. Green is the most vivid colour in its composition and therefore the most frequently observed. Reminded by the descriptions in *The Times* correspondence that natives of the Isle of Man used to place a mystical interpretation on something very like the Green Ray, I addressed an inquiry to the paper about this aspect of the matter. My letter elicited one response only,* but it furnished the desired details, which are appended here as a valuable contribution to Insular folk-lore:* In the issue of 10th September, 1929.

To the Editor of The Times.

SIR,-I should like to corroborate the statement of your correspondent Mr. Gill, in your issue of 30th August, that something like the green flash appears occasionally in Manx folk-lore. The old Manx name for it was *soilshey-bio*, or " living light " ; and I have gathered the impression, without having been actually told so, that it was thought to be an emanation of the sun's life in much the same way as the " living image," or apparition of a living person, is believed to be an emanation of the personality or will. The soilshey-bio is, however, sometimes taken as a warningsign. In several fragments taken down by me from Manx fisherfolk, the " flash " was seen at sunrise on the morning preceding a wreck of one or more boats, sometimes by a relative of men actually lost and in other cases by the men themselves, who took the warning and withdrew from the fated enterprise.

Perhaps the real significance of this danger-signal aspect of the *soilshey-bio* may be a belief that it conferred upon the watcher a kind of second-sight, enabling him or her to apprehend coming events. At any rate, the " flash " certainly also had its beneficial side in popular belief, and in this aspect it was made use of by the old " charmers ' or " witch-doctors " who flourished in the island until recently. It was believed by them that if this strange ray fell upon certain medicinal herbs and they were gathered immediately afterwards they acquired an almost miraculous power. I had this belief directly from a very old man who was, I should think, about the last survivor of the "charmers," and who claimed to be able to cure " all diseases of body or mind in man, woman or child," provided that the sufferer came to him in good time and that he did not " see the sign of death " on him or her. This man also told me that if any person could find what he called " the herb of life " at the moment when it was touched by the soilshey-bio, death would never touch him or anyone to whom he gave a portion of the herb to eat.

Yours faithfully,

Isle of Man. MONA DOUGLAS.

I do not know how far the old Manx conception of the " ray " as a tongue of fire bestowing its gift of inner vision and soothsaying on the lucky beholder is to be related to another and more definable portent seen in the morning sky. Here, again, I am only able to give a hearsay description, not the first-hand evidence of an eye-witness. The correspondent whose letter has just been cited has retained from her childhood a family tradition of " old tales which speak of some tremendous being with his body shining like water and all colours of the rainbow, who could be seen in the sky on play morning, but others say at Midsummer dawn; and my own grandmother . . . told me that she herself had once seen it on Easter morning, and had been very much afraid. But all the versions agree that it was a dawn apparition." The beliefs held in Britain and on the Continent that the sun danced or gave three leaps when it rose on

Easter Day, and the Somerset tradition that a lamb could then be seen in it, may be further fragments of some myth which formed part of a system of sun-worship.

So fertile is the Isle of Man in experiences produced by supernatural sight and hearing that I shall restrict myself mainly to instances of foreknowledge and afterknowledge which have been related to me by the actual percipients. Exceptions to this rule will be clearly distinguished as such. I have been careful to use the statements of those persons only of whose sincerity I feel assured. Some of the examples date so far back as forty years ago, others are so recent as last year. All but one were written down immediately after I heard them.

Footnotes

1 Roeder, *Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 155.

2 Adamnan's *Life of Columba*, bk. I., ch. xliii.

3 Bk 1., ch i.

4 A notable exception to this dictum was Jacob Boehme, during the later part of his life.

5 Ennemoser's *History of Magic* mentions cases of it in Denmark, chiefly on the coast. In Germany it is concerned largely with the same phenomena as in the Isle of Man. " To this day," says Grimm (*Teut. Myth*., page 1107), " there are families that" have the peculiar gift of foreseeing what will happen, especially fires, deaths and corpses."

6 Sir George Douglas, *Scottish Fairy Tales*, page 211.

7 Sacheverell in his *Account of the Isle of Man* (1703) says that the gift was hereditable and could be transmitted from father to son in the course of nature. From my own observation I have no doubt the visionary tendency does, in Man, run in families. In Germany, Grimm says, it descends from mother to daughter, from father to son.

8 MacCulloch, *Guernsey Folk-lore*, page 337.

9 *Celtic Folklore*, page 230.

CHAPTER III

SECOND SIGHT AND ASSOCIATED FACULTIES

§ 2. The Living and the Dead.

The form which Second Sight most often takes in the Island is that of the " phantom funeral," in which the coming event casts its likeness before it. In the following case the seer, whom I shall call Y.Z., has been well known to me for the greater part of my life. On approaching, by daylight, her aunt's house in Castletown, she saw when a short distance away a small knot of people, some of whom she recognized, and several carriages, standing in front of the gate, as though waiting for something to come out. Although she did not actually distinguish a hearse, she " felt " there was a funeral in progress. When she came nearer the gathering suddenly vanished. Feeling puzzled and uneasy, she continued on her way home and told what she had seen, but was rebuked by her elders for romancing. The aunt died within a year, and Y.Z. saw the same crowd again, this time in reality, as she went to the house on an errand connected with the funeral. Among the crowd were the persons whom she had recognized, in her vision, as friends of the family.[1]

A former Rector of Arbory, a gentleman of Manx extraction, has recently described to me how he, his sister, their coachman, and the horse, all saw a " phantom funeral " when driving home one evening many years ago. He does not remember that their collective vision heralded a death in the neighbourhood. [similar tale told by Wentz - attributed to Canon Kewley]

A retired Presbyterian minister, likewise a Manxman, tells me that he saw one of these spectral processions coming along the main road at the Howe in Rushen, and that he recognized among the party a man whose features were very familiar to him. The man died a couple of weeks later.

In two of these visions a considerable difference will be noticed between the periods of time elapsing before the deaths of the persons identified ; in one case a fortnight, in the other nearly a year. In this connexion, though without any particular example being given, I have been told that certain signs denote the length of life remaining to the doomed one. When an image is seen of the person who is about to die, it may appear draped to a greater or lesser extent in a shroud. The height to which the shroud reaches from the feet upwards corresponds to the nearness of death. If the grave-clothes reach only to the middle of the figure, death is some months distant. If they come up to the neck and a little earth is clinging to them, death is not far off. If the figure is covered with adherent soil, only a few days of life remain. These are said to be the accepted rules, but I have not met with anyone who has proved them by experience. The fact that they were acknowledged in Scotland also in the 17th century[2] need not weaken their validity for the isle of Man, where they have been known in a family of my acquaintance for at least three generations back. The coating of grave-mould recalls to mind the days when the body was buried in the earth without a coffin.

Another premonition of a friend's death happened to the same Y.Z,. some few years subsequent to the vision just described. It was less clearly visualized than the " phantom funeral," but no less movingly felt. A connexion of hers by marriage, whom she had nursed throughout his illness and who had become attached to her, lay slowly dying. While visiting the house the day before his death, she met, towards dusk, in a passage leading from the

kitchen, what seemed to her a dark impalpable cloud barring her progress. She found herself quite unable to pass it, although she made two attempts. She felt as though something were pushing her backwards. This she immediately interpreted as meaning that Death was in close attendance on the sick man and that he had not long to live, and her inference was borne out before daybreak.

People have been similarly hindered and pushed back when passing the gate of Kirk Christ Rushen, and have regarded the invisible barrier as a sign that a " phantom funeral " was in progress. When it was over they were allowed to go by. Possibly, however, this interference was due to a certain ghostly procession which had a regular route from Ballagawne towards the church ; in that event it should be put down to the slightly different phantasm known as the Death Coach. A connexion is thought to exist between this particular Death Coach and a brownish stain near the wainscot of a room in Ballagawne house, said to be ineradicable because the result of a murder. Being rayed like a starfish, it looks more like a splash of spilt paint.

Akin to Y.Z.'s premonition just related was that of a hoxdale woman who, as she crossed her kitchen one day- in the course of her housework, struck her foot against something near the door which caused her to stumble ; but when she looked down there was nothing to be seen, nor could she feel it again. A few days later her husband's coffin was carried in and laid down in exactly the same spot.

Of the following remarkable symbolic warning of a death (related to me, as were all the preceding experiences except the last, by the living individuals concerned) I did not write down the details until some months after hearing them for the second time ; a few minor points are therefore queried, but the essentials of the story stamped themselves so strongly on my memory that they may be taken as accurate. The narrator, at the time of the vision about twelve years old, and her little sister of about half that age, were sleeping together in a certain house in Ramsey. During the night the elder sister awoke, and saw a beam of light slanting down from the upper part of the window ; it seemed to contain (or take the shape of ?) a tiny woman only a few inches high, standing on (or above ?) the bed. This figure gazed hesitatingly at the elder sister, and then, as though changing her mind, looked towards the younger one who lay asleep. She then kissed the latter on the forehead and vanished. The narrator said that the figure seemed to be going to kiss her at first, but chose the younger child instead. Next day this child sickened, and died within a week.

Two young brothers living in Douglas went recently on their bicycles to visit a woman they knew in Sulby. One of them was preoccupied with a love affair, and it is thought that he was intending to ask the girl next day to marry him. After tea he begged their hostess, who had a reputation for seeing into the future, to tell him what sort of luck he would have to-morrow. The other likewise wished to know something of his own future. She refused both of them, but after they had importuned her she consented to write down a few words for one of them (the lover) if he would promise not to read it that night. While they were cycling homewards in the late evening he was run down by a charabanc and killed. Before the funeral the survivor asked his mother whether he might look in Dick's coat-pocket to see what was on the paper. When he opened it he read: "There will be no to-morrow." He afterwards went to Sulby and blamed the woman for not having warned them before they left her house ; but she said that what she had foreseen could not have been avoided. (Communicated by a friend of the two young men.)

Death was foreknown, in a more general way, by watching at old chapel-sites on Hallowe'en, as has already been recorded. Lights could then be seen which corresponded in number to the deaths fated to occur during the ensuing twelve months. I have never heard that any spoken, or other charm was needed, or that the sight was not granted to all who ventured to foregather. It seems to have been a collective vision.

Visions at the death-moment of one to whom the seer is attached by some bond of sympathy-perhaps not wholly realized during life-are not lacking. One recounted to me twice, with several years intervening, by the son of the seer of the vision, runs thus. In the secluded farmhouse called Little London, in the parish of German, Evan C. lay dying. His elder sister Isabella, as she was walking up a path from a cornfield to the house, was astonished to see him coming down to meet her, dressed in his " wearing clothes "-that is to say, his working suit. He passed her without a word or a sign of recognition. When she reached the door she found her mother standing in the porch, and began to tell her what she had juist seen. " Hush ! " her mother whispered, " Evan is dead."

Of a less common type is a dream-vision of a young soldier's death in France during the late war. It was seen by an elder relative and friend of his, from whom I had the particulars. She woke suddenly in the middle of the night and sprang up with a vigorous clap of the hands, exclaiming, " That's the shot that killed C.H. ! " In her dream she had heard it and had seen him fall backwards from the top of a ridge. When she came in to breakfast the others present greeted her with a general hand-clapping, and chaffed her about her nocturnal performance. But it was learned afterwards that C.H. had been sniped that night while leading his men out to an attack or a raid, and had fallen backwards into the trench. He died next day. It will not be irrelevant to mention that the dreamer in this case is a woman who, while asleep, is highly suggestible and open to external impressions as well as being somnambulistic. She will, or would in earlier life, answer questions spoken into her ear, without any knowledge, after waking up, that she had done so. The imitation of the sound of the shot is of a piece with the imitative acts performed by subjects in the hypnotic state, and in her waking life this lady's receptiveness has resulted in a genius for mimicry.

An instinctive awareness of the neighbourhood of death with its conventional attributes is a trait common among " sensitives," as these experiences help to show. X.Y., when little more than a child, was spending a holiday with some friends in England. Several times when going upstairs after dark she felt an indefinable reluctance to pass a particular landing, a feeling so strong that it seemed as though an invisible power or presence were barring the way, and she was obliged to return. On one of these occasions somebody in the downstairs room, surprised at the shortness of her absence, asked whether she had already found what she had gone up for, and, not having any rational explanation to offer, she made some trivial excuse. When going up to bed she always contrived to have the company of one of the daughters of the house. Towards the end of her visit she discovered that on an old oak chest which stood on this landing had rested, not long before, the coffin of a member of the family, whose body had been carried thither from an adjoining room. Before learning this she had spent a night in that room, but though one of the other girls was with her she felt restless and could sleep but little, and next day she asked to be put in a different bedroom.

Another experience of what may be termed aftervision was shared a few years later by the same X.Y. and her elder sister. While occupying the same bedroom in a house on the outskirts of Ramsey into which the family had recently moved, X.Y. saw on different occasions a white figure kneeling at a chair by the window, as though in prayer. She was

always wide awake when she saw it, not dreaming. As it caused her no alarm she said nothing about it until her elder sister told her she had seen the same figure, when she replied, " Oh, yes, I often see that ! " They were both troubled by a smell of oak in the same room, which they could not account for. Eventually they chanced to hear from a local doctor, with whom they were on friendly terms, that a short time before their father took the house two deaths had happened there in close succession—first a woman and then her daughter, both of consumption ; the bodies had lain in their coffins either in that room or the next, he could not be sure which.

A similar but more habitual sensitiveness to invisible surroundings was described to me recently by a doctor, to whom the wife of a fisherman living in a small Manx town came, as a last resort, in the hope of a cure. Whenever she and her family moved into a fresh dwelling she was distressed by sensing the events which had happened there and the psychic atmosphere left behind by the previous tenants.

A Manx Seer

The next two experiences differ in character from those previously narrated. They were not waking perceptions of a death recent or to come, but the active intrusion of two dead women upon the dream-life of the living, and so are rather to be classed with spiritualistic phenomena than with the messages received through Second Sight. The two living women, sisters, to whom they happened, were both of a mediumistic temperament; one was a waking seer and the other was a seer in dreams. The first sister, whom I shall call A.Z., dreamt a few weeks before the marriage of a third sister, the eldest, that their aunt (dead before A.Z. was born) came and warned her not to let the marriage go forward. She was able to describe the aunt's features and dress minutely, and the details were verified by her parents. (The possibility should be mentioned that her accuracy may have owed something to her having seen a feeble water-colour portrait which was preserved among the family relics, or to having heard a description of her aunt's appearance during life.) However that may be, the other sister similarly dreamt, shortly before or shortly after, that the intending bridegroom's first wife, who had died a couple of years previously, stood by her bedside and exhorted her in most earnest words to do her utmost to prevent the marriage. She felt deeply impressed, and awoke crying passionately, " I promise, I promise ! " Though I have called these " dreams," it was felt by both narrators that their visitors were " far more real " than the ordinary inhabitants of dreamland. The marriage came to pass, with almost tragically unhappy consequences that were terminated only by the death of the husband.

The aunt (whom I never met) was the one whose funeral was foreseen in a vision in a Castletown street, as already told. She must have been a woman of strong and persistent will, to make herself so plainly seen and heard after death (if this is how we are to understand the matter) as though she were still watching over the fortunes of her family. For, in addition to these two special occasions, the A.Z. already mentioned, who had been her aunt's greatest favourite, held lengthy conversations with her in frequently recurring dreams for long after she left this world. In A.Z.'s words, " they seemed too real for dreams "-a remark often made by those whose visions come to them in sleep, and not without reason, I would add. One night A.Z. was struck by the dull, earthy hue of her visitor's face, which always before had seemed the face of a living woman ; and her aunt told her that this was the last time she would be able to come. At her bidding the dreamer kissed her good-bye, and in doing so was aware of an almost overpowering smell of fresh, damp earth, as of soil newly turned up ; it was real enough to haunt her nostrils throughout the following day. After that she never saw her aunt so distinctly as before or conversed with her. " They only seemed vague, ordinary dreams," which grew fainter and fainter, and at last ceased entirely.

When the warning of a death comes through the sight, nothing is heard ; when the warning is heard as a voice or other sound, there is no vision, only an intuitive sense that the sound is not natural. This is the rule, but there are exceptions. Sounds having this prophetic significance are as numerous as visions. If we may take the following experience (from the lips of the man concerned) to embody something more than an accidental identity between two sounds at two different times, we learn from it that future events may cast sound-waves as well as light-waves backwards into the present and affect the physical hearing. A friend of mine was sitting quietly before the fireside one afternoon with the woman who was to be his wife. The rest of her family had gone out to some festivity or other, and these two were alone in the house. Without warning the stillness was broken by a resounding, hollow thump which seemed to come from above their heads; it was followed by what he described as " a tippetty-tippetty sound," which lasted for a few seconds ; then there was silence again. The girl leapt to her feet with a cry : " What was that ? " He searched the upper room and then the rest of the house, without finding anything that looked as though it had just fallen ; but, not to frighten her further, he told her he had discovered the cause of the sounds. That day week his mother died. In those days (about forty years ago) graves were dug by anyone who would lend his service., for there was no regular grave-digger in that parish. In filling up this grave one of the men unskilfully let drop a heavy clod on the coffin ; the result was a perfect repetition of the thump heard ten days previously, and in the ensuing silence my friend recognized the " tippetty - tippetty sound " of soil trickling down from the edge of the grave.

In another case, also in the South of the Island, there was, so far as I learnt, no later repetition of the sound which was taken as a death-warning. Two persons in a room were attending to a woman in bed who was dying of consumption. All three heard a sudden, loud knock at the front door. It was opened at once, but no one was there or in sight. The woman said, " That's for me ! ", and not long afterwards she died. How long after I am not certain, nor in what degree self-suggestion hastened her death.

A man well on in years, after watching by his wife's bedside when she was in her last illness, and holding her hand, lay down to rest in an adjoining room, without doffing his jacket, while his daughter took his place. The sick woman kept asking for him, and eventually the daughter went to him to ask him to come. When she entered the room he said to her, " It was very wrong of you, E., to let your mother get up and leave her room ; it might be the death of her." " But she hasn't been out of it, or even out of bed." " What nonsense ! Why, she has just been

in here to me and put her hand in mine, and put three handfuls of rice info my coat-pocket." But there was no rice in the pocket, and his wife died a few hours later. Rice being used at weddings, it was thought by the family to have a kindred significance here ; a son interpreted it as meaning three years or three wedding anniversaries before husband and wife would be together again. This turned out to be the true reading of the dream or vision, for the old man lived to see only three more anniversaries, and then he rejoined her. At his death he spoke his dead wife's name, and clutched a hand which was invisible to his daughter; he retained his grasp of it till he died, holding the daughter's hand with his other one, and thus forming a link between the two worlds. It was the daughter who told me these circumstances ; I know- the family very well. Several members of it have been gifted with visionary powers, which have continued throughout their lifetimes. One of them recently experienced the following symbolical dream which came true.

She dreamt that her father, who had died three years before, came to her, and there was a baby there also, which had a great hole torn in its side. He looked very grieved, and was saying, " I am not to blame for this ; I never wished the baby anything but the best." She woke up, went to sleep again, and the dream repeated itself. The interpretation given was this her father had set great store by his little croft ; it had been his pet hobby, and he had spared neither labour nor money to improve it. This, then, was his " baby," and in the unprecedented floods which ruined Glen Aldyn in September, 1930, the portion of this land which bordered upon the river, and on which stood the house he had built and the garden he had cared for, was devastated. The dream preceded the floods by two or three days only. This description of it was given to me by the dreamer herself.

The same local disaster was foreseen in symbolic dreams by two other members of the same family, who afterwards related them to me. In one case the dreamer seemed to be coming down from the mountain road towards the farm. On reaching a certain field she saw her father (who had died three years previously) sitting on the stone hedge. He said, " Look down there ! ", and she saw that though the surrounding hills glowed with bright sunlight, a deep darkness covered the glen below. She felt strongly impressed by the strangeness of the contrast, and understood that it was charged with significance.

A third sister dreamt, three or four days before the floods caused by the same cloudburst swept away part of the churchyard at Lezayre, that she saw her mother's grave half full of water.

Shortly before the disastrous failure of Dumbell's Bank a girl whose father suffered heavily in the smash dreamt that X., the man who was afterwards held to be chiefly responsible, was striking at her father with an axe. She felt greatly distressed, and thrust herself between them, but the axe fell again and brought him to his knees. At the time of the dream the two men were on quite friendly terms.

A premonitory vision of evil, somewhat similar to these prophetic dreams, occurred to another seer when she was wide awake. While she was walking one afternoon down a road in Lonan which overlooks a broad stretch of sea, she saw to the South-East, in the direction of Liverpool, an unnatural-looking light, compact and rayless in form and bluish or livid in hue. It was moving slowly over the water, apparently about half-way between the cliffs and the horizon. She watched it for what seemed some minutes as she went along, until it disappeared. Before she had gone far a sense of utter depression and heart-chill came over her, and she realized that the light was meant for a warning of something dreadful. Her father

had arranged to sail from Ramsey that night in the steamer *Ellan Vannin*, but she persuaded him to put off his journey, though without fully explaining her reason ; for what she had seen had such an effect on her that she could not bring herself to speak of it then or for some years afterwards. The foundering of the Ellan Vannin at the bar of the Mersey that night with all her crew and passengers is cut deep in the annals of the Island. The seer's account to me of the circumstances connected with her vision was independently corroborated by her father.

A warning of a death, or what is taken as a warning, may be seen by those to whom it does not apply, and who are unconscious of its nature and purport until it has been interpreted by the person for whom it is supposed to be intended. An example of this has reached me recently in the course of correspondence with a well-known Manxman of the highest credibility.

"One dark night at about ten o'clock my sister noticed a bright light in one of the west gable windows of Arbory Church. She thought that plumbers had been at work at the cistern close by it on the gallery. She called the maid. They went together to the church, observing the light all the time. On entering they found the place in darkness. They examined the gallery and found nothing. Next morning my sister suggested to the old sexton, who was also organ-blower, and whose seat for that purpose was in front of the windows, that he was very late in the church on the previous evening. He replied that he had not been near the church after dark. She told him what they had seen. He said, 'That was my sign, M'm.' We buried him (Jem Duggan [James Duggan, age 76 on 3 Dec 1897 - presumeably told by Canon Kewley]) within a fortnight, in December, 1897. He was in his usual health when the light appeared." In this case, as in others, self-suggestion may have had something to do with the ensuing death. The light would still require explanation.

Among other phenomena, in addition to unaccountable lights, which are accepted as death-signs, are the prancing and neighing of the horses drawing the hearse at a funeral. If the procession of mourners and other followers on foot straggles out in a thin line it is a sign that a second funeral will pass along the same road within a week. An unimpeachable witness gives me specific instances of the fulfilment of these omens. Children going about in a band singing or chanting is held to be a certain sign of a coming death. So, likewise, is the hearing of the songs or cries of birds, or seeing them going about in flocks, or hearing the rush of many wings ; all, be it understood, at irregular times and places. It is their unusualness which marks them as prophetic. A correspondent sends me the following recent illustration of this kind of " warning."

" In connexion with premonitions of death I once heard a rather curious one at Glen X. It came to the wife of a policeman whose little son was ill, though not despaired of by the doctor. The woman awoke her husband about midnight, saying that she heard a great flock of birds going over the house and singing beautifully. He listened, and after a moment or two heard what seemed to be the faint song of a blackbird, but he could not be sure of it. After it had passed over she said, ' That's a death in the house within twentvfour hours-it must be our W.,' and the boy grew worse rapidly and died the following evening. The man told me this a few days afterwards, and his wife confirmed it later on. I knew them both well."

With these secret intimations of mortality should perhaps be classed the family- death-warnings which are plentiful in Ireland and not unknown in England and other countries. No Manx family, so far as I am aware, possesses a typical banshee, but some of the Kaighans of Michael and German, who say they were " the Horsemen of Manannan," were—perhaps still

are—liable to be warned of impending misfortune to members of their clan by the sound of the hoofs of invisible galloping horses. No one who is not of the Kaighan blood, even if in the company of a Kaighan at the time, is able to hear it. Some light may be cast on this tradition by the derivation of the name Kaighan from McEaeharn or McEachan, i.e. *Each-tighearn*, " Horse - master." The McEacharns (a Kintyre surname) were said in Scottish tradition to be " Manannan's Horsemen."[3] Kintyre was associated with horses nearly 2,000 years ago, when the name of its inhabitants, recorded by Ptolemy from a previous authority, was *Epidii*, " The Horse-people "—probably a Pictish word which was replaced by the Gaelic name *Echdi* for the same tribe.

Waldron mentions the trampling of horses merely as a prognostic of the arrival of visitors, which is not regarded as a misfortune by the Manx of to-day. The sound is also heard in several parts of the Island as a local haunting without reference to future events—notably near the circle of stone graves on the Mull.

To return to birds : if a wild bird comes into the house it is looked upon as presignifying a death to occur shortly. There is also a dislike, seldom definitely expressed but none-the-less inveterate, to killing any kind of wild bird. These ideas are probably the remains of an old and widespread belief that the souls of the dead enter birds, or take their shape, and haunt the scenes which were most familiar to them during life. Therefore a bird which makes itself conspicuous by its unusual behaviour is a messenger from the underworld.

Human souls which have made the transit from the land of the living to the land of the dead can thus be glimpsed, in a shape other than that which they wore on earth, when the hour is ripe and the word is spoken. As I have heard it from an esteemed friend, " the ninth wave out from the shore with the new moon shining on it has birds on it which are the souls of the dead, and it never comes to land. They can be seen by saying the right words." The magic virtue of the ninth wave is too well known to need emphasizing. It might be supposed that " the dead " means here only the drowned ; in Brittany " the souls of drowned men may enter the birds of the sea, or appear as sea-birds to those who must follow them."[4] This brings to mind how, in the fatal Baie des Trëpasses, near Quimper, in la Cornouaille, on the Night of All Souls, the pale phantoms travel on the crests of the waves seeking each other. [5] It is not said that they wear the shapes of birds at that place and hour, but from a non-Celtic part of Great Britain the catholicity of the Manx belief is confirmed. In one of a series of East Anglian literary sketches a countryman goes out in a North Sea fishing-boat intent on catching sight of his recently-drowned brother among the sea-birds. His brother had said, before starting on his last voyage, " Jack, when I die I'll be an owd gannet, and if I heave round yow'll heave me a herrin', won't yow ? " " George," I say, " how shall I know yow along with the other gannets ? ", and he say, " I'll hev a pair o' black arm-sleeves, so yow'll know me." Independently of this tryst between the brothers, the mate of the boat says of a gull which has been caught in the net and drowned, " Here comes an owd fisherman what hev hung hisself. He've come to look on at us."[6] In a note on page 154 the author says : " I found that on certain parts of the East Coast many of the old fishermen believe that they turn into gulls when they die. It was with great difficulty I first found out that this strange belief in a post-mortem transformation existed at all, but once having learned it, I found to my astonishment that the belief was common, but was spoken of with much reserve. I have never seen any mention of such a superstition existing in our day, and should feel obliged to any critic who could throw light upon it. I asked one fisherman if he did not dislike their being shot on this account ? He replied philosophically, ' No ! they hev been dead onset, they hev been on earth onset, and we hev got quite enough old men now.' ' And the children,' I asked, '

what becomes of them ? ' ' I believe all the young 'uns what die are kitties (kittiwakes), they don't come to gulls. . . . The wives don't come back no more.' "[7]

This superstition is not unknown in districts other than Man and the East of England, though the Manx version has received, or retained, a stronger tincture of magic. " In West Sutherland I ascertained that some of the fishermen formerly held that it was unlucky to kill a gull, for gulls were the souls of the deceased."[8] In Cornwall " the souls of old seacaptains never sleep ; they are turned into gulls and albatrosses." [9] In the Netherlands it is only " the soul of a person that dies on shipboard " which passes into a bird ; " when it appears, it is to predict the death of another."[10]

The ordinary kind of vision of a dead person is well typified by the following experience. Y.Y. saw her mother in the garden of their house in the North of the Island about a month after her death, dressed as usual but looking in better health than during the latter part of her life. She came down a path from the hill and turned towards the house, but stopped at the corner of the wall and looked intently and anxiously at her crippled daughter who was sleeping beside the one who saw the vision and who narrated it to me afterwards. The mother then passed on to the rear of the house. The kinship between some of these waking visions of the dead and similar appearances in ordinary dreams is suggested by the seer's statement in this case that she did not realize her mother was dead until the figure had disappeared. This, we all know, is usual in dreams of the dead.

A more uncommon mode of appearance is exemplified in a woman's description to me, a few hours after the occurrence, of the apparition of her dead father to her waking sight. In this instance the vision consisted of a face only, of natural size, and wearing a mournful expression. It appeared. high up, near the ceiling, surrounded by a luminous mist, and remained motion less until it vanished. He had died about three months before. Such visions usuallv herald a crisis in the seer's affairs, or appear during a time of emotional stress when the dividing wall between the inner and outer lives wears thin and translucent, and their contents become confused. This was the case here.

Y.Y., a middle-aged seafaring man living in a southern village, has seen his wife twice since her death. One of these occasions was " on the same day as she was laying out the sheets " ; i.e. on their wedding anniversary. He was lying awake in bed about four o'clock in the morning and saw her standing by his side. She had previously appeared to their son as he lay awake in his bunk in the Liverpool Docks after lights-out (11 p.m.), which was about the hour of her death. The boy sat up and put out his hand towards her, but she said, " Touch me not," and vanished. It should be remarked that he had that day received a telegram from his father telling him to come home as soon as possible, and no doubt he was thinking of his mother at the time.

The same man (the boy's father) was visited by his own mother after her death. His married brother lived within a stone's-throw of him, but there was ill-feeling between the women-folk of the two households, and the two brothers, though quite friendly when they met outside, did not visit each other. The mother came to Y.Y.'s bedside one night and told him to go down and see his brother in his home, " for you were the sons of one mother," she said. If he had not gone first thing next morning in obedience to her request, he would never again have seen his brother alive.

This man Y.Y., whom I know well, and the same son, were in the cabin of their schooner lying in Holyhead Harbour. It was Sunday evening, and they were singing hymns to the father's accompaniment on a harmonium. While he was singing and playing the man felt there was a third presence in the little cabin. Though he saw nothing he knew perfectly well who it was--an intimate and beloved friend of his named F.S. who had died in Castletown shortly before. (F.S. was a conspicuous figure in the South during his lifetime and is still well-remembered ; his name will be guessed by some of my Manx readers.) Y.Y. heard him say in the familiar voice, " The prize is well worth contending for." The hearer felt so deeply moved that the tears ran down his face. He understood the words in a religious sense, and they made a lasting impression upon his mind. The son was not conscious of the presence or of the spoken message.

From a Peel source comes a story—at second-hand only, this one—of an apparition of a dead woman who was troubled about her child's welfare. The youth who saw it, afterwards Captain M., and a friend of the friend who told me of the occurrence, was not more than fourteen at the time. A woman from Foxdale who had come to Peel to improve her health was stopping, together with her child of about five, in the next house to where the boy lived. This nextdoor house was full up with " visitors " (holidaymaking strangers), and a few of them were accommodated at the M.'s; as the child had taken a great fancy to young M. he was allowed to share his bed. During the night M. happened to be lying awake looking at a big star which was just setting above Peel Hill, when the door opened without a sound and the mother of the little boy was in the room, with her gaze fixed on him as he lay sleeping. She took a long look, and as her eyes at last turned away from his face they caught the elder boy's eyes ; she smiled at him, and disappeared as inexplicably as she had come. Next morning he learned that she had died that night, at about two o'clock. M.'s mother tried to reason him out of the belief that he had seen the woman and was not dreaming, so to prove that he had been awake he told her to look out for the star herself on the following night, and see if she would notice it setting about the same place, and at what hour. She watched for it, and saw it as he had described, about two o'clock.

Not all revenants are so well-disposed towards the living as those which have come under our notice hitherto. In Ballaugh a woman named C. by marriage came back after she had left this world and nearly strangled her husband in his bed. It was about a will she had left, I am told, which he was not doing right by ; he had hidden it, or the money it referred to, under the bed; but she frightened him into doing right. He did not live long after her visit.

"CHRISTIAN LEWAIGUE."

Sometimes the dead, instead of appearing directly to their kindred or their former friends, make use of an intermediary to whom they entrust their message. One notable interpreter of the dead to the living, according to an aspect of the legend which has grown around his name, was a member of a well-known Maughold family, the Christians of Lewaigue. It is probable, however, that the anecdotes which follow related originally, so far as they are based on facts, to more than one member of the Lewaigue family, which had dwelt on that site since the 16th century. Some of the material may pertain to other branches of the family, even to other families ; for a personality so powerful as Christian's has a magnet-like effect on floating scraps of biography, whether authentic or apocryphal. Ostensibly, at any rate, these illustrate the life and character of that Evan or Ewan Christian who, according to Moore's brief and discreet biographical sketch,[11] was born in 1803 and died in 1874. As nearly sixty years have now elapsed since his death, I trust I may, without offence, make public some of the

memories and beliefs still attached to the name of this remarkable man, as I have picked them up from time to time in different parts of the Island.

Like so many of his surname, he was a faircomplexioned man, with yellowish or auburn hair worn rather long at the sides of his head; of middle height, stoutly built, with penetrating eyes and a powerful voice. In his youth he went abroad, and was " a bit of a scape "—a scapegrace, that is—but after his return home he was suddenly converted from his wild ways. Some say this conversion was the result of a meeting with a spirit or unearthly presence when crossing Ballure Bridge one night on his way home from Ramsey. A woman who remembers him as he was towards the end of his life, and whose grandfather was an intimate friend of his, thinks he was moved to religion by the same dream as that which prompted him to paint in large, black capitals across the western gable of his house, which confronts the lane leading from the high road, a minatory text of Scripture. This, though often painted over, is still faintly legible after rain : *Prepare to meet thy God*.

Whatever happened to cause the change in him, from a certain epoch in his life he became an earnest preacher of the Gospel and of teetotal principles, travelling with his pony and trap the length and breadth of the Island, holding forth eloquently at the chapels and social gatherings, and organizing religious revivals when and where he judged the soil to be sufficiently fertilized. He was something of a musician, and led a small band of local instrumentalists which he took about to further his crusade, himself playing the bass fiddle. So whole-heartedly, in fact, did he give himself up to preaching and charitable deeds that he was not successful as a farmer.

In illustration of the moral courage which inspired his striking personality the following story is told. On the occasion of the holding of an Agricultural Show in Workington he went across from Ramsey to attend it ; for he used to spend a lot of money in improving his livestock. In the evening, as he was passing the half-open door of the smoking-room or bar-room of his inn, he overheard the conversation of the men drinking there whom the Show had drawn to the town, and I have been assured that although the company was largely composed of nobility and gentry, their topics and vocabulary were far from edifying. Christian stepped inside and introduced himself by name. After a little preliminary small-talk he attacked his theme: " But, gentlemen, what do you think of God ? " And without protest or interruption from the company he spoke to them of the wages of sin and of God's mercy towards those who repent in time. When he had ended his discourse he knelt in the middle of the bar-room floor and prayed aloud for them and for himself. Finally he rose to his feet, bowed ceremoniously to each man present, and took his departure. It is further related that many years after this, two gentlemen who chanced to meet at a similar Show in the South of England and recognized each other as having been present at the scene in the Workington hotel, agreed that they had ever since retained a vivid memory of " that strange Manxman." " Do you remember that strange Manxman who came in and preached to us ? " " Yes, I have never forgotten him, or met anybody like him before or since."

Whatever the nature of Christian's reputation during his lifetime, after his death it began to develop two contrasting aspects. It is the dark side of it rather than the light side which calls for notice here. Though an ardent religionist and reformer of morals he is believed to have lived on perfectly familiar terms with the population of the spirit-world ; the woman whose opinion on the cause of his sudden conversion has just been quoted says she once heard him admit that the spirits of the dead showed themselves to him and spoke so that he could understand them. Whether she actually heard his own statement or not, (she is old enough to

have done so), it is believed by some to whom his name is familiar that the dead came to him for help in their difficulties. Often the request was that he should deliver a message to a surviving relative about some task or duty left unfulfilled, or about valuables hidden away in houses or out of doors. After the death of a neighbour of Christian's (at, I think, Folieu), the will could not be found. The testator's spirit came to his bedside and told him it was hidden in the mattress of the bed where the man had died ; and there it was discovered. On another occasion a spirit stopped him on the steep road going up to the Hibernian and Laxey, at a spot near the house called " Clifton," and gave him information about some money put away in a safe place ; Christian passed on the message to the dead man's relatives, and the money, much to their satisfaction, was found.

It is thought not to have been beyond his powers to bring up a spirit if necessary, and make it reveal what its family had a right to know ; but no particular instance of his doing this has come my way. Understanding so well, however, the nature of spirits, Christian was at least able to handle them when they became refractory. A girl at Jurby was tormented by an invisible presence which would not let her sleep, but pinched her and knocked her about until her sides were black and blue. After ordinary charmers had failed to find a remedy Christian was sent for. He sat in her bedroom for three consecutive nights. On the first two nights nothing unusual happened; on the third he saw the door gently pushed open and the bedclothes lifted as though someone were getting under them. " Whatever it was he did to It " he banished this troublesome intruder, and the girl was never bothered by it again. In the lack of fuller details it remains doubtful whether the invisible visitor was supposed to be the spirit of a dead or a living person.

With a woman's spirit he had so desperate a struggle that all the hair was taken off his head, and he was bald ever after. Possibly expecting sympathy as a result of this baldness, a man whose hair had been cut too short for his liking just before or just after his death, and who felt troubled about it, came and complained to Christian, with what effect is now unknown.

He had the power, not otherwise unheard-of in the Isle of Man, of stopping the flow of blood by saying a charm. While walking one day on his land, or else on a neighbour's, he came across a man who had just injured his hand severely in a chaff-cutter or some other piece of machinery. The man was thought to be bleeding to death ; at any rate he was bleeding freely, but Christian stopped it, and without touching him. When the doctor who had been previously sent for arrived from Ramsey he was clean beat ; he couldn't make out what had been done.

It was Christian who brought up the *Kione Prash* out of the floor at Lewaigue, into a circle marked on a white sheet, to make it talk, but it burst and nearly killed him. This item of his biography, which I heard so recently as 1930, may need a little elucidation. By some accident the legend of Friar Bacon's Brazen Head—*Kione Prash* in Manx—was planted long ago among the wooded glens of North Maughold, and not unnaturally the later and strictly insular legend of Ewan Christian became intertwined with it. A rhymed and elaborated version of the story contained in a mid 19th century MS. was contributed to a Manx newspaper by the late G. W. Wood.[12] Appended to Wood's article are eight lines of cryptic doggerel in Manx which show that the legend of the Brass Head was connected with the neighbourhood of Lewaigue before 1836, and probably a long time before that date, in which case its presence there preceded that of the Ewan Christian who was born in 1803. One never knows what trifling circumstance may have sufficed to attach a legend to a personality. In Mr. P. M. C. Kermode's *List of Manx Antiquities* is mentioned a brass sundial formerly existing at

Lewaigue but now taken off the Island, which preceded one of slate made by a Ewan Christian in 1666.

Lewaigue Farmhouse

The poem in English which attributes the making of the Brass Head to a man of this name and estate consists of nearly 500 lines in smoothly written couplets. Substantially, they narrate the achievement of Roger Bacon while crediting it to Christian and giving it the necessary local colour. Christian " lived in witchcraft's day " ; by his " astrologic skill " he raised storms which strewed the shore with rich cargoes to his personal profit ; and was accomplished in every department of magic except that he lacked the faculty of Second Sight, notwithstanding much earnest labour to obtain it. In a dream a female spirit advises him to construct a Brazen Head, which shall reveal things past and to come. The Arch-fiend supplies him with materials, with which he experiments for seven years in a glen near Lewaigue house ;[13] but the Devil jealously contrives that a fit of sleepiness shall overcome him at the critical moment when the Head begins to speak, and his servant fails to wake him. Wanting his control, the Head, after uttering (in Manx) the words " Time was, Time is, and Time shall ever be," bursts into fragments, and Lewaigue, then middle-aged, dies soon afterwards of chagrin.[14]

And how was Ewan Christian of Lewaigue enabled to perform these surprising feats ? It was not merely that he possessed a strong will and a natural aptitude for exercising it in such directions ; no, he had a Black Book with magic of all sorts in it, things you wouldn't hardly like to speak of. What became of it after his death, or whatever it was happened to him in the end, there's no telling. It's like he took it away with him.

The moon reflects the sun's light. Christian's wife is also endowed by the shanachies with a small measure of supernatural faculty, the Sight to wit. For example, (the only example I know), while she sat listening to an address by her husband in chapel one morning her pious train of thought was interrupted by a vision of one of their cows trespassing in a field of corn just ready for the scythe. She was so perturbed by the jeel that was being done that she scandalized her husband and the congregation by shouting, " O Devil, if the cow's in the cornfield go thou and drive her out ! " It has been explained to me that in the circumstances she naturally attributed her vision to the Devil's agency.

The story of Christian Lewaigue's end unites the two contrasting sides of his reputation, for he perished as a consequence of engaging the Devil in single combat on a moral issue. He had for some days been leading a religious revival in the South of the Island, and was coming home from Port Erin with his pony-trap. Dusk was falling as he climbed the long hill from Laxey, and he still had five miles to cover before reaching Lewaigue. Early next morning one of his farm-servants found the pony waiting for the stable door to be opened; on the floor of the trap lay Christian doubled up and unconscious. After he had been taken into the house

and brought round he described to his family, as well as he was able, the calamity which had overwhelmed him. As he was passing the gateway of Upper Ballachrink farm in Lonan, near the Maughold boundary, the Devil had come up to him out of the deep shadow there, and had accused him of having done him much harm by robbing him of souls which were his by right, and it had to stop. Christian defied him and all his works, and the dispute developed into a physical struggle. The Devil was too strong for the evangelist in the end, and Christian lost all knowledge of his surroundings until he found himself on his own " street." A week or two later he died. This account of his quietus was narrated to me recently by a man who is distantly related to Christian, as many Manxmen are ; slightly different versions of the affair used to circulate in the North of the Island years ago. On the other hand, some deponents venture to affirm that he died a natural death, like any ordinary man ; " but he used to be seen," says one ancient dame, " round the farm after he died, putting a sight on the place and watching how things were going on there, whether he had sold it or not, for it was a place he had loved and spent his money on, going over to Cumberland to the shows and buying pedigree stock ; but he lost a lot of that through the jealousy of neighbours."

A less scrupulous man than Ewan Christian is known to have been might have manoeuvred a personal profit or advantage out of some of his messages from the other world. Sometimes, indeed, it is the intention of the spirit to benefit his confessor. In that event the man who has " taken the ghost " will never reveal the secret that has been confided to him, for he knows that if he does so he will not only lose the usufruct of it, but will risk the offended spectre's ill-will. A certain native of Rushen was supposed to have been favoured with a communication from the lips of a dead man. Whatever may have been its import, it did not cure him of his excessive fondness for good ale, or, failing that, for any ale. When two of his friends found him one night rolling in the roadway near Ballacurrey, singing " We won't go home till morning," one said to the other, " We'll get the secret out of him this time, anyway," and asked him pointblank what it was the ghost had told him. The question sobered him into silence on the instant, but for a few moments only. Then he relapsed into song, to sober again when the question was repeated. The last time it was put he picked himself up without a word and walked steadily away.

THE DEATH-COACH.

The apparition called " the Death-coach " has some resemblance to the " phantom funeral " already discussed, but there are differences also. The "phantom funeral" is a shadowy reproduction of an actual funeral about to occur in the more or less near future ; among the company may be recognized one or more individuals known to the beholder, who is thereby warned of a coming death. The phantoms accompanying the Death-coach, when any are seen, are the already dead ; but sometimes the next person to die is seen among them. The " phantom funeral " is, therefore, akin to the prophetic manifestations of Second Sight. The Death-coach, on the other hand, appears to be descended from one of those religious or mythological conceptions which live on for thousands of years, adapting themselves to times and places. The coach, when seen, is less clearly defined than the funeral; often it is not visible, and its passing is perceived only through the hearing, and by an instinctive sense of something dire. The sounds heard (not necessarily all on the same occasion) are the tramping of the horses, the creaking of the coach or hearse, the grinding of its wheels, and a strange rustling or whirring noise, which cannot be explained. Popular opinion tends to regard the coach as a repetition of the funeral of some ungodly person already dead and in further trouble, but this is not the only interpretation of it ; sometimes it is taken as a warning of death to the one who meets with it, or to a relative. The Death-coach of which the horses and

wheels used to be heard passing through Onchan village, (at one time attributed to the tragic end of a certain Finloe Oates),[15] has had a still later explanation attached to it. This account gives it the name of " Spurrier's Coach," for the following reason. Spurrier was a wealthy man who left England in the middle of the 19th century to reside in the Isle of Man, for reasons not unconnected with the law. The house he occupied is still standing in the village, but as it is inhabited I forbear to name it. One of its rooms is believed to be haunted, and it is said that the door is never unlocked. When Spurrier lived there he used to travel about the Island in a coach-and-four, " with never less than £1,000 in his pocket." Dr. Palmer, the notorious poisoner, got wind of this and came over from England to look into the matter. He made friends with Spurrier, was invited to stay with him, and often accompanied him on his journeys. One day they drove together to Peel ; Spurrier was taken suddenly and violently ill at an hotel there, and died before they reached home. Palmer shortly afterwards left the Island, supposedly with the £1,000 and whatever more he could find in the house. The spectral coach heard in and near the village is a reproduction of Spurrier's four-in-hand.[16]

The same original Death-coach has been further confused in the popular mind with another dark affair which happened on the White Bridge Hill at some unascertainable date long ago. This was a case of highway robbery accompanied by murder. The sound of the blows, the groans of the victim, the galloping off of the murderer, all are vividly reproduced, but nothing can be seen. This invisibility, not to be wholly explained by the natural darkness of the night, heightens the terrifying effect of the experience, according to the man who gave me his account of it. He took to a tree.

In Malew the thing is often called Solomon's Coach, not from the monarch of that name, but from a local Manxman whose knowledge of one sort or another earned him the sobriquet. A specimen of it travelled, it is said, from time to time through Ballamodda, whence it eventually reached Peel and vanished in the direction of the main gate of the Castle.

Another, which went along Lime Street in Port St. Mary, was invisible ; the sound of the wheels was heard, but not the horses' hoofs. In one specific instance, at least, it preceded an actual funeral in that street by a few days, and I think it was generally regarded as a death-warning, as the same phenomenon is in Lincolnshire.

A number of others frequented various parts of the Island; some of them are mentioned in the previous *Scrapbook*. The possibility that processional apparitions of this type, suggested by the common belief, may have been staged by smugglers for their own purpose is put forward, I find, so early as 1815 in Roberts's *Popular Cambrian Antiquities*, page 171. In Wales the procession was a silent one, disappeared in the direction of the churchyard, and was held to presage a death. In these features it somewhat resembled the Manx " phantom funeral."

As a horse-drawn hearse with waving plumes the Death-coach cannot be a tradition of very long standing in an island where hearses are of comparatively recent introduction, and in this shape it may owe something to the similar apparition, the " phantom funeral." In Ireland, also, the Coach often takes the form of a hearse ; there, as in Wales, it is a premonition of death.[17] In England it seems to have been seen most frequently in the districts which own the greatest proportion of Danish blood. In Brittany it is " the Cart of Brother Death," l'Ankou. Anciently (if a speculation may be ventured) it belonged, in either a literal or a symbolical sense, to religious doctrine. The dead in classical Greece were imagined as being borne out of this life in a chariot by Hades, God of the Lower World ; a representation of his thus carrying away Persephone occurs frequently on sarcophagi, as symbolic of the dead man's transit to

the kingdom of Hades. In the frescoes on Etruscan tombs at Orvieto the dead man is being conveyed in a large chariot, in front of which his guardian spirit bears a scroll containing a record of his life.[18] Perhaps the journey of the dead across water, a world-wide teaching or belief without a backward limit in time, has lent its vehicle-the boat of Osiris, of Charon, the barge in which Arthur was borne to Avalon, and the rest-to modern forms of the superstition ; for the funeral conveyance takes sometimes the form of a ship. Some support for this suggestion may be derived from the following strange folk-tale, which, though it was heard in Roscommon and attributed to Mayo, has not a peculiarly Irish flavour.

When the reckless Lord Tirawley was carousing in his castle, a great black coach drove up to the door, surrounded by a crowd of black-clothed attendants bearing lighted torches. Their demonic leader warned Lord Tirawley that he had but a year to live. He thereupon reformed, but relapsed again, though fully expecting the coach to come for him at the appointed date. He was not disappointed, for punctually the dark stranger knocked and entered, beckoning the young man to follow him to an empty room. The door being left open, the company and servants saw that 'the stranger drew a ship on the wall; it became solid and moved out ; he got on board, Lord Tirawley followed, and the ship sailed round and passed through the wall, which closed upon it, and neither of its occupants was seen again on earth.' "[19]

In that tale the Ship of Death came ashore; between Man and the adjacent coast of Scotland, in the year 1700, the Death-coach or Chariot was seen at sea" a chariot drawn by six horses, and conducted by three drivers, all of the Pandemonium stamp, coming plunging and snoring over the wild waves, attended by black clouds vomiting forth thunder and lightning." [20] This was the vehicle sent to take to hell a venomous persecutor of the Covenanters, who had just died.

Though it has no obvious connexion with the world of the dead, a case of supernatural intervention and protection from danger may be added here in conclusion, since other visionary experiences of the individual thus favoured have already been related in this section. Throughout her life, indeed, she has been subject to occurrences which cannot be explained on natural grounds, in the ordinary sense of the word " natural."

Once, in the thick darkness which fills a narrow, steep-sided glen on a winter night when the sky is overcast and there is no moon, she was feeling her way towards a little wooden footbridge which connected the roadway with the path leading up her garden. There had been heavy and long-continuing rains, and the river was full and rapid. When she got hold of the end of the bridge-rail she thought she had hit the right spot and was about to step forward, but something like an arm shot out towards her and pressed her back , at the same moment she heard a low voice say, " Stoop down and feel where you are." She did so, and found she was on the wrong side of the rail ; another step would have taken her into the torrent.

After this had happened (in 1924) she would often be aware, when coming up the glen alone on dark nights, and when walking along other unlighted roads, that a light was shining just in front of her and making her way clearer. It seemed to come from behind her, but if she looked round there was never any light to be seen. In time it came to help her whenever she felt a strong need for it.

This light was on one occasion seen by others when she herself was not conscious of its presence. As she was walking along the promenade at Castletown one evening in 1928 her nephew and another boy chanced to be leaning out of a window on the opposite side of the

road. (This nephew's phantasm appeared to her at a later date, shortly before he underwent an operation.) As she passed them they called out" Good night ! " and she answered. Next day the nephew asked her why she had been carrying that little electric torch with her in a place like that. She had not been carrying a torch, and did not know what he meant. " But there was a light shining before you as you went along—we both saw it ! "

Although she has sometimes deliberately wished for it since, the light has never again come to befriend her. She attributed it to the protecting influence of her deceased mother, whose form had appeared to her on several occasions.

Footnotes

1 Robertson, who published his *Tour of the Isle of Man* in 1791 [sic 1794], shows the " phantom funeral " as a positive agent of death, not merely a reflected picture. He describes it as a personal warning to the one who sees it. The seer hears his name called ; he is attended by the visionary funeral wherever he turns, until one of the spectres, a deceased relative, touches him, whereupon the whole vision vanishes. Soon the sickness of death seizes him, and it is not long before he joins the ghostly band.

2 See Martin's *Western Isles*.

3 The office of Horse-keeper to a fairy king is a recognized one in native Irish literature. It is solicited, for example, by an 18th-century poet quoted by O'Curry in the Atlantis, iv., 138, note. The poet addresses Don Dumhach, the fairy ruler of the southern coast of Co Clare, requesting him to " Take me in . . . to be a groom for thy fairy steeds. '

4 MacNicholl, *The Piper of Kerimor*, page 206

5 Souvestre, *Les Derniers Bretons*, i., 37.

6 P. H. Emerson, *English Idylls*, (1889), pages 68, 71, 72.

7 In an Eskimo folk-tale a " sea-girl " captured by a hunter marries him on condition that he never kills a grey gull, because they are of her race. One day he forgets this taboo ; his wife shakes the feathers of the slain birds over herself and the children, transforming them all into kittiwakes. (Wood-Martin, *Rude Slone Monuments of Sligo*, page 227.)

8 Henderson, *Survivals of Belief*, page 98.

9 Courtney, *Cornish Feasts and Folk-lore*, page 6o.

10 Thorpe, *Northern Mythology*, iii., 161.

11*Manx Worthies*, page 188.

12 It was reprinted in *The Manx Quarterly* for October, 1920.

13 Doubtless the glen meant is that which stretches up towards the former Hibernian Inn. Over the door of the house a recent wooden porch has covered up the initials and dates of the builders and rebuilders, Christians all.

14 Of this considerable piece of Anglo-Manx literature the author's name remains unknown. He was undoubtedly a Manxman and a practised verse-writer, and he had a working knowledge of machinery. Certain habits of phrasing and vocabulary, together with the evident enjoyment his imagination took in describing the mechanics of Christian's invention, make me think that the poem is the work of the Maughold bard who invented an early marine engine and many other ingenious devices. If " *The Kione Prash* " is indeed William Kennish's, its ripeness of style shows that it was written later than the verse published in his 1844 volume, *Mona's Isle*. Doubtless it would have appeared in the " more extensive work wholly devoted to his Native Isle," for which he solicits patronage in one of his letters.

15 See *A Manx Scrapbook*, page 345,

16 The slender facts that have swelled into this piece of fiction are these. Palmer's dissolute brother Walter, after becoming bankrupt in Rugeley, took refuge between 1849 and 1855 in the Isle of Man, where he achieved a second bankruptcy. That the Palmer family had other Manx connexions is suggested by the marriages of Walter and his eldest brother Joseph, a prosperous timber-merchant in Liverpool, to two sisters named " Milcrest " (Mylchreest), daughters of a Liverpool ship-builder. For these particulars I am indebted to Dr. Fletcher's *Life of William Palmer*—see page 54 of that work.

17 As, for instance, in its appearance near the seaboard junction of Galway and Mayo. The man who saw it there died shortly afterwards (*Folk-lore*, xxix., 310). In Ireland it is also called the Deaf-coach.

18 Abbreviated from *Folk-lore*, xxix., 311.

19 *Folk-lore*, xxvi., 98

20.Gallovidian Encyclopedia, page 242,

CHAPTER III

SECOND SIGHT AND ASSOCIATED FACULTIES

§ 3. The Living and the Living.

The supernormal faculties so marked in the Manx are by no means limited to an awareness of death impending, to encounters with the dead and the distant dying, and to warning visions and dreams. They bring their possessors-or rather, those whom they temporarily possess-into psychic contacts with their living fellow-creatures from their birth onward. An instance of a man's learning of the birth of a child through the Second Sight occurs in a passage in the poems of T. E. Brown, which is the more interesting inasmuch as supernatural motives and incidents are rare in his works. It is, I think, highly unlikely that he invented this episode, notwithstanding its superficial resemblance to Shelley's vision from the shore at Lerici two months before he was drowned. Amid the breaking surf, in strong moonlight, he saw, it will be remembered, a naked child smiling and clapping its hands.

Tom Baynes loquitur :

" Listen ! I'll tell you a thing—
...
The very night Kitty was tuk-[1]
Just three days,
If you plaze, out of Dantzic, there was a sea struck—
Jemmy'll remember
Every timber
Shuck !
Close-hauled, ye know, and I navar tould ye,
But behould ye !
In the trough there, rowlin' in it,
Just that minute
I saw a baby, as plain,
Passing by on a slant of rain
To leeward, and his little shiff
Streamin' away in the long gray driff.
I saw him there-you didn't regard me
But his face was toward me
Oughtn't I to know him ?
Well, I saw him a fore Kitty saw him!
I saw him, and there he ess,
There upon his mother's breast,
The very same, I'll assure ye ;
And I think that'll floor ye !
And his body all in a blaze of light
A dirty night!
'Where was he goin' ' ?
Who's knowin' ?
He was in a hurry, in any case,
And the Baltic is a lonesome place
But here he is, all right! "[2]

" Mock christenings," says Waldron, were commonly seen by pregnant women, and he gives particulars of one. In these, as in the man's prevision of the railway line (mentioned in the first section of this chapter), the actors are called fairies, but the phenomena are essentially those of the Second Sight and Second Hearing. By them the sex of the child was foreknown,

as it was apparently by Tom Baynes. Waldron was told also that " the fairies " celebrated at a certain spot " the obsequies of any good person." In that part of Scotland which lies nearest to the Isle of Man the name of " fairy funeral " is similarly given to those sombre processions which are the shadow cast by the approach of Death.[3]

Formerly the voice of an approaching visitor was sometimes heard while he was yet far out of natural earshot, and Waldron tells us how his own arrival at a Manx homestead was thus foreknown to its inmates. Similarly, Leland in writing of modern Italy says, " Ere a visitor arrives his voice may be heard." [4] These mysteriously-carried sounds belong to the domain of clairaudience, an ally of the Sight, and a precisely similar experience is related in St. Adamnan's Life of the psychically-endowed St. Columba.

An esteemed friend of mine professed, like many elderly Manxmen, a hearty scorn of all branches of the supernatural which are not exemplified in Holy Scripture, but he was not quite so robust a skeptic as he believed himself to be. With most of his fellow-countrymen, he accepted as facts in natural history the growth and multiplication of stones in the fields and on the shore, and the transformation of hairs from horses' tails into thin eels. He and other boys, he stoutly affirmed, had often proved the truth of the latter theory by leaving the hairs in water for a certain time—not more than a week or two—and then finding hairlike eels wriggling about in their place. (In this belief he had the support of Izaak Walton and William Cobbett.) With better reason he was inclined to place faith in some of the stories which he told me at odd moments while we were working together on his little farm or walking about the hills after his sheep. One anecdote that comes under the present heading ran as follows.

His cousin, while sitting at her wheel in a house near Castletown many years ago even at the time of the telling, fell without warning into what he termed " a sort of a faint." On coming out of this trance or whatever it was, she related the following adventure. She had found herself walking up a long garden path and through the open doorway of a cottage, where she saw an old woman and a young man sitting together at a table. They appeared to be bending over something which she could not see, but she heard the woman say to the man, " This is your future wife." Then everything vanished, and she came to herself again in her own house. A year or two later the man she had seen in the vision came to the Island to buy horses, and she met and eventually married him. When, after their marriage, she told him that she had seen him in her " faint " before meeting him in the flesh, he confessed that about that time he had consulted a " wise woman " living in a cottage close to his home in Wavertree, near Liverpool, in the hope of being shown his future bride, and hers was the face which appeared to him. My friend could not be sure how it was shown, whether in a mirror or in a basin of water, or in some other medium, but " it was some sort of a reflection he saw." It is thought unlucky to reveal previsions of this kind to the other person concerned, in the same way, perhaps, that we should not divulge the secrets we learn from the spirits or the benefits conferred upon us by the fairies. In this case the husband-Fazackerley by name -in time treated his wife harshly, and she left him.

A man belonging to the South of the Island, who is himself a seer and has described to me many of his visions of the living and the dead (some are included in this chapter), went to sea when he was twelve years of age, getting sixpence a day for his wages. During one of his early voyages their barque got into difficulties in the Baltic, off a place on the Swedish coast of the Kattegat named Anga. They could not get the anchor to hold, and she was in imminent danger of being driven ashore. The skipper was striding up and down the deck and telling them that every man must look out for himself, for they might not have much longer to live.

On this same night the boy's mother at home in Port St. Mary saw him, when she was awake, clambering up over the foot of her bed, which had been a favourite trick of his as a small child. The ship was not lost, however. Another barque which had been lying hove-to near them suddenly ran for it ; thinking she knew of some place to shelter in, they followed her course after she had disappeared into the thickness, and found anchorage off the harbour of Gothenburg.

The mother, in her turn, appeared to him more than once in his later years, after her death.

The same little boy suffered at times from a severe pain in his head, which was liable to trouble him until he grew into manhood. Once, when they were fishing off Kinsale, he felt so bad with it that he thought he was going to die. Though his mother did not see him on this occasion, she knew very well that he was in some trouble or danger, and when he came home she asked him what had been the matter with him at a certain hour of a certain day-the time when he had been in such pain.

The power to return home from sea in a spirit-form, without being impelled by fear of death, is shared by some Manxmen with the Finns and the men of the Scottish islands. It seems to be a sleep-walking of the soul when it is consciously or unconsciously homesick. A Peel man in a boat which was fishing off the South of Ireland would often say to his mates of a morning, " I was back home again last night, boys." They only made fun of him or abused him for a liar, according to their individual temperaments. One morning he turned out looking very tired and Wilt, and told them he had been home again last night, and felt worn out after it. " It's dreaming you were," they said as usual. But in the next letter that came from his wife, she was complaining that he had been making a lot of noise in the house on a certain night (the night he said he had been home), waking them up and disturbing them all; it was not the first time, and she wanted him to stop it.

Another family, also living on the West side of the Island, consisted of the father, the mother, a son, and three daughters. With all of these, except the son, I was more or less acquainted before they became scattered by various circumstances. One night, when the son was supposed to be in America, shortly after retiring to bed all the rest of the family heard footsteps coming upstairs which they recognized as his, and the mother (but none of the others) also heard his voice calling. She got up and went to the head of the stairs, where she was joined by some of the others, but they found nobody there. At the time this happened the lad, unknown to them, was crossing the Atlantic to go into training in England, the European War having broken out not long before. He had been unable to get permission to visit the Island first, and did not see his family till he came home on leave from France. Then they told him what they had heard, and he asked the date and the hour. After reflecting, he said that at the time of the occurrence the ship in which he was crossing from America was at the nearest point of her course to the Isle of Man. Whether he was awake or asleep just then I do not know.

The premonition which came to a girl whom I have called Y.Z. in the description of it on page 52-a premonition of a young man's death-happened about twenty years ago. Between two and three years ago the same woman saw her nephew, aged 20, pass swiftly through the kitchen close to where she was standing, and disappear without a word or a look. She had not been thinking of him just then. At that time he was in England awaiting a serious operation, naturally in a state of considerable anxiety, and longing, as he told her afterwards, to be safely out of it with her in the Island.

From a friend of many years standing, the widow of a former Speaker of the House of Keys, I have the following account of a visionary message from a battle-field. One afternoon while walking home from a visit, she saw, on reaching the stile to the East of the Crossags Farm, near Ramsey, a form which she knew to be that of her stepson, coming towards her, but still a considerable distance away. When they drew near to each other she realized with horror that he had no head. He then vanished. She went home feeling depressed and unwell, and fearing that some misfortune had befallen him. Soon afterwards a letter came with the news that he had been wounded. Some weeks later, when she visited him in hospital, he told her that while he was in the company of five other men a shell which killed the others outright had flung him some distance away and buried him, causing severe injuries to his head. When this was happening the thought of her flashed through his mind, and she seemed to be present.

A man I have known well for the last dozen years was working, three summers ago, in the company of several other men, on the flat, open part of the Douglas Recreation Ground, where hockey and other games are played. The hour was about midday, the air clear, and the light consequently good. A motor-mower was being driven up and down. My friend happened to be looking up from his work at the others, who were scattered about the ground, and saw a vague outline of a human shape pass from the body of one man towards that of another about fifty yards away. The shape was of a violet colour, deeper and denser in the middle and paler at the edges, which faded into the light. It moved swiftly over the grass in the sunshine and disappeared into the body of the other man. Nothing further happened. My friend, being educated and intelligent, was able to give me an exact account of what he saw, though he had no explanation to offer. It would have been interesting to hear whether the two men concerned stood in any special relation of friendship or enmity towards each other, and whether the one from whom the form appeared to issue was thinking of the other at the time.

A case of intentional and highly-intensive haunting of the living by the living is so recent that it is even more advisable than usual to omit the names of the locality and the principal actors. The facts are well known in the village where it happened, a much modernized place containing a considerable proportion of English residents. A woman holding an official position there took an uncontrollable fancy to a middle-aged man named S. living near her, and went so far as to haunt him night after night until her unwelcome presence " had him nearly distracted." No securing of doors and windows availed to keep out the disembodied intruder. He only got peace from her when she was off the Island, and was once heard to complain, on a day when she was due to return, that he could feel her in his bones the moment she landed. Finally, by acting on the instructions of an old woman skilled in such matters, he was able to " send " his tormentress to another man in the same village, a member of the local Council, whom she plagued in the same manner. How this affair ended I do not know. It appears to reverse, as regards the sexes of the principals, the haunting of a Jurby girl that was effectually dealt with by Ewan Christian of Lewaigue. The paucity of detail in that story, as I heard it, (see page 78), leaves room for doubt whether the afflicting spirit was that of a dead or a living man, though it was probably the latter. In the present case the haunting is explicitly ascribed to the living woman. The finding of a substitute, by which means alone can the victim rid himself of his visitor, occurs in some of the Irish Lhiannanshee stories, but Manx speakers of a bygone generation would, I think, have called this particular apparition a scaa-goanlyssagh or a scaan-olk-a revengeful double.

The seeing of living doubles is not commonly followed by the death or illness of the person so seen, or by misfortune or accident. An uncle of the woman who told me of the following occurrence at the place where it happened was out on the long jutting reef on the West coast

of the Island called Niarbyl, fishing with a line. During the afternoon he was "seen" by two people simultaneously—one of them my informant's husband, who corroborated her—to come up to the cottage and walk round to the side of it out of their sight. They had no doubt it was he ; his features and figure were unmistakable, even down to a peculiar limp. All seemed so normal that they took it as a matter of course and wondered why he did not come in, until he really came back (for the first time) an hour or so later. Though they could find no natural explanation for the incident, nothing unusual happened afterwards of which it might have been deemed an omen.

The man who saw this, himself a fisherman, saw on another occasion his wife in the act of drawing water at the neighbouring well, and then walking off with the two buckets she had been filling. He went after her to lend a hand, but she turned the corner towards the door of the house before he could catch up with her. When he entered he found her and another woman, a caller, sitting quietly by the fireside. She had not been to the well at all. It was probably a mere trick of the brain or the eyes ; at any rate, no misfortune ensued.

An anecdote implying genuine, though seemingly accidental, clairvoyance is told of a man named Moore, foreman in a Douglas cabinet-maker's factory not a great many years ago, and in his leisure a maker of violins which are said to be developing remarkably fine qualities. In his youth he sailed to foreign parts. When the ship put in at a port on the Bosporus he landed to take a look round. In the course of conversation with an old man on the quay he felt prompted to ask him if there was not a high building somewhere over there, behind the others, which had a deep crack in the wall, running right down to the ground. " Yes, there is," replied the local man, " but you can't see it from where we are standing. You must have been here before." " I have, but not in the body," was the answer. For Moore attributed his experiences of this sort, and others, to his being a reincarnated personality.

Footnotes

1 Brought to bed.

2 *Collected Poems of T. E. Brown* (Macmillan), page 34-" The Christening."

3 Gallovidian Encyclopedia, page 201.

4 Etruscan-Roman Remains, page 165.

CHAPTER IV
DIVINATIONS AND OBSERVANCES

" Lheie ersooyl myr hay er ny sleityn as myr heayn er y traie."
" To melt away as the mist from the mountains and as the ebbing tide froze the shore."

(Manx charm.)

§ 1. Divinations.

CERTAIN traditional rites and customs surviving at the present day or till quite recently, and practised, many of them, on special days of the calendar, remain to be added to those described by Waldron and Train, and by others after them. Any one custom must not necessarily be understood to belong exclusively to one particular day, for the date of observance in some cases varies in different districts.

The Manx people has inherited a strong faith in that species of the unseen which is not countenanced by orthodox Christianity. From this naturally springs a desire to question the invisible powers about one's future and to influence them in the questioner's favour.

There is a lingering belief which is not unlike a reflex of the Platonic doctrine of the Creation, a belief that every human being has a visible star in the sky which corresponds to, or is in sympathy with, him or her. More than once I have heard from a companion looking up at the night sky the speculation, " I wonder which is my star ? " A well-known method of divination by the stars is to count seven of them on seven successive nights, and after the last enumeration your future husband or wife will come to you in a dream. Another way of using the seven stars is to wish silently after the seventh count, and your wish will shortly be fulfilled.[1] I used to class these ideas as offshoots from the vulgarized astrology of palmists, gypsies, and other popular tellers of fortunes, but I am inclined now to see in them an adaptation of the general European beliefs of the same purport, though those may have been derived from an astrological source. For was it not the sweet influences of the Pleiades, the Seven Stars in chief, which our forefathers and mothers sought to bind with their spells ?

A wish, also, may be formulated to oneself, with some hope of fulfilment, during the passage of a shooting-star across the heavens. What looks like a modern adaptation of the same rite is attached to the Wishing Gate on the Lewaigue Hill road near Ramsey, Here you must lean over the gate, watch for the *red* flash from the Point of Ayre lighthouse, and formulate your wish when it appears.

If a shooting-star seems to come towards the direction in which one is walking or facing, it is a lucky sign ; if it seems to go away, it is unlucky.

Another wishing-spot also overlooks the sea. The groove of rock at Scarlett known as Cromwell's Walk has a flat place half-way along its ledge called Cromwell's Chair. Sit on it and wish. If you are favoured by the *genius loci* your wish will come true in three hours, days, weeks, months, or years-there will be a three in it, at all events. This belief dates back at least thirty years. St. Maughold's Chair, by his well on a sea-cliff at Maughold, had a similar reputation for granting wishes, but the number three was not involved, so far as I know. Some of the Manx holy wells, which are equally potent, have been dealt with in the first *Scrapbook*.

To return now to methods of divination. An outpost of clairvoyance or the Second Sight is the power of recognizing and interpreting natural omens. By this I mean the discerning of future events by means of an object which is taken as a symbol, or which in some cases delivers its message by its actual resemblance to something familiar ; whereas the true Sight thrusts its symbol or its picture upon the consciousness from an inner source by its own mysterious energy. In both kinds of vision the coming event is apprehended in a sudden inspiration or illumination ; both constitute a prophetic faculty which shades off, through the practice of divination by a recognized ritual, into the various methods of casual fortune - telling and omen - reading which sometimes reveal or develop an innate faculty but are more often worthless. The ability to see and read " signs " seems to have for its physical basis that visualizing power by which some persons can, for example, " see things in the fire," often in a purely fanciful way and without reference to realities or actual events. But these cloudy regions of the mind do not lend themselves easily to definitions and distinctions, and a specimen of what they produce will be more useful than any attempts to analyse them.

For example, configurations among natural objects sometimes present themselves, into which a symbolic shape or meaning can be read by an imaginative mind. J.M., a man I know fairly well, while walking on the hills notices some arrangement of bushes or clouds, flocks of animals or birds, or the shape of a distant fold-he avoids or is unable to give an exact description of what he sees-which reminds him of a coffin; and he says there will very shortly be a death in the district. When he and his companion get back that evening they hear that a woman who has been lying sick for a long time has just died.

More commonly practised is the questioning of the future deliberately by a recognized ritual. A woman whom I knew in Ramsey, Mrs. C., practised for her own benefit, and for others without payment, a method which is employed in England also. She melted lead in a pan over the kitchen fire and dropped it slowly into a basin of clear water. From the shapes taken by the cooling metal she made her predictions. Her scrutiny of the contents of the basin may have served to evoke a glimmering of clairvoyance, for she hit the mark oftener than she was likely to do by intelligent guessing.

In the Dalby and Glen May district there is a practice (also followed in Britain, e.g. in Northamptonshire, and in Brittany) of noticing and writing down the doings of the weather on New Year's Day and each of the successive eleven days, making twelve altogether. Some people begin with Old New Year's Day. As these twelve days are as to weather, so will be the ensuing twelve months, month for day. In other parts of the Island the particulars are recorded from the first day of February, a date which is in any case concerned with the weather of the future as prognosticated by the appearances and actions of the Calliagh and of St. Maughold.[2] The importance of 1st February is partly explained by the Manxman's custom of reckoning Spring to consist of February, March and April; Summer of May, June and July; Autumn of August, September and October ; while the three remaining months belong to Winter. The modern names for the months in Manx merely describe their respective positions in these seasons—the first month of Spring, and so on. The two Manx dictionaries, however, have between them preserved for us four month-names of an earlier type: *Mee ny Mannan, Mee ny Meayllagh, Yn Baaltin*, and *Yn Sauin*.

Another method of foretelling the future in the Dalby district on Twelfth Night was to place " hibbin " (ivy) leaves in a bowl or pan of fresh and clean spring-water, a separate leaf for each person concerned, just as in the use of the salt-heaps. These leaves were left undisturbed on the hearth all night, and according to the varying depths to which they had sunk by the

following morning was presaged the health of each person concerned. If your leaf was half-way down in the water, it meant a serious illness, but you would recover. If the leaf had settled at the bottom, it meant death. If it remained floating on the surface, that was a sure sign that all would go well with you during the next twelve months. Omens were also taken from the appearance of fine cracks in the leaves after their over-night immersion ; these were considered to be a bad sign, generally speaking, but the exact rules for interpreting the patterns do not seem to be clearly remembered. A similar practice was carried out in Cornwall, also on Twelfth Night.[3] Among the many hill-tops appointed for the ceremonial bonfires on Midsummer, May Eve and November Eve-one or another of these dates, or all of them, were thus signalized in different placeswere two which I have not seen mentioned in this connexion : Cronk Illiu at the southern end of Patrick parish, and Slieu Chairn [sic Chiarn] in Lonan. On the shapely summit of the latter hill the fires were encircled by a ring of dancers. At other times, spectral fires were seen there in the darkness by dwellers below, which had left no marks of burning when the ground was examined by daylight. At sunrise on May morning—alternatively on the morning of Easter Day—the figure of a tall youth was traditionally expected to be visible from the foot of the hill, moving across the summit from East to West. If a man who had a dispute with another man ran round the cairn three times he would get the better of his adversary. And a kind of moss which grew there was useful in lovecharms.[4]

The tall shape moving westward is reminiscent of a charm used by girls at a river-pool named Lhing Berrey Dhone in the neighbouring parish of Maughold at the rising of the harvest moon :

" Berrey, Berrey, give to me
My true lover's form to see!
If he walks from East to West
I'll wed within the year at best," etc.

It may not have been unconnected with the presence of the lucky herb just mentioned that young men used to go to the top of Slieu Chairn to wish for good fortune in their love-affairs, or even to get a sight of their future wives. From a letter by the same hand as the foregoing notes concerning that hill I have permission to quote the following account of such a rite:

" On May Eve a newly-sharpened sickle was carried up the hill, and certain herbs were cut with it, in silence, on the way up, also some gorse-bons [5] and rushes. At the top of the hill a big sod was cut out, and the diviner stood on the bare place and repeated a charm while making a fire under his own feet of the gorse and rushes. As soon as it was alight he stepped out and threw the herbs on it, after which he expected to see his future wife appear in the smoke and flames. When the fire had died out the sod was replaced. I had this description from a man who had done it himself in his youth, and he declared solemnly that he saw the woman he afterwards married."

1 In Brittany and Germany the would-be diviner fasts from daybreak until she is able to count the first nine stars coming out in the evening sky.

2 For details see *A Manx Scrapbook*, pp. 350 and 384. The Calliagh as a weather-Prophet is also alluded to in other works on Manx folk-lore.

3 There the ivy-leaves were first drawn through a wedding-ring. Their shrivelling or turning black in the water foretold death before next Twelfth-tide ; if spotted with red, a violent death. " These prophecies through

superstition sometimes unluckily fulfilled themselves. Ivy-leaves were also used to discover when girls would marry." (Miss Courtney, *Cornish Feasts and Folk-lore*, page 17)

4 These beliefs about Slieu Chairn Gerjoil (to give it its full name) are taken from a paper by Miss Mona Douglas which was read at the Celtic Congress held in Glasgow in September, 1929.

5" Bons," sticks for firewood.

§ 2. The Crow's Foot.

Like fire itself (which we shall return to shortly) its product ashes figured conspicuously in Manx divinations and charms. The strewing of ashes evenly about the hearth (the fine turf - ash is to be understood, of course) on Twelfth Night in the expectation of finding a mystic footprint impressed in them next morning has already been recorded by Train.[1] What he calls "the fairy foot" and " the ominous print," which betokened a death or a birth according to the direction in which it pointed is, more exactly, a sign resembling the " broad arrow," known to Manx people as " the crow's foot." It is noticeable—I am theorizing now, not reporting a popular explanation—that in the questioning of Fate by means of ashes, as in the omens taken from salt and from ivy-leaves, it is the invisible presences of the night who are appealed to. What these visitors from another world really were is plainly seen in the more fundamental custom which in Man has been adapted for a divinatory purpose. "French and Scotch peasants," says Andrew Lang,[2] "are or were in the habit of burning the bed on which a patient died, of spreading the ashes smooth on the floor, and of examining these next day to see whether the revenant of the dead had marked them with his feet. An inspector of natives in Australia (who does not seem ever to have heard of the Scotch and French superstition) found Australians carefully smoothing sand round the grave of a tribesman, and watching every morning for the print of his ghostly tread. Now here, we may say with some confidence, is an instance of a savage belief perpetuated in Europe."

Though Lady Wilde,[2] in recording the same method of divination in Ireland as that used in the Isle of Man, says it is done in the name of the Evil One, she seems to imply that the footprint has a human shape, for " if the impress is perfectly flat, it indicates marriage and a long life ; but if the toes are bent down into the ashes, death will inevitably follow." Andrew Lang, however, in a note on the practice in Scotland contributed to the Morning Post of 19th October, 1906, says that the spirit was expected to leave a print like a bird's claw ; in which we can easily recognize the Manx " crow's foot." Another correspondent stated that it was a very ancient Eastern custom, illustrating the belief that a demon had cock's feet and left the prints wherever he trod, although himself invisible. In the Outer Hebrides the hearth - ashes were spread out on the eve of St. Bride's Day, and the footprint, which promised all kinds of fortunate increase if it appeared, was that of Bride herself.[3] Estonia, while practising the divination, preserves what seems to be the basis of it ; in that country the straw of the bed on which a man has died is burnt, and footprints which come in its ashes tell whether the next death will be that of a man or a beast.[4]

The symbol which, as we have just seen, was called by the Manx " the crow's foot," is worthy of further investigation. It was visible not only in the ashes spread for divination, but was supposed, in the Isle of Man, to appear and disappear from time to time on a stone or boulder or other substance, by some species of magic agency which nobody now seems able to define, and to be seen there by those for whom it was intended. The only comment I have ever been able to extract by a casual reproduction of it in the sight of persons who might be expected to know it, was " that's a bad sign." In its mysterious comings and goings it reminds

one of the demonic raven on the white war-standard, which portended victory or defeat to the armies of the Northmen - or so the Anglo-Saxons believed. But the true import of the mark itself is strongly suggested by two passages in the Reverend Father Sinistrari of Arneno's 17th - century work on Demoniality. Of the eleven ceremonies of initiation into witchcraft, the ninth, he says, is the scratching of the Novice's name in the Black Book by the Devil's Claw (*ungue Diaboli in eo exarantur*) ; and in the eleventh the Novice is sealed to the Devil by a secret mark, the seal (*sigillum*) by which such tokens are imprinted being the Devil's Claw. It is true that the Reverend Father tells us the character in the latter case is not always of the same form, but sometimes resembles a toad's foot, a hare, a spider, and so forth.

In Elton's edition of *Saxo Grammaticus* there is a passage of dialogue on page 80 in which Bjarke enquires of Rute, " But where now is he that is commonly called Odin, the mighty in battle, content ever with a single eye ? If thou see him anywhere, Rute, tell me." Rute replies, " Bring thine eye closer and look under my arm akimbo ; thou must first hallow thine eyes with the victorious sign, if thou wilt safely know the War-god face to face." York Powell, in a footnote, explains Rute's injunction thus : " Bjarke was to gain second sight by looking under the bent arm of Rute. . . . The ' conquering sign' in the next line (victrici signo) is probably the broad arrow of Tew (Tyr), the sign of which was to be made before second sight could be obtained." Looking through the arm akimbo is certainly understood to help in rendering visible what is ordinarily invisible, just as does the view through a knot-hole, through a ring, through the forefinger and thumb placed tip to tip, through the legs spread apart, through a water-horse's halter or bridle, if one can conveniently be obtained-through almost anything, in short, which helps to focus the mind on a limited field of vision; but in this Danish saga the use of the arrow sign seems to have been intended to protect the seer against the blinding apparition of a god, rather than, of itself, to confer second sight. This is further implied by the word " safely."

That the " crow's foot " should have brought a magical atmosphere with it down the ages is not surprising, for being the old German rune which stood for the letter T [6] it was employed as the symbol for the arch-deity and war-god Tius, Tiu, Tiw, Ti, Tyr, Zio, etc., forms taken by the divine name in the various Teutonic tongues ; somewhat as the triskele (supposed to have been the prototype of the *trie cassyn* or Three Legs of Man) was Odin's sign, according to the Earl of Southesk's *Origins of Pictish Symbolism*. Grimm has some suggestive remarks on this arrow-like ancient signature of a god who may be placed, he says, " on a level with the loftiest deities of antiquity " before his eclipse by Odin. " T, equivalent to Tyr, appears to have been a supremely honoured symbol, and the name of this god to have been specially sacred : in scratching the runes of victory on the sword, the name of Tyr had to be twice inserted. The shape of the rune ˆ has an obvious resemblance to the old - established symbol of the planet Mars when set upright- õ - and an Anglo-Saxon poem on the runes expressly says : ' tir is one of the tokens, a certain sign.' " " The rune . . . may be the picture of a sword with its handle, or of a spear."[7] Grimm's translator, Stallybrass, plausibly suggests an arrow. In his Supplementary Volume Grimm opines that this ancient Mars-symbol stood for the war-god's shield and spear. Could it not represent an even earlier weapon than the metal ones, namely, the spear-head or arrow-head of stone ?-implements which are still, in some countries, regarded with superstitious awe. No instance is mentioned by Grimm of the use of the symbol in magic, but a sign charged with such dynamic power did not escape the attention of the devisers of charms and amulets. There are, for example, in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (vol. xxvii., pages 467-8) three illustrations of flint arrow-heads mounted in silver which were used as amulets in Scotland in the early 17th century. All have the " crow's foot " engraved or scratched on the back of the mount, together

with initials, presumably those of the person for whose benefit the amulets were fashioned. (See also vol. xxiv. of the same *Proceedings*.)

The sign has associations in the Scottish Isles which are significant of its great antiquity. In the course of an official report on the agrarian customs of the Outer Hebrides, Alexander Carmichael, prior to the publication of his Carmina Gadelica, describes the casting of lots for rigs of land. " The constable takes a rod and divides the scat [share of land] into six equal divisions. At the boundary of each division he cuts a mark-Gaelic, beum-in the ground, which is called by the curious name of tort. The tort resembles the broad arrow of the Ordnance Department. The word tort signifies a notch, and is applied to cattle whose ears are notched. These notch-eared cattle-tore-chluasach-are frequent in the Western Isles, and are spoken of as sliocd a chroidh mhara, the descendants of the fabled sea-cattle."[8] The same mark was used, among others, in recording temporary divisions of land among English villagers also.

The crow's foot was also a " bardic letter " or " druidical symbol " for T.[9] It was used occasionally in Ogam writing as a symbol for P.

What may be the oldest example of the crow's foot or broad arrow as a symbol appears among the remains dug up by Schliemann at Hissarlik. At the level of the nethermost of the nine cities which grew up and perished in turn on this site (the sixth was the Troy besieged by the Achaeans about 1200 B.C.) occurred a great number of terra-cotta whorls belonging, Schliemann says, to the Neolithic Age. At any rate, the settlement was founded somewhere about 3000 B.C. On some of these whorls four broad arrows are scratched in a circle around a central disc. Schliemann thought they were not meant for use but were *ex votos* (or " idols " as his translator has it) intentionally made to resemble in shape the heroic sepulchral mounds of that neighbourhood, and of many other parts of the world. Possibly this opinion has now been superseded ; indeed, Suchardt affirms in his notes that they were actually used in spinning.

In one case the sign alternates with the sun-symbol, and all are grouped around a larger sun-symbol. A similar sign is repeated on other articles, but having more branches than the two of the broad arrow.[10] The whorl-ornamentation in which the arrow is associated with the circle-and-dot of the sun is selected by Goblet d'Alviella for representation in his *Migration of Symbols* (plate ii.).

The Manx name, crow's foot, or the French name, *pied de grue*, are preferable to " Broad Arrow " ; for the Government mark, which is not traceable further back than the 15th century, is thought to owe its form to a misunderstanding of a rudely cut anchor with its flukes.[11]

1 *Historical Account*, ii., 115.

2 Introduction to vol. ii, of the *Folk-lore Record*.

3 *Ancient Cures, Charms and Usages of Ireland*, page 120.

4 *Carmina Gadelica*, i., 168.

5 *Teutonic Mythology*, page 1844.

6 Their name for the letter, and consequently for its rune, was lac-not very different from the " toc " of our telephonists in France during the war.

7 *Teutonic Mythology*, pages 200 and 204.

8 *Celtic Review*, x., 358

9 Davies, *Celtic Researches*, plates 1 and 2.

10 See Ilios, plates xliii., xxiii., xxxiii., xxxiv., the plate of whorls, and the inset illustrations with their respective letterpress.

11 *Notes and Queries*, ser. 11, vol. 9, pages 17, 52, 481

§ 3. The Virtues of Salt and Ashes.

In many divinations, the Dark Powers are expected to transmit their verdict or message through certain materials which, by their magical associations, are peculiarly fit for the purpose : ashes which retain something of the still-living dead, or ashes of the hearth-fire, the focus of the family's past and present life ; and salt. In the Isle of Man, for instance, ash from the housefire was carried on the person to ward off evil influences ; it was strewn on the earth or floor in the form of a ring, for the same purpose as a defensive circle was drawn by necromancers. Conversely, ash was scattered about anything which was suspected of uncanniness, to restrict its power for harm.

Salt is universally used to negative dangerous and corruptive forces, and a hundred examples of its employment in folk-custom could be quoted. Manx people carried a small quantity in the pocket—perhaps a few do still—especially when likely to be exposed to risk from witches or fairies. For the same reason it was sprinkled lightly over provisions, and over farm implements and sea tackle, particularly the nets. It was—and perhaps still is occasionally—thrown into the kitchen fire to allay a storm. Its preservative virtue was, in fact, transferred from the material plane to that of the unseen.

Salt was also used as a medium through which Fate declared its intentions. On Old Christmas Eve (Twelfth Night, 6th January) it was a custom a few years ago in the Parish of Patrick, and doubtless elsewhere, to set upright on the kitchen table a row of thimblefuls of salt. Each heap, moulded by a thimble, stood for a member of the household. If, when the earliest riser came downstairs next morning, any of the salt-heaps was found to have fallen over and scattered, it was understood to be an omen of the death during the coming twelve months of the person whom the heap represented. Those which only leaned a little sideways prefigured an illness or accident ; the extent of the list showed whether the affliction would be serious or slight. The person whose salt-heap remained standing upright and uncrumbled could look forward to a fortunate year. A similar practice is mentioned briefly by Moore,[1] probably from information by Rhys, who gives it more fully as heard by him in the North of the Island.[2] I insert the Dalby canon for comparison, with the remark that in North Germany the same divination is practised with flour on St. Andrew's Eve ;[3] while Grimm says, " On Christmas Eve put a little heap of salt on the table ; if it melts overnight, you die next year ; if not, not."

[4] Roeder must have heard of it in Rushen, for he alludes to the use of thimbles full of salt for some fortune-telling purpose, but without giving any details. [5]

Ashes and salt combined had their place in the soddag valloo, " silent cake," eaten late on Old November Eve to bring about a dream-sight of the husband-to-be, as is recorded by Train and others. It must be baked in ashes on the hearth ; it had to be over-salted, and a small quantity of fine ash or of soot —another hearth-product—was one of its indispensable ingredients.[6] The correct shape, I have been told, was three-cornered, and this, too, may have had significance. A salt herring eaten just before retiring would bring the future husband in a dream, to relieve the thirst. With the same laudable purpose the Greek girls make their supper of a cake containing an excessive quantity of salt.[7]

1 *Folk-lore of I. of M.*, page 140.

2 *Celtic Folk-lore*, page 318.

3 Thorpe, *Northern Mythology*, iii., 145.

4 *Teutonic Mythology*, page 1118.

5 *Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 180.

6 Manx babies were marked with soot to protect them from the fairies. (Roeder.) In the case of the " Michaelmas cake " made in Ross-shire a small piece was thrown into the fire " for the Donas "--presumably a hearth-spirit.

7 Lawson, *Ancient Greek Religion and Modern Greek Folklore*, page 303.

§ 4. The Significance of Fire.

In the original intention, then, of the hearth-baked soddag with its addition of soot or ash the Powers of Darkness and of the Underworld were invoked, and they communicated their answer through a dream or a vision. They were, ultimately, the dead ancestors, and it has already been pointed out that the use of the hearth as a burial-place in prehistoric times has heightened its natural significance as the centre of the family life. " Le grammairien Servius, qui était fort instruit des antiquités grecques et romaines dit que c'ëtait un usage trés-ancien d'ensevelir les morts dans les maisons, et il ajoute : ' Par suite de cet usage, c'est aussi dans les maisons qu'on honore les Lares et les Pënates.' Cette phrase établit nettement une antique relation entre les cultes des morts et le foyer. On peut donc penser que le foyer domestique n'a été à l'origine que le symbole du culte des morts, que sous cette pierre du foyer un ancêtre reposait, que le fen y était allumé pour l'honorer et que ce feu semblait entretenir la vie en lui ou reprësentait son âme toujours vigilante."[1]

Fustel de Coulanges here seems to go rather too far in opining that the domestic hearth originated from a cult of the dead, for surely its usefulness must have been the prime consideration. But its acquired sacredness may, as is suggested by Mr. J. C. Lawson,[1] have prompted the use of torches, lit from the hearth, at pagan and early Christian funerals, and the presence of the " unsleeping lamp," similarly kindled, at modern Greek gravesides. In the Isle of Man there is no direct evidence of the interment of the dead or their ashes within the walls of the dwelling ; burial in a neighbouring field was preferred. Scraps of lost traditions, however, are to be found preserved in the old songs of the Island, and it may not be amiss to

draw attention to a passage in one called " My Henn Ghooinney Mie," although possibly nothing more may have been intended than a culminating stroke of humour. At the end of this Darby-and-Joan duet the old woman asks, " And where shall I bury thee, my good old man ? " to which he replies, " In the smoke-hole, my good old woman." *Towl-yaagh* is now equivalent to " chimney," though it meant originally the hole in the roof through which some of the smoke of the central hearth found its way out.[3] The smaller Manx dwellings, even in the towns, had no chimneys till the beginning of the 18th century, after which date they were gradually introduced by legal compulsion.[4] In Scotland the smoke-holes were not made directly above the fireplace, lest rain should fall on the fire, and probably the same precaution was observed in Man.[5]

Without wishing to stress the allusion to burial in a towl yaagh, it may still be said that the fire on the hearth was, in the Isle of Man as in every other country, the heart and soul of the dwelling and its inmates ; greater care was taken to keep it alight from night to morning, and from May Eve to May Eve, than considerations of mere convenience demanded, even in the days before matches were invented.[6] Behind these superstitious observances in domestic life, the particulars of which we shall come to in a moment, looms a myth.

In the Manx development of this myth the element takes on a two-sided significance : by fire the Island was discovered for men's use and misuse, and by fire it has ever since been prevented from reverting to its original condition. The revealing flame lit by a mortal visitant on the shore where he had accidentally landed drove the gloomy mists up into the mountains and exposed the seaboard to the human race.[7] Consequently arose the belief that if the Island should ever be wholly without a fire for even the briefest moment it would vanish again into its primeval mystery ; or as Waldron heard it, " terrible revolutions and mischiefs would immediately ensue." How the vigilance of the Laxey people once saved the country is told in the following account of the myth by a Solway-side laird of a century ago. After describing the wonders of a magic island which appeared off the shore of his estate once in every seven years, he continues : " The Manxmen's Isle was ance enchanted the same way, but a spark of fire, lighted on't ance frae out a sailor's pipe, broke the charm, whilk has hinner'd it to sink mair ; but war a' the fires at ony time to gang out, it wad just gae whar it was again ; ance they went a' out but a wee bit gleed in Luxy ;[8] and faith, the Isle of Man was begun to shog and quake."[9]

Geologists will tell us that it has already been under water more than once and is to be submerged again, but perhaps the sea-changes hinted at in the myth are not to be understood literally. The need for a continuity of fire in the Island, however, has been accepted literally enough by its population in the past, although custom, in seeming contradiction, sanctioned an annual extinction and relighting of the hearth-fire. " The house-fires were everywhere extinguished on 30th April, and fresh ones laid on 1st May and ignited by rubbing two sticks together."[10]It may be doubted whether the frictional method of kindling was employed for the annual relighting of the domestic fires. What was generally done is described by Dr. Kelly in his *Manx Dictionary*, under the word " Baaltin (laa)." On May Day, he says, fires were kindled on hill-tops in order that the smoke might blow over the farms and cattle. From these sacred fires were re-ignited the domestic hearths, and it is quite possible that at the date Kelly was compiling his dictionary—the end of the 18th century-the ancient method of friction was still employed to engender the flames of purification. It was in use in Cumberland and Westmorland at a much later date ; Sullivan, in his volume on those counties, published in 1857, describes it on page 116 in these words

" The Need-fire was once an annual observance, and is still occasionally employed . . . as a charm for various diseases to which cattle are liable. All the fires in the village are first carefully put out, a deputation going round to each house to see that not a spark remains. Two pieces of wood are then ignited by friction, and within the influence of the fire thus kindled the cattle are brought. . . . The charm being ended in one village, the fire may be transferred to the next, and thus propagated as far as it is required." Sullivan mentions a corroborative passage in Miss Martineau's *Lake Guide*.

There was a taboo on the use of fire for certain purposes at a certain time of the year in the Isle of Man. " Having occasion to send a horse to be shod on 5th January last, the smith refused, on the ground that it was very unlucky to light a fire and temper iron before Christmas had expired. The utmost that he would do was to put a nail in to secure the old shoe."[11] This was in the year 1878. The 5th of January is, of course, Christmas Eve by the old way of reckoning. Train gives Good Friday as a day when no iron, even in the forms of griddle, poker or tongs, should touch the fire ;[12] which agrees with the teaching in the North-East of England and in Cumbria " Blacksmiths will not light their fires on Good Friday,"[13] and " Good Friday is kept by the smith as a sort of holiday " because of the nails used in the Crucifixion. [14]

The importance attributed to keeping the Manx home-fires burning reappears in the apocryphal " law ' believed to regulate squatters on other men's land. If, after sufficient materials for four walls and a roof have been collected in readiness, a dwelling-house can be run up between sunset and sunrise, and smoke sent out of the chimney, the house belongs to the man who, with his friends' help, has built it ; but if and when the fire fails to be continuous, the site reverts to the owner of the land. Only the stones of the building then belong to the tenant, who may take them away if he chooses. A cottage in Ballarragh village, Lonan, now stands empty and unrepaired on account of the uncertainty created by this belief.[15]

The use of fire to counteract overlooking or bespelling by witches is a familiar theme which I shall recur to in dealing with the subject of witchcraft. It is a curious point that the witches were supposed to be personally yet invisibly present, at the time of the " burning-out," in the bushes and the boats from which it was sought to expel them ; wherein may be recognized one of many instances of the transference of fairy characteristics to witchcraft. (See Appendix I.)

1 *La Gité Antique*, chap. iii. In the same chapter it is shown that the terms Lares, Heroes, and others signifying the ancestral souls of a family, came to be used indistinguishably from the terms for the domestic hearth-fire ; so close was felt to be the bond between the fire and those who had, while alive, tended it, enjoyed its use, and worshipped it.

2 Loc. cit., page 507. [Lawson, *Ancient Greek Religion and Modern Greek Folklore*]

3 Students of Manx folk-song will be interested to see that " My Henn Ghooinney Mie " has a brother in the Principality, " Yr Hen Wr Mwyn," the Pleasant Old Man, who appears to resemble him fairly closely; (*Welsh Folk-song Journal*, i., 81-84; iii., 26). The Welshman ends his whimsical answers to a string of serious questions by asking to be buried under the hearthstone, where he may have the pleasure of listening to the porridge boiling, " fal-de-ral." That they would be buried under the hearth was also a threat to unruly Welsh children.

4 See Moore's *Notes and Documents*, page 46.

5 The hovels in which the poorer sort lived had something the appearance of a sleeping walrus, the rough branches which constituted the roof were covered with the coarse bent which grew on the Curragh. At one end it was carried up and tied round some rough stakes to form a chimney for the peat smoke to escape. At the opposite end it was brought down to a long tail and kept tight by a large stone swinging dependent from it. The walls were built of sods. The interior was shared with the pigs and poultry and sometimes railed off for a cow if the intaek could support one." (*Our Centenarian Grandfather*, ed. A. G. Bradley, p. 224.) This relates to the North of the Island in the thirties of the 19th century.

6 In Cumberland and Westmorland the conservation of the hearth-fire of peat was carried still further. " Many fires in the Lake District had never been altogether extinguished for years ; and I know the case of a man who possessed his grandfather's fire-the fire never having been altogether extinguished for three generations. "-Ellwood, Laheland and Iceland (Eng. Dialect Soc.), page 6.

7 Exactly the same story is told by Wood-Martin concerning the island of Inisbofin, Co. Galway. Two fog-bewildered fishermen landed there and lighted a fire, " but no sooner had the flame touched the rock than the fog suddenly lifted and the fishermen found themselves on the solid land of inisbofin, which has ever since remained."-*Elder Faiths*, ii., 221. Giraldus Cambrensis gives a similar account of the fixing of a newly-risen island, apparently the Orkney islet of Eynhallow, in his *Topography of Ireland*, chap. xii.

Myths dwindle into superstitions. In the Isle of Man to-day there is a vestige of a prejudice against making a fire on or against a shore-rock.

8 Glowing ember in Laxey.

9 *Gallovidian Encyclopedia*, page 307.

10 *Our Centenarian Grandfather*, edited by A. G. Bradley.

11 Notes and Queries, ser. 5, vol. x., p. 23

12 *Historical Account*, ii., 117. The whole passage occurs also in *Letters from the Isle of Man*, page 57, under the date 1846. It is paraphrased by Moore in his Folk-lore (p. 109) without any indication of its source. In the Letters it runs thus : " No one is allowed to put any iron in the fire on Good Friday, and the tongs are placed aside for fear anyone should use them to stir the fire, and a stick of the rowan-tree is substituted ; and even a griddle is not suffered to hang over the fire, but the bannock or soddag is made with three corners, and baked on the hearth." Was this a special cake made on Good Friday only ?

13 *County Folk-lore* (Northumberland), page 56.

14 Sullivan, *Cumberland and Westmorland*, page 164.

15 For the information that it is necessary to maintain the fire in these circumstances I am indebted to Miss Mona Douglas.

CHAPTER IV
DIVINATIONS AND OBSERVANCES

§ 5. Other Customs and Beliefs.

The English custom of egg-rolling at Easter took root for a while in the Isle of Man, but it seems to have died out now. On Easter Monday the boys and girls of the Port St. Mary district boiled a supply of eggs stone-hard, coloured them in smoke, and took them to a certain hollow in the grassy slope just above Perwick shore, facing the Bon Rock. There they let them roll down from the top so that they fell into the shallow pit at the foot of the slope. It was done chiefly by girls ; sometimes the boys would put round stones among their eggs to crack those of the girls. The chief point of interest in this custom (which flourished thirty or forty years ago, a native told me when showing me the spot) is the selection of one particular place, year after year, for the purpose.

On the morning of a wedding it was a custom for young men to climb a neighbouring hill (Cronk Shammyrk in Lezayre and Slieu Chairn Gerjoil in Lonan are two which have been specified to me in this connexion), and blow cow-horns as long as their breath held out. This horn-blowing was also a feature of some of the wren-processions. The original intention of the wedding-day performance was, perhaps, less to announce an important occasion or to vent high spirits than to ward off the fairies, since the same music was performed on the morning of the Twelfth of May (Old May Day) to prevent their stealing children, according to Moore. Roeder says it was done on May Eve, which is more probable. Aubrey says, " At Oxford the Boyes doe blow Cows horns and hollow Caxes all Night" on May Eve.[1] The same was done in Germany, according to Grimm.

The bygone Manx observance of St. Bride's Eve (1st February) has been recorded : how the inmates of cottages stood at the door with rushes in their hands and called to Bride to enter-" Open the door to Bride, and let Bride come in "-afterwards spreading the rushes on the floor to make a bed for her. What is missing from the accounts of the custom in its degenerate state may, perhaps, be gathered from the procedure in Ulster. At Tobermore the children who go out for the rushes (which must be pulled, not cut with a knife), on St. Bride's Eve to make crosses, ask at the door when they return, " May St. Bride come in ? " and are answered from within, " Yes, she may."[2] Probably at an earlier stage in the decay of the ceremony they carried an image of Bride made of the rushes, which Church influence transformed in time into a cross ; and this image would be the Bride whom the Manx people invited to enter their houses. In the Hebrides, according to Martin, such an image was made of a sheaf of oats dressed up like a woman, and put in a basket which was called " Bride's bed." Thus the three accounts, if pieced together, make a coherent whole.[3]

Rushes were likewise spread at the doors and on the window-sills of Irish cottages, without reference to Bride, on Midsummer Eve, and on the Eve of Ascension Thursday.

In the parish of Lezayre a remarkable custom connected with farm-service was not entirely obsolete, I am told, so late as the latter half of the 19th century. When a manservant was engaged for the year he would sprinkle a little of the soil of the farm on the doorstep, on the flagstone of the hearth, and on his new master's chair. Sometimes the soil was first mixed with ashes from the hearth. The act, though not the occasion for it, resembles a Norse land-buying ceremony described in the " Gulathing." The purchaser, in the presence of witnesses, took mould, " as is mentioned in the laws," to the four corners of the hearth and to the

owner's high-seat, to where field and meadow met, and to where pasture and stone-ridge met. The mould was afterwards preserved, along with the written conveyance, as a concrete token of the bargain. There is also a reminder in this Norse ceremony of the former Manx custom of handing over a sod when taking possession of a farm.

The same respect for the controlling centre of the estate figured in the old method of giving notice to leave. When a farm-servant wished to do this in the absence from home of his employer, it was prescribed that he should repair with a witness " to the usuall Place where the Master or Mistress did sitt, at the hearth or at meat, or . . . the Door where they usually enter " ; his verbal warning given at these spots satisfied the requirements of the law.[4]

The first making of the broth by the newly-married woman in her husband's house signified that she had taken up her position and duties in the home. Exactly the same observance has been found among the Haussas of East Africa.

AFTER DEATH.

Many significant observances and beliefs have clustered round the bodies of the dead. The knots on the grave-clothes should be loosened just before the coffin is closed, otherwise the soul cannot free itself for its flight to heaven. To be effective, some people think this office should be performed by a man if the corpse is a woman's and vice versa, or there is a risk that the loosener will be haunted by the ghost or spirit of the dead person. Others say that the loosener of the knots should always be a woman.

It is not very uncommon to hear of treasured articles or heirlooms being placed in the coffin and buried with it. A woman in East Foxdale mentioned to me last year that her mother had been buried with a linen apron woven by the dead woman's father. A part of it having knots of some kind was carefully cut off, and she was lifted by the bands into the coffin. I have heard of letters and photographs being buried with the body. A few leaves of the elder were sometimes strewn over it ; or two or three straws were snapped asunder and passed beneath the body as it lay on the bed, and afterwards placed with it in the coffin. This is still done sometimes. Is it to be taken as symbolical of the parting asunder of body and soul ? The latter, it is said, goes away at death, but on the third night it returns to where the body is ; so the body should not be removed or buried before then, for the homeless spirit would haunt the house afterwards. If it were seen after the third day people would be frightened by it, but not till then.

According to another account of the matter, for three days after the death the soul or spirit lingers about the places which are familiar and dear to it, and may then chance to be seen by its kindred, or by Sighted persons, as a bird, animal, or insect, and its voice may be heard. After the third day a change comes over the dead features ; it is a sign that the soul is no longer homeless, but has reached the end of its journey and found peace.

To pass for a moment beyond the limits of the Isle of Man, this idea that the dead may take the shapes of animals is one of the many fragments of ancient belief which have been adopted into witchcraft and its attendant magic ; but to the minds of savages, who are usually supposed to exhibit the most rudimentary forms of our superstitions, the passing of the soul at death into the animal is a natural process which owes nothing to magic. The taking of animal shape by living human beings, such as that of the hare by a witch, or of the wolf by a bewitched or magic-using man, cannot, I think, be dissociated from the belief in the dead as

animals. Not only do witches, while alive, temporarily become hares, but a hare may represent the spirit of a deceased relative ; not only may a living man spend periods in wolf-shape, but a dead man may take the shape of a wolf and behave in the same manner as the were-wolf which is a living man.

FORETOKENS OF MISFORTUNE.

Minor omens having conventional interpretations are numerous. A rare one is the appearance of the Aurora Borealis ; it is understood to portend the outbreak of a war in some part of the world. There is said to be a Manx name for the Northern Lights, but I have not found anyone who knows it. If there is, it may embody the old belief that the strange glittering in the heavens is caused by the dancing fairies.

Portents of a more trifling character, foreshadowing either definite events or merely luck good or bad, are as common in the Isle of Man as everywhere else, and not very different. A cut loaf should not be left lying on the plate or table with the cut side downward. This is known in Cornwall also, and probably in other fishing centres, since the analogy is obviously a capsized boat. Herrings too, in the Isle of Man, should not be turned over when they are being eaten,

for the same reason. In the little volume of tales and sketches in the Anglo-Manx dialect published in 1895 by one of Ruskin's disciples, which conveys the tone and spirit of Manx country life with such truth, the English author's almost infallible knowledge of Island ways fails him for once when he makes one of his characters say, in this connexion, " When the mate is puk off arram at one side, they turns it over on the other, to gerrat the mate."[5] The herring should be lifted, never turned over, and the " mate " shaken off or picked off with a fork.

Boots should not be placed on the table ; it is an omen of a death in the house.

The entry of a living wild bird of any kind into the dwelling-house has the same significance.

The " stranger " or flake of soot on the bar of the grate is an infallible token of a coming visitor, according to Manx housewives.

To kill the small, black, outdoor beetle called a " Greg " (carraig) is, as in England, certain to bring rain, and hence is an accident which is avoided so far as possible. For an account of a deliberate sacrifice of the creg, see page 285.

Another rain-bringer, and one belonging exclusively to the Isle of Man, was a man who, up to four or five years ago, went about the Island with a piano-organ. It was commonly said and believed that his arrival in a town would shortly be followed by wet weather. The first time I heard this-as a matter of detail I overheard a woman make the remark in a Douglas street-I thought I had come across a newly-coined piece of folk-lore passing current only in its own part of the world ; but I have since found its equivalent in the South of England, where the same influence was credited to the German bands which used to enliven our thoroughfares. At the bottom of both beliefs, perhaps, lies the idea that a loud noise, such as thunder or the firing of guns, will shake down the rain.

It has been suggested that the Manxman's objection to the presence of white stones in the ballast of his boat was due to their being found by excavators and ploughmen in old graves. In Orkney and Shetland, however, the objection is based on the ground that they are symbolic of white waves, and consequently of rough weather; and this, perhaps, lies at the bottom of the Manx superstition also.

As in many lands, the parson is unlucky to encounter by a man on his way to the fishing. His presence in a boat is unwelcome, notwithstanding the pleasure taken in Pazon Gale's company by Tom Baynes and his men in Brown's poem of " Betsy Lee." This instance must be considered as a special tribute to the affection in which Pazon Gale was held; and when such exceptional cases have occurred in real life it has been due to the minister's personal popularity having triumphed over the ominous colour of his cloth. Certain rare members of the clergy have, indeed, been reckoned lucky passengers to carry in a fishing-boat.

When the fishing-fleet was leaving harbour for Northern waters or the South-West of Ireland, the next two crews after the second were accustomed to lash their boats together, so that neither should be the fatal third. For local fishing it was not thought necessary to take this precaution-an illogical one in any case. To prevent there being a third boat the two which followed the first should have been united, unless the two which were bracketed third were expected to halve the bad luck. But that was not the case ; it was understood that there was no "third boat" when two went out at the same time. It would be interesting to hear the origin of this belief in the fatality of a number which is otherwise almost universally lucky in the British Isles. Almost—for we know how strongly the British soldier in the European War objected to being the third to light his pipe or cigarette from the one match. In modern Greece, however, "three, which in old times was lucky, is now universally unlucky."*

RESPECT PAID TO RELICS.

Not only books on Manx folk-lore, but works of an archaeological nature, bear witness to the disastrous, sometimes fatal, consequences of destroying, or even meddling with, the venerable relics of the country-side, and many similar stories circulate unrecorded. The time-limit usually assigned for the blow to fall is twelve months, or a year and a day. Its weight is held to correspond to the amount of damage done to the relic ; also, the longer the consequences are delayed the more serious they are expected to be. They may not be confined to the actual perpetrators, but may even fall on the neighbourhood at large. Looking at the matter in a rational light, it cannot be denied that misfortunes do follow such interferences within the specified time, often well within it. But are they greater than the normal amount of trouble which every man has to expect in any given period? Such things are not reducible to statistics. Admittedly, the tales grow more dramatic as they travel, and one will reproduce itself in several places ; but I should not care to say that there is nothing at the bottom of the belief. It would be difficult to state precisely who or what is supposed to avenge the destruction of the relic ; fairies-that is to say, the souls of the dead-might be deemed guardians of the tumuli, the old thorntrees and the elder-bushes, but they could not very well be held responsible for the walls of the ancient chapels.

More than one story bearing on this subject has been related in *A Manx Scrapbook*; those I will supplement here with a characteristic specimen which I met with half a dozen years ago. A neighbour of mine, when ploughing a field containing in the middle the remains of a small group of stones from which weapons and an urn had been disinterred eighty years previously, shaved the skirt of the mound more closely than any of his innumerable predecessors had

dared to do. I think it was the first time he had ploughed this particular field since taking up the tenancy of the farm, but am not quite certain about that. At all events, he was a little reckless, in spite of a strong hint from his landlord, who knew the risk, for his ancestors had held the land for centuries. Being in a small way, the tenant possessed two horses only. A week or two later the more valuable of these, a strong, healthy young mare, fell sick and died without any visible cause. She was insured, but the man felt her loss so keenly that he shed tears over it. The only physical explanation he could think of was that a young lad who had had charge of her sometimes had ill-used her ; but his history of the loss was brought out by some remarks we had been exchanging on the subject of the stones and their significance.

Among the traditions of this nature mentioned in the Reports of the Manx Archæological Survey the most striking is that relating to Keeill Coonlagh and its burial-ground, in Jurby parish. About 200 years ago the farm on which they stand, Ballachonley, was owned by a family named Conoly, in which were seven sons and a daughter. " The sons destroyed the remains of the Keeill, and as a punishment they all died within the year. But the daughter had no part in the destruction," and was consequently spared to inherit the property ; and her descendants have inherited the tradition along with it. And the people living at Ballacarnane-beg in Michael have exactly the same tradition about the keeill on their land.

C., the tenant of Claughbane farm, near Ramsey, and two or three of his men, dug away a tumulus on his land in 1923 or 1924. He and all the men concerned contracted pneumonia within a couple of months ; all died but one of the men. I give the circumstances as they were given to me by local residents independently of each other ; without personally vouching for them as facts, I believe them to be true. A well-documented case, on which any reader can form his own judgment, is furnished by the late Dr. John Clague, of Castletown. On the last page of the printed extracts from his notebooks published under the title of *Manx Reminiscences*, he says : " On the twenty-first day of May, in the year nineteen hundred and eight, we were at Ballacross digging an old urn out of an old graveyard. . . . ' His sudden death occurred on 23rd August, 1908, in his 66th year.

Footnotes

1 Remaines, page 18.

2 Anderson, *Ulster Folk-lore*, page 17.

3 As much the best account of the Manx ceremony in former times lurks in the local Society's Transactions, its repetition here may be excused. " On St. Bridget's Eve the old farmers' wives used to sweep out the barn, and put a bed, and a chair, and a table in, and light a large mould candle that would burn all night, and set bread and cheese on the table, with a quart jug of good Manx ale, all in the hope that ' Breeshey ' would pay them a visit ; and used to say, at the open door, before going to bed, ' Quoi erbee vii thie hig oo, hum tar gys yn thie aynyn '-' W'hosesoever house you come to,come to ours.' " (C. Roeder, *Lioar Manninagh*, iii., i8t.)

4 Statutes, 1664.

5 Rydings, *Manx Tales*, page 24.

6 Lawson, *Modern Greek Folk-lore*, page 313. He gives instances.

§ 6. Legal and Ecclesiastical Customs.

Many of the incidents and beliefs which have been collected into the present part of this volume as typical of their respective classes exhibit, I think, a national habit of mind more akin to that of a portion of the Breton race than to any other European people. In that country,however,the prevailing religion,though inimical to the fairy faith, has tended to foster the pagan belief in the nearness of the dead to the living, in the ease of communication between them, and in the equal actuality of both ; whereas in Man this feeling of their propinquity has been driven below the surface, not only by religious inhibitions, but by the effects of modern conditions on a much smaller population than that of Brittany. In old days it was as unashamedly a part of the Manx national life as the belief in the Holy Trinity and in the fairies.

An excellent illustration of the slenderness of the partition between living and dead in the old Manx conception of existence is provided by one of the ancient Insular law-customs. In its history can be seen also the irrepressible vitality of primitive ways of thinking and of the practices they gave rise to. When a claim was filed upon the estate of a dead man within a year and a day of his decease, and documentary evidence was wanting, the claimant stretched himself on his back along the grave of his alleged debtor, with a Bible on his breast, and his two compurgators (as they were inaccurately termed), standing on either side of him ; in this attitude he swore to the justice of his claim and the total amount of the debt. There can be little doubt that in early times, perhaps while the practice was still a part of the unwritten " breastlaw," it was confidently expected by all concerned except, perhaps, the deceased, that in the event of the claimant committing perjury the dead man's spirit would rise up to contradict him, and, either on the spot or soon afterwards, to punish him. By degrees the belief probably decayed to a vague feeling that bad luck would dog the perjurer's path, in addition, of course, to the penalty reserved for one who bears false witness against his neighbour.

Praying on the graves of the dead was one of the items of an inquiry recommended by the Governor to the Vicar-General at a Tynwald Court in 1594.

Although a temporal statute of 1609 denounced and forbade such a mode of testifying as unchristian, it continued to be looked upon with favour by the ecclesiastical authorities, as Moore shows, and it remained more or less in vogue during the succeeding century, when Bishop Wilson still held to it. So late indeed as the period of the Rev. B. Philpot, Archdeacon and Vicar-General (1827-38), the custom was observed, though in a modified form. " By degrees," writes Philpot in his Journal, " I abolished many old superstitious customs, such as swearing to the amount of the debts claimed on the grave of the deceased debtor, while standing at its east end."[1] He may have abolished it from official recognition, but not from the hearts of the people; for a circumstance mentioned in a little work published in 1895 reveals strikingly how the identical habit of mind (which the reverend author regards in a ludicrous light) unofficially persisted among the lower classes until a much later era than Philpot's. " I know a churchyard in the North of the Island where . . , a man of the parish, when not quite sober, was apt to call at night at the grave of a former debtor with the request that the debt might be paid."[2]

Ecclesiastical Penance, it is well known, was performed in a white sheet, sometimes with an advertisement of the offence pinned to it, in the market-places of the four towns and at the door of the delinquent's parish church. When the tongue was the offending member, the sheet was replaced by a bridle of special construction. I have been told that the sinners of Arbory sometimes stood on the flight of stone steps at the side of the entrance-gate of Arbory

churchyard. It has been denied that penitents were ever allowed to enter the church at all during their probationary period, but a statement by Bishop Wilson in his History of the Isle of Man seems to be conclusive. He says that the penitent, wearing a white sheet, was brought into the church immediately before the Litany, and after an exhortation by the minister was prayed for by the congregation. Offenders who relapsed were not permitted to do penance again until they had given proof of repentance and reformation ; they were obliged, thereuntil, to stand at the church door during the service. Fornication and adultery were the sins with which ecclesiastical authority chiefly concerned itself.

" In connexion with the subject of penance, a scrap of lore which clung to the Saddle Stone near Kirk Braddan sixty or seventy years ago is preserved in the Name Books of the Ordnance Survey. The stone was at that date " said to have been a penance-stone in olden times. It was removed from the ruins of the Camp at Braddan." This supposed use of it was probably communicated to the Ordnance officers by Dr. Oswald, who mentions the same tradition in his Vestigia. Apparently the meaning is that culprits were made to sit or stand on it as a punishment.

A legal observance or law-custom which has long gone out of use is noticeable in the course of an action for debt at a Sheading Court held in Rushen Castle in 1417. Translated out of its Latin the passage runs thus : " Because John (MacGilcallum, the defendant) would not place his hand in the hand of the Deemster to accept the verdict as the Court might afterwards deliver it, as was required by the same Bris (Bullok, the plaintiff), which he himself proved on the spot by legal witnesses then put on oath, judgment was given thereupon in favour of the plaintiff." The clasping of the Deemster's hand was, no doubt, a gesture of allegiance similar to that of the chieftain towards his overlord, and, in early medallions of Carausius and other rulers, the worshipper towards his deity.

The ancient legal penalty of Deodand, well known in England, by which an animal or object causing a death was confiscated and became the king's property, was enforced in the Isle of Man so late as the end of the 17th century, and probably later still. In 1694 a bull which killed John Cain, of Lhergy Dhoo, in the parish of German, was forfeited as Deodand to the Lord of the Isle.[3]

The obsolete Customary-law of the Ring, the Rope and the Sword, by which a single woman was given the choice of seeing her violater hanged, beheaded, or married to her, has already enjoyed publicity. Though first proclaimed at the Tynwald Court of 1577, it was one of a number of highly- interesting " Old Customes given for Law, which have never been put in Writing, but used and allowed of long Time heretofore." It is said (I have heard it from a Northside lawyer as a fact of local history) that the last occasion on which this option was exercised was after a ship's cargo of strong liquor had been cast up the North end of the Mooragh shore near Ramsey. The joyous tidings spread swiftly, and the people swooped down to the feast like vultures. As a sequel, a woman who had been raped while returning home along the Mooragh handed to the culprit, at the end of the trial which found him guilty, the symbolical piece of rope. My friend was unable to give this affair a date.

1 *Our Centenarian Grandfather*, ed. A. G. Bradley, pages 162 ff.

2 Rev. W. T. Radcliife, *Ellan Vannin*, page 68.

3 Enquest and Petition Files, Rolls Office. The 16th century enactments which formulated in picturesque terms the Manx law of Deodand are cited in Train's *Historical Account*, ii., 21.

CHAPTER V

WITCHCRAFT AND CHARMING

" A woman is a dish for the Gods, if the Devil dress her not. But, truly, these same whoreson devils do the Gods great harm in their women, for in every ten that they make, the devils mar five."

(Antony and Cleopatra, v., 2.)

§ 1. Witchcraft in General.

CERTAIN elements in witchcraft have always recognized themselves as an old religion in survival, and have been treated as such by the discerning. Of late years writers on the subject have been kind enough to refresh our memories by rediscovering and exaggerating this truism. The craft is now further dignified by being identified with a fertility-cult. It has been perversely misunderstood, and its rites must no longer be called indecent and obscene except between inverted commas. It was, in fact, a joyous form of worship which was persecuted, and its celebrations suppressed, by gloomy spoil-sports in the 16th and 17th centuries. One of its recent champions, in whom the feminine gifts of intuition and sympathy surpass even the ability to weigh evidence and reason from it, does honour to the witches' unshakable faith in the eternal union of their souls with the deity whose posterior they kissed ; in their deaths, indeed, they resembled the Christian martyrs. . . . However this may be, witchcraft, being rooted in the body, has, ever since its emergence from prehistoric darkness, been almost exclusively a women's religion, and hence would appear to stand a chance of returning to fashion, with a little alteration and retrimming.

In order to get as clear a view of Manx witchcraft, past and present, as the data permit, we may remind ourselves that witchcraft, in the usual acceptance of the term, is a combination of two differing and perhaps originally unconnected activities : the congregational celebrations of the " sabbat," and the individual operating of spells and charms. These two activities are correlated in statements that " the Devil " at the gatherings instructed the witches in the use of magic, supplied them with the ingredients of potions and philtres, and received reports of their successes and failures.

The sabbatical assemblies testified to by witches in the course of legal proceedings against them, and by the evidence of tradition, fall under two heads (a) actual gatherings which were exploited by a male controller personifying the Devil ; and (b) imaginary journeys to, and participation in, the sabbats. The actual gatherings, it has been suggested, may have been a debased relic of a primitive fertility-cult. If they owed anything at all to that source they were not so much debased as wholly perverted. If gregarious witchcraft could be considered as a fertility-cult gone rotten, it would strengthen the evidence for the mutual independence, at some epoch, of the sabbats and the individual practices ; for nine-tenths of the latter, far from being fecundative, are eminently obstructive and destructive. But gregarious witchcraft, so far as it existed outside the delusions of periodic insanity, appears to have been less a corrupt form of fertility-rites than an almost complete reversal of them. Its aim was to blast and blight, stunt, wither and destroy. In its use of spells and charms this tendency has been almost equally marked.

The imaginary journeys to, and participation in, the sabbats may have been induced by drugs, possibly even by ointments,1 also by primitive methods of self-hypnotization. Dreams, too, may have been artificially cultivated and intensified to a point at which they became indistinguishable from waking life, to the type of mentality concerned. It may well be, however, that a self-acting ideation, stimulated by the prevalent mental and psychical atmosphere, and akin to the hysterical ecstasies of the Christian and other religions, could have sufficed to create nearly all the delusions of gregarious witchcraft, especially in women who were acquainted with the procedure at the actual gatherings.

From this suggestible state of mind, however produced, resulted such of the phenomena as are inexplicable on natural grounds. These, it is said, are found, when the records are scrutinized, to be less numerous than might have been expected. For the whole phantasmagoria a framework was provided by traditions of superseded divinities of paganism, especially Greek paganism, and by the indestructible nature-religion which permeated all the pagan systems. The outcome of these ideas was a long - persisting communal memory of the practices which continued after the overthrow of paganism-the secret, because forbidden, worship of pagan gods, and, more especially, goddesses. These memories, like those which constitute the material of other superstitions, multiplied with each other promiscuously, and with extraneous ideas.2 Hence were born both the real witchcraft of modern days - the working of charms - and the mainly imaginary witchcraft of the covens and the massmeetings. With such traditionary assemblies as a model, actual gatherings were occasionally held, especially in later times, and it may have been the increasing frequency of these that aggravated the Church's antagonism to witchcraft from the 14th century onward.

These two modes of taking part in the sabbats, the imagined and the actual, have been completely confounded in popular legends and beliefs, and to a large extent likewise in the confessions of participants. The witches' inability to distinguish between them is not surprising, for it would be difficult to decide which mode of experience must have seemed the more vivid. The distinction was, however, recognized in a few cases. " They eat and drink really when they meet in their bodies," " they were bodily there " (at the sabbat), are phrases occurring in the testimony (reported in the third person) of a 17th -century Somerset witch.

The net result of this collective hysteria was to dominate the women's minds with an idée fixe or monomania which made them reckless of the extreme penalty of the law. Hence, perhaps, resulted also the local anaesthesia, the insensitive place on the body which was held to be an infallible token of a witch.

Through the practising of magic by witches, and through the attaching of the name of witch to women believed to practise magic, the idea of witchcraft has so permeated superstition in general, the Manx species no less than others, that it is liable to turn up in connexion with many matters with which it could have had nothing to do formerly.

1 The belief in the efficacy of drugs and ointments to open the inward eye existed long before the medieval sabbats. " Hésychius nous rapporte que les anciens évoquaient parfois Hécate à 1'aide de diverses préparations qui avaient certainement pour effet d'engendrer des hallucinations, où l'esprit croyait voir la déesse des nuits." (Maury, *La Magie et l'Astrologie*, page 419.)

2 For example, the common notion that witches flew through the air was probably derived, together with other features of the cult, from the antique belief in flying female demons who assumed the shapes of animals-a belief which even attached itself to the august legend of Diana. But the priests of the classical Diana refused, it will be remembered, to sacrifice to her till the land had been cleansed of the presence of the archwitch Medea.

CHAPTER V

WITCHCRAFT AND CHARMING

§ 2. The Ways of the Manx Witches.

The terminology of Manx witchcraft has been so fully dealt with by Roeder in his *Manx Notes and Queries* that I may now pass on to describe the sisterhood and its doings, which differ little from those elsewhere. In the Isle of Man a witch is a woman, usually elderly, not necessarily unmarried, who affects her fellow-creatures, both directly and through their possessions, by means of spells and charms. To this end she employs certain herbs and other substances as vehicles of her desires ; or she simply concentrates her will in a fixed gaze, in muttered words, or in a silent wish. She is able to change her shape to that of some animal or bird, frequently a hare, and may then be shot with a silver bullet or caught in a snare, after which misadventure she resumes her human form, suffering from the effects. Though there have been white witches (mostly male), the atmosphere surrounding the word *buitch* [1] is one of malevolence, and when the *buitch* performs a cure she is, in most cases, only undoing harm which she, or a rival, has previously inflicted-undoing it, sometimes, By similar methods.

In modern times, if not always, Manx witches have worked individually, ploughing each her lonely furrow, and sowing trouble for her neighbours to reap ; each for herself and the Devil take the foremost. Herein, and in most other ways, they resemble a host of old women in the rest of Britain and all the Irish witches ; for the assemblers at sabbats in Ireland were women of Plantation or English and Scottish extraction, as their names in the trials show. [2] Since in Scotland the gregarious type of witchcraft common to the Continental countries, and in a lesser degree to England, flourished only in the Lowlands, it seems a fair inference that witches in Gaelic-speaking lands resembled their compatriots and confréres, the Gaelic druids, in working single-handed and in a comparatively small way, even opposing when necessary their fellow-workers in the same field, as well as the fairies. The difference between the Gaelic witches and those of England, Lowland Scotland, and most of the Continent thus finds a parallel in the difference between the Irish druids and those of South Britain and Gaul.[3]

The Manx witches, then, were-to some extent still are-workers of charms and spells and petty magic, operators with the dead hand or hand of glory and with the dëbris of graves, stickers of pins in, or dissolvers of, images of wax or clay, vendors and manipulators of magic herbs, casters of the evil eye on men, women and children, livestock, crops and dairy-stuff, skimmers of the dew and soil off their neighbours' lands or ceremonial tramplers thereonnot to specify a number of less typical ways of doing mischief.

In the same vein of inspiration from an infernal source, but used with a contrary effect, they could promote fertility in women and animals; increase the yields of crops, milk and butter, or transfer them to themselves or a client ; and fill the nets with fish. They supplied favourable winds [4] and protective amulets to seafarers, love charms and potions to both women and men, caused beneficial rains by their operations at wells, streams, and standing - stones, brought about cures by means of words written or spoken, by herbs, by pebbles, and by " fasting spittle."

These were, at least, some of their pretensions. They were prepared also to show or foretell future events to the laity ; but such inquiries were, and still are, more often carried out personally by the parties interested, by means of traditional formulas, and, usually, on certain days of the year. Some of these faishags have been described in Chapter IV.

It is scarcely necessary to add that a reputation for uncanny powers was very easily earned. In 1730 an inquiry was held by Bishop Wilson on the head of an allegation by Patrick Corlet that " he saw Bahee, the wife of John Kaighen, of Skeristal, on May Day early in the morning, in the fields and about the houses of her neighbours, in a suspicious manner, as if she were practising charms or sorcery, from which was conceived an evil opinion in that neighbourhood, which soon grew into a common fame thro' the Parish of her being guilty of Sorcery." No evidence was forthcoming. Bahee denied everything, and the Bishop acquitted her and made Patrick beg her pardon on his knees in Court.[5]

The protective measures taken against Manx witches have been almost as numerous as their methods of doing harm. Counter-spells were, I think, not much used, beyond " saying a good word "-a short prayer, that is, or a pious invocation-and keeping a Bible in a conspicuous place. Recourse was had rather to material objects, such as holed stones hung by the bed, the croph-bollan carried on the person, and home-made crosses of various substances, pre - eminently the kieran or mountain-ash, fastened up inside the house. Witchcraft, in its widest sense, was also repelled by encouraging certain plants, notably the house-leek, to grow outside the buildings, as near the doors as possible ; by the purification of places by fire ;[6] by the nailing-up of horse-shoes on doors ; by the killing of a black cock and carrying it bleeding about the farm ; by the wearing of amulets supplied or prescribed by another witch, a " wise man " or a " fairy doctor " ; by carrying a small quantity of salt or ashes in the pocket ; by dabbing a spot of soot with the tip of the forefinger on a baby's arm or a cow's udder.

Drawing blood from a witch was a more aggressive remedy against her machinations;[7] this cure may account for some of the many trifling "fines for drawing blood " entered at the end of the first Manorial Roll, or rent-roll for each parish, in which women were often sufferers at the hands of men and other women. Some also of the " blood-wipers " - i.e. blood-wites or compensations-noticeable in the records of courts held by the Bishops may be due to the same cause. A silver bullet was notoriously useful when the witch was seen in animal form. Dust taken from her (human) footprint or her threshold where her feet might reasonably be supposed to have recently trodden was applied to a bewitched animal. Intervolving patterns were scribbled in chalk or whiting about the doorstep after it had been washed, that the witch might be hypnotized by trying to trace them with her evil eyes. [8] Certain gestures were made and certain attitudes assumed in the witch's presence. Salt was sprinkled in, on, or around everything which was exposed to danger, particularly if it was given out of the house. Salt was also put into the churn when overlooking was suspected; or a piece of iron or a live ember was placed underneath. Spitting has always been accounted a mild prophylactic against witching in general ; " if it does no good it can do no harm," I have been told-a point on which opinions may differ. Years ago I used to be told that honeysuckle was powerful against witches, but that does not seem to be admitted now.

Detection, in doubtful cases, is said to have adopted the time-honoured method of ducking the suspect in a pool or marsh. The guilty floated, the innocent sank. Were the witches lighter and more buoyant than the laity because they had parted with their souls to the Devil ?

Footnotes

1 *Buitch* (Sc. Gaelic buidseacht) has supplanted the other, perhaps older, term *ben-obbee*, which may be rendered with strict literalness as " woman-of-the-doings," a definition whose ambiguity bears out the truism that any distinction between black and white in witchcraft, and perhaps in supernatural affairs generally, does not strike deep. Both kinds spring from a single source, the current from which can be coloured at will.

2 See *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology*, The Trial of Dame Alice Kyteler, etc.

3 This is the generally accepted opinion regarding the druids of the Gaelic-speaking countries, but it should be remarked that Professor W. J. Vv atson thinks " there is strong presumptive evidence that the Irish and Scottish druids formed an organized corporation." If so, it did not restrain them from antagonizing each other on behalf of their respective patrons. This is illustrated in detail in Irish romances.

4 This is the subject of what I take to be one of the earliest scraps of Manx folk-lore which have been recorded as such. It has been frequently quoted from Higden's 15th-century *Polychronicon*, lib. i., cap. xliv.

5 These Kaighens, by the way (though Bahee was probably not of their blood), were supposed to have owned a mermaid in the direct line of their descent, like the Hennessys of Ballinskelligs, Kerry, the Flaherties of Ballyferriter in the same county, and other better-known instances.

6 See Appendix I.

7 Conversely, but perhaps not unrelatedly, drawing blood from a woman was, in other countries, a rite in her initiation into witchcraft. In Northamptonshire, a woman bitten or scratched by a witch immediately became one herself. (Sternberg, *Dialect and Folk-lore of Northants*, (1851), page 147.)

8 These scribbles are the humble descendants of the interlaced patterns seen on Norse crosses, gravestones, swords, etc., and also found in countries bordering on the Mediterranean. A plaited-strapwork pattern, in relief, can be viewed on a midMinoan vase of circa 1900 B.C. in the Ashmolean Museum.

§3. Witchcraft in Manx Literature.

The Manx witches have not—in recent times and in still-living tradition, at any rate—been exponents of an organized pagan religion or diabolic ritual ; they have not gathered at agreed places to dance around and pay allegiance to a personal Devil and receive his instructions ; but within their limits, and diminished in numbers and power, they continue to function on the same lines as in past centuries. In England, likewise, this individualistic policy has outlasted the collectivism of the sufferers by fire, water and the gallows in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries.

It need not surprise us, therefore, that to enjoy in the 18th century the benefits of a partnership with Satan a native of the Island was obliged, or found it more convenient, to go abroad. Bishop Wilson, whose writings evince a keen interest and a lively faith in the supernatural in general and witchcraft in particular,[1] has left us details of a compact which was entered into by a Manxman with the Devil of East Ulster, who is presumably the same Devil as elsewhere, though perhaps a trifle more influential. The particulars are taken from " The Pocketbook of Bishop Wilson," extracts from which were published in *The Manx Note-Book*, No. 6. As this brief-lived periodical is not widely known or easily obtainable, and the sixth number is especially hard to come by, it will be convenient to reproduce here the passages in question.

" 1721, April 18.—Mr. Walker brought me two papers sent him by the Vicar of St. German. The first dated November 29th, 1720, the second December 12th, 1720. The substance—that John Curlitt, of Murlough, in the County of Down, in the parish of Kilmogh, did give himself body and soul to Satan the Devil, who is called Lucifer, after the term of 9 years, on condition that he wd. give him as much money during the time as he should please: on performance of which he did bind himself, &c. to the performance of the bargain-and promises to fight under his banner during ye said term, wch. if he do desert he leaveth himself to Satan's pleasure, and promises at the end of 9 years to go to himself.

1st paper—signed (with blood) sealed and delivered to the Devil. *John Curlet.*

2nd paper—signed (wt. blood) sealed and delivered in the presence of Jony Curlet and her family. *John Curlet*.

I sent for ye man and showed him ye papers wch. were found in his lodgings at Peel. Before he would read ym. he said they were none of his writing (though his hand was well-known) and very obstinately rejected all pains I took to get him out of the snare of ye Devil.

N.B. In one of ye papers (wch. I have by me) he had writ " In," but there stopt—the word not being proper for such a bargain.[2]

This man fled from Ireland on acct. of ye smuggling trade, and this place being too hot for him on ye acct. of this act, he took boat upon wch. the most dreadful storm arose, as soon as he was out of ye harbour—so yt he was given over for lost, but God is patient, and he is I hear yet alive.

N.B. I wrote to him in June, 1729, to put him in mind, &c."

In the latter half of 1729, therefore, John Curlet had both the Bishop and the Devil after his soul, but there is no record of the result.

It is easy to guess that " the Devil " in such compacts is standing in the shoes of a pagan deity when we recall the promise of a Norse king to give his life to Odin after ten years if the god would grant him victory over his foes. Here the Celt prefers money to glory.

This signing of articles to sail under the black flag is not typical of Manx witch and wizard lore. The Black Mass, as it was termed by a Manxman who described it in my hearing, certainly did appear to embody a vow of renunciation of Christianity and adherence to the Devil; but I have not met with a specific instance of its celebration in the Isle of Man. The formula used was little more than a mechanical reversal of orthodox forms of prayer and ritual, excepting that (so far as I could make out and recall afterwards, for the circumstances prevented my taking a written note at the time) it was performed wholly or in part in the bed of a stream ; until the water should flow backwards the terms of the vow were to hold good.

There are, however, some slight but cumulative bits of evidence which seem to suggest that the forerunners of the modern Manx witches were of the communal sort, that they flocked by air or otherwise to meet each other and a Satanic principal in conference, and to make merry after their kind. As witchcraft has for centuries exerted the strongest influence of all forms of superstition upon the lives of the people, and as this question of its collective character bears on its racial affinities, the pros and cons may be briefly stated.

To begin with the cons. Though place-names indicative of the former presence of the fairies are not unknown, there is none which implies a gathering-place of witches. None, I believe, of the Island's early social historians makes any allusion to sabbats ; in the case of Waldron especially the absence of everything relating to witches and their spells and charms is surprising, for the supernatural at large was his chief interest as a writer, and the Island must then have been a seething cauldron of that particular brew. Train confines himself to mentioning individual practices, and is silent on the subject of assemblies. The same is true of these writers' predecessors and successors, including Roeder and A. W. Moore. With the exception of the song " Berrey Dhone " the ballads printed by Moore contain no allusion to any kind of witchcraft. Moore has indeed reported in some detail an account of a young girl's initiation into the craft,[3] but the ceremony was conducted by her mother alone ; it was the passing on of the elder woman's personal accomplishments, not an official admittance into a corporation of witches. Moore has also a version of the story of the witch of Slieu Whallian which credits her with the power of flying by the aid of three pewter plates which had never been in use ; two were to be employed as wings and the third as a tail. Her intention, however, was to escape from punishment, not to travel to a sabbat. [4]

On the other hand, the evidence which points to organization and collective action among the Manx witches is only inferential, outside the covers of Kennish's volume of poems, to which I shall return.

Thus, an anecdote in the diary of Archdeacon Philpot implies that the witches of his time went about in companies at nightfall. They were believed to be unable to cross running water till nine o'clock struck, and equally unable to fly over it, seemingly, for they were held up at the bridges awaiting that hour.[5]

Again, among the *disjecta membra* of Berrey Dhone's doings in Maughold she is said to have been in the habit of sending the lesser witches, her subordinates, before her to open the side of Barrule, at some spot now forgotten, that she might enter the hill. This scrap of tradition clearly implies a belief that they were an organized body, and it may perhaps be inferred that they assembled habitually in the neighbourhood of North Barrule. Berrey's traditional title of " Queen of the Witches " or " Queen of the Maughold Witches " further suggests organization.

On page 264 of *A Manx Scrapbook* I have noted a feminine practice of dancing in procession round Cronk Sumark in Lezayre, for the purpose of getting husbands. On this subject a friend sends me the following note : "From rumours reported by my grandmother I gather that the ' Old Maids ' did not always expect a human husband in return for their efforts. The dance round the hill was-at any rate in some cases-regarded as the first step towards becoming a witch, and the 'husband' was the Devil according to some reports, and the Grey Man himself according to others. I think there was also the more innocent form of the practice which you mention, and probably the other is forgotten, or buried in the limbo of things which are better left unmentioned. There seems to be a queer mixture of good and bad tradition attaching to this hill. . . ." An enclosure on the skirt of Cronk Sumark is called the Old Maids' Walk, but one would expect this name, if it is correctly rendered (the same Manx word is used for both old maid and nun) to belong to their path or track round the hill. Perhaps this is a small section of it where the name has remained.[6]

In the *Chronicon Manniæ* a circumstantial account is inserted at the year 1158 of the threatened plundering of Kirk Maughold by a follower of Somerled, whose troops were then

encamped at Ramsey. (Why the church was being used as a safe-deposit is made clear by the previous entry, which states that Somerled had been devastating the Island.) Saint Maughold, who had then been dead for about five and a half centuries, appeared in a shining white toga to the intending robber on the eve of the day for which he had planned his deed, and after upbraiding him stabbed him thrice with his pastoral staff, so that he died early the following morning. Somerled and his adherents sailed away on the next tide, overawed by what the chronicler calls a miracle. The " miracle " is obviously capable of a matter-of-fact explanation ; otherwise this able-bodied spectre's behaviour would strongly resemble the doings of ghosts in the Icelandic sagas and Norse folk-tales. But the point I wish to suggest, without any desire to insist upon it, is that certain Maughold women, in their resolve to evoke the spirit of their saint to avert the sacrilege, made use of the ritual of co-operative witchcraft. Upon a rumour of the enemy's advance, *" Sexus infirmior dissolutis crinibus ejulantes diseurrebant circa parietes ecclesiæ magnis vocibus clamantes 'Ubi es modo Machute . . . ?* ' " " The weaker sex, with their hair unloosed, ran keening around the walls of the church, crying in loud voices, 'Where art thou now, O Maughold ? ' " etc. They continued to invoke him in passionate terms to arise from his tomb and defend both them and his own honour. The women, no doubt, intended simply the Christian practice of calling upon a saint for aid, and the exact words of the invocation are, perhaps, the writer's own ; nevertheless, the running round-sometimes dancing round or going on bare knees-in a circle in the course of magical operations, is a rite too familiar to need emphasizing, while crinibus dissolutis is an invariable characteristic of witches engaged in necromancy. The loosening of the hair was in itself regarded as an essential part of a conjuration.[7]

All these hints of the former existence of an underlying system do not suffice to prove that Manx witches were organized and convened, or that they entered into compacts with the Devil. It is in Kennish's poems [8] that we find what seems, on the face of it, to be positive and substantial evidence of the kind required. On page 49 *et seq.* he says that the witches flew in the shape of crows [9] at midnight on Old May Eve, to renew their allegiance to

" Beelzebub and his infernal crew,
To vent their spite upon the human race,
In some sequester'd, goblin-haunted place,
Where the Satanic council would appear
To give instructions for th' ensuing year,
And issue mandates of their dark intrigue
To those old witches serving in their league.",[10]

By Old Nick and his " suite " a Maughold witch named Old Kate was given discretion to

"initiate those upon probation,
And give each hag her proper station."

On one occasion it was her duty to appoint the learners to their respective posts for a combined effort, the object of which is not stated. On her own account Kate made dogfish tear nets, storms snap off masts and wreck boats ; but in the end she was shot in Glen Rushen with ammunition of solid silver while flying around the locality to make sure she was not being spied upon, before beginning to work her spells. Another witch, Kate's cousin, sold herself to the Devil by standing before " his council " and writing her Christian name and her lineage (doubtless in her own blood as was customary) and renouncing " Providence " in his favour.

It is noticeable that, according to Kennish, the witches were granted only one audience with Satan annually, namely, on May Eve, and he says nothing of orgies or dancing. His thrice-repeated mention of a council under the Devil's presidency, composed apparently not of the witches but of his subordinate devils, is unusual among records and legends of such matters; I am not sufficiently versed in the subject to say that it is unique. In a footnote to a passage concerning Old Kate's " candidates " Kennish says they were "those witches alluded to as being on probation, ere they were allowed to take high degrees in witchcraft." Kate evidently had charge of the local coven in South Maughold, even if she did not control a wider diocese, and was thus a successor of the celebrated Berrey Dhone. It is curious, by the way, that Kennish, who was born and bred in Berrey's own neighbourhood, has nothing to say about her. Perhaps she stood too far above the ranks of the ordinary human witches whose ways he was describing.

Though these traditions roughly sketched by the bard of Maughold may be taken as authentically Manx, it is possible that they were grafted from the Southern Scottish or the English growth upon an earlier stock of beliefs which were more typically Celtic. They may even have come in with the Scandinavian conquerors ; but the nocturnal gatherings, at the least, seem to belong rather to North Germany and Eastern Scandinavia, with which Man is supposed to have had little or no intercourse, her older runic inscriptions excepted. Folk-lore, however, creeps like oil, independently of racial contacts. Broadly speaking, men raise the Devil at home, women go out to meet him. This in a folk-lore sense, of course. But I do not gather from the general literature of the subject that it was only at the sabbats, with their concomitant revels, that women were granted the power of casting spells and working cures. It might conceivably be acquired in private, either from a diabolic source or from an older adept. This last has certainly been the usual method in the Isle of Man, but it may have replaced the Devil's personal instruction in which Bishop Wilson believed. In either case, it follows that Man, though enjoying its full share of female spell-binders, may never have possessed, as did Scotland, a Blocksberg of its own, or have been the scene of a Walpurgis Night, except possibly in imported and localized stories which soon perished in an uncongenial soil. Manx witches may never have ridden with Diana or danced round a throned Devil. If they did not, we should be able, by going far enough back, to dissociate completely the arts of *buitcheragh* from the nocturnal gatherings, and to see in them two originally independent conceptions which have, in most countries, become confused-confused both in traditions current among the people at large and in the confessions of witches under pressure of examination and fear of punishment. The testimony of the witches on this head is further discounted by their sex and small mental capacity, and by the leading nature of the questionnaires.

The minor devilries that make up most of the practice of the Manx witches are very like those of their sisters all over the world ; of the already printed specimens a moderate number will therefore suffice. The next batch we shall glance at, after those in Kennish, has a more recent literary source. Thomas Edward Brown, that unique medley of pantheist, decalogical moralist, classical scholar, rhapsodist, sentimentalist, humorist and mystic, a bundle of inconsistencies tied with the golden string of genius, whose poetic fire lit up his qualities in turn but never fused their unlikeness in a supreme achievement, was in his art as glowingly positive as the sun ; a darkness of a nether world was to him an unreal dream, an idle tale of the faithless. His interest lay in normal human passions, and by this much he comes short of showing a complete picture of the Manx country-folk. What he had to say of witchcraft he gathered into one narrative poem, " The Manx Witch," charged with the spirit of human malevolence, not with a sense of supernatural powers. Outside this, he tells us almost nothing

of the Island's superstitions. For him the efficacy of a spell is wholly derived from the sufferer's awareness of it. Pa'zon Gale's view of the matter is Parson Brown's view. People were possessed by devils in the Old Testament, right enough, but Christ sent them about their business once for all. And witches ? Just a disease like other diseases.

" Wutches ! They're tuk and done away with Altogether."

What people now call witches are

" Most of them wake in their intelleck ;
But others wicked ; and the faymale seek
In general, (the Pa'zon said),
Aye, wrong in the head, wrong in the head.
But mischievous enough was a wutch
Sartinly-and special for such
That believed in the lek.
But believe them not,
And where's their power ? it's gone like a shot.
It's you that gives them the power, he says,
By believing in all this wickedness."

Nevertheless, through the mouths of his characters he gives us some vivid descriptions of the ways of the witches, and in spite of his skepticism there is a passage where the atmosphere of passions merely human is suffused with a thicker darkness.

" This strong wutchin' is hard to clane
Urrov things ; it gets in the grain,
The very subjecs,[11] lek no bleachin' 'll fly it,
Nor nothin' else won't purify it.
It's all about in the fields and the bushes,
You'd think you could see it among the rushes,
Creepin', crawlin', like a blue mist,
Like the breath of some spir't.

I'm feeling it, what ? .
All round me, he says; it's cowld and it's hot,
And it's stickin' all over, like these webs, he says,
That's spun in the air."

For

"Misthriss Banks could do the jeel [12]
She was braggin' she could, and she'd take and kneel
On her bended knees, and she'd cuss-the baste !
Cuss the very skin off your face
But low, very low
A surt of a spittin'."

" She'd dart in her ear
Most despard cusses, navar fear,

And tellin' the charms she had on Jack
She could turn ev'ry bit of his body black
She could make him hate her-poor Nessy Brew !
Nothin' she couldn' and wouldn' do ! "

And Harry (from Dalby) is

" middlin' freckened she'd come
In some shape or other, like a corpse, by gum!
Or a modda-doo, goin' baw-wawin',
Or a tarroo-ushtey, or a muck-awin.
but the aunt [began] to rowl
Her eyes like wheels, and her body stretched
To the full of her height, and tuk and retched
All over the child, till she fell right down,
Like stiff, like dead.
and stooped lek to cover her,
And sthroogin' her theer, and breathin' over her
The witches breath, and hummin' charms
In her ear."

There are witches so case-hardened that they don't care even for a silver bullet, they are able to turn it aside. This feat was achieved by Misthriss Banks in the shape of a hare when Tom Baynes and Harry went hunting her. In " Job the White " (who was Mrs. Banks's son) Tom says of witches in general,

" Well, of course the boss
Is the Divil himself,"

and of Mrs. Banks in particular,

" the Divil was hers
Sure enough, and drilled with spurs
Of hell-fire ; and she hadn't no shame,
And up to every divil's game,
And had a way to 'tract ye though,
'Deed she had-as our as a crow, and well-spoken enough
When she liked."

Footnotes

1 A Pastoral Letter on the subject is cited in Stowell's *Life of Bishop Wilson*. After denouncing the fraudulent practices of the charmers, Wilson requests his clergy to represent to their flocks " the sin and the consequences of seeking to those wicked deceivers : That you make them sensible that all charms, let the words be good or bad, intelligible or meer jargon, are of the devil, with whom there is a compact implied by the very practice That it is a forsaking of God," etc. " Let not your people fancy that these practices are rather foolish than wicked. God has not taught us to think so ; for Exodus, xxxiv., 26, is an instance, amongst others, of God's disapproving such charms, that prohibition being directed against a charm used by the heathen to procure plenty. Besides, these beginnings may, if not timely discouraged, end in downright witchcraft."

2 Presumably the incongruous words Curlet was about to write were, " In the name of God the Father," etc.

3*Folk-lore*, vol. v.

4 *Manx Folk-lore*, page 6.

5 *Our Centenarian Grandfather*, edited by A. G. Bradley, page 180. Was it a similar disability to the above that caused the Northumbrian witches, when the Devil was to meet them and hear of their successes in spell-binding, to draw their " compasse " or protective circle " nigh to a bridg end " ? (Denhani Tracts, ii., 307.) Less understandable is the permission to cross water at 9 p.m. The Venerable Archdeacon's anecdote, however, though highly coloured, was probably based on a tradition; for in the notes to *Carmina Gadelica* (page 273) it is said that nine in the evening is, in the Scottish Isles, the unluckiest hour of the twenty-four in which to be born.

6 Girls of the Northern Isles ran three times each way round any large embedded stone when the first moon of wintef became visible, repeating a rhyme, in order to get a husband. (*Ork. and Shet. Old-lore Miscellany*, July, 1912, page 124.)

7 So does Horace (.*Satires*, i., 8) describe Canidia and Sagana in the Esquiline cemetery, with high-girt garments and streaming locks, howling their conjurations of the spirits of the dead from whom they required an answer. " Witches carry magic in their hair; therefore we cut it off." (Grimm, *Teut. Myth*., page 1624.) Even when they were merely flying to their reunions it was allowed to stream behind them, as innumerable pictures testify.

8 Published in 1844, but many of them were written a good deal earlier.

9 The Norse flavour of this is shared by the witches (*doiteagan*) of Mull, who, legend says, fly in the form of ravens, croak maledictions over ships, and raise tempests to destroy them. (*Norse Survivals in Celtic Belief,* page 92.) Dalyell, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, page 241, finds the same practice in a 17th-century trial ; to wit, " fleing lyk crawis, ravens, or uther foulis, about the schip as use is with witches," when they wish to sink. her. " O Scotchman," says the oldest poem in Manx, " the ravens croak above thy head !"

10 On this night, Old May Eve, the Manxmen brought their horses, cows, and even sheep, into the farmyards to enjoy the protection of the bolugh and other golden-hued flowers which were strewn about the place, and of the kieran-crosses tied to their tails-to the cows' tails, at any rate. If the witches could contrive to be-spell the cattle on that night, the housewife would find difficulty in making butter and cheese throughout the year ; even the rennet which would afterwards be made from the calf then unborn would be useless because tainted with the witches' spells. On the same evening the furze and other bushes in the neighbourhood of the farm-buildings were set on fire with torches carried by the younger men.

11 Substance.

12 Damage.

§ 4. Witchcraft in Manx Life.

'Deed she has, and 'deed she was ! It comes back to me, that caressing suavity, as a characteristic of the sisterhood. It is superficial, and never lulls one's uneasy sense of a deadly undercurrent belying the smooth surface. She may be ruddy or swarthy, beautiful or bearded, tall and slim or short and stuggagh, youngish, middle - aged or hag - like, well - to - do or blighted by extreme poverty, but she has a look. It is a look that runs in families, though the virus may sleep in individual members, or even through a whole generation.

The doings of one modern witch and another are like peas in a pod ; they differ in magnitude, not in kind. Partly because she has been dead for some halfdozen years I select from my memory Misthress X. In her lifetime she was reputed, not only in the glen where I knew her, but in her native district out of which she had been escorted by a band of pot-and-pan musicians, to possess the Eye or power of overlooking as well as the ability to work charms

of a noxious nature. Whatever her gifts in that line may have amounted to, she undoubtedly possessed a virulently slanderous tongue. In short, she was a *buitch*, a typical Manx witch of the smaller sort, though no one definitely gave her that title in public. When the washing was hanging out to dry, and she passed, it was pretty sure to rain if she had none of her own out; or if churning was in progress the butter would be strangely reluctant. For its reluctance on one such occasion I can vouch personally, if not for the cause. A friend of mine came on her, near his gate, in the act of brushing road-dust into a little bottle in the direction of her own house. She looked, it was surprising to hear, slightly foolish when discovered. During a period of feud with another family, when she feared the head of it was about to outbid her for her cottage and its two or three fields (as in truth he meditated doing), she dogged him up the hill one morning when he was driving out his calves, and called down, or up, every kind of trouble upon his cattle, not without appropriate gesticulations. One of the calves thereupon tumbled into a ditch and broke its back, and some other equally fatal mishap, I forget just what, befell another a couple of days later. While on professedly friendly terms with him a year or two afterwards, she inspected (not by invitation) and commended some pigs he had just bought. Following on her visit one of them fell sick and died the same week. Pigs, truly, have a way of dying without what seems sufficient cause in their owner's eyes, but in this case C. had no doubt about the cause, rightly or wrongly. She scattered herbs and flowers across the road in front of a trap containing members of another family which had incurred her enmity, and the driver remarked to the occupants, " Some more of her *buitcheragh*, " but I did not hear of any definite result from this. Greater success attended her machinations against the same family on another occasion, when a married member came home on an afternoon's visit. Said this lady to me " As I was sitting in the trap starting for home I suddenly felt a peculiar sensation all over me, as though all my strength was leaving me and I was going to faint. Y., [a sister] who was sitting next to me, cried out, ' Whatever is the matter ? ' because I looked so strange. I lifted up my head with an effort and saw Mrs. X. staring at me with a fixed and evil expression in her eyes that I shall never forget, and I couldn't look away from her for what seemed a long time, though it could not really have been more than a few moments. The trap was going at a walking pace on account of the bad road. At last we passed out of her range, and I was able to answer, ' Oh, it's that dreadful Mrs. X. !' and I felt a sense of relief, though far from being myself." Up to then the narrator had been in her usual fair state of health for some time, but shortly afterwards-not more than a week or two at the most-she developed a pneumonia with complications which amounted to a dangerous illness; she was confined to bed for many weeks, and had not fully recovered six months later.

More tales could be told of this old woman with the unpleasant gifts, but their details are such that they might lead to her identification, and although she is now dead her descendants are justly respected. In tacit excuse for her own use of charms she averred that she suffered from the evil spells of her enemies, but on her death-bed she expressed to a neighbour, a friend of mine, whom she believed she had injured, deep regret for her misdeeds.

Even a simple curse, or a wish that misfortune may happen, if it is fired at its object with a sufficient force of will and faith behind it, can hit hard, without the instrumentality of any material substance, such as writing or herbs, puppets of rags or clay, or the bodily superfluities of the victim, in which to incorporate its malevolence. A Manxwoman once confessed to me that the only wish for harm she ever deliberately and formally uttered took almost immediate effect. A man to whom she had been in the habit of wishing God-speed when he departed on a voyage had seriously offended her, and she wished him a bad journey.

He begged her to withdraw her words, but she refused. During the voyage he was prostrated by the first severe attack of the disease which eventually killed him.

The following anecdote is as typical as any of those previously given ; incidentally, it illustrates the savage grip of the peasants upon the land they live by. There was a feud of long standing between two families, the C.'s and the K.'s. By degrees the C.'s grew poor and were forced to sell some of their fields and partly support themselves by working for other people. Later-in the next generation, I think-one of the family who had saved up or inherited a little money tried to buy back one of their old fields, but the K.'s heard of his intention, and by means of some trick forestalled him. The C.'s were then living in a cottage close to the main road, and whenever any of the K.'s passed on their way to market, Mrs. C. stood at her door and put curses on them, to the specific effect that none of them should ever prosper or die in his or her own house. These predictions have, I am told, been fulfilled up to the present time ; the K, family has sunk into poverty, and all its representative members, at any rate, have died elsewhere than at home.

The possession of an Evil Eye is not confined to witches and wizards, or even to persons of a malevolent nature. One of the Island's loth-century bishops was firmly believed by the country-folks to have a glance which damaged their animals and produce. A lesser light of the Church brought a similar though milder reputation with him from a Northern parish to a Southern one not many years ago.

In Ballaugh Glen, about sixty-five years ago, a man's horse went sick and could not stand. The man made up his mind to find out who had overlooked it. He invited all his neighbours in turn to come and see what they could do for it. They all complied except Billy Killip, but none of them was any use. Billy was sent for again, wheedled, threatened ; but still he refused. " Come on now, man," said the farmer, " it'll do no harm if it does no good." So at last Billy came. He put his hand on the horse's bad leg, and it jumped to its feet, all right again. The farmer knew then who had done it, for the one that does it is the only one that can cure it. So an eye-witness of the affair tells me.

In Sulby Glen last year (1930) a woman put a hen to sit on a specially important clutch of eggs she had. Someone came and looked at them while the hen was away. The hen " took the corree " and would not sit again. This I hear from a man who knows the woman, the hen, the circumstances, and probably the " someone."

Anybody who cared to spend his time in collecting tales of the Eye could soon amass hundreds, mostly monotonously trivial but tending to merge into the larger schemes of witchcraft. The intentional use of a " bad eye " is, in fact, a species of *buitcheragh*.

CHAPTER V

WITCHCRAFT AND CHARMING

§ 5. Cures and Charms.

THE TEARES of BALLAWHANE.

Further instances of the darker side of Manx witchcraft will crop up when we come to consider the superstitions connected with animals and plants. Its brighter side is best seen in the charms and cures which, though performed or prescribed by men and women (mostly men) having the name of charmers, " fairy-doctors," and witches, display nothing of the diabolical.

Long before 1797, when Feltham wrote his Tour, the Teare family of Ballawhane in Andreas must have been noted for their skill in human and animal medicine. By degrees their willingness to practise it for their neighbours' benefit was given a supernatural colouring, until in the first half of the 19th century Charles Teare's adroitly spectacular use of the family recipes made him the most famous of all the Manx charmers. The confusion in the popular mind between witchcraft and fairydom is seen not only in his title of " fairy doctor," but in the name, still remembered, of his little plot where he grew his herbs, the " fairy garden," to which men came by stealth at night and rolled themselves on it before going to the fishing. One of Teare's elaborate cures is described in detail in Dr. Clague's *Manx Reminiscences*, page 127. In 1849 a woman of the same family performed a cure on the doctor himself (page 129). Teare concerned himself with the diseases of animals and crops more than with human ailments, and was typical of a multitude of his forgotten predecessors and humbler followers. With regard to the question of whence such powers are believed to emanate, it was commonly agreed that Teare possessed, like Ewan Christian of Lewaigue, a mysterious book of written charms and other magical formulas.[1] But we have Teare's statement on oath in the presence of a magistrate and of Train the historian who reports it in 1845, that he " never called evil spirits to his assistance." Nor, it is still said, would he on any account operate between midnight and cockcrow. He was, in short, like most men of his profession in the Isle of Man, a " brother of the light," not of the shadow. Nevertheless, the original prescriptions had resolved themselves, by degrees, into magical practices of the traditional sort.

A. W. Moore says that one of Teare's daughters was carrying on the family traditions at the time he was engaged on his Folk-lore of the Isle of Man. Another at least of Teare's children, known as Charley Chalse, inherited some of his skill. Mr. C. H. Kee, of Ramsey, when a boy of ten, enjoyed the privilege of witnessing Charley's curative powers in action, and I append his story as an illustration of the methods of these " charmers." Mr. Kee's elder brother returned from a sea-voyage to their home at Leodas, and found one of their cows sick. She had been standing for days refusing to eat or drink and taking no notice of anyone, but roaring all the time. The brother went, taking the little boy with him, to Teare at Gat y Whing near Ballawhane, and asked him to come at once. Teare was lying on his bed half drunk, and there was no food in the house. This was about 10 a.m. The brother gave Mrs. Teare two half-crowns to buy something to eat. Thereupon the fairy-doctor got up, went round to the back of the house, and cut with a knife some herbs from two or three different spots in the garden. They then went back to Leodas, Teare accompanying them. When Teare entered the cowhouse the cow turned her head round and looked at him. He rubbed the herbs along her back and threw them down before and beside her. She let out one final unearthly bellow and

quietened down. Then she began to eat and drink, and was all right afterwards. My informant does not remember that Teare spoke any words when applying the herbs ; if he did, it was under his breath.

This scion of the Ballawhane family was exceptional in being sometimes the worse for liquor, but he was seldom or never quite incapable. One night, however, he came out of the Friendship Inn at Ramsey, walked straight into the harbour, and was drowned.

Mrs Charley Chalse Gat y Whing

After his death his widow practised similar cures with success, and so did their crippled son, Danny. In 1904 T. E. Brown [sic Brown died 1897 ! - is 1894 meant ?] , then living in Ramsey, took Mr. George B. Cowen, the well-known Ramsey photographer, to Mrs. Charley Chalse's house at Gat y Whing and persuaded her to sit for him. It was much against her will, for she feared she was committing the sin of vanity, and quoted Scripture texts and the Commandment forbidding graven images. She had " navar been tuk before," and in all probability never was again. Her cottage, in front of which she sat for her portrait, was a good specimen of the type which succeeded the sod-houses-two rooms below and a loft to sleep in.

OTHER HUMAN AND ANIMAL CURES.

When a cure of any magnitude is undertaken by the charmer himself or herself, it is seldom that anyone else is permitted to see what goes on, as happened in the Leodas case just related. Personally, I can say no more than that I have known a sick cow to recover after having been thus treated. It is fairly common knowledge, however, that stroking with the hand or with plants and twigs forms part of the treatment, also making the sign of the cross and spitting. All charmers, professional and amateur, male and female, are expert pre-prandial expectorators. Something is said to be whispered into the animal's ear as well. Writers on folk-lore report that the patient immediately rises up whole, but from what I have heard I gather that some hours, up to as many as twentyfour, sometimes elapse before the desired result appears. It may not appear at all. Infallibility is not claimed. In serious cases the state of the tide has some obscure connexion with the question of success or failure, and with the length of time which must intervene between charm and cure.

To treat superficial human ailments of various kinds, from erysipelas to a stye in the eye, a stone was kept by some of the charmers. It was rubbed on the affected spot, while the Lord's Prayer or some less respectable formula was muttered in a tone which made it unintelligible to the sufferer. Sometimes a second or third treatment at the witch's house was necessary, but she was careful to repeat it at the same hour of the day exactly on each occasion. A man who was thus cured of a troublesome eye when a boy remembers having been kept waiting on his second visit until the finger of the clock marked the appointed moment.

The dealings between a witch and her client sometimes imply clairvoyance on her part. A man's cow was laid low by an obscure complaint. In despair he made the journey to Douglas, reinforced by a friend, with a view to getting advice from a certain wise woman. By way of testing her qualifications he began by asking her to tell them what they had come for. At this challenge she showed anger, or feigned it. Then she looked into a cup (contents unknown to my narrator, who was a brother of one of the men), and said: "You have come to me about a four-footed beast, but I cannot tell what kind of a beast it is." She further said, " One of you is short of a limb." One of the men had indeed lost an arm, but he was wearing a voluminous cloak to conceal the loss, for both he and his companion wished to remain unidentified. In the end she gave them a herb, with full directions how to use it. They took it back to the country, and, says my informant, it cured the cow.

Another instance of clairvoyance in witchcraft may be given here, although no cure was in question. A dog, valuable because well-trained and intelligent, disappeared from the Northside farm where he was employed, and nothing could be seen or heard of him. The farmer went to Nan Wade, the famous witch or wise woman, then living at Poortown near St. John's, for help in solving the mystery. After she had got a detailed description of the missing animal, but without making any inquiry as to the man's name or where he came from, she retired into the adjoining room for a short while. When she came out she said: " Your dog is not alive on the Island." He then asked her where it was, and whether it was alive or dead. She retired for a further space of time. On coming back she described the situation of his house with regard to its immediate surroundings, and told him to go back home and walk straight from the house to a river which ran, she said, on the West side of it, and then follow the current along the East bank. He went home and carried out her instructions, forcing his way for a hundred yards or more through brambles and undergrowth, until, on a ridge of gravel cast up by the stream, he found his dog lying dead under a bush. It had, he concluded, been killed by a neighbour with whom he was at loggerheads, and the body bidden there. The Rushen man (well known to me) who told me this story was of the opinion that Nan could not possibly have known by natural means who her visitor was or the situation of his farm, because the river in question was the Agneash river, which is ten or eleven miles from Nan's home by the nearest road and on the other side of the mountains. The querent had never had any dealings with her before.

A calf in Ballaugh Glen " took sick " and wouldn't feed. The family got a herb which had been recommended to them, boiled it, and mixed the liquor with milk. Then " the calf was put sitting on his behind " and the mixture poured down his throat. After that he was wanting more, and always throve from then on, says one of the family.

A man who lived by a certain railway-crossing in Lezayre parish had a sow which fell incurably sick. After trying several specifics of a veterinary nature he took advice from a charmer, and threw over the creature's back (possibly with a few well-chosen words mumbled *sotto voce*, as charms should be mumbled) a pinch of dust from the nearest cross-roads. Next morning the sow, which had previously refused to move, feed, or suckle her offspring, was walking about as usual. My informant asked me to say nothing about the transaction, which had happened not long before ; but that was twenty-five years ago. The commoner practice in such cases, it may be remarked, is to gather the dust or soil from the fresh track of the person suspected of the overlooking, or else from her threshold. But cross-roads, in addition to the sign they make, promise a fourfold chance of catching the required footprint.

In conformity with these customary measures, a dog in the South of the Island, which was apparently dying of some complaint undiagnosable and therefore the result of *buitcheragh*, was sprinkled with dust collected with a brush into a dollan from the suspected culprit's doorstep. The dog, like the sow, had lain for days almost without moving, but a few hours after the remedy had been applied he was working the sheep as cleverly as ever.

Perhaps an old-fashioned remedy for " anything wrong with a hoss's eye " may be mentioned among these charms for animals, although there is no magic in it now, whatever form of words may have been used to assist its action in the past. A certain long, narrow, whitish and bone-like shell from the sea - shore - probably the *shuggiloon* of *An Anglo-Manx Vocabulary* -is crushed fine and blown into the eye, the patient's consent and faith in the cure being dispensed with. The effect is to stimulate the lachrymal gland and wash out foreign matter ; possibly inflammation due to other causes might be relieved by this operation, possibly not. A similar cure is described, for cattle, in the *Gallovidian Encyclopedia*, where the shell is called a caum or clam. That this use of it in the Island may formerly have been credited with magical efficacy is suggested by " A Note on Lime from Seashells for Charms and Medical Purposes " in the *Folk-lore journal*, vol. iv., page 265. The contributor mentions having seen, especially in Co. Wexford, miniature limekilns in which sea-shells were burned ; there was a vague tradition that the ash had special virtue in charms.

A remedy which appears to be more than purely medical is mentioned in the course of a lengthy finding on a trial for witchcraft and sorcery held by an Archidiaconal Court.[2]John Corlet having threatened one of the accused persons, John Steon, that he would present him to the Great Enquest for his evil deeds, Steon replied that he might not be able to do so, for by then he might " be sick and have need to be washed in tobacco water and swine's broth." Of tobacco water as a cure I know nothing ; but swine's broth is used in the *Táin Bó Fraech*, an Irish tale of which the oldest extant MS. belongs to the 12th century. Fraech, who is human on one side only of his pedigree, is hurt in slaying a monster. King Aillell says " Let a broth be made for this man, namely, a broth of fresh bacon." The minced flesh of a heifer is to be added. Fraech is put into the broth and rubbed from head to foot ; fairy women then come and take him away. Next morning he returns healed.[3]

Quite in accordance with modern practice is the cure of an ox described in the same finding. Steon told Gilbert Moore that he would do him a mischief, and shortly afterwards Moore's ox was struck lame. When Moore sent for Steon the latter " spit upon the Ox and handled him and he recovered."'

A Report of the Malew Churchwardens in 1634 contains the following item : " Alsoe their is a Crosse in ye Mids of Foure Wayes within our P'ish at which we heare that some used to lay their sick Children to what purpose we know not."[4]

A truly heroic remedy was practised not long ago in the Isle of Man. A blacksmith named Molroy, whose smithy stood next to the present Grosvenor Hotel in Andreas village, cured cancer by applying a poultice made of a certain herb. After the treatment had been repeated a sufficient number of times he was able to draw out the cancer by the roots. Sufferers came to him from all over the Island, from Liverpool, and from still farther away. He would tell nobody the name of the herb, not even his own son, and the secret was lost when he died about thirty years ago [5]. [see 3rd Scrapbook]

We read, however, in *Carmina Gadelica* [6] of the eradication of superficial cancerous growths by means of the herb named *Curran cruaidh*, the hemlock - literally " hard carrot." " The old Highlanders used a plaster of hemlock for the extraction of cancer. The plaster was applied to the part affected. It is said to have been effective in the earlier stages of the disease, extracting the cancer with its innumerable roots and rootlets, and leaving a hollow where it had been. The process of extraction is said to have been extremely painful, the sound of the tearing out of the roots of the cancer being like the snapping of linen thread."

The flame-in-darkness of smithcraft has from remote ages picked it out against the obscure mass of less picturesque employments, and its initiates' mastery over metals which were in their time the precious metals has linked them with the subterranean powers. The smith-god Gobannon is invoked in an ancient Gaulish butter-charm, and St. Patrick's great protective incantation averts the enchantments of " women and smiths and druids "-the wizards, the witches, and the charcoal-blackened smelters and armourers of the forests and river-banks. Manx blacksmiths have not been free from suspicions of inspiration from an infernal source. In common with the witches some were able to take the hare-shape when they wished,[7] to cast spells, and to cure men and beasts. Bloodstopping was also one of their specialities.

BLOOD-STOPPING.

That a few men have the power of stopping the flow of blood-venous and arterial are not distinguished-from a wound, is firmly believed by many people, and circumstantial tales are told in testimony. It seems to be a male prerogative ; at all events, I have only once heard of its being done by a woman. Neither have I seen it done by either sex ; accounts which have reached me have, with one exception, been but hearsay and valueless as proofs, unless their profusion can be held to argue a basis of fact. I suspect that the basis of fact consists in the application of ribwort or some other astringent herb, notwithstanding that a form of words is held to be the essential feature of the cure and the presence of the charmer to be unnecessary. I have not heard the limit of his range ; perhaps it varies with the professional calibre of each individual.

Twenty years ago a case which dated to some years earlier was thus popularly related. A man employed by the Isle of Man Steampacket Company damaged himself severely during a voyage from Liverpool to Douglas ; " the blood was pouring from him " and could not be staunched. As soon as the steamer came alongside the pier a message was sent to a practitioner in the town ; he pronounced the charm in his own house, and the man on the steamer immediately ceased to bleed.

According to another story the benefit is not necessarily restricted to the human race. Half a dozen years ago, as I was passing a house in Dalby in the company of a local man, he pointed to the farmyard and said, " They were killing a pig there one time, and So-and-so came by, going up the road. He was a man that knew a lot of these old charms they're telling about, but too fond altogether of playing jokes on people. Well, he looked at the pig and said something under his breath, and the blood stopped running." [8] They had to send for him later, to take off the spell.

This seriously-told tale rather contradicts the belief that to work the charm demands an expenditure of nervous force which is not lightly incurred. " It takes it out of them terrible." It is also held that such gifts will be withdrawn if they are used frivolously, for they are bestowed by Providence on those who are worthy of them. Ewan Christian of Lewaigue in

Maughold, for example, an earnest and renowned lay-preacher who died nearly sixty years ago, is characteristically credited with this power to stop the flow of blood, together with other faculties equally mysterious in their workings and beneficial in their results. Another blood-charmer in the same parish was Jim Crellin of Ballaberna, son of Juan Richard. It is not many years since he died.

Faith on both sides is essential to success, also the sufferer's permission. A man I knew intimately for many years, and whose statements I learned to trust, told me an experience of his own which bears this out. When a boy he was constitutionally subject to bleeding from the nose. On one occasion of the kind his aunt offered to charm it for him, but he refused her aid, until he began to feel faint from loss of blood. This frightened him even more than the idea of being charmed, and he let her use the words. Nothing else was done, but the bleeding stopped at once.

More blood-stopping charms have been recorded than any others of the verbal kind. Several recorded in the early part of the 18th century can be found in Harrison's *Mona Miscellany*. All but one of the verbal charms given by Moore are the same as those in the Miscellany. Some of them appear again in Dr. Clague's *Manx Reminiscences*, together with others added from his own knowledge. One notices, by the way, that it is only the word-formulas that are meant to do good which have got into print.

CHARMS FOR THE FISHING.

As is proper to an occupation where so much depends on luck,fishing-boats and gear have always been conspicuously sensitive to both good and evil influences. The luck of a successful boat can be transferred to an unsuccessful one by secretly sweeping - at midnight for choice - dust from the doorstep of the fortunate skipper and shaking it over the unlucky nets the next time they are used, before they touch the water. Dust taken from the steps of a church was reckoned useful in the same way.

Certain herbs, culled by the witch in the correct manner, were boiled, and the resulting brewage sprinkled over the nets and about the boat to ensure good catches. Sometimes the herbs themselves were tied in an oilskin bag to the *mollag famman*, the tail-buoy of the net, or fastened inside the bow of the boat. These were well-known and popular practices, and it would not be safe to say that such charms are no longer used in cases of extreme necessity. If they are dead it is because the fishing is nearly dead. Of their former use I have heard one account which takes a humorous twist not characteristic of Manx superstitions.

One of the crews engaged in the Shetland fishing was having a very bad season, no luck at them at all. So they decided to take measures to remedy this state of affairs, and sent, by a boat going home from Lerwick, a message to Nan Wade to do her best for them, together with a fee of five shillings which they had raised among themselves-two half-crowns, for such charms should always be paid for in silver. She sent them a big bundle of herbs to be boiled and applied to the gear in the customary manner.[9] The next time they tried their luck they got such a catch that the nets broke under the weight of it, and they lost both fish and nets. The skipper pushed his cap back, scratched his head, spat over the side, and remarked ruefully, " Well, boys, I'm thinking if we'd sent her half as much it's like we'd have done a sight batthar till this ! " With half as many fish in the nets they would have saved both nets and fish.

On a similar occasion, but in home waters, a packet of herbs which had been tied to one of the nets disappeared. It was thought to have dropped off, and the youngest member of the crew (now the friend who told me the story) was sent to Nan's house for another lot. When she handed it to him she told him to tell the skipper that the first lot had been cut off and burned by one of the men. An unbeliever among them was suspected and accused. He stoutly denied it at first, but in the end admitted that he had done it.

Variations could be introduced into the boat-charm at the discretion of the witch. On the recommendation of Nan Wade the same boy was sent to buy three rows or papers of pins at the village shop. They were all to be pins that had never been used, and not one must be missing from the rows. These were boiled, together with herbs supplied by Nan, and the liquor sprinkled over the nets as usual, each man at the same time drinking a mouthful, and doubtless keeping a sharp lookout for pins.

Knots tied by a witch and given to seamen to evoke winds were as popular in the Isle of Man as in the rest of North-Western Europe. Within the last thirty years the three knots were tied by an old woman living in the Abbeylands of Kirk Patrick for a Peel fisherman, who wore the cord as a belt. The man is, I believe, still living. In making use of one of these charms, the third knot should never be loosened save in extreme need, and, especially, should never be cut with a knife. If it is untied with insufficient reason, or by a man other than its rightful owner, the consequent hurricane will bring grave disaster. In Brittany the three knots were once tied by a captured mermaid for her capturer.

SELF-HEALING BY CHARMS.

Besides the personal cures worked by the professionals, simple treatment for simple ailments could be administered to a patient by a friend or by himself. A common method of getting rid of a stye in the eye was to describe a circle round it lightly with a brass pin, saying words. To be effective this had to be done during the ebb of the tide. Round a blotch or a pimple on a baby's skin the mother would rub her " fasting spit " with the point of her forefinger three times, and finish by " signing " the spot or putting the dumb-cross on it " in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

For the tingling numbness called " pins and needles " the cure was likewise, and more appropriately, a slight pricking or scratching of the limb with a brass pin. The words accompanying the act have already been recorded as a nursery-rhyme :

" Ping, pang prash,
Cur yn cadley jiargan as my chass ! "

" Pin, pin of brass,
Send the blood-sleep out of my foot ! "

The stone-cure also could be worked by the patient on himself. If wind or pain in the intestines troubled a man he would go out of the house-or if he was out of doors he would look around him immediately the pain began-pick up the first white stone he saw, spit on the underside of it, and replace it exactly in the spot where it had been lying, with the same side downwards. The pain would soon stop. Superficial pains and aches of a slight nature were rubbed with the underside of a white stone, which was then put back on the ground. In both

methods the theory, consciously held or otherwise, was evidently that the pain should pass away into the earth.

An old remedy for worms which cannot be styled a charm is nonetheless evidently connected in people's minds with the traditional mode of expelling the small lizard called a " mancreeper " when it is supposed to have run down a human throat. The cure in both cases is to eat only well-salted food, or, better still, to swallow a quantity of unmixed salt, and then lean open-mouthed over water, especially water which is running audibly. The worms hear it, and cannot refrain from coming out to quench their thirst. So far as the mancreeper is concerned, there are many variants of the same " cure " in other countries.

LOVE-CHARMS.

A number of these have been published. I regret extremely that I have none to add, except an apparently unrecognized one in Rydings' *Manx Tales*, page 39. " And that Juan, who was sittin' nex' her, grabs her pockad-han'kecher, and winkin' at the fallar nex' him, rams it undhar his oxthar 'spectin' the gel would rag him for it, lek mos' gels would." The intention in such an act is more than merely to invite a pleasant scuffle. When the girl gets the handkerchief back it is supposed to carry with it a powerful sexual attraction, especially if the man can seize an opportunity to press it against her face.[10]

Footnotes

1 To the Carmarthenshire family known as the Physicians of Myddfai, which produced medical men for more than six centuries, the secrets of their inherited skill were, it is said, first revealed by a dead ancestress in the shape of a fairy.

The Highland family of MacBeth (anglicised Beaton) has had a similar record since the 14th century. The people attributed some of their wonderful cures to a compact with the Devil

2 *Manx Note Book*, No. 12, page 190. The contributor, R.B., gives its date as 1717. Moore, in reprinting it in his *Folk-lore*, page 81, dates it 1690; in quoting an item from it in *Yn Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 310, he dates it 1712.

3 Leahy, *Heroic Romances of Ireland*, ii., 41.

4 Delightfully discreet of the worthy Wardens, who must have known all about it.

5 Kneen, *Manx Place-names*, page 64.

6 I ought to say that I heard this recently from an unknown man met on a road in Maughold, and have not verified it. Vol, ii., page 266.

7 Blacksmiths in Abyssinia can turn themselves into hyenas and other animals. (Cox, *Introduction to Folk-lore*, page 88.)

8 A similar story is told by Moore in his *Folk-lore* (page 96) about a man near Laxey. Most of the instances of blood-stopping would no doubt be difficult to track down to their starting-point.

9 Doubtless the all-powerful vervaine was the principa ingredient.

10 An English charm of kindred nature is described in Brand's *Popular Antiquities*. Two pieces of lemon-peel carried under the armpits during the day and rubbed at night on the four bedposts will bring the future husband during sleep-that is to say, in a dream.

§ 6. Witchcraft and Fairydom.

Into the central sink of the larger witchcraft many foreign currents of belief and practice have been deflected. Though they have joined its muddy welter of obscenities, imbecilities and cruelties by force of attraction they do not wholly refuse their true character to analysis. But analysis of the contents of the quagmire was far from the intention of the ecclesiastical authorities in Britain and on the Continent. Their only purpose was to drain society of it, and of anything which seemed to them to resemble it ; and no doubt their sweeping condemnations increased the popular confusion of the various branches of superstition, especially confusion of the powers and practices of the witches with those of the fairies. Joan of Arc was as deeply implicated by her accusers with the fairies as she was with witchcraft ; no distinction was made between them, or between fairies and evil spirits. All were equally the Devil's offspring.

Curiously enough, it was after the Reformation that this ecclesiastical view of the matter began to prevail in Great Britain ; but it did not originate then. In 1438, for example, a Montacute woman was convicted for " fortune-telling and incantation." The fourth head of the accusation was " that she professed to cure children afflicted with violent [acris] spirits, which the common folk call Feyry, and that she had communication with these unclean spirits, and sought their advice whenever she pleased." She admitted no more than that she used prayer to cure people who came or sent to her. " The Bishop ordered her to recite these prayers before him in public ; in which he heard certain strange and unknown words which the woman was unable to explain."[1] These evil spirits called Feyry appear to have been what are otherwise known as witches' familiars. We find mention in Kennish's poems of exactly the same belief concerning a Manx witch.

In other parts of England, and more notably in Scotland, fairies, witches and spirits were similarly jumbled together. In Italy the word for a fairy, *fata*, is occasionally used to denote a witch of a certain rank or variety.

The early histories of the two realms, witchdom and fairydom, almost certainly share at least one important feature ; for there is little doubt that some of the pagan goddesses, Hecate, Diana, " Herodias," and others, who were adopted as queens or leaders of the post-pagan witches, were by a different course of descent diminished into fairy queens.[2] Reginald Scot in the 16th century alludes to them as " Fairies or Ladies " who headed the rout of witches. A French name of the same period for the witches' male leader or Devil —" Abiron "—strongly resembles that of the fairy king Oberon or Auberon.

Much could be adduced from literary sources to show that the territory of the witches and that of the fairies have a considerable stretch of boundary which is common to both, and which is sufficiently ill - defined - as boundaries are apt to be in the world of superstition - to render their respective jurisdictions confused and uncertain. But there is no question of any original identity of the two realms. It is merely that their spheres of influence intersect.

Some evidence of this confusion in Manx traditions may be of interest, even though the particulars are not peculiar to the Island. Thus, the circular and nocturnal dancing of the fairies, and their knowledge of spells and potions, resemble certain well-known activities of the witches. Night-riding of horses and tangling their manes, attributed to the fairies in Ireland and elsewhere, was in Man a pastime of the witches also. Waldron has the prior form of the superstition.[3] In entering the hill of North Barrule the witches were adopting a habit of

the fairies, elves and trolls. Witches, like fairies and other non-human beings, could change their shapes and dispense with a visible shape altogether. Both knew what was said about them in their corporeal absence. Both were able to fly, yet both found difficulty in crossing running water. Many of the herbs and other specifics used as antidotes to witchery were equally valid against the fairies; for the ill-will of both was liable to cause similar mischiefs, which could be averted by similar means. For example, the yellow flowers scattered to defeat the witches' aims on May Eve, St. John's Eve and November Eve (all important dates in the fairy calendar) were potent likewise against fairy interference. Both bodies were unusually busy on these nights ; if they were less active at Christmastide it may have been due to the greater concentration of the Christian faith on this old pagan festival than on the others. Waldron reports the seeing of a party of thirteen fairies, a number which was—in other countries at all events—that of a witches' coven.[4] The substitution of human by demonic infants is in Man the subject of many short fairy tales; in Scotland it has been popularly accounted for by the demand for babies to sacrifice to Satan at the witches' revels. A tumultuous attempt by fairies to drag her baby from the arms of a Glen May woman is exactly paralleled by two Scottish stories, except that in the latter versions the would-be kidnappers were notorious witches.[5]

Yet in the main the two corporations, though sharing or exchanging some of their characteristics, were kept separate in the people's minds. The witches were, and are, living human beings, the fairies were not.[6] Nowadays we do not hear much in the Isle of Man about the Devil in any capacity, except that he was, proverbially, beaten by Manachan in some affair which has been lost to history ; but that the witches' powers emanated from him as their master was acknowledged by Bishop Wilson when in 1741 he exhorted his clergy to denounce witchcraft as " a cursed practice carried on secretly by Satan and his instruments . . . to terrify those that practise it, and to confirm people's faith in God, against any hurt the Devil or his agents can do them." He further stigmatizes the witches as " wretched instruments of Satan."[7] The powers of the fairies, on the other hand, both for injury and for benefit, were their own, and subtler and more incalculable in their nature. When Kennish's Glen Rushen witch was scared by the shooting,[8] in hare-shape, of her cousin and crony Kate of Maughold, she decided to suspend her personal activities and make catspaws of the fairies to attain her ends. She harboured them, and sent them forth on her commissions. This was partly to ensure her own safety and partly because they were better at the flying and able to pass unseen through keyholes and crevices. She used them, in fact, as her " familiars," a class of being which does not appear in Manx oral tradition, so far as I am aware.[9]

Footnotes

1 *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, March, 1910, from Harl. MS. 6966, page 51.

2 Hence perhaps the tendency in many countries to call the fairies " good," however dangerous they were to meddle with ; they were the Good People, Good Neighbours, Daoine Maith, Bonnes Dames, Guten Holden, etc. They had been good—for their pagan worshippers.

3 Rhys, *Celtic Folk-lore*, page 194, notices a similar confusion in Monmouthshire of fairies and witches in this matter of using other people's horses without leave.

4 Waldron's fairies, however, were in hunting kit, one of them winding ;a horn ; while the twelve principal Norse gods were captained by Odin, the Wild Huntsman.

5 Dalyell, *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, page 584.

6 The 17th -century Scottish minister Kirk, who was in his lifetime and afterwards reckoned a first-rate authority on the fairies, thoroughly confounds them with both witches and spirits, so far as their deeds are a criterion. His book reads more like a treatise on witches than on fairies. The attribution of witch-practices to the fairies is noticeable throughout Scotland; even so far north as Westray the fairies used to steal milk from the cows.

7 Moore, *Folklore of the Isle of Man*, page 84.

8 By means of ammunition extemporized by the sportsman out of the silver studs or buttons on his wristbands, " the heirlooms of his granny." (*Mona's Isle*, page 56.) This detail of a story which must have been a memory of Kennish's youth was heard again by Roeder in Rushen nearly a hundred years later (see his *Manx Notes and Queries*, page 10), and I heard it half a dozen years ago in Patrick. In North Germany it is necessary that the silver so used is inherited (Thorpe, *Northern Myth*., iii., 27), and this may explain the persistence of what now appears to be a meaningless detail in the Manx story. Silver jacket-buttons are similarly turned into bullets for witches, in the shapes of a duck and a hare, in two Danish stories. (Thorpe, ii., 193.)

As a further illustration of the continuity of Insular folk-lore, and incidentally as a piece of testimony to the trustworthiness of Waldron as a recorder, it is notable that Train, writing about the same time as Kennish, reports hearing many of the wild legends related to Waldron upwards of a century earlier. (*History*, ii., 164.)

9 In view of the above and of the fairy reputation of the elder tree in the Isle of Man, it is interesting to read in Grimm (Tent. Myth., 1074) that the German witch gets her familiar spirits from underneath the elder, which is otherwise called " the elves' grave."

CHAPTER VI

THE FAIRIES THEMSELVES AND KINDRED SPIRITS

" And in this country, as you must have heard,
(Doubtless the rumour has far overpassed
The shores of Mannin), gossip is never weary
Of fairies and monsters lurking everywhere;
In this small Isle they're hourly spoken of
As being seen by us, both night and day."

(Translated from " Coontey Ghiare jeh Ellan Vannin," " A Short Account of the Isle of 'Man," Joseph Bridson, 1860.)

§1. The Fairy Faith.

OF fairy-lore, a subject which is at present a little out of fashion, the accepted theory seems to me satisfactory so far as it goes. According to this theory, three main sources, two of them supernatural and one historical or prehistoric, have combined to form the body of belief conveniently termed " the Fairy Faith." These three sources are : (a) Nature spirits ; (b) Souls of the dead (to which I would add " unborn souls," as being of the one substance) ; and (c) Extinct peoples.

(a) " The nature-spirits " or natural forces personified in human-like shapes are, with us, usually tiny because (it may be suggested) the energies of Nature in these latitudes are not large and violent. In China, for example, a land of cataclysmic floods, the destructive powers of rain-clouds and rivers are typified as monstrous dragons. The Scandinavian *alfar*, whose name answers to that of the English elves, were of ordinary human size.

(b) " Souls of the dead and unborn." We and They are to each other as walking shadows. They interfere with us chiefly in our hours of crisis, thrusting themselves into the apparent breaks of continuity in our existence. They have special power over women at marriage, over women and animals in parturition, and over their new-born offspring ; they are present and potent, consequently, at our births and deaths, our passing from the one world to the other. In like manner they are, at least in Celtic countries, active on November Eve, when the old year dies and the new is born; and equally active on May Eve, which marks the end of Winter and beginning of Spring, by the antique reckoning of Celtic-speaking humanity.

In illustration of the identity, in a folk-lore sense, of some kinds of fairies with the dead, a hundred tales could be quoted and a hundred observances and beliefs specified. The generalization quoted hereunder contains the germ of many of the Scandinavian beliefs that have impressed themselves on Manx superstition " In Iceland some families are said to have believed that after death they entered into a hill, which they accordingly worshipped. In this connexion ' elf ' is again used, and it seems reasonable to assume that, whatever other signification this word may have had later, it must also have meant the spirit of a dead man."1 The leaving of food at these hills or gravemounds late in the evening, is of course comparable with the Celtic custom of leaving out food for the fairies, the glaistig, and other dwellers in the wilderness.

Derived from the old Scandinavian conception of death (which, it scarcely need be said, was far from being exclusively Scandinavian), is the recently existing belief implied in an Orkney

expression for sickness" being in the hill." The idea is that the sufferer has been carried off and a changeling left in his place. " It is within the memory of men not yet qualified for old-age pensions that an old man dying in Rousay complained bitterly that ' George and Jean wadna' bring him cot o' the hill,' though he had described to them the very place where they would find him." Also, " there were two or three women in Rousay who 'had to do wi' ' the fairies, and when anyone was ill they were applied to that they might take them ' oot o' the hill ' " before it was too late.2

An even more remarkable illustration of the identity believed to exist between fairies and the dead is that a " fairy blast," dangerous to living human beings, was caused by the ashes of the dead returning through the air from foreign lands to the ancestral burial-places in Ireland. 3

Mention of kindred beliefs in the Isle of Man will be found in the following pages.

(c) Extinct races. The explanation of the fairies as a memory of human races which have died out or become absorbed is the easiest of the three contributory theories to understand and to handle, because it is the most concrete. In the Isle of Man the Finoderee also, though he differs from any kind of fairy, is best explained by this theory. No one can read the accounts of the relations between fairy and non-fairy people, Scottish accounts especially, without seeing that they depict two sets of human beings, alien to each other in many ways, mutually hostile sometimes, but both undeniably human.4

The gap between the present time and the time when remote places of shelter and souterrains were in human occupation is bridged by rapprochentents from both directions. In the first place, such sites have been occasionally re-occupied in recent days by the poorest class of people, especially wanderers and those wishing to conceal themselves. The folk-memory of " the fairies," the earliest occupants, was thus refreshed, and no doubt the old tales were enriched with the later details. " I heard from an elderly man of Danes having encamped on his grandmother's farm. Smoke was seen rising from an unfrequented spot, and when an uncle went to investigate the matter he found small huts with no doors, only a bundle of sticks laid across the entrance. In one of the huts he saw a pot boiling on the fire, and going forwards he began to stir the contents. Immediately a red-haired man and woman rushed in, they appeared angry at the intrusion, and when he went out threw a plate after him."5

There is a second way in which tales of the fairies have been kept in circulation as events of recent occurrence ; in some cases they may even have enjoyed an unbroken continuity from the period that saw the strange tribes in possession of the brochs, the hut-dwellings, the underground chambers. Stories told to children are imagined by them so vividly that when they grow old their dimming faculties are apt to see in them either their own personal experiences or at the least the experiences of those elders who first related them. We all know how an episode in our own infancy which is described to us in later childhood seems even in middle life to be a first-hand reminiscence, until reflection tells us that we could not possibly remember what happened to us at such an early age. And all collectors of folk-lore know how a story may be related in perfect good faith as a personal experience which is in fact common to nearly every country in Europe.

Actual happenings do at times lend themselves to fortifying the belief in fairies, with a curious faithfulness to accepted traditions. " At Airlie in Forfarshire a cottage was supposed

to be haunted because oatcakes baking on the hearthstone occasionally disappeared from sight in a mysterious manner. It was thought proper to pull down the cottage altogether, and then it was accidentally found out that the hearthstone was the roof-stone of an underground house, into which the cakes had fallen through a crevice."6 This disappearing of cakes from the hearthstone is a motive in more than one recorded fairy-tale.7 The Airlie affair belongs to the 18th century, and it is easy to imagine the local folks of that period (or a much later period, for that matter) maintaining that the fairies had indeed taken the cakes found mouldering below, and had extracted from them their essential food-qualities.

These two conceptions of the fairies, as the dead and as neighbours (neighbours who have, in fact, been a long time dead), naturally tend to merge into each other. In a Lewis tale of this class an unexpected change of standpoint is seen. An old fairy-man complains, in Gaelic verse, of the doings of the housewife who lives above his hillock-dwelling: " . . . The dumb woman who came from the land of the dead took the kettle . . . " " Dumb " signifies, probably, that she spoke a language unintelligible to him, that of another race ; in this case, according to the terms of the story, the race of the dead.

1 *Cambridge Medieval History*, ii., 488.

2 *Orkney and Shetland Old-Lore Miscellany*, April, 1909.

3 *Proceedings of the Ossianic Society*, ii., 94.

4 The comparatively late occupation of Western Scotland by the Gaels may explain why the Highland stories of this kind read the most freshly and realistically of any. Their " Good Neighbours " would be largely the Picts of those districts who were overcome and partly absorbed.

5 Anderson, *Ulster Folk-lore*, page 9. The " Danes " were probably tinkers, or similar vagabonds at odds with the law. In the West of England there is a tendency to attribute fairy doings to " the old Danes."

6 MacRitchie, *Celtic Review*, iv., 319.

7 See, for example, Nicolson's *Folk-Tales and Legends of Shetland*, page 43, where one of the hearthstones is slowly lifted and a hand from below snatches a cake.

CHAPTER VI

THE FAIRIES THEMSELVES AND KINDRED SPIRITS

§ 2. The Manx Fairies.

Whereas witchcraft is the most vigorous of the superstitions remaining to the Island, the belief in fairies has suffered greater decay than any other article of the old creed, and I fear I have little to add to the minute and localized fragments of their racial history already noted in *A Manx Scrapbook.*

Yet although they now exist only as a memory, it is for many people a memory of something which was real, and was by no means a delusion of the weakminded. I met a native lately who had retired to his remote birthplace after nearly fifty years of sea-faring and sea-fishing, a man of unquestionable earnestness and sincerity like most elderly Manxmen of his class and calling, and a preacher of the Gospel, who was occupying his days of leisure with the Bible, the newspapers, and " the wireless." He warned me gravely that " it won't do to run away with the idea that there were no such things as fairies." (I had no intention of doing so, but a silence which can be construed as politely skeptical sometimes stimulates the desire to convince, and I scented a story or two.) He might never have seen any himself, maybe, but there had been enough of them round about there one time. A friend used to be telling him he went early one morning to a quarry in a field yonder (which bordered the Southern village over one of whose low slate walls we were leaning in the rain to talk), and this man came across two of Them. Little fellows they were, between two and three feet high ; they were wearing red caps, and they ran away when they saw he was looking at them.1 That's what he was tellin', anyway. No, he had seen none himself at all, not that he could be sure of. This was our first meeting, and in his future dissertations on religion, British politics and local affairs something to my purpose would probably have escaped him; but before I could go to Cregneish again I heard he was dead.

FAIRY ANIMALS.

Those red caps remind me that red, and even blue,2 was preferred by the small Manx fairies to green in their attire, and this is specially true of the fairy animals, which copied their masters in wearing crimson headgear. Roeder has reported a fairy dog thus ornamented, and I am inclined to think I was wrong in suggesting that the " red hat " observed on a fairy pig near Peel was in reality a pair of red ears.3 Possessors of red hair of a certain shade were favoured by the fairies, and their own hair was often seen to be of that colour when they took human shape. The lucky fairy lamb which occasionally appeared among the flocks to the advantage of flockmasters had a fleece which was wholly or partly red. One day, about twenty-five or thirty years ago, Mrs. S., who lived at the top of Close Clarke, Malew, went as usual to look after her sheep, which happened to be in the steep brook-side field containing Chibbert y Wirra, the holy well of Saint Mary. Running amongst them she saw a strange lamb wearing a little red saddle and having a red bridle about its head and face. She incautiously stretched out her hand to lay hold of it, but it sprang from her and vanished. If she had touched it, she said afterwards, she would have had a " poor arm " —withered or paralyzed arm. She was not an habitual seer, and this unique experience remained an indelible impression until her dying hour. She then spoke of seeing lambs around her, and a little lamb in particular which was playing about and underneath her bed. Whether this was the fairy lamb again or was a vision resulting from her lifelong affection for her flock, I

cannot say. She died in a physical condition which is commonly understood to be the result of *buitcheyagh* —bewitching.4

The luck brought by the Manx fairy lamb is understood to have operated chiefly on the health and fertility of the sheep ; but the saddle and bridle in the foregoing instance strongly suggest that the fairies rode it. In an old Italian legend a similar luck-bringer inspires the artist Giotto and guides him to success and fame. There are gaps in the story as related by Leland (more simply than was his wont) in his Legends of Florence, and its affinities lie as much with the Irish conception of the Lhiannanshee as with the Manx fairy lamb.

" Giotto was a shepherd, and every day when he went forth to pasture his herd there was one little lamb who always kept near him, and appeared to be longing to talk to him like a Christian.5 Now this lamb always lay down on a certain stone which was fast in the ground ; and Giotto, who loved the lamb, to please it lay down also on the same stone. After a short time the lamb died, and when dying, said :,—

Giotto, be not astonished
That thus I speak to thee;
I have such love for thee
Wherever thou shalt go
I will follow thee always
In the form of a fairy,
And through my favour
Thou shalt become a famous sculptor
And a noted artist.'6

And so it came to pass that Giotto was an able sculptor by the aid of the lamb, and all that he did was due to the lamb which helped him.7 And when he died, the spirit of the lamb remained in the form of a folletto, or fairy, in the campanile, and it is still often seen there, always with the spirit of Giotto. Even in their death their souls could not be separate."

This incomplete but suggestive legend may perhaps be viewed as a transmutation of a more naturalistic tale about Giotto's boyhood. His father owned many sheep, and it was the boy's task to tend them on the Apennine hill-side. To pass the time he used to draw their outlines on a rock or flagstone with a pointed pebble. The scratchings caught the eye of Cimabue and led to his patronage. That one of these little images should come to life in the ferment of Italian folk-belief would not be incredible.

It may be suggested that the material basis of the Manx fairy-lamb superstition is to be found in an occasional throw-back to the ancient reddish-brown loaghtyn breed of sheep. But there is more in it than that. The Scottish Highlanders had their " Wild Calf " which haunted the oldest byres only. It was never seen, as the lamb was, but was heard lowing at midnight. If it could be gripped in the dark the goodman was thenceforward wonderfully successful with his stock.8 Here we come round to another Manx animal-apparition-one, however, that is not lucky to meet-the black calf, or something like a calf, without a head and having a chain about it which jingles. In the lower part of Glen May a girl who went beyond the " street " one dark evening saw it hanging about the gateway. It jumped across the lane into the deep place below the waterfall, making a rattling noise, and she never did any good after, with the fright she got. Another girl saw one at the Folly, between Castletown and Ballasalla, a spot where many other queer things have been seen and heard.

The lucky lamb, again, may be recognized in a passage contributed by W. H. D. Rouse to vol. xii. of *Folk-lore* from a fragment of Accius's " Atreus." King Atreus of Mycenæ mourns for a lamb, conspicuous among the flocks for its golden fleece, a heavenly prodigy which guarantees (or sustains) the stability of his kingdom, and which Thyestes thought it worth his while to run off with.

Fairies keep all the domestic animals except cats and fowls, and cats they steal, in Denmark. Is this because cats and fowls came into Europe later than dogs, cattle, horses, sheep and pigs? Hen-eggs and their shells, so useful to witches, have always thoroughly mystified the minds of fairy changelings, no matter how long their memories, and although demon cats and witch-cats are plentiful, a fairy cat is a creature I have never heard of. It is acknowledged that a cat has better vision than the rest of the animals for wraiths, ghosts, and other essences of the duskbetter even than the horse-and this gift of hers may have some connexion with the Manx belief that the cat was the only member of the family whose presence was tolerated by the fairies when they came into the kitchen at night. She saw them better because she had more affinity with them, perhaps.

Fairy horses were often merely the stems of the cushag or ragweed temporarily transformed.9 Red-eared fairy cows came up out of the sea. The little white fairy dog with something red about his head heralded the approach of his owners, especially when they wanted to come indoors for shelter on a wild winter night. He may have been one of them in that serviceable shape.

NAMES FOR THE FAIRIES.

The Irish expressions " the Gentry " and " the Gentle Folk " were not bestowed on the Manx fairies as a body, or at least they have not survived ; neither has any other title which might testify to their physical or social superiority. They were the *sleih beggey*, " the little folk "-the right sort for such a little island. Another colloquial name was *mooinjer veggey*, " the little people " or " kindred." These were translated into the dialect as " the Li'l Fallas," and varied with " the Crowd," " the Mob," or " Themselves." " Them's that's in " covers the fairies and other supernatural beings of the better sort. All these terms, both the English and the Manx, were substitutions ; caution forbade the everyday use of the right name. None of them is likely to be heard now, because the fear has vanished with the faith, and " the feeries " are spoken of without periphrasis. But in place-names, which presumably date some centuries back, both *shee* and *ferrish* are found. The Manx must have adopted the English word " fairies " for use in the singular number, and *ferrishyn* is at the least a double plural. This borrowed word ousted the earlier *shee* in ordinary usage, but shee has survived, alongside of *ferrish* and *ferrishyn*, in at least one place-name. In plant-names, on the other hand, we find *ferrish* or *ferrishyn* invariably, from which it may be argued that one or two of the fairy places got their names long before the fairy herbs got theirs. Plant-names are more liable to change than place-names, but it is difficult to believe that in so many of the former the older word *shee* was replaced by *ferrish*. Must we therefore conclude that, although magical and curative properties were doubtless attributed to these herbs before Manx existed as a distinct language, their connexions with the fairies were an imported tradition ?

FAIRY PERSONAL-NAMES.

The leaders of the English, Welsh and Irish fairy communities are known to legend by personal names. Irish fairy kings and queens had each his or her own territory, and there are

traces of similar limitations in Wales ; but hardly any names of individuals have survived in the Isle of Man. The Manxman has forgotten the names of his fairy aristocracy. Kelly's definition, however, of the older word *shee* (ignored by Cregeen) as " spirits," and of *lhiannan-shee* as " an attendant spirit," not " fairy," suggest that Manx fairydom was formerly understood to include the tall and stately beings of the ancient Irish tradition as well as the lively little elves. Were the latter rather the *ferrishyn* ? At all events, with the exception of Mab, it is the personages of more than human stature and majesty who are sometimes , distinguished in other countries by names of their own.

In the Isle of Man, Daniel Dixon, who was met with high up in Glen Aldyn, was a little fellow,10 but perhaps he was joking when he said he was the fairy king, or he may have had his reasons for giving a false name when interrogated. Hom Mooar, " Big Tom," of the Fairy Hill in Rushen, was sometimes called a fairy musician but more often a *glashtyn*. Fenoderee is not exactly a fairy, and Teeval, though a genuine fairy princess, appears to have reached Insular folk-lore through a literary channel. In one of the charms in the *Mona Miscellany* (page 178) occurs the expression *fynn firrinagh* for an entity of an uncertain nature. There is a twofold reminder here, firstly of the name of Finvarra, the ruler of the Connaught fairies, and secondly of that of his fellow-chieftain in Co. Limerick, Donn Firrinagh. The translation renders *fynn* as " sprite." In " Finvarra " it means a chief. Is there in either case a clue to the meaning of the Fin- or Fenin " Fenoderee " ?

Of all the probable substitutions of Christian for pagan names in Manx charms the most tantalizing occur in a blood-stopping charm: " Va Philip Yee ray shee as Bahee yn ven echey," " Philip was king of the fairies and Bahee was his wife."11Bahee promises abundance all round as though she were a right fairy queen.

FAIRY PLACE-NAMES.

Hereunder follows a list of place-names derived from the Fairy-faith, the definition of " fairy " being stretched wide enough to squeeze in a few Giants, a couple of Fenoderees, some Horses and Bulls of the Water, a pack of Black Dogs, several Hags and White Ladies, Mermen of sea and land, and a Mermaid, together with sundry nondescript Bugganes : the whole mustered from *A Manx Scrapbook*, where the personal characters of many are delineated : and reinforced by five able-bodied recruits from another camp.12

(a) The Fairies Themselves.

Chibber Nerrish (probably for *C. ny Fherrish*), " Well of the Fairy " ; near the Whallag, Malew.

Close ny Ferrishyn, " Enclosure of the Fairies " ; near Gob y Volley, Lezayre. In it is

Chibber my Ferrishyn, " Well of the Fairies."

Loghan y Ferrish, " Lakelet of the Fairy"; Ballacrye, Ballaugh. (J. J. K.)

Paal ny Ferrish, " Fold of the Fairy " ; in Lonan. (J. J. K.)

Thie Ferrishyn, " The Fairies' House." This name was sometimes given to what was supposed to have been the first house built in a village, its oldest house, because the fairies were always

fondest of it and more given to " taking " there than in any other building. A family I know, who lived for some time in the *thie ferrishyn* of a Lonan village, saw nothing uncanny ; but one or more of its members used to hear unaccountable sounds, and sometimes music, before learning the name and reputation of the cottage. There is no stream near which might explain these sounds.

A farmhouse a little West of the Skyhill ridge, referred to on page 235 within, and on page 252 of the first *Scrapbook*, was probably a *thie ferrishyn*.

Cronk ny Shee, " Hill of the Fairy, or Fairies," on Windy Common, Malew. A cairn which contained a cist.

Mount Sion or *Sinai*, Slieu Whallian, Patrick. " Mount Sion " is, in Ireland, often a version of Cnoc Sithean, " Fairy Hill." See Wood-Martin, *Elder Faiths*, ii., 19 ; Power, *Place-names of Decies*, page xi. ; Joyce, *Irish Place-names*, i., 41, 180.

Purt y Shee (commonly " Port-e-Chee") *shee* here may or may not mean the fairies.

The Fairy Bridge, near Oakhill, Braddan. This name used to be applied occasionally to Ballalonna Bridge, Malew, also, for sufficient reasons. There is another somewhere in Rushen.

The Fairy Broogh, Glen May, Patrick.

The Fairy Glen, near Ramsey. This and the next name may be modern.

The Fairy Glen, Lag Mooar, Patrick.

The Fairy Ground, Douglas Quay. Perhaps for " Fair-ground."

The Fairy Hill, Ballastole, Maughold. The Fairy Hill, near Orrisdale, Malew.

The Fairy Hill (alias Cronk ny Mooar, Cronk Howe Mooar, etc.), near Kirk Christ, Rushen. Professor Herdman, in an article in the Liverpool Daily, Post of 5th February, 1912, stated that local tradition has it that King Reginald II. of Man was buried in the Fairy Hill at Port Erin, in his armour, standing erect. " Local tradition " was suspiciously definite in its details, and it may be surmised that local antiquaries are ultimately responsible for the " King Reginald II." at the least. Herdman found no signs of burial there, and thought the mound had been used as a fort on which guns may have been mounted.

The Fairy Hole (otherwise The Hall), a marine cave in the Sugarloaf, Rushen.

The Fairy Orchard, Ballaquinney, Marown. Site of a keeill. This is a plantation (of larches), so the name may have been given comparatively recently. " Orchard " in Man, by the way, does not necessarily imply apple-trees.

The Fairy Place, a fishing-ground off Peel.

The Fairy Well, at the Fairy Bridge, near Oakhill, Braddan.

The Fairy Well, on Slieu Rea, Lonan.

(b) Others than the Fairies.

The Buggane, Andreas and German. Two mounds, both no doubt haunted formerly.

Creg Towl y Buggane, " Hole-of-the-Buggane Rock " ; near Laxey.

Calliagh ny Groamagh, " Hag of the Gloominess " ; near Ballagilbert, Malew.

Creg ny Caillee, " Rock of the Hag " ; on Shen Curn, Ballaugh. (J. J. K.)

Gob ny Callee, " Point of the Hag " or " Point of the landing-place " ; on the Barony shore, Maughold.

The Fenoderee's Hole, Glen Rushen, Patrick. The Fenoderee's Path, or Track, at the head of the East Baldwin valley, Braddan.

Claghyn y Foawr, " Stones of the Giant," Cronk y Chuill, Lonan.

Creg y Foawr, " Rock of the Giant," Glen Mona, Maughold.

The Giant's Quoits, monoliths at the Four Roads, Port St. Mary.

The Giant's Foot, at the head of Glion Mooar, Michael.

Lhiaght y Foawr, " The Giant's Grave " ; a mound at Peel Castle.

Lhiaght y Foawr, a passage-grave, Kew, German.

Meir ny Foawr, " The Giant's Fingers " ; boulders on Lhergydhoo, German.

Meir ny Foawyr, "The Giants' Fingers"; boulders at the Dhoon Bay, Maughold.

Lady Port, German. Probably so-named for the same reason as the next item.

Lady's Strand, or Port Lady, Michael. Haunted by a White Lady. (J. J. K.)

The White Lady, monoliths at Glencrutchery in Conchan, Ballafreer in Marown, and elsewhere.

The Nikkesen's Pool, in the Groudle river, Conchan, and in the Awin Ruy, Lonan. The Nikkesen was a longshore Merman.

Lhiondaig Pohllinagh, " Greensward of the Merman " ; in Glen Wither on the Rushen coast. His basking-place.

Chibber Yoan Mooiy, " Sea-Joan's Well " ; near the Chasms, Rushen. Probably a name for the Mermaid.

Ghaw ny Spyrryd, " Creek of the Spirit " ; near the Sound, Rushen. What kind of spirit is uncertain, but perhaps the howling Buggane who was known to reside there.

Trowl-pot or *Trowly-pots*, near Ballamooar, Patrick. Probably the Norse troll.

(c) Supernatural Animals.

Lhing y Glashtyn, " River-pool of the Glashtyn " ; Ballacorris, Lezayre (J. J. K.), and Glen Mona, Maughold.

The Terroo, a field on Baldromma, Maughold, may imply the former presence of a Tarroo-ushtey, Water-bull. So also may

Pooyl Therriu, " Bulls' Pool," and possibly *Magher yn Tharroo*, " Field of the Bull." Both these are taken from Moore's *Manx Place-names*.

The word *moddey*, " dog," undoubtedly signifies in some place-names the supernatural Black Dog, *Moddey Dhoo*. The wolf must have become extinct in Man at such a remote period that it need not be considered in connexion with extant place-names. Among the spots likely to have been named for their being haunted by a Black Dog are :-

Cooill y Voddey, " Nook of the Dog " ; intack in Lezayre Curragh.

Ellan y Voddey, " Island of the Dog " ; intack in Ballaugh Curragh.

Jeeg y Voddey, "Water-ditch of the Dog," adjoining W. Nappin, Ballaugh.

Lag y Voddey, " Hollow of the Dog " ; adjacent to Perwick, Rushen.

Loghan y Voddey, " Lakelet of the Dog " ; a half quarterland in Jurby.

Moaney ny Moddey, " Turf-ground of the Dogs " ; intack in Malew.

The above are old documentary names in MSS. except *Lag y Voddey*, which I picked up lately. There are also the well-known *Cronk y Voddey*, German, " Hill of the Dog," and *Mwyllin y Voddey*, Lezayre, now called the Dog Mills. Moddey in certain other place-names leaves room for a good deal of doubt as to its interpretation. If Ballamodda, Malew, was formerly *Balnemoddey*, as it is in the Parish Register, 1649, it is a plural (correctly spelt -*moddee*), hence it is unlikely to refer to the Moddey Dhoo, which is always seen and spoken of in the singular.

Recently I have been told (once spontaneously and in a second case in reply to a question) that the adjective spelt *feeyney* in place-names and pronounced " *feenyeh*," which is usually translated " wine," really means " the fairies, or something to do with them." It is not generally understood in that sense nowadays, but " wine " is not satisfactory in any of the cases in which *feeyney* occurs, except perhaps *Traie Feeyney*, which might allude to smuggling; in *Traie ny Feeyney* an article is placed before a word purporting to be an adjective. Already recorded in the first *Scrapbook* are :

Chibbbey Feeyney, situated in Lheeaney Feeyney, Ballaeree, Bride. Chibber Feeyney, Glen Roy, Lonan. Cooill ny Feeyney, Clenaigue, Maughold. Gayer Feeyney, West of Greeba, German. Tyaie Feeyney, Ballaquane, Patrick.

To these must be added

Cleigh Feeyney, Patrick (O.S. map). There is some doubt about this name. Moore (*Place-names*, page 166) says " formerly Cleigh Cheeiney," which he translates " Green Hedge " ; Kneen (*Place-names*, page 336) says " Cleigh Fainey, ' Ring Fence'" is correct, according to the late Wm. Cashen.

Cronk Feeyney, field on Mwyllin y Quinney, Santon. Gayer Feeyney, triangular piece of rough ground at junction of Foxdale - Castletown road and Bayr Ballaquane, below North Star Inn, Malew. The fairies once punished a man for cutting down their trees here.

Traie ny Feeyney, Maughold (O.S. map). Probably many more instances exist or have existed among field-names.

FAIRY PLANT-NAMES.

The only plant-names I have been able to gather from printed and verbal sources, which contain a distinct reference to the fairies, are :-

Bee feyrish, " Fairy food " ; the wall-pennywort.

Blaa ferrish, " Fairy flower " ; the red campion (lychnis diuyna). Also known as

Pinkyn ferrish, " Fairy pinks."

Cleaysh hramman, " Ears of the elder-tree " ; a fungus which was understood to be or to resemble fairies' ears. It was used as a poultice for the reduction of enlarged glands.

Lieen ny ferrishyn, " Flax of the fairies " ; the greater stitchwort (stellaria holostea).

Mairanyn ferrish, " Fairy thimbles " ; the harebell (campanula rotundifolia). This is a name for the foxglove in the Scottish Highlands. In Man the flower is known also as

Clag ferrish, " Fairy bell."

" Fairy bottles," " Fairy shoelaces," and " Fairy purses " are various kinds of seaweed. A blue " fairy flower," now unknown by a more definite name but having magical properties, grew near the Cairn on Laxey Head, whence it was introduced at a spot in the Laggan Agneash in Laxey Valley. In both places it has since been exterminated by its admirers.

FAIRIES AND MORTALS.

The airs of two or three Manx songs have the name of being " fairy tunes " which were overheard in lonely places, especially on the banks of streams. Some account of the most famous of these songs will be found in the chapter devoted to Songs and Rhymes. Other melodies from the Middle-world are " Tappaghyn Jiargey " (The Red Topknots), and the "

Arrane Ghelby " (The Dalby Song). The link with the supernatural is furnished by the words in the cases of " The Song of the Travelling Fairies," of " Arrane ny Ferrishyn " or " y Fenoderee " (The Song of the Fairies or of the Fenoderee), of " Yn Folder Gastey " (The Nimble Mower), of a portion of the Hop-to-Naa song, and of the remainder of " Arrane y Glashtyn " if we had it.

Drinking-cups have been won from feasting fairies, and most of them lost again-perhaps all. Girls have been rapt from this world by their fairy lovers, and men have entered the hills for various reasons ; some have returned, but not many. Between a breath and a breath a mortal might spend a hundred years in fairyland, or after a lightning-glimpse of fairyland he might come back a hundred years later. Or again, his body might live in this world and his soul in the other. Something of this last idea has survived the general belief in fairies, and certain abnormal states of mind are still liable to be interpreted, though rarely and privately, as a lapsing into the fairy sphere of influence. So too was phthisis, a century ago.

A Lezayre girl was seen to be failing in health ; she grew thin and listless, and lost her interest in the ordinary affairs of life. Her mother accused her of having dealings with a spirit or with the fairies, but she would not confess to it. So from time to time the mother watched by night in the churchyard, and on other nights in the woods above the church, and eventually she saw her daughter dancing with the fairies among the trees on the hill-side. She did not dare to go near them, but next morning she gave her a good beating. Not long afterwards the girl died. She was, of course, supposed to have joined the fairies for good.

It was seldom the adventurer or captive or victim returned, once he or she was taken, though he might be sighted in the midst of a troop of shadows or phantoms met with in haunted places-ghostly rabbles which were not clearly distinguished in people's minds from the fairies. Quite healthy and normal human beings might find themselves mixed up with " the Crowd " if they were not careful to keep their stables well protected with the usual horse-shoes, kieran crosses and so forth. For a horse accustomed to being borrowed at night by the fairies might at any time be attracted by the fairy hunt as irresistibly as the Cabbyl-ushtey was attracted by water. To catch a note of the fairy horn, or the tinkle of silver bridle-bells, or the twitter of a silver whistle, or the yelping and whining of the little red-eared, skewbald hounds, or to get a glimpse of the green and scarlet cavaliers themselves winding along far up the ferny glen-side, was enough to make him prick up his ears and gallop away with his reluctant rider to join them.

The fairies were most frequently to be seen, heard and smelt (" a stale, sour smell ") in the lonely upper parts of glens, where the bright slender rivers tumble swiftly and musically from pool to pool and only a narrow strip of sky shines down between the high green banks; but they dwelt also on bare, dry hill-tops where dancing could be enjoyed, and in places where green burial-mounds swell from the level sward so delightful for dancing. There was hardly any kind of place indeed, by all accounts, which they would not transfigure with their presence if the humour took them. At night, from a long way off, they could be seen trooping or dancing on " the tops "-the high places-as drifts of sparks or little flickering flames.

Glen Aldyn has always enjoyed the honourable reputation of being " a great place for fairies and the like," and the clearest and fullest first-hand account of a view of them which has come my way belongs to that once-beautiful glen. It is the only experience among those I am relating that occurred to a person other than Manx by descent, for the narrator of the following story is a Cestrian in business in Liverpool. I have known him well for the last 35

years. About 34 years ago, when he was 23, at zo a.m. of a brilliantly sunny summer morning he was walking on the short grass below the debris at the West side of the Glen Aldyn slate-quarries, which lie far above the inhabited part of the Glen. Here he came to a sudden stop to avoid stepping on something alive between two and three yards in front of him. It was five little creatures dancing in a ring, hand in hand. They stood a foot or 18 inches high and were greyish in colour like fungus, their bodies seeming to be swollen in front, their limbs and eyes clearly distinguishable, and their heads moving as they danced. He speaks of them as " little men " because they gave him a strong impression of being of the male sex. After he had watched them for a short time they vanished from his sight and there was nothing there but the grass. Thinking his eyes or brain might have played him a trick, he went to the same spot a couple of mornings later, and saw them again, just as before. He has hardly ever spoken of it to anyone, for fear of ridicule. These are the only times he has seen anything of the sort which is called supernatural, and the first of the two encounters made him, he says, feel a bit queer.

Sometimes fairies were heard without being seen. It is remembered in Arystine that a former tenant of Ballakillowey used to hear them making music in the kitchen after he had gone to bed, and one of them was playing on a trumpet. Before Castle Mona at Douglas was turned into an hotel nearly zoo years ago there was a small garden in front of it. This is now a bare, open space, but a tradition still survives that the fairies used to be heard singing there in the days when it was a garden.

Old water-mills were dear to the fairies, and Scroundal Mill in Ballaugh, now abandoned to silence and decay, was "full of them" during its busy lifetime, a former miller's last surviving daughter has told me. Her father called her and another child down to the bottom of their garden one summer evening to see the fairies walking on the wall of a tholtan that was there. She saw their legs stalking along the top of the wall. On account of the leaves she couldn't see their bodies very well at all, but judged they would be about two feet high altogether. Having volunteered this estimate, she added that when They were seen or heard near the house they were a sign of death or trouble of some sort, and it always came true.

During an unusually busy season it was decided to run the old mill at Kiondroghad by night as well as by day. This innovation was strongly resented by its invisible occupants. The human tenants, two brothers, went in one evening before retiring to see that all was working smoothly; as they opened the door a broom which was standing against the wall shot across the floor in front of their faces and hit the opposite wall with a brisk smack. Slightly mystified, but suspecting a practical joke by some of the village lads, they called to their dog, and with his help searched the mill thoroughly, both the floors and the cellar. The result was that they found nobody. They then went home and told their mother what had happened. She advised them to stop the mill at once, lock the door, and leave everything alone for three days. This they did, and nothing unusual was seen or heard when they restarted it ; but they never ran the mill at night again.

Manx fairies were often described as being quite tiny, less than a foot high. This follows the English tradition as we have it in Shakespeare, Drayton, Herrick and other Elizabethan and Jacobean writers. True, fairies could assume any size and shape that suited their convenience, but whence arose the now prevailing belief that they were so small ? Part of the explanation may be that supernatural beings were deemed to differ so entirely from humanity that their stature must necessarily be unlike ours, and in the course of time they became exaggerated into rockhurling giants and diminished into fairies of these absurd proportions. Apart from

mere size, it is not always easy to feel sure what people meant by " the fairies," " the mermaid," and other terms for supernatural beings. So far as the Manx tales are concerned, I have no doubt that gambolling rabbits, flocks of birds feeding, and other natural phenomena, were sometimes mistaken for fairies by men whose sight was permanently or temporarily impaired. Yet could not the fairies turn themselves into such commonplace spectacles in a flash, if they thought they were seen and didn't wish to be ? Of course they could ! And the question is further obscured by the fact that Manx supernaturals of all kinds dreaded artificial light, for which reason a rushlight or a night-light was kept burning all night in some houses.

Certain of the manners and customs of the Insular fairies have been recorded by Roeder and Moore so far as the surviving material permitted ; valuable glimpses of an earlier state of the belief are afforded by Waldron, and by the historians who touched on such matters incidentally.[13] The local branch of the clan did most of the things that foreign fairies did, with a marked tendency to mimic human activities. They loved to imitate us in our tasks after these were finished for the day. There used to be a small boatbuilding yard in the East corner of Perwick shore, at the foot of the brooghs. Here the boss would often say to his men towards dusk, " Now, boys, it's time to put away your tools, They'll be wantin' to get to work ! "

Notably missing from the accounts are tales of the " Good Neighbour " type so numerous in Scotland and other countries, where human dwellings are sometimes found to have been built over the fairy dwellings, especially when the latter occupy the interior of a hillock. The only Manx specimen of this type I can find is one rescued in Lezayre by Roeder in 1883.[14] The fairies' fostering of human children and the visits of these in later life to their old nurses, a not uncommon feature of the older Irish tales, is likewise unknown in the Isle of Man. Only hinted at is the use by fairies of an unknown language and their childlike attempts to express themselves in the speech of their supplanters.

If these " neighbourly " characteristics had ever been conspicuous in Manx folk-lore a few stories of the sort must surely have survived, and it may be possible to draw some conclusions from their absence. Their frequency in other lands and the striking realism of their details have been justly accounted for by supposing that in them two of the main sources of the fairy tradition have coalesced : the indigenous inhabitants and the souls of the dead. It may be gathered that for some reason there was in Man little or no ordinary communication between the two living races, perhaps because the older one was few in number and dwelt far apart. Indeed, the idea of their remoteness survived into the 18th century, when Waldron wrote that " As they confidently assert that the first Inhabitants of their Island were Fairies, so do they maintain that these little People have still their residence among them. They call them the good People, and say they live in Wilds and Forests, and on the Mountains." This belief is well illustrated in the two following reminiscences, which I owe to Miss Mona Douglas.

The last sod-house on the Island is said to have been one which stood on Skyhill and was inhabited by a family named Ribbat (Redpath) ; it was built on the spot " where the oldest farm on the North used to be." Miss Douglas's nurse had it from her own father that " the fairies used to have a regular city just about there, and ones had seen it all lit up at night when they would be passing."

The same tradition in greater detail, as heard about twenty-five years ago, I will give in Miss Douglas's own words. " Johnny Callow, an old grave-digger of Lezayre, often used to tell me when I was small about a man who was crossing Skyhill one night, and was ' took ' and lost

his way. At last he saw a great house before him, bigger than Ballakillingan, all lighted up and the door open, and ones going in and out. He never thought where he was or what it would be, but went on towards it, and inside there were scores of grand ladies and gentlemen in silks and satins and velvet, and all the tables and chairs and dishes were of gold and silver, shining fit to blind you, and there was mortal grand food and drink all set out ready. He walked right in, but none of the ones that was there seemed to see him, so he thought he would take shelter and watch them for a bit, and he did, sitting all quiet in a corner. But he was tired coming in off the mountains after his day's work, and before long he went to sleep, and when he woke up in the morning house and people and all was gone, and he was lying in the fern up on top of Skyall. I don't remember whether Johnny said he had eaten of their food or not." Most likely not, or he would have been drawn into their world, for a while at least. R. J. Kelly, who published his *Sketches in the Isle of Man* in 1844, relates a tradition attached to the same place which anticipates this man's adventure.

SUNDRY SCRAPS OF FAIRY LORE.

One factor in their ability to make themselves known to us was the place; they might become visible to one who inadvertently walked over a potent herb or a hollowness beneath the surface of the ground. Another factor was the *hour*; the phase and position of the moon and the state of the tide promoted or prevented a rapport between them and human beings. The temporary mental vacuity called "thinking of nothing," or an unintentional posture or gesture or sign-all these helped to put us into touch with them.

A fairy in human semblance could be scented for what he or she really was by the preterhuman brilliance of the eyes, or by odd-coloured or oddlooking eyes.

They conferred the power of charming and curing on some of those who were away with them, and allowed them, after their return to this world, to pass their knowledge on to others. Perhaps not all the fairies were good-tempered at all times, any more than we are ; but much, I feel sure, has been put down to their discredit which was really due to the indifference of non-human Nature towards the well-being of humanity, and to our own ill-will towards one another. The chief risk lay in injuring or offending them unintentionally.

More is known of their personal natures and habits, but it is not necessary to tell all. Of the Dead and of the Gods, say classical writers, we should speak nothing but what is good. Neither should we of the fairies, flocking or lonely.

Farewell now-or *au revoir* ?-to the gregarious little fairies, who lived and moved as unanimously as a flock of starlings or a shoal of herring. Let us call up instead some individual members of their community; those who, though seen in many places and by many persons, always walked alone.

THE LHIANNAN-SHEE.

Of the Island's individual fairies the best known-unless we call the Fenoderee a fairy-is the Lhiannan-shee. She is, in the literal meaning of her name, a fairy follower or sweetheart, but she stands apart from the main body of the fairy inhabitants and is capable of a more purely psychological explanation. No superstitious conception, however, is wholly unmixed with another, and more than a single quality is covered by this name. On one side of her traditional character she is the " succuba " to whom so much attention was paid in medieval times, and

thereby she belongs to the subject of demoniality ; she is the modern form of the classical *lamiae* and of the ancient Gaulish *bandusiae*, and Merlin's Nimiie or Vivien was one of her manifestations. Thus she is for the Manxman, In the opposite extreme, she has in some parts of Ireland added to her nature the compensating qualities of a guardian spirit and inspiring genius of poets and musicians ; this is also the motive of the Italian legend concerning Giotto and his fairy lamb, previously cited. Though called a fairy she comes, in her character of lamia, from the land of the dead ; hence in the main she is a vampirish kind of creature who attaches herself to a man, in the form of a woman invisible to all save himself, whom eventually, if he yields to her seductions, she ruins, body and soul. Among the Manx people, in whose ethos the artistic impulse is weak, this is her normal character. Dr. Kelly in his Dictionary compiled about the junction of the 18th and 19th centuries, translates " Lhiannan-shee " as " a genius, a sprite or spirit, a familiar spirit, a guardian angel " ; but he adds significantly, " I have seen this word used for nightmare."[15] It is still occasionally used as an affectionate reproof to a small child which clings to its mother's skirt and demands an undue share of attention ; just as an urchin who is restless or mischievous out of the ordinary is " a little ferrish."

The Lhiannan-shee often haunt the vicinity of wells and pools, whence they attach themselves temporarily or permanently to the men of their choice. There was one at the Chibber Roon in Marown, another at the Fairy Well near Tholt y Holt in Lonan, and something of the kind at some roadside water near Glen May. Of the male of the species we hear very little, doubtless because he does not take up his residence with his human bride but carries her away privately to his own country. His presence, however, may be detected in a beautified tale related by Train [16] which pretends to be an explanation of the Fenoderee: a fairy-man woos a Glen Aldyn girl under the Blue Tree there.

Roeder has a story about a Lhiannan-shee that a man picked up at a dance at Ballahick, Malew, and could never shake off,[17] and half a dozen other tales of the same kind, all belonging to the South..[18] One I heard last year needs a good deal of filling in to make it satisfying. A former tenant of a Port St. Mary farm -remotely former, be it understood, though the narrator's tone, as is often the case, was that of a man going back a dozen years or so-was haunted by one of these instruments of darkness. " The people could hear it noising when all was quiet." The man thought it might be one of the women he employed on the farm, and he dismissed one after another in the hope of getting rid of the culprit, but this did him no good, she kept on bothering him. Some men from another part of the Island stopped in the house and watched for her, but they could do no good for him either. He died in the end.[18]

The man's suspicion of his female servants belongs to the belief that strong passions focussed by a strong will can send out an influence in a more or less material form on an errand of hatred, envy, or love. An account of such a sending at Dalby has been given in the previous volume ; another, having a different motive, will be found herein on page 99.

In a Manx legend which has already seen publicity the Lhiannan-shee has developed from a personal familiar into a family guardian. She has, in fact, come to resemble the fairy being of the Highlands called a Glaistig, who " was held to have been a woman of honourable position, a former mistress of the household, the interests of the tenants of which she now attended to."[19] With her in the Manx instance was associated a glass tumbler with flutings

resembling fingers and a scroll-work ornamentation, called the Fairy Cup of Ballafletcher because it pertained to the old manor-house of that name. In honour of the good fairy it was ceremonially drained at Christmas (and Easter ?) by the head of the Fletcher family. It was a fetish or palladium ; whoever should break it would be haunted by the Lhiannan who was hidden in it or to whom it belonged, and the family fortunes would be similarly shattered.

Kirby, (Ballafletcher) House, A hundred years ago
[from Ashe 1825]

Of the two themes here interwoven, the fairy and the drinking-glass, the former is the more promising from a folk-lore point of view. The original cup was probably brought into the Island by the branch of the Lancashire Fletchers who took possession of Kirby and renamed it Ballafletcher at some date previous to 1580. By what whim or accident it became associated with a fairy can now only be guessed at ; Manx legends of cups won from the fairies, and English traditions such as that of the Luck of Edenhall, were perhaps jointly responsible. But it may be remarked that the house occupied by the Fletchers adjoined the great boulders of the prehistoric " fort " on the river-bank, and stood within a stone's-throw of the old Kirk Braddan graveyard and the Chibber Niglus.[20] Wherever the Fletchers' invisible châtelaine came from, she had so far departed from her presumable native character of lamia or seductive vampire that Dr. Oswald, whose account of the matter is much the earliest, calls her " the Lhiannan-shee of the hearth and domain."[21]

Perhaps it would be juster to her memory to think of her as a family banshee ; if so, she was the only Manx one I have heard of. The Fletchers died out a hundred and fifty years ago, and the house she presided over, having been superseded by one built by Colonel Wilkes in another part of the estate in 1820, has long been merely a site ; so the influence of this particular Lhiannan-shee and the virtue of her cup may be deemed to have perished equally.

To sum up the several accounts of the vessel's wanderings: after leaving its home at Ballafletcher it passed from the Fletchers to the Caesars, from them to the Bacons, from them to Colonel Wilkes, from him to Lady Buchan, and from her to the Bacons again.[22] Reasons other than superstitious ones can doubtless be found to explain the dying out of the three Manx families which in turn held the cup. When in recent years the Bacons became extinct in the male line it passed into other hands. Whether what is now called the Fairy Cup of Ballafletcher is the original one or one substituted at a date unknown is open to doubt.[23]

OTHER FAIRY-WOMEN.

In looking through Mr. J. J. Kneen's *Place-names of the Isle of Man* [24] from my own standpoint I notice brief allusions, in the parishes of German and Michael, to two strange visitors called White Ladies, who came out of the sea and married local farmers. (Probably one and the same story has been attributed to the two places concerned, which bear similar names and lie near each other.) Here a term which belongs to certain land-dwelling

apparitions has been given by the country-folk to what must originally have been either mermaids or " seal-women." A seal-woman is no spectre, like a White Lady, and no fairy, like a Lhiannan-shee. While she is living ashore she makes a good wife, mother and housekeeper, and is indistinguishable from ordinary women except by a few inconspicuous physical and mental peculiarities. Chief among these are : a slight web between fingers and toes, roughness of palms and soles, slow breathing, fondness for the shore and sea-bathing, expertness in swimming and diving, instinctive knowledge of the state of the tide at any moment and foreknowledge of storms, foreknowledge in general and understanding of secret matters, with skill in medicine and cures, especially in midwifery. She is said to be very fruitful herself. But sooner or later in her married life she comes across the seal's skin, or the mermaid's scaly sheath, which her husband has hidden away from her, and she cannot resist the temptation to try it on again. The feel of it awakens the sea sleeping in her blood, the ties of earth cannot hold her and she is drawn back reluctantly, or she forgets them and goes with delight. Why her partner does not burn or otherwise get rid of the covefifig to prevent her deserting him and the children is a mystery ; but among the dozens of tales of sea-women and bird-women which I have met with, in one only is the transforming integument destroyed, and even then without the desired effect.[25] Are we to understand what is never stated or hinted that the skin is magically indestructible ?

Quite different from these are the White Ladies. Those whose home is in the mountains are the fierce hag-like creatures called Calliaghs ; they are eminently unweddable. The White Ladies of the lower levels are milder phantoms, who flit silken-robed and silkenfooted at twilight among the trees in the grounds of large houses, or by wells and rivers like the Lhiannanshee. There is one at the Folly near Castletown, another in the glen above Lewaigue farmhouse in Maughold (where there is also a small waterfall). The latter lady is still being seen by various people, and " no one will pass that little glen at midnight," says a local unbeliever.

For some reason I do not clearly understand, monoliths on farms are in a few cases called " the White Lady " and kept carefully whitewashed. Ballafreer, Marown, has one ; another near Glencrutchery House stands on the site of an old chapel and burial-ground. Does the implicit argument run somehow on these lines : Calliaghs and Hags were associated in many lands with dolmens and standing-stones, often they lived inside them when at home. When seen abroad they usually wore flowing white garments, and so did the Banshee always. (One of Roeder's informants called the Lhiannan-shee a " white woman.") Hence the White Lady in stone is the spectral lady of the estate turned into stone, like the Irish Vera and her cow, the Cailleach of the Hag's Head in Clare, and others all over the kingdom. Was there ever one at Ballafletcher who became associated with the Fairy Cup belonging to that house ?

Unlike all the other Manx supernaturals, the White Lady has no specific name in the vernacular. There is the Ben Varrey of the tidal waters, and the Shen Ven of Carraghyn, but I have never heard of a Ben Vane or a Ben-ainshter Vane.

Nor is the Banshee native to the Isle, at least not under that title. Train supposes that her duties were performed by the Dooinney Oie, the Nightman, because he " appeared only to give monitions of future events to particular persons."[26] But this is a misconception of his office, which, as Train himself more credibly tells us a little later, was confined to foreboding storms to the Islanders in their beds.

The spectral ladies are not always white. A friend whose visionary experiences do not amount to more than three or four in a lifetime of over forty years was coming from Lewaigue farm one evening, before it was quite dark. Just after he had turned into the main thoroughfare which connects Ramsey with Laxey and Douglas he saw the greyish form of a woman, accompanied by a low-bodied, shaggy dog like a poodle or spaniel, coming down the road towards him. Before they reached him the dog ran across the road and disappeared where the ditch lay, and the woman seemed to melt into the hedge on the opposite side. He went up to the spot, but found no opening through which she could have passed, nor any possible way out for the dog on the other side, where there was no aperture except a pipe from which water was trickling. He wondered vaguely what had become of them. A minute or two later the bus for which he was waiting came round the bend, and he got in. As soon as he sat down he suddenly felt a strange weakness, and began to tremble all over. Only then did he realize that he had seen something spectral. The effects remained with him for the rest of the evening. When I chanced to be passing the place in his company a few months later he showed me where he had first seen the lady and her dog, and where they had vanished. Other tales are told, and unfavourable opinions expressed, of this locality.

Footnotes

1 If you saw them before they saw you, they couldn't do you any harm ; they would disappear. But it wasn't often you could see them first, for they knew when you were coming.

2 Henry Jenkinson, who walked about the Island a good deal when collecting his materials was told by a farmer's wife that her mother " always maintained that she had once actually seen the fairies, and described them as young girls, with scaly, fish-like hands and blue dresses." (*Guide to the Isle of Man*, 1874, page 75.) A blue-clad fairy man was described to Roeder also.

3*A Manx Scrapbook*, page 486. Nevertheless, ears have always been a strong point of the entire fairy creation--men, women, children and domestic animals. In Roeder's *Manx Notes and Queries*, page 55, a Glenchass woman saw some bigheaded fairies whose ears were the size and shape of wine-bottles, and that was a sight for sore eyes.

There is said to be a kind of fairies having feathers growing in their hair.

4 What is sent by a spell can be removed by a spell ; in Germany lice are charmed away by magicians. Grimm, *Teut. Myth*., page 1068, note 3, mentions the trial of a family who had inherited this power. The lice in such cases are the " spontaneously germinated " kind.

5 Shepherds in Roumania, as in other countries, often lead lonely lives. " They will choose out a favourite lamb as a companion, and talk to it and console it, so as to console themselves." (Princess Bibesco, *Isvor*, page 112.)

6 I have made a trifling correction in the translation of the verses.

7 Of the painter, sculptor and architect Giotto a critic (Basil de Selincourt) says, " His is a genius that we dare not limit by our preconceptions of what is possible to man ; we can but admit in humility that what is conceivable by us falls short of what was practicable to him."

8 MacDougall, *Folk Tales*, page 291.

9 Henderson, *Folk-lore of the Northern Counties*, page 227, says that if a Manxman happens to tread on the herb luss-ny-chiolg [belly-wort, hypericuin perforatum], a fairy horse rises out of the earth to carry him about all night. Moore (*Folk-lore*, page 152) reproduces Henderson's words.

10 Moore, *Manx Folk-lore*, page 2.

11 *Mona Miscellany*, page 178. Shee is there translated " peace," but " fairies " seems preferable.

12 Mr. J. J. Kneen's Place-names of the Isle of Man.

13 Robertson (Tour, 1790 was told that the Manx fairies were of two kinds: the playful and benignant, and the sullen and vindictive. The former were gay and beautiful, but shy; the second kind dwelt apart from the others and from men, " in clouds, on mountains, in fogs, on the hideous precipice, or in the caverns on the sea-shore " ; where they were frequently heard to yell. These two divisions were, doubtless, in the main descended from the Norse and Icelandic elves and trolls respectively, but the second kind would now be termed bugganes by the Manx.

14 *Lioar Manninagh*, i., 325. It is of the standard pattern. A little old woman in a red skirt and a petticoat thrown over her head comes in to borrow meal. Next day she returns it, and at the same time asks that the cows in the cowhouse may be turned round, because their dung was coming into her house below. Until this is done the cows are ailing.

15 By "nightmare" we may understand " succuba." The true origin and nature of the Lhiannan may be recognized in an Ulster account of one of the species, where she is not given the honourable title of fairy. " The ancient churchyard of Truagh, County Monaghan, is said to be haunted by an evil spirit, whose appearances generally forebode death. The legend runs that at funerals the spirit watches for the person who remains last in the graveyard. If it be a young man who is there alone, the spirit takes the form of a beautiful young girl, inspires him with an ardent passion, and exacts a promise that he will meet her that day month in the churchyard. The promise is then sealed by a kiss, which sends a fatal fire through his veins, so that he is unable to resist her caresses, and makes the promise required. Then she disappears, and the young man proceeds homewards; but no sooner has he passed the boundary wall of the churchyard, than the whole story of the evil spirit rushes on his mind, and he knows that he has sold himself, soul and body, for a demon's kiss. Then terror and dismay take hold of him, till despair becomes insanity, and on the very day month fixed for the meeting with the demon bride, the victim dies the death of a raving lunatic, and is laid in the fatal graveyard of Truagh. . . . But the evil spirit does not limit its operations to the graveyard ; for sometimes the beautiful demon form appears at weddings or festivities, and never fails to secure its victims, by dancing them into the fever that maddens the brain, and too surely ends in death." (Lady Wilde, *Ancient Cures, etc., of Ireland*, page 8q.)

16 Probably from the " MS. *Account of Manks Superstitions, etc*.," which was afterwards in the possession of the original Manx Society, but is now lost.

17 *Manx Notes and Queries*, page 55.

18 *Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 161-2.

19 They usually do everywhere. In the first volume of the *Folk-lore Record*, page 108, Andrew Lang, in alluding to this " very primitive superstition, the belief in the deadly love of the spectral forest women," says that " so wide-spread is this superstition, that a friend of mine declares he has met with it among the savages of New Caledonia, and has known a native who actually died, as he himself said he would, after meeting one of the fairy women of the wild wood."

20 Campbell, *Superstitions of the Scottish Highlanders*, page 19r.

21 Two holed stones formerly in Braddan churchyard, according to Wood-Martin, are described by him, in reference to his photograph of them, as having been connected with aphrodisiac and wedding-customs. " In times gone by," be says, " it was the custom for the brides and bridegrooms during the wedding-ceremony to clasp hands through the holes in the stones, but though this ancient Manx custom has fallen into desuetude, these old waifs of antiquity remain," etc. (*Elder Faiths of Ireland*, ii., 248).

22 Train's information (*History*, ii., 154) was received from Oswald in 1830.

23 Oswald in Train's work; Oswald, *Vestigia*, pages 189 and 192 ; Jenkinson's *Guide*, page 24 ; Moore, *Lioar Manninag*h, i., 318. Joseph Johnson in his scarce booklet entitled *Legends, etc., of the Isle of Man* (1881), states

on page 15 that the cup, which had been preserved in a strong oaken box mounted with silver, had recently been sold by auction for a few pounds.

24 Manx treasures, like Manx men, are prone to emigrate. A critical notice in the 1911 Year Book of the Viking Club has a reference to an early Celtic casket-shrine bearing a runic inscription, " Ranvig owns this casket." The reviewer comments " The runes belong to the peculiar group found on the monumental crosses in the Isle of Man, from which it may be inferred that Ranvig was a Norwegian woman, perhaps settled in Man at the time when she first possessed the casket, which was afterwards taken to Norway, whence it found its way to Copenhagen."

25*The Times Literary Supplement* has charged me with having overlooked this collection, but I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Kneen, and his work in various fields, for nearly twenty years.

26 In Beza's *Paganism in Roumanian Folk-lore*, page 76.

27 *History of Isle of Man*, ii., 147.

CHAPTER VI

THE FAIRIES THEMSELVES AND KINDRED SPIRITS

§ 3. Other Spirits and Apparitions.

The uncanny personages hitherto described may be regarded as types of those seen by many people in many parts of the Island. The hero of the following story is a rarer bird, but if he is a stranger to Fairyland I do not know where else to place him. My narrator (whom I have known for thirty years) was walking home from Ramsey towards Milntown late one evening in the winter of 1912. It was a dark night and she carried a lantern, but it went out after she had left the town. As she was nearing Milntown corner, but short of the darkest part of the road, there suddenly appeared just in front of her, and facing her, a little man about two feet high, wearing a red cap and a long blue coat with a lot of shining buttons down the front of it. He had white hair and bushy greyish or whitish whiskers all over the lower part of his face, and the upper part was covered with hundreds of wrinkles. His bright blue eyes, the kindest eyes she ever saw, were smiling up at her. All this was visible by the light of a sort of little lantern he carried in his hand, with a tiny but very brilliant spark of light in it. They stood looking at each other for a few moments until he vanished. She felt immensely amused at seeing him. [fpc she must also have had extraordinary colour vision to distinguish colours on a dark night]

It is known in the family that her mother's sister, who died a generation ago, more than once saw exactly the same apparition. She herself had heard of this long before, in her childhood, but had not thought of it for years. What she saw might possibly be explained as a visual projection of this forgotten memory ; but before this explanation is adopted it should be mentioned that it was to her that the helpful light used to appear on dark nights, as described on page 90. This began about twelve years later. Believers in guardian spirits will know how to account for the whole matter. Those who favour a fairy explanation will point to the story about a little old man with an extraordinarily wrinkled face who, one fine summer day, sat himself on the chest of a man venturing to take a nap near the Glen Aldyn quarries.[1]

Here may be included two other manifestations which have less of the fairy flavour than the vision of the gnome-like little man. The first reached me from a friend of the man concerned. This man was quite recently driving a car late at night along the road between the Corrany and Lewaigue. When he came to a certain spot he was confronted with a great black mass barring the way. He felt as though his hair were standing up, but resolved to drive through the obstacle. As he accelerated, the cloud of darkness rose up before him and let him pass under it.

An Englishwoman, by profession a nurse, was spending a holiday with a friend of hers a few years ago in a certain roadside cottage between Lezayre Churchtown and Sulby village. One evening when dusk was setting in she went out with the intention of climbing to the top of the hill opposite. When she was about half-way up she heard a voice, clear but not loud, say " Good night ! " almost in her ear. She turned round sharply, but no one was in sight. She went on. The same thing happened a second time, and a third. She grew nervous ; a chilly feeling came over her, and she retraced her steps down the hill. Next morning she asked her hostess whether the hill was supposed to be haunted, and on being told that it was, she felt she might relate what had happened to her without incurring suspicion of her sanity. This was told to me by a friend of her hostess.

A Manxwoman of education was cycling from Peel to Dalby one evening before dark in the year 1922. On coming to the hill at Gordon cottages something made her look behind her. She saw in the distance what looked like a horse with a man's head and face, the whole apparition being of a pale grey or whitish hue. It was following her and gaining on her. She pedalled hard up the hill in a panic, expecting the sound of galloping hoofs, but hearing nothing. The creature did not catch up to her, and after she had gained the top of the hill and the skirt of Glen May village she saw no more of it, and felt it had gone.

This experience, which was related to me less than half an hour after it had occurred and while its effects were still noticeable, pairs with a traditional story concerning the same piece of road. A horse standing there was mounted by a man who shortly afterwards found it had human ears, and was nearly carried to destruction.[2] To the lower part of Glen Rushen half a mile away is assigned a legend in which the ratio of human to equine in the creature is transposed ; a Water-horse, temporarily human in shape except for a tell-tale detail, carries off a girl. Just so is the Centaur seen carrying off a woman on certain ancient Macedonian coins, while on others the abductor is a man with hooves, ears and tail of a horse. " Satyr and Centaur, slightly diverse types of the horse-man, are in essence one and the same."[3] And a famous picture by Zeuxis portrayed a female Centaur with semi-human ears-the ears of a Satyr.[4]

Of the Keymagh, the spook which haunted the stiles and gateways of the churchyards, nothing is remembered now beyond that characteristic, which is implied in his name. He, or she, probably embodied (if the term may be used in this connexion) some article of superstition similar to the Scottish belief that it is the duty of the last person buried in a churchyard to wait there and prevent the burial of a suicide or an unchristened child. He is relieved of his office by the next comer. That Keymaghs have always been confined to the stiles of churches may be doubted, partly on account of their name, which means merely " the Stile One," and partly because Manx people used to say a prayer or good word before crossing any stile or cloghan. A spirit of some kind once took the shape of a grey horse which confronted a man who was about to cross a stile to visit his dying sister. Every time he tried to get over the horse threw up its heels at him. He said a prayer and the horse vanished. He found the woman just expiring. The horse was thought to be an evil spirit which wanted to keep him away till she was dead. Roeder has a Rushen story very similar to this one which I heard on the West side of the Island. In neither case was the apparition called a Keymagh, but the situation it took up points to its having a right to the name.

The Cughtagh is not now spoken of by that title, but it seems likely that some of the numerous and stillremembered bugganes of the coastal caves were once called Cughtaghs ; for this personage was a dweller in the caverns under the cliffs. The Cughtagh and the Keymagh are coupled (both in the plural) in a bloodstopping charm in Manx [5] -a rare honour, for Manx charms are otherwise consistently Christian in their invocations. The Cughtagh is easily identifiable with a denizen of the Scottish Isles called Ciuthach (with many variants), who in current lore is a nasty personage inhabiting sea-caves, but in the older stories was a giant of a gentlemanly character with whom the Fianna enjoyed single combat. He also figures in the Irish romance of Dermat and Grania, whom he visits after they have taken possession of his cave during his absence at sea in his canoe. Professor W. J. Watson [6] comments upon him in the following terms:

" In view of the fact that traces of Ciuthach are found, one may say, from Clyde to the Butt of Lewis, it is clear that at one time he played a great rõle in the traditions of the West. Among

all the confusion of the traditions as they have come down to us, there may be, and probably is, an ultimate historical basis. It may not be unreasonable to surmise that the Ciuthach was a broch-dweller, who degenerated in the tales, and perhaps in fact, into a cave-dweller. . . . Throughout the references to him there runs the feeling that Ciuthach was a hero, or the hero, of a race different from the Gael . . . The conclusion suggested is that Ciuthach was a hero of the Picts." Professor Watson suspects the name to mean a cave-man. The Manx form of the word, as we now have it, appears rather to allude to its owner's uncleanliness, and the name has probably suffered in the Island a degeneration corresponding to that of the tradition. In justice to the Cughtagh, he might be defined as a Fenoderee who has taken to the sea.

In the next number of the *Celtic Review* David MacRitchie, on the strength of a description of the Ciuthach in a version of " Diarmaid and Grainne " (Dermat and Grania), claims him as a representative of the " Finn-men " who frequented the coasts of Scotland in their little skin-canoes. In that event the Manx Cughtagh, in his earlier and more romantic days, might be recognized in the strange visitor who haunted the Dalby coast and entertained the people with his singing, and from whose repertoire has survived the " Arrane Ghelby," the Dalby Song.

Of the Glashan I have heard no news these many years, but earlier writers call him a brownie and give him the helpful characteristics of the Fenoderee. It may be that the Glashan has been lost in the Glashtyn through the similarity of their names ; the Glashtyn is now sometimes confused with the Fenoderee.

Of the Croghan there is still less to tell, only that she was seen at wells and springs. Ulster possesses a fairy with a similar name.

In the first *Scrapbook* I have described some of the forms taken in local stories by the notorious buggane of Gob ny Scuit on North Barrule. Still another of its disguises, I find, was that of the spectre of a gigantic man smeared and dripping with blood; though human in shape he had horns like a bullock and flaming eyes. Albeit his appearance was against him, he never did an actual hurt to anyone. He walked by day as well as by night, but in the daytime he was invisible.[7]

" He has seen the Spectre Hound that haunts the Isle of Man ; has heard him bark, and at every bark has seen a ship sink." So says a character in the story of " The Haunted Ships," in Allan Cunningham's Traditional Tales. Was any such power ever attributed to the Moddey Dhoo of Peel Castle or of any other place in the Island ? It would be refreshing to hear something new about the first-named animal-if animal he really was, for a man told me last year that it was not a dog at all, but the spirit of a man imprisoned in the Castle " for his sins." Dorothy Wordsworth heard that it was the spirit of the Duchess of Gloucester. [8] Can there have been any connexion between the Moddey Dhoo legend made famous by Scott and the buried hound whose bones were discovered some years ago in an imposing but unidentified tomb within the Castle precincts ?

The Moddey Dhoo species is not yet entirely extinct. One which has long haunted a locality near Ramsey is more deserving of fame than the Black Dog of Peel Castle, if only because he has been seen oftener and more recently. In 1927 a friend of mine met him one night at Milntown corner as she turned into Glen Aldyn. " He was black, with long shaggy hair, with eyes like coals of fire. I was frightened and would not pass, so we looked at each other, and the dog gave me a chance to pass him. It happened just before my father died." From a widely-respected family doctor I had in 1931 his description of the same beast. As he was

driving to a confinement at 2 a.m. he saw it sitting at the side of the road just beyond Milntown corner. It appeared to be a big black dog-like creature nearly the size of a calf, with bright staring eyes. When he came back a couple of hours later it was still there. He had had no previous experiences of the kind, but members of his family are " psychic."

In the second instance the eyes of an ordinary dog would have been illuminated by the lamps of the motor-car, but in the first case the only light at this tree-shadowed corner was that which shone from the " dog's " eyes. This spectral creature is believed to be a portent of evil, and to be connected with the similar Moddee Dooey which roam the Sulby hills. I have confined myself to first-hand descriptions of him.

THE CARRASDHOO MEN.

The Northside legend of the Carrasdhoo Men has, as a whole, every appearance of being an exaggerated version of actual facts, and to that view of it I intentionally confined my previous remarks.[9] There are, nevertheless, in Esther Nelson's rendering of it into ballad form a couple of passages which might be suspected of importing the magical element into a folk-tale not otherwise coloured by superstition. The first passage can only be understood to mean that the outlaws could hear at an indefinite distance the lightest of whispers :

"the slightest word
Sighed unto silence, or scarcely spoken,
Had gathered around him the bandit horde;
For there was no trace, there was no token."

The Manx, Irish and Scottish people's reluctance to speak harshly of the fairies, or even to mention their specific name aloud, must have been due to a belief of this nature. (Is the fairies' detestation of loud noises due to this sensitive hearing ?) The particular instances of the belief I happen to have met with occur only in the lore of the largest island of the three, but it probably exists in Ireland also. In the Mabinogi of " Lludd and Llevelys " the faculty of far-hearing is credited to the inimical invaders called Corannieit or Coranied, who are generally admitted to have been of the fairy race.[10]" Such was their knowingness that no conversation could be held anywhere on the Island [of Britain], however low its tones, without their being aware, if the wind took hold of it."[11] The same keenness of hearing is attributed to Math son of Mathonwy in the Mabinogi of that title, who was certainly a magician : " the slightest conversation between two persons, howsoever softly it may be whispered, if the wind catches it, it comes to his knowledge," which is obviously a mere variation of one and the same folk-tale formula. The Coranied were eventually dispersed into Scotland and Ireland, according to the *Iolo MSS.*

I do not wish to lay too much stress on this point, but merely to mention it in connexion with what does look like an allusion to the fairy practice (imitated in Scotland by the witches) of shooting, unseen by men, the flint arrowheads at them-or more exactly, of flicking them off the left forefinger with the thumbwith intent to kill. Though these arrowheads seem to be little valued now in the Isle of Man, except by peaceful-minded antiquaries, the expression guinn-shoe, "fairy dart," shows that a better-informed idea of their purpose once existed. There are, moreover, a couple of charms against them on record. The lines in question of the Carrasdhoo ballad are these :

" It was not a weapon, it was not a dart,
Nor a gunshot wound, nor a flying ball;
But death smote the bravest ; his manly heart
Beat once; 'twas over-they saw him fall;
He died without murmur or dying moan,
There was buried deep in his brow a stone.
" Sooth, it was fearful and strange to tell,
So truly, fearfully, worked the spell ;
How the pebble was winged with such fatal power
None knew, or may know to their dying hour;
None saw it hurled, none saw it strike."

It may be that Miss Nelson introduced effects of her own to heighten the colour. Even if this is not one of them, but belongs to a version current in her time, it is too incidental to be evidence that the obscure legend of the Carrasdhoo Men originated in a piece of Manx fairy-lore or witch-lore ; but these may have left their mark on it.

Another version of the legend (alluded to briefly in *A Manx Scrapbook*) was related to me about three years ago by a Northside lady who had it from her grandfather. He died about the year 1899 at the age of 86, and had heard the Carrasdhoo tales in his boyhood. The Carrasdhoo men had a sort of a storehouse on the right side of Ballure Glen [13]as you go up, not far from the shore. It was there they used to take the stuff from smuggling and wrecking; they carried it up on ponies. There was plenty to eat and drink going after they had had a bit of luck. A Robert Christian of Ballure and the miser Mylecharaine of the song were involved in the business and shared in the booty. This account, it will be seen, goes back well over a hundred years.

T. E. Brown's notice of the gang may have been due to his acquaintance with Esther Nelson's ballad, but his spelling of the name suggests otherwise. " I think you know our bogs are inhabited by a dark people, the Carysdoo, and that they bewilder and entice poor travellers as the mermaids overpower the fishermen."[14] Here again a suspicion is conveyed, by the comparison with mermaids, that there was something other than human about the Carrasdhoo Men.

Footnotes

1 The quarries are not more than a mile from Milntown.

2 Moore, *Manx Folk-lore*, page 2.

3 See *A Manx Scrapbook*, page 484. This is the Cabbyl-ushtey or Water-horse.

4 Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, page 380.

5 Lawson, *Modern Greek Folk-lore*, page 236: chapter on the survival of pagan deities.

6 *Mona Miscellany*, page 178. " The Three Mothers," well-known in the rapports of fairydom with mythology, appear in this and other Manx charms.

7 See *Celtic Review*, ix., 193-209-

8 The Antiquary, xiv., 259 ff.

9 See her *Journal in the Isle of Man*, 1828. Her description, by the way, of her home while in the North of the Island points to its having been Ballure Cottage, near Ramsey.

10 In *A Manx Scrapbook*, pages 385-6.

11 According to Rhys, *Celtic Folk-lore*, page 675, they were (like the Nelsonian malefactors) fen-dwellers. On page 195 he quotes a Welsh folk-lorist's statement that "the fairies knew whatever was spoken in the air without the houses."

12 Loth's *Mabinogion*, i., 235.

13 There is some uncertainty whether it was Ballure or Ballaugh Glen.

14 *Letters*, ii., 17.

§ 4. A Fairy Stronghold.

The fairies and their camp - followers formerly possessed the entire Island, and they had it all to themselves. Their co-occupation of parts of it appears to have lasted till quite recent times. Let us consider one of these regions which humanity has, on more or less equal terms, shared with fairydom. Picture a small triangular area, two of whose sides measure not more than three miles each, and the third side two miles. Its apex is formed by the convergence of a river-valley with high ling-clad hills in which the river rises ; its base is a high-road running parallel with the adjacent coast. It is penetrated by no thoroughfare deserving the name of road according to modern ideas ; such of its farms as are still tenanted are connected with each other (and, deviously, with the high-road) by rough green tracks more or less water-logged for half the year, and by field-paths. From bearing grain and roots the land has lapsed into pasture of the coarsest quality, upon which the gorse and ling are a continually rising tide. Some of the farm-houses marked in the Ordnance Survey of 1868-70 lie in ruins, others are barely recognizable sites. More than a few are merely a name and a memory. Where now is one human being, fifty years ago were perhaps ten. The population has ebbed into the lower lands, to Douglas, to England, and to the Colonies.

Nevertheless the human element, even in its most flourishing days, must have been heavily outnumbered by the fairies, the ghosts, the demons, and the formless and nameless shadows born partly of darkness and partly of the fear of darkness. By daylight all these shared a peaceable possession with mankind. After nightfall the earth, the air and the waters were undisputedly theirs, to have and to hold till daybreak, cum furta et fossa.

The final clause may be interpreted literally. As regards the furca, it is related that after a man had cut down the elder-trees which nearly surrounded a small house beside the river, he was found hanging from one of the beams of the " loft " or upper chamber ; he had been driven to this act by the fairies whose beloved bushes he had destroyed. The fossa was a little isolated pool half-way down the slope of the valley, in which the fairies used to duck persons who displeased them.

In its seclusion and decay this district is by no means singular, nor yet in its hauntedness. I choose it as an example because I have been fortunate enough to meet with a number of people who remember stories of its non-human inhabitants, and because I know nearly all the trivial features of the landscape which occur therein. If I am not personally acquainted with the incorporeal actors, I do at least feel sure that all of them have been believed in and many of them have been seen or heard. Even when deductions have been made, there cannot be a farm precinct, a field, a lane or a footpath which has not, once or much oftener, been the scene of a supernatural manifestation, so intensely active was the spirit-life of the district.

In the first place, it was over-run with the Little People. The fairy clan's headquarters was the aforesaid small pool, to-day smaller than ever. From the nearest house, some three lnindred yards away, they were often seen congregated about this dub, even in daylight. John-the-Lord was on very familiar terms with them. He would sit at the edge of their pool and hold arguments with them on political and other matters. If he ventured to express an opinion too flatly contrary to theirs they were liable to heave him into the dub. John was not above taking a drop of other kinds of drink occasionally ; but Billy Creetch was a strictly sober man, yet when he was going to his work at the mines below at half-past six in the morning (an hour, I suppose, which has not yet seen a drunken man) he got took at the fairies here, worse than ever John did. His mate from the mine came up to know why he had not turned in for his shift, but he was not to be found, and nothing was seen of him till the afternoon of the following day, when he arrived home wet and bedraggled with his enforced journey across hedges and ditches to a distant point of the coast. Around this same pool unaccountable lights were seen after nightfall, and in a hole in its bank a cuckoo left an egg year after year, which was unfailingly hatched.*

It is not definitely stated that this cuckoo was in any sense a fairy bird. Her fondness for the spot, however, brings her under suspicion. Mr. J. G. Mackay in Scottish Gaelic Sludies for September, 1929, says that a Highland name for the cuckoo was Eusz-sidhe, Fairy-bird. In Main the cuckoo is reckoned to be one of the " Seven Sleepers " and to hibernate underground.

From their dub the fairies had a regular path, beat, or " parade " as far as the nearest gate, which stands on the boundary-line between two farms ; there was trouble for the man who got in their way when they were on the move. Against the left-hand pillar-stone of this gate a visitor from another world was sometimes seen standing-the figure of a man in a long brown coat with bright buttons, but a figure of more than human height. Horses disliked passing between the two pillars late at night, and cattle kept away from them. Each of the two cairns in the field further on had its guardian buggane. From the ditch alongside a track not far from the gateway the semblance of a woman used to rise with startling suddenness and follow the passer-by through the gap in the hedge into the adjoining field. She gave forth a loud noise of jingling, clattering and rattling, as though she were covered with chains and cans and bits of metal, ridiculous to tell of but most terrifying to hear. The third time this happened to a man he stood still and said : " In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, let this creature be taken away from me ! " At that she turned and went back along the field-path to where she had come from, and was never seen again. At a hedge (dry stone wall) on his own farm about a quarter of a mile away a Scotchman frequently spoke with the red-hatted Manx fairies, and one day his shepherd found him lying there, dead.

Some of the local wells, besides being curative, were haunted. At one was a Moddey Dhoo, which is described as being of " a kind of shining blackness, and getting bigger and bigger

while you were watching it." It took no notice of human beings, and nobody attempted to meddle with it. Another well was haunted by mysterious lights. Reddish lights also rose up out of the ground to a great height, highe_ than a man, and travelled in front of people for a long way, finally vanishing. A headless woman was seen from time to time walking round one of the farmhouses. A procession of shadowy forms was often seen to pass along the side of a certain field from one corner to the other, and disappear into a bushy spot which was otherwise of bad repute and seems never to have been cleared for cultivation. Fenoderee roamed the whole district impartially, lending a hand with the work where he was most needed.

Two girls, sisters, English bred but of local extraction on one side, were spending a holiday in this neighbourhood. Many years afterwards one of them told me this story, the details of which were stamped on her memory. There were on the farm two horses very similar in size and colour, each one with a white streak down his face, and each one having a name. One day the girls, in passing along the lane above the Horse-field, happened to see them standing side by side gazing upwards over the hedge, and stopped to discuss the question of which was which. In the middle of their argument, instead of seeing the two horses a few feet away from them they found they were looking straight down at a man who was standing in their place ; and he was looking equally straight at the girls. He wore a long brown coat and had a black moustache, and they had never seen him before. No horses were visible. One girl whispered to the other to wait and see which way he went, and they would take the opposite way. After a few moments he walked off in the direction of the farmhouse, and was quickly lost to their sight without there being a building or sufficient growth to conceal him. They described him afterwards to the people at the house, but he was not known.*

Much was heard hereabouts without being seen, and was no less dreadful for its invisibility. At a certain uncultivated spot the crying of a child was heard to come over the hedge by people passing along the track. No one ever tried to find out the cause. Past a farmhouse a heavy, plodding footstep used to be heard sometimes, and is heard still, between five and six o'clock in the evening, passing up the lane towards the Foawr Stones (a bilingual attempt at rendering Claghyn y Foawy, the Stones of the Giant), of which a trace can yet be seen in the middle of the way and in the adjoining hedge. It maybe the remains of a small stone-circle. This was another place the horses would not pass after dark without much urging, and they were equally shy of many other spots which were known to be haunted. " Between twelve and two " is said to have been the time of night they objected to especially, but it is difficult to imagine a Manx horse being asked to work at such hours since the smuggling era. A similar footstep was heard periodically passing a cottage in the early part of the evening ; in this case a shadow was seen as well, when the door was standing open, as the sound went by. In an instance related to me by one who had been paying a call there, the chickens outside the door ran to cover as though frightened by a hawk, and the cats came in with their fur standing up.

* Dr. Douglas Hyde in his introduction to the Irish section of Evans-Wentz' Fairy Faith relates a similar experience which befell him when a boy. while he was looking at a horse which was careering round a field it suddenly changed into a woman who continued racing round and round in the same manner, and then vanished. In more than one Highland story deer are seen to turn into men and a man into a horse.

The strange matters mentioned hitherto pertain to a small area within the larger one. The hills which form the general background are now tenanted apparently by nothing mere dangerous than sheep and curlews. In the days when their lower slopes were more busily cultivated, these high barren lands secreted a Giant and a Magician, a Grey Man and an Old Woman, a large white beast with one horn, an enormous beast with branching horns, a howling cat-headed demon, a whirling wheel of fire, and who knows what other portents and perils ? For one now remembered there must have been a dozen a couple of centuries ago ; they have dwindled with the population they over-awed. From the river to which these hills decline the fairies let their favourites among mortals overhear sweet melodies which may not all have been lost to posterity; for did not one hearer note them down on the rocks with a sharp pebble ? Other singing, as of human voices in distant unison, exhaled mysteriously on still evenings out of a certain steep piece of ground on the opposite bank, called the Granane, where long mossy stones lie half hidden under bushes and briars, and lights tremble along the rugged surface after nightfall. The villagers and farmpeople used to come to their own bank of the river to listen to this singing. On the other side, where the music came from, tradition says that religious rites were practised in some far-off age ; here, too, treasure was buried under the soil, and in the search for it a tumulus has been rifled of its urn. Nearly facing this place, on the hither side of the stream, a natural lawn surrounds a pointed stone erect in the centre of it, from which the gorse and the long grass stand back in a respectful circle.

Out of the same river issued a Tarroo-ushtey of especially ferocious character, who terrorized the dwellers on the further bank. His personal name was yn Dhow Vargayd Margaret's Bull, and the Moaney was his chief haunt. The bullocks of that farm were on several occasions found cruelly mutilated. After keeping watch for many nights the inmates of the house saw, through a window, the water-bull coming up out of the deep part of the gill and attacking the bullocks. After the farmer had tried every means he could think of to get rid of him, he sent off the Island for a black Spanish bull and planted him on the farm. One very dark night terrible noises were heard, from which it was gathered that the new bull and the water-bull were fighting furiously. By and by their own animal seemed to be getting the worst of it ; he came towards the house and took to running round and round on the farm street, bellowing. Expecting the Tarroo to follow him, the inmates fortified the doors back and front with their heaviest furniture and waited for daylight. Then they discovered the Spanish bull lying gored to death, but no trace of the other. This my informant reckons to have happened sixty or seventy years ago, and the farm has never been tenanted since.*

About the Fairy Tailor now. He was working at a house in Agneash one time, and he found he was running short of thread. He was wanting it in a hurry, for some wedding clothes, wasn't it, I think that was it, so what did he do but off he went for it himself. They saw him go out of the house and heard his footsteps dying away. Well, in about forty minutes or half an hour they heard him coming back again, and he had the thread with him in a paper bag with the name of the Ramsey shop on it where he had bought it, and that showed plain enough where he had been to. Ramsey'll be about five or six miles from Agneash, going through the air, and it was through the air he went, right enough. There was no other way he could have done it in the time. Themselves was carrying him along. He was very thick with them always, that's the way he was getting the name of " the Fairy Tailor." They were always known to be taking round Agneash, more than any place on the Island. Lots were seeing them. Some say he flew to Douglas from his own house down by the river, on the other side of it, but that's not right at all. It was from Agneash they were carrying him, to the shop in Parliament Street. I just forget the name. Yes, Kneale the draper.

" Well, all them things is what they used to be telling. I'm sure I don't know ! "

On the Hebridean islet of Heiskeir (Monach 1. on the maps), off North Uist, it was a particularly fierce house-bred black bull which was put to fight with a water-horse. The water-horse used to come out of a small lake and terrorize the islanders. Finding the bull a match for him on land the horse lured him into the lake and finished him. off under water. Otherwise the story, told at length in " Some Legends of Heiskeir " (*Celtic Review*, iii., 177-9), reads like an expansion of the Lonan affair.

CHAPTER VII

THE ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE KINGDOMS

§ 1. Beliefs about Animals and Insects.

ANY domestic animal the possession of which is grudged or envied "will never do any good "-it will not thrive or be of use to its owner.

HARES.

The animal most intimately allied with magic in the Isle of Man is the hare, whose shape is oftener assumed by the' witches than any other. The details of these transformations do not differ much from those in other countries. Though no creature figures so conspicuously in Manx folk-lore, the instances are seldom attached to specified localities. Of the *Towl ny Mwaagh*, the " Hole of the Hare," near the circle of cists between Port Erin and the Sound, I have heard no stories natural or supernatural, neither does Roeder, to whom I am indebted for the name, record any; and I know no other place-name containing the word. If such an indefatigable seeker of marvels as Roeder found nothing to report of Towl ny Mwaagh, its name may be due to an abundance of perfectly normal hares, which are probably as plentiful in the Island as the other sort. To the true nature of these latter the folk-lore books testify freely. A lady wrote to the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould in the latter part of the 19th century complaining that she could not get her servants to eat hare, because it might be some old woman in a transformed state.[1] Evans Wentz also touches upon the subject in the Manx section of his *Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries*.

To distinguish between the two species of hare at sight may perplex the most practised observer. A friend of mine tells me that a friend of hers, a poacher and church-organist, being dutifully apprehensive of killing one of the wrong kind (which might have turned out to be a living or dead relative, or at the least some elderly woman well able to avenge herself) has devised a test by food. If he notices in the course of his chief vocation that a hare neglects an aliment favoured by its kind—a ridge of carrots in a field, for example he gives it the benefit of the doubt and releases it if it happens to get entangled in one of his snares.[2]

Two youths were poaching on a Glen Aldyn farm with an acetylene bicycle-lamp, a common method by which dazzled creatures can be knocked over or netted silently. In the course of their proceedings they were startled by the appearance before them of a black mass having the shape of a gigantic hare. They made off down the hill, and gave up their little games for a time at least. During their repentant period they confided their adventure to the farmer, who confided it to me as a first-rate joke.

A white or conspicuously light-coloured hare is regarded as especially significant. If one is seen near dwelling-houses it foretokens fire. The fat of any hare, rendered down over a slow fire, is useful in divination, inducing particularly that kind of clear-sightedness which reveals the identity of an ill-wishing or ill-working neighbour.

The ubiquitous anecdote of the shooting of a hare with a silver bullet, or of its being worried by dogs, and the subsequent discovery of a suspected witch with corresponding injuries, is heard as often in the Island as everywhere else. The use of a special form of silver for this purpose is referred to on page 201.[3]

This feeling of respect for the hare has many minor ramifications. It is even carried so far that a doctrine obtains among conservative thinkers that a hare-lip is the vestige of the hare-shape assumed either voluntarily or through bewitchment, whether in the possessor's lifetime or in that of a progenitor. The shoulder-bone of a hare, even more infallibly than that of a sheep, when looked steadily into, in the proper circumstances, rendered visible the invisible and brought the future into the present. A hare's foot is a lucky thing to carry concealed on one's person, but the less it is shown, or even spoken of, the stronger is its power for good. It is also a specific against rheumatism, and has in the past been carried by fishermen, but whether for luck in fishing or for protection against danger and bad weather I am not sure. Neither perhaps were they.

Three-legged hares of sinister potency, as known in Wales, Lincolnshire, Scandinavia and the Teutonic countries, might have been expected to thrive on Manx soil, but if they do they have eluded me hitherto.

PIGS.

Though a less romantic creature than the hare, the pig has made his influence felt in the folk-lore of the Island. It would be surprising if he had not, for his eye has the most human expression of any animal's, and his intelligence, though purely self-centred, does not belie his countenance, to say nothing of the human look of his skin. In the remoter parts there seems to linger a prejudice against eating pig-flesh. A member of the Manx Executive Council once told me that he had tried in vain to persuade his farm-servants and their families, for their own benefit in cold weather, to eat bacon. I cannot say with certainty that this reluctance had a superstitious cause, but it is difficult to find any other, since the bacon was home-fed and to be had cheaply.

There is a Manx notion, which is not peculiar to the Island, that pigs have a tendency to grow fatter or leaner, or at all events to fatten more or less rapidly, according as the moon is waxing or waning. A relation is also understood to exist between the age of the moon when the pig is killed and the degree to which its fat—in bacon form, presumably—will run in the frying thereof. Exactly how far pigs respect the calendar in these ways I am unable to say ; but one of the race resident in Maughold which I had the privilege of studying during a couple of years, on and off, certainly corroborated the first-mentioned belief. Having attained respectable proportions in the course of a short life, in a waning moon he began to dwindle until he was a mere anatomy of a pig, and observed an eclipse of the next moon by dying—without assistance.

Black pigs can see the wind. No doubt this was once a belief; now it is merely a saying. Possibly it arose from the study of pigs as weather-prophets. When they run about vivaciously, especially if in a homeward direction, or with straws or grass hanging out of their jaws, it is taken as a sign of coming storm.

The half-wild pigs called " purrs " which were formerly allowed to roam about the hills, particularly in the North, picking up a living for themselves, are honoured with a place in the early Statute Laws of the Island. In the lack of any other undomesticated animals of appropriate size they were adopted into tales which must originally have been inspired by some more formidable creature, conceivably the wolf, for the wolf still stalks and howls in vestiges of legends saved from total extinction by Waldron and Train.[4] I have already dealt

with several strange narratives of which a more or less supernatural purr is the subject ;[5] the present chapter is limited to ordinary animals about which there are extraordinary beliefs.

GOATS.

The practice, formerly current in other parts of the Kingdom also, of letting a goat accompany flocks and herds at pasture, was favoured in the Isle of Man. It is said to be followed still on a few farms, but I have not noticed it anywhere in recent years. The goat's presence was believed to have a beneficial effect on the general health of cows and sheep, and, especially, to promote their fertility and successful calving and lambing.[6] As it is wiser than the beasts, it knew before they did when bad weather was coming, and led them to shelter. That the running of a goat with sheep is an old custom is suggested by a note in *Folk-lore*, vol. xxvi., relating to a different subject :

" It appears to be a convention, at least from the 13th century, to represent pastoral scenes with sheep feeding on the ground, and a goat on his hind legs craning up to browse on a tree."

" In the good old times, the Manx law permitted a native of the Isle of Man to kill a Scotchman, provided he afterwards went over to Scotland and stole a white skin (meaning a white goat), and so giving the Scotch an opportunity of retaliating (by killing him)."[7]

By an obsolete Manx law, which was no doubt traditional in some form or other for ages before it was put into writing, all the livestock and corn forfeited by a conviction for felony were divided between the Lord of the Isle and the Coroner (presumably the Coroner of the parish to which the criminal belonged, the duties of whose office differ from those of an English Coroner). The goats, exceptionally, became the property of " the Queen of this Land." This ruling was brought to light, together with other unwritten customary-laws, in a judicial inquiry held in 1504, the year of the fifth Earl of Derby's succession to the Lordship. Although he was nominally King of Man his usual title was " the Lord," and the disparity here between the terms Lord and Queen suggests that the expropriation of the goats for the benefit of the Countess of Derby was a survival from a code of even greater antiquity than the rest of the customs sworn to on this occasion.

SHEEP.

" In the Isle of Man it was believed that to pasture sheep on ground which was marked by a stone circle would surely bring disease to the flock."[8]

HORSES.

Horses were liable, as has often been noted, to be ridden o' nights by the fairies, with results disastrous to their condition and usefulness next day. A fairy saddle has fortunately been preserved for us, by instantaneous petrifaction, near Kirk Braddan. Once horses were broken to this nocturnal sport, they were always inclined to run away with their human riders and follow the fairy hunt.

The fairy call was not the only one they were obliged to answer ; a witch, or anyone knowing the necessary charm, or even the right pronunciation of the word *giense*, " dance ! ", could, as easily as the ringmaster in the circus, make a horse rear up and revolve on his hind legs.

Among the many curious Statute Laws of the Island is one enacted in 1629 that " whosoever shall be found or detected to pull Horse Tayles shall be punished upon the Wooden Horse, thereon to continue for the Space of two Hours, and to be whipped naked from the Waist upwards." Are these horse-tails to be understood literally ? The plant now called " horses' tails," which grows in uncultivated places, may possibly have been valued for the same purpose as the bent-grass which checks the inroads of sand from the sea - shores. The enactment follows immediately upon one which decrees a fine of ten shillings for cutting trees, plants or hedges on another man's land, with the alternative, if the offender cannot pay, of being whipped through all the market-towns of the Island. The reason for pulling " horses' tails " might be that which prompted the gathering of so many herbs , indeed, a decoction of them is still recommended for rheumatism, though I am not sure that it is an old Manx specific.

It is more probable, however, that the Act referred to the tails of living horses. Horsehair, especially the long hairs from tail and mane, must have been extremely useful for making snares for hares and rabbits, and for other purposes. It is not unlikely that it was employed in charms, as it was in England and Scotland.[9] The abstraction of the hairs from other men's horses, which the Statute seems to imply, would be explicable by the rule that, to be thoroughly efficacious in spell-working, an object ought to be stolen.

That the long hairs from horses' tails were intertwined to make fishing-lines may explain why the offence of plucking them was one in which fishermen were sometimes implicated. In an inquiry into an affair of the kind made in the year 1717, " A Jury of Enquisition [was] impanelled by the Lockman of Kirk Christ Rusher by vertue of the Hon. Govr.'s authority in the suit of William. Gell, Thos. Waterson, and Jo. Carran, to swear [and] Inquire all the fishermen thereabout for pulling and cutting of horses' teals. John Caran, being charged, by the said Lockman, did come before us the said Jury and refused for to swear for to clear himself, therefore we leave him layable to a fine to the discretion of the Court ... (four signatures). 24 February, 1717. Fined 3s. 4d."[10]

In the Isle of Man as in England it was, and still is, firmly believed that hairs from the tail of a horse, if left for a time in water, turn into thin eels, the bulbous root becoming the eel's head. I have been assured of this by men who have made the experiment when they were boys. The eels of slender dimensions found wriggling in the troughs and other places where horses drink are pointed out as ocular evidence of the transformation, which is regarded as quite natural, like that of caterpillars into butterflies and nonentities into members of the House of Keys. The widely-spread abhorrence of eels as an article of food may have been strengthened by this belief in the origin of some of them. J. G. Campbell tells a fantastic tale of a man who was found fighting with a horse, and who had been driven mad because some eels he had eaten were transformed horse-hairs.[11] Still, the creature which is supposed to be an animated horse-hair is not really an eel, but the Hair-worm or *Gordius Aquaticus*, which never grows any thicker.

COWS.

In former times it was always possible that the Manxman numbered among his cattle one or more cows which were not what they appeared to be to a casual eye. These were " sea-cows," or grey seals, which had assumed the shape of ordinary cows and come ashore for a lengthy period. They were luckbringing visitors to the herd, for they promoted fertility and insured health and vigour in the calves, much as the supernumerary goat did. In this there seems to be

a reflection from the belief in the freshwater Tarroo-ushtey or water-bull. *Raun*, " seal," is a word still used occasionally, I am told, as an adjective with the meaning of " lucky," especially in farm-yard matters.

CATS.

It is almost needless to say that cats, particularly black cats, have suffered unjustly in reputation from their presumed partnership with witches. One version of the Hop-to-naa song has a line " I met a witch-cat " ; in others it is only a polecat or a wild-cat. There was a feeling among the old-time Manx folk that cats were connected in some way with the sea ; that as they came from the sea (or from water) in the beginning, so they must go back to it in the end. The ground for this doctrine is hidden from me, but an underlying animal myth is plainly indicated. The idea cannot be entirely obsolete, for it was put forward by a woman a little time ago as the obvious explanation for her drowning of an unwanted cat in the sea, instead of putting it to death more mercifully.

THE SHREW-MOUSE.

The shrew-mouse is disliked because it is supposed to cause a local numbness, which may reach the degree of paralysis, if it runs over the limb of a human being or animal, especially if the victim is asleep at the time. For this reason a countryman will kill a shrew-mouse with a vindictiveness which is not warranted by its size and natural habits.

THE CRANE.

The *corr-ny-hastan*,[? coor-ny-hastan]" crane of the eels," is surrounded by a supernatural atmosphere, as he is in Irish legends and his brother the stork on the Continent. In the Isle of Man it is no more than an atmosphere, which is vaguely felt but out of which comes nothing tangible. Since we see in old engravings the stork depicted as flying with sticks in his beak, it may be that-as a friend has suggested to me-it was in the form of a corr-ny-hastan that the Calliagh ny Faa'ag flew with sticks in her mouth on St. Bride's Day, the 1st of February, in prediction of the year's weather.[12]

Much lore about the crane must have been forgotten. Perhaps it will be pardonable if in the lack of anything immediately local I refer to the Irish myth of the mysterious " Crane-Bag " of Manannan mac Lir. The fullest account of it is scattered through the seventh poem of the Middle-Irish *Duanaire Finn*, translated by Professor Eoin MacNeill. [13] From this piece the following circumstances may be collected. The magic crane from whose skin the bag was made had belonged while alive to Manannan, and was a transformation of his partner Aoife while she was imprisoned in Manannan's house for two hundred years. The bag held all his wonder-working treasures his shirt,[14] his knife, the belt of Gobniu, a smith's hook, the shears of the King of Alban, the helmet of the King of Lochlann, the bones of Asal's pig, and a girdle of the skin of the Great Whale's back. At high-tide these fetishes could be seen inside the bag ; at the ebb it appeared to be empty. From Manannan the bag passed to Lugh of the Long Arm, from him to the sons of Cearmaid Honeymouth, and from them when slain Manannan carried it off again, and kept it until he bestowed it on Conaire in his sleep. It belonged also at one time to Cumhal, the ancestor of Finn. And that is all we are told about it in this poem. But the Crane-bag can be recognized, though not under that name, as the property of Manannan, (who is also using an alias), in the story called " O'Donnell's Kern."[15]" Out of his conjuring-bag he drew a herb that he had, rubbed it to the palate of each man of

them, and successively they rose up whole." The story of the Kern is, as a whole, a comparatively modern composition, but it embodies mythic elements. What the Crane-bag myth suggests to me is the shamanistic magic of Central Asia and North America [16] with its magicians' conjuring-bags containing the implements of their profession ; the system extended into Finland and Scandinavia. In the latter part of the world they became " weather-bags " out of which the wizard produced the weather which he or his clients wanted-mostly gales. The giant " Old Windand-Weather " of the Norse folk-tales was doubtless a weather-maker ; in Denmark he was called Finn. Manannan's reputation as a weather-prophet in medieval Irish lore suggests very strongly that in earlier or unrationalized versions of this attribute he was in the best possible position to forecast the weather because he caused or controlled it.

Of birds as omens some examples have been given in Chapter IV. The Wren will have a chapter to itself.

INSECTS.

I have to thank a Manx friend for the following account of the deliberate sacrifice of the small black outdoor beetle, called a caraig or Greg, to bring rain. I have deleted only the names of the farmers and their farms, in order to conceal the locality ; for a similar reason the valued correspondent must remain anonymous.

". . . . I never dreamt of it being done as a ceremony until I actually saw it a few years ago. It all grew out of a conversation between the local farmers outside the chapel one Sunday night. A__ started it by observing that they had prayed for rain for five weeks now and there was no sign at all; he thought he would kill a creg, and see would it do any better for them. One or two of the others thought it mightn't be a bad idea, might do a little help for the rain anyway, and then no more was said. But the following evening the five farmers from the five farms met at a certain spot on the road ; X__, a manservant of one of them, brought a creg in a matchbox, and A__ put it down and crushed it with his foot while the rest looked on. There were some facetious remarks after the deed was done, and I believe most of the men did the thing in more or less of a joking spirit, but still it was done-and the next day the rain came."

In parts of Europe the killing of a frog is the essential feature of a charm to cause rain ; in other parts a black creature is preferred, the colour symbolizing. it has been suggested, that of the desired rain-clouds. Or perhaps its blackness marks it as a fitting messagebearer to the infernal powers, like that of the black cock or hen, black goat, black cat, and other dusky sacrificial victims. Some of these reptiles and insects may be the modern representatives of the human victims of another age or continent. A man was sacrificed to the Rain-goddess, conformably with custom, in Rhodesia in 1923 ; the desired rain fell immediately afterwards. The trial of the principal actors, which occurred near the end of May in that year, was fully reported in *The Times*.

Another Manx way of persuading the rain to fall may be mentioned here, although it has nothing to do with insects. A man whose garden is suffering from drought will water a small portion of it, and leave the rest alone in the expectation of a downfall attracted by his partial watering. The time-hallowed comment on the appearance of a water-cart in a British street, " now we shall have rain," though intended as a gentle sarcasm on the natural perversity of things, may have had its origin in the same notion of sympathetic or homoeopathic magic.

Concerning the long, black, diabolical-looking insect which Manx people call a *tarroo-deyll* and English people the Devil's Coach-horse and the Bull-beetle, the feeling in the Island is that it has a connexion with the darker powers ; hence it is regarded with a mixture of fear and superstitious respect. This feeling is crystallized in a couple of traditional stories. One runs to the effect that a man came across two tarroo-deylls (or a tarroo-deyll and a caraig- accounts vary), engaged in a bitter struggle in the middle of the road. The onlooker, sympathizing with the one which was getting the worst of the fight, killed its opponent. The surviving tarroo-deyll came to him later in a human shape, but a black one, and told him that his timely aid would be rewarded by good luck during the rest of his life. And so it befell.

The second story says that the spectator of the battle noticed that one of the two combatants renewed its vigour from time to time by going to the side of the road and feeding on a herb which was growing there, and thereby won the fight. This led the man to the discovery that the herb was equally medicinal for human beings. He made use of it to cure weak chests and lungs, and got the name of a "fairy doctor." Miss Sophia Morrison published a slightly different version of this anecdote, in which the herb eaten by the tarroo-deyll is the *slane-luss*, a styptic.

The tarroo-deyll is further believed to prefer the scraas-the sods under the thatch of a roof-to reside in, and to be capable of setting the thatch on fire by means of his erectile tail. I heard this old belief reaffirmed in Malew so recently as 1929. A good deal of gossip about this insect's affairs must have been forgotten, or else I have not met with it ; but the extra - insular folk - lore concerning him, and the etymology of his Manx name, will be found to shed light on each other.

First as to the name. Under Tarroo-deyll and Deyll Kelly gives the definition of " a rove-beetle, the horned beetle, the beetle tribe," and derives the term from the Irish *tarbh daol*, which, as spelt, would mean " blind bull." The other Manx dictionary-maker, Cregeen, has it as " *Taroo-deyill*, the bull-worm." Under " *Caraig* or *Carrage*, the clock-beetle," he cites a proverbial comparison for a pair of sworn enemies " myr y tarroo deyill as y charrage, like the tarroo deyill and the carrage." The modern Manx pronunciation of the second half of the name wavers between " dale " and " deel," and my impression is that the inclination is towards " dale " in the South and " deel " in the North. The first half is a perversion of something else, as we shall discover in tracing the name and its associated folk-lore beyond the limits of the Island.

In Ireland as in Man the creature is surrounded with an atmosphere of dread. " *Dubh Dael*, *Dara Dael*, the Forfecula Olens, a black insect of the earwig class [*sic*]. No reptile has been so much abhorred or dreaded by the peasantry of Ireland, as it is popularly believed that it betrayed to the Jews the way the Lord went when they were in search of him, and that whoever kills it seven sins are taken off the soul of the slayer." The remainder of the article[17] may be summarized as follows. When the dara dael is seen in a house they always put a coal of fire on it (i.e., a piece of burning turf) and carefully sweep out the ashes afterwards, because fire is thought to exterminate evil spirits. It is never trodden under-foot or killed with a stick, for its demoniacal essence would penetrate the leather or wood and reach the foot or hand with grievous results ; but it may safely be killed with an iron spade. Among the many stories about the insect, the most remarkable is that of a young man who displayed superhuman strength and energy in threshing, and was afterwards found to have a dara dael hidden in the handle of his flail. He confessed that the Devil, with whom he had a compact, had told him to put it there.

A Galway tale credits the same trick to no lesser a personage than the Cailleach. After she has outrivalled a young man in a reaping contest, her daughter tells him that there is a cockchafer hidden in the handle of her mother's sickle, and that so long as the insect is there no one in the world can keep up with her at the reaping. Next day, before resuming the competition, he takes off the handle, the cockchafer drops out, and the Cailleach is done for.[18]

In a satire by Dallan, a 6th-century Chief Bard of Ireland, the immediate predecessor of that Senchan Torpeist who was fabled to have brought his company of poets to the Isle of Man, occurs the phrase " *a airbhe in duibh daeil* ! " " O keep off the black beetle ! " Thus the Irish people's dislike to the creature reaches back at least thirteen hundred years.

The opening scene of " The Fate of the Children of Tuireann " shows us King Nuadha of the Silver Arm lying sick in his palace. A pair of wandering herbdoctors hear him groaning. " *Féach nach osnadh os cionn daoil ?* "[19] "See now, is not that a groan on account of a beetle ? " diagnoses one of them ; and a daol was indeed blackening the King's side. When they examine him it runs out among the benches, and the company jumps up as one man and puts it to death—in what manner is regrettably not stated.

In a footnote O'Curry gives two other instances where the " gnawing " or mortification of human flesh is attributed to the daol. The first occurs in the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick, where St. Fiacc had his leg gnawed by one. The second is in the *Felire Aengus*, where a daol fed on St. Ite's or Mide's side until the insect grew to the size of a young pig. " It is certain," remarks O'Curry, " that, as far as our traditions and actual experience go, the dael, or darbh-dael, of our times, shows no disposition to come into contact with living human flesh ; but our satirical post-mortem elegies frequently represent the mortal remains of the satirized person as being torn by daels in the earth." He suggests that maggots have been magnified by the poets into daels. In a note to " The Children of Uisnech "[20] he identifies the darbh-dael with the cockchafer, the *Melolontha Vulgaris* of naturalists, and gives the following piece of folk-lore, current in his day, concerning it. After the robin had covered with leaves the tracks of blood from the feet of the Virgin in her flight with the infant Jesus, the darbh-dael came along and removed them in order to betray the fugitives' course to their pursuers. Hence, traditionally, its persecution. He mentions instances of the occurrence of the word " dael " in Irish place-names, and the epithet " daeltenga," " dael-tongued," bestowed on a chief notorious for his bitterness of speech.

Shearman, in referring to the same legendary incident, says "the Daol is even in our times an insect of popular disrepute, and an object of aversion among the peasantry, who associate it with the betrayal of our Lord."[21]

In the Hebrides the " cearr-dubhan " beetle and the daol are also associated with the betrayal of Christ ; the former's fault is less heinous than that of the Irish beetle, but when he is seen he must be turned over on his back.[22]" Ceardfhiollan " and many other variants suggest that his name is not understood in current Gaelic.

Dr. Douglas Hyde has a good deal to say about the insect. Out of a dying woman's mouth (she was so indurated in miserliness that she had actually refused alms to a wandering angel) " there came a host of dardeels. Patrick let a screech and ran for fire to put on them. When he came back the woman was dead and the dardeels gone. . . . The reason the dardaol (pronounced in Mid-Connacht " dhardheel ") is burnt, is because if you stamp on it with your foot, or kill it with a stone or stick, the next time your foot or the stick or the stone strikes a

person or an animal it will give rise to a mortal injury. That is the reason the dardaol is taken up on a shovel and put in the fire, or else destroyed by a hot coal. . . . In the South of Ireland the dardaol is generally known as dearg-a-daol, and in the AngloIrish of Connacht he is called a " crocodile."[23]

Its dull black colour and threatening movements have made the little creature an object of unmerited hatred and superstition in many other countries besides Ireland."[24].

In a letter to Lady Wilde a friend of hers wrote " One day when out snipe-shooting I saw a horrid-looking insect staring up at me. I called to a man close by, and asked him the name of it. He told me it was called the *Thordall*, and was reckoned a great cure for the " chin-cough " ; for if anyone got it safe in a bottle and kept it prisoner till it died, the disease would go away from the patient. It was just the time to try the cure, for my child was laid up with the epidemic. So I bottled my friend and daily examined the state of his health. It lasted for a fortnight, and at the end of that time the child had quite recovered, and the horrible-looking insect lay dead."[25]

In a story from one of the Connaught islands the same creature (not actually named) is the shape taken by a witch for the purpose of stealing her neighbours' corn. [26]

In what part of Ireland the name took the form of " thordall " is not stated, but it is likely that " thordael " was heard and written. In either case the spelling leads us to another variety of beetle which has beliefs associated with it similar to those existing in Man and Ireland about the Tarroo-deyll. In Sweden, says Thorpe, the Thorbagge (*scarabaeus stercorarius*, dung-beetle) was sacred to Thor.[27]" Relative to this beetle a superstition still exists . . . that if anyone in his path finds a Thorbagge lying helpless on its back, and turns it on its feet, he expiates seven sins ; because Thor in the time of heathenism was regarded as a mediator with a higher power or All-father. On the introduction of Christianity the priests strove to terrify the people from the worship of their old divinities, pronouncing both them and their adherents to be evil spirits and belonging to hell. On the poor Thorbagge the name was now bestowed of *Thordjevul* or *Thordyfel* (Thor-devil), by which it is still known in Sweden proper. No one now thinks of Thor, when he finds the helpless creature lying on its back ; but the good-natured countryman seldom passes it without setting it on its feet, and thinking of his sins' atonement."[28]

Grimm says, " Some traces of beetle-worship I am able to disclose " ; but he is less certain of this explanation of the Swedish name-Norwegian " tordivel," " torr " among the Jutlanders-without wholly rejecting it, observing that the Anglo-Saxon name for the insect was " tordwifel, plainly made up of ' tord,' dung, and ' wifel,' beetle." He instances the English " dumbledore," the Netherlandish " tor," beetle, and " drektorre " for the dung-beetle or else for the devil's coach-horse (our Manx tarroo-deyll), and adds that the Icelanders have turned the Norse word into " torfdifill," turf-devil.[29] Elsewhere he mentions German beliefs that " on his horns he carries red-hot coals into a roof, and sets it alight . . . lightning will strike a house into which this beetle is carried." The German people, he says, place the stag-beetle in close connexion with thunder and fire.[30]

In Old Icelandic the name was " tord-yfill " ; the Shetland name for " a large beetle " given in a list of Norse-derived words current there is " turdeill,"[31] which has more resemblance to the Manx name. The resemblance may be accidental; in Gaeldom the superstitious beliefs have mostly been transferredso far as the various insects are identifiable-from the dung-beetle to a

fellow beetle equally black and more sinister in looks and gestures. As we have seen, in Sweden seven sins are remitted for setting the one kind on its feet, in Ireland they are forgiven for killing the other kind. In Scotland the former must be turned on its back. In Germany and Man, and probably in Iceland, the tarroo-deyll takes to roofs and causes fires ; in Ireland it is to be killed with fire. In Man and Ireland it is associated with the cure of disease ; in Ireland it both cures and causes it. In all the countries it owns an infernal, or at all events a pagan, master, and behaves accordingly.

Either there is an accidental similarity of the names in Norse and Irish, which is unlikely, or else one language has borrowed from the other. The Manx " tarroo " and the Irish " dara " and " dearga " probably owe their existence to the Irish *doirbh* or *dairbh*, a word for a water-insect which is believed from Donegal to Kerry to cause disease in a cow which swallows it. In the former county it is a worm, and the disease it causes can only be cured by persons named Cassidy ; in the South-West it is a beetle which makes the white hair fall off the cow, but the white hair only; if she has none she is immune. This of course is a superstition of a different type, and more akin to the Manx belief about the " man-creeper," or " man-keeper " as Professor Edward Forbes called it in his notes on Manx folk-lore contributed just a century ago to *The Mirror*.

That the first part of the name in the Isle of Man should have taken the form of " tarroo " and be understood to mean " bull " is not surprising, for there is everywhere a persistent association in folk-lore of horned beasts with beetles. *Taurus*, for example, is Pliny's name for *scarabaeus terrester*, and Grimm collected many other names of the same kind, including the significant Swedish " horntroll." In both Germany and France a beetle is a stag-" hirsch " and " cerf volant." The Lapps say that the sexton or dung beetle which entomologists call *silpha lapponica* is descended from the reindeer.[32] Even the modest little Manx caraig and his brothers in England bring rain as the horned rain-gods of three continents used to do. So the threads cross and recross.

Footnotes

1 *A Book of Folk-lore*, chapter iii.; a work recently reprinted without the date of its first publication.

2 This cautious Manxman is well-advised, for when a brother of the poaching craft in the Netherlands was unlucky enough to shoot at a temporary hare the recoil of his gun knocked him down and twisted the barrel, while the hare, now a rapidly-swelling globe of blackness, chased him to the nearest tree, up which he clambered just 1n time to save himself. (Thorpe, *Northern Mythology*, iii., 289.) Somewhat similarly, a Galloway poacher who set a gin to catch a hare was surprised on the following morning to find his dog trapped in it ; next time it was his cat. After this he gave it up. (*Gallovidian Encyclopedia*, page 154.)

3 Used in other forms silver negatives equally the secret influences projected bywitch or fairy; an amulet worn on the person, as so many are still, should be set in no other metal. Cornwall has a humane modification of its employment as ammunition against witches ; instead of shooting it into the witch-hare, the Cornish induce the suspected culprit, when in her human shape, to give change for a silver coin, thereby depriving her of the power to harm the other party to the transaction. A Manx charm should be paid for in silver, if it is to be paid for at all ; just as a silver coin should cross the palm of the fortune-telling gypsy. Sometimes the silver cure is worked directly upon the actual sufferer instead of upon the originator of the trouble; all over Scotland water which has been in contact with silver is used to cure animals that have been bewitched or overlooked. The giving of silver-mounted playthings and a " christening-spoon " to children may be an unconscious tribute to the old sentiment about the metal. In the Isle of Man silver has the name of b°ing a favourite substance with the fairies, but its use against the powers of darkness is comprehensible enough; for magic must be met with magic, and is not the moon the cold fountain of all glamour ? And her symbolic metal is silver.

4 The purr stories, however, may have been brought from the Continent, and need not presuppose the existence of wolves on the island. Strabo (Bk. iv., ch. 4) says of the Gaulish swine that they lived out of doors and were of extreme size, strength and swiftness. " To persons unaccustomed to approach them they are almost as dangerous as wolves."

5 In *A Manx Scrapbook*, pages 105, 272-4, and 356.

6 In Germany, Grimenl says, " a white goat is reckoned wholesome in a horse's stable." (*Teutonic Mythology*, page 1484.)

7 Footnote to " A Manx Myth," in *Mylcharane*, " poems from the Manx by Elizabeth Cookson," a 12-page pamphlet printed at Douglas in 1858.

8 Johnson, *Folk Memory*, page 139, from Tyack, *Lore and Legend*, page 26.

9 A doctor in Cornwall has recently reported finding the finger of a baby patient bound tightly with a white horsehair, taken twice round and tied with a reef-knot. It is added that hairs from the tail of a horse are used in Gloucestershire for reducing a wen or a thick neck in females. (*Cornish Folk-lore Notes*, repr. from *Jnl. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, 1915.) In the Northern Isles " a hair from the tail of each cow or other beast about the place, was pleated and fastened over the byre door " on Tulya's E'en, seven days before Yule Day. (*Ork. and Shet. Records*, Oct., 1913, page 26.) The horsehair buarach with which the cow's feet are tied at mincing-time is considered by the older Highlanders to be a holy and venerable thing. (Henderson, *Survivals in belief*, page 296.) In Carmarthen Museum there is a charm against witchcraft, made of horsehair, which eras acquired in 1921 after ha: ing been in use for centuries. On the other hand, in more countries than one, horsehair halters were used by witches to skim dew from their neighbours' pastures, and milk was afterwards extracted from them.

10 Enquest and Petition Files, Rolls Office,

11 *Witchcraft and Superstition in Scotland*, page 222. The belief in horse-hair eels was universal up to a century ago. Izaak Walton held it, so did William Cobbett. McAlpine in his Gaelic Dictionary founds his derivation of *easgann*, " eel," upon it " *easg*, a ditch where eels come alive, and faonn, a hair, the thing from which they breed."

12 *A Manx Scrapbook*, page 350.

13 Irish Texts Soc., vol. vii.

14 *Leine*, cloak ? i.e., the Cloak of Forgetting which he shook between Fand and Cuchullain. It is tempting to expatiate upon the various articles the bag contained, but the temptation must be resisted.

15 *Silva Gadelica*, ii., 323.

16 Among certain tribes of North Arnerican Indians " the bag is made of the skin of an animal (such as the otter, wild cat, serpent, bear, raccoon, wolf, owl, weasel), of which it roughly preserves the shape. Each member of the [secret religious] society has one of these bags, in which he keeps the odds and ends that make up his ' medicine' or charms." (Golden Bough, abridged edition, page 698.)

17 In the *Tranactions of the Ossianic Society*, vol. v.

18 J. G. Mackay in *Scottish Gaelic Studies*, iii., part i.

19 O'Curry's text, *Atlantis*, iv., i6o.

20 *Atlantis*, iii., 414.

21 *Loca Patriciana*, page 194, note.

22 *Carmina Gadelica*, ii., 188.

23 Evidently a corruption of the Western form of the Irish name, which Dinneen gives as " dearga-daol."

24 Collected from *Religious Songs of Connaught* and *Legends of Saints and Sinners.*

25 *Ancient Legends of Ireland* (edn. of 1902), page 193.

26 *Ancient Cures, etc., of Ireland*, page 149.

27" Bagge " is equivalent to the Celtic " mac " and " mab," hence Thorbagge means " Thor's attendant."

28 *Northern Mythology*, ii., 53.

29 A belief that it lived in the thatch and could set it on fire may have helped the Icelanders to turn " for " into " torf." Sound has similarly been adapted to sense in an English dialect variant of dumbledore-" tumble-dung," and in the first part of the Manx name, " tarroo-deyll."

30 *Teutonic Mythology*, pages 691-3, 183.

31*Orkney and Shetland Old-lore Miscellany* for 1909.

32 Folk-lore, xxix., 186. Of the stag-beetle Grimm in the supplementary volume of Teutonic Mythology says: "in the Hartz they wrap him up in moss, letting the horns stick out, and strike at him blindfold, one after the other, as elsewhere at the cock; whoever hits him takes him." Grimm does not specify the kind of moss used ; is it the staghorn moss ? Not only would that be appropriate, but it would form yet another link between the beetle and the greater horn-wearers (not forgetting Auld Hornie himself), through a Welsh fantasy which I heard not long ago: on a certain midnight in the year staghorn moss can be seen, by those who are gifted with visionary power, to take on the appearance of a great forest, in which herds of wild deer are roaming about. With this must be placed a belief held by old Exmoor people, that when stags die their life passes into that of the streams which they drink from and bathe in, and to which they often come when they feel their end drawing near; and that this is why the staghorn moss and the hart's-tongue fern grow so plentifully on the banks of Exmoor rivers.

§ 2. Beliefs about Plants and Flowers.

The names of plants and flowers associated in various ways with superstitious doings or beliefs would make an extensive list, which would merge without any strict dividing-line into a list of herbs which were formerly used for medical purposes alone. The work is well worth doing, but it needs a botanical knowledge which I do not possess. The medicinal uses of a number of herbs are given in the two Manx dictionaries, and *Yn Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 311 and 312, has a list compiled by A. W. Moore.

Of the generic terms, luss, the commonest, seems, broadly speaking, to be given to low-growing plants, *bollan* and *bossan* to those having more stalk, although there are many exceptions, for plant-nomenclature is extremely fluid. The general name for grasses in Ireland, cuise, diminutive cuiseag, Scottish cuiseag, rye-grass, has become confined in Man to the ragweed, cushag, or in full, cushag-vooar. Contrariwise, the colloquial Irish name for ragweed, boholaun and booliaun, is used in Manx, in the form of bollan, for plants in general. The Manx bossan, similarly used, represents the Gaelic baddn, diminutive of bad, a tuft, bunch or cluster. Luss precedes or follows its adjectives; bollan and bossan precede only.

Things which are simply lucky or unlucky in a general way, to do, to see, to hear, or to wear, are almost innumerable, and probably very few, if any, are peculiar to the Island. Many have

already been recorded in sundry publications, and others in my fourth chapter; but I have seen no mention of what is called the " even ash," a twig which bears, exceptionally, an even number of leaves. This is lucky to find by chance, and nearly as lucky if obtained by searching. It should be plucked and carried on the person, early in the day or at the beginning of an undertaking, and everything is then sure to go well. The same belief is current with regard to the " two-topped " ash-twig (which likewise has two leaves at the end instead of the usual single one), in England and in Cornwall—if I may differentiate between the two regions as they deserve, especially in folk-lore matters.

The ash observance is not quite obsolete. And in the same way, but going back a generation, before a farmer went to a fair with something to sell or other business to transact, it was no uncommon thing, within the memory of middle-aged people, for him to search his land for a four-leaved clover ; sometimes he would spend an hour or more in looking for it. If he found it (which was probably not often the case) he would put it in his pocket and go off feeling sure of getting a good price for what he had to sell, or, if he wanted to buy something, sure of getting it cheap.

In these two charms from which similar results are expected there is a conflict between odd and even numbers. Doubtless it is the unusualness of the number in each case which makes it significant, though the ordinary clover is chewed to relieve toothache. Apart from that, odd numbers belong to the gods above, even numbers to the gods below, it has been observed. The latter seem to have the chief say in most men's lives and deaths. Nevertheless the number nine is potent above all other numbers in Manx superstition. " Manannan's house has nine doors," a saying which I have heard without fully understanding it, may be connected with the nine waves or the ninth wave, which have a mystic significance. To walk nine times round a little hill, a standing stone, or an old site, works wonders. Nine sips of water from a sacred well go far to restore the health. A drowned man will not come to the surface of the sea until the ninth day.[1]

In the vegetable kingdom the number nine operates in this way. After walking over a stretch of country for the first time in one's life a nine-fold plait should be made of grass, rushes, or other suitable material taken from the ground in question. It should be made as soon as possible-before sleeping, at any rate. Or better still, make it while walking and carry it till familiar ground is reached. Presumably this is done to bind the powers of the place - the earth-spirits-from doing mischief to a trespassing stranger. [2]

As regards the contexture of the charm, the plaited strapwork ornamenting many of the Manx crosses ranges from threefold to the ninefold pattern on the shaft of a Kirk Michael cross. These interlaced patterns -Mediterranean via Norway-found on gravestones, crosses, swords, and elsewhere, have another humble descendant in the convolutions scrawled in whiting by the Manx housewife about her threshold ; the root idea being to intrigue the evil eye of the witch or other ill-wishing adversary and keep it out of mischief.

The house-leek (hiss y-thie) grown on a wall, especially close to or right over the door, though it is not known to have the fire-resisting quality it has in other countries, tends to avert a more dreaded evil, the entrance of witches, and even the entrance of their unseen ill-will. It has, in fact, exactly the same beneficial effect as in Italy.

The virtue of the vervain is so limitless that the herb lends itself to the use of magic both black and white. The Manx witches employed it in their mischief-making spells, just as

Medea offered it up to Hecate ; and a couple of years ago a young singer at a Manx musical-guild competition held a leaf of it in her hand while singing, and won the first prize. Vervain may be heir to the magical properties of other plants, since verbenae was the classical name for branches of any sacred shrub-e.g., laurel, myrtle, olive.

In flowers, yellow is the most desirable colour. But although yellow flowers were scattered about the thresholds on May Eve and November Eve to keep out fairies and witches and any other unwelcome influences which might be active on those nights (just as three sunflowers are placed on North Italian windowsills against the spirit of nightmare), the broom-blossom is not on any account tolerated inside the houses of right-thinking people even to-day, at least in the parish of Patrick, and doubtless in other districts as well.

Lately I have learned from a Lezayre source that even the sprays of the kieran or mountain ash, the luckiest thing that grows, should never be brought into a room, though crosses made of its wood may advantageously be hung up. This may explain a puzzling incident related in *A Manx Scrapbook*, page 211, in which a kieran shoot was left planted in a house that was being vacated, to cause misfortune to the next-comers ; but the explanation only takes us a step further back. Why should thë growing leaves not be brought in ? The following rare exceptions to the witch-repelling power of the mountain-ash (to give it its English name) may be worth noting. In Finland, though sacred, it is one of the five trees not created by God, but by the principle of evil. In Italy witches have been seen eating its berries and riding through the air on its branches. In Friesland, also, they eat the berries at their gatherings on St. John's Eve.

Conversely, it is equally unaccountable, considering the whitethorn's intimate relations with unseen powers, that the presence of its blossoms in a house is not objected to, for aught I have heard to the contrary.

" Walking out with some friends in the neighbourhood of Douglas, Isle of Man, we met an old Manxwoman, who was carrying in her hand a large piece of ragwort. . . . We asked her what she used it for, and she replied that it was to prevent her from catching infectious diseases ; that when she visited anyone who was ill, she always smelled at a piece of ragwort before entering the room, which prevented her from taking the complaint. She told us she had used ragwort for the purpose ever since she was a girl."[3]

I do not recall having met with this use for the cushag plant or its flower; but it is boiled and drunk as a medicament in Ireland, according to " Lageniensis," and Mr. W. B. Yeats, in his Notes on Lady Gregory's *Visions and Beliefs* (page 284.), says he remembers it having been used to make a medicine for horses.

The sacredness of the trammon or elder-tree to the fairies is not often met with outside the Isle of Man, though the elder is generally associated with magic and witchery. A belief corresponding closely to the Manx one, however, existed among the old inhabitants of Prussia, who belonged to the Slavonic race. There the elder was not only connected with the fairies, it harboured the spirit who controlled them-Putscaet, the deity who protected trees and groves in general. He dwelt under the sambuc (elder) and offerings of food and drink were made to him. His devotees begged him to send the Barstuccae (underground sprites, earth-men) to live in their houses and bring them luck. For these food was placed every evening in the barns. If it was taken the omen was good, if left, bad.

Specific references to the material of superstition are so rare in T. E. Brown's writings outside " The Manx Witch," that the avowal he puts into the mouth of Tom Baynes in " *Christmas Rose* " concerning the queerness of trees in general and the sycamore in particular is noteworthy :

" Trees is very curious though !
If there's ghos'es takin' anywhere
It's in trees it is. Aw, they've got their share
Has churchyards and that-but mind you me,
I've seen funny things in a sycamore tree.
Aye, aye, my lads. Aw, lower down
All right of coorse, all right, I'll be bound
You can grip them there, and feel the stuff
That's in them-aw, all right enough.
But-up in the branches. I say!-they're about;
But never mind ! look out! look out! "[4]

Footnotes

1 In the case of a relation drowned off the Manx coast I have found this belief to be true.

2 Another use is made of the ninefold plait by German girls on St. John's Day ; they weave one of flowers and cast it backwards into a tree to find out how long they must wait for a husband. (Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, page 1825.)

3 G. H H., in Science Gossip for 1871, page 215.

4 *Collected Poems* (Macmillan), page 180.

CHAPTER VIII
SONGS AND RHYMES

§ 1. Folk-songs.

THE ensuing remarks on Manx folk-songs are confined to the folk-lore associated with the airs and the words. In some cases the air belonging to a certain set of words has been lost, in others words have been refitted with airs not belonging to them ; but to discuss these bereavements and remarryings would require a knowledge of music, which I do not possess. Those who are interested in the musical side of the subject should consult Nos. 28, 29 and 30 of the Folk-song Society's *Journal*.

In a volume devoted mainly to folk-lore first place must be given to the " fairy tunes " which, according to tradition, have been overhead by fiddlers and singers when travelling the country, or near their own homes. One such man, known to the older generation of Lonan people as the Fairy Tailor, was a craftsman who had friendly relations with the Little Ones. He lived far up the Laxey valley, a few dozen steep and rugged yards above the brink of the river, where it pours musically among boulders and rocky basins.

He was therefore in a position, both physically and psychically, to hear these seductive melodies, and being a musician himself, was able to commit them to memory. His method of doing this, an old native tells me, was to " scratch the music in a way he had of his own " on the rocks of the stream with little pebbles, after singing it over to himself. When he was thus engaged his voice could be heard for a distance of two miles ; which beats the record set up by St. Columba in preaching. That would be somewhere about eighty years ago. None, however, of the Manx airs now known as fairy tunes is attributed to him, nor are any, so far as I can make out, still decipherable on the rocks below the ruins of his little house ; but I must repeat that I do not easily read music in any notation.

" YN BOLLAN BANE."

Chief among the fairy tunes which have survived is the " Bollan Bane." The tradition of its supernatural origin is so strong that three or more localities are indicated in which it is said to have been given to mortals, the man and the circumstances differing in each case.

1. It was got from the fairies by Juan Brew, a great-uncle of the Mrs. B., aged about 80, who told me the story. He was one of seven big, strong sons reared in a sod-house in the great glen of Ballaugh. The house consisted of two rooms and a loft. One was the living-room, the other was the sleeping-place of the parents and any current babies or small children ; as the children grew bigger they were accommodated in the loft above.1Well, this Juan had a long journey to make from his home in Glion Mooar as far as Douglas itself. The way he would lose only one day's work he started late in the evening,2 meaning to come back home the night after. The road he took was the shortest road-over the tops. Towards midnight, while he was walking along the Croggan Road in the mountains between Glion Dhoo and Injebreck, thinking of nothing, like the Irishman, what did he hear but music coming from some place he couldn't rightly see. He was greatly taken up with the tune, and got it off by heart with whistling it over and over on his way down to Douglas. He was not a singer or a fiddler, but he played on the clarionet,2 and before he would take bite or sup after getting back nothing would do but he must reach down his clarionet off the laf'. And that was the first time the " Bollan Bane " was ever played by a man.

2. " Old Bill Pherick was coming home late one night across the mountains from Druidale, and heard the fairies singing, just as he was going over the river by the thorn-tree that grows there. The tune they had was ' Bollan Ven,' and, as he wanted to learn it from them, he went back three times before he could pick it up and remember it, but the third time he was successful; just then the sun got up, and the fairies immediately dispersed, for they always go at sunrise. He came home whistling the tune, and since then it has always been very popular, and very much played on the fiddle ; the words of the song ' Yn Bollan Bane' are sung to it. Many people think that Bill Pherick invented the tune ; but he didn't, he got it straight from the fairies."(Miss A. M. Crellin, of Orrisdale, in *Yn Lioar Manninagh*, ii., 195.)

A field on Ballabeg in Ballaugh parish, lying between the Bayr Jegga and the river, is still called " Croit Bill Pherick," Bill Pherick's Croft, and the croft itself is named in a record of 1697. If this is where Bill of the " Bollan Bane " lived, his whistling progress from Druidale homeward would inevitably take him down Glion Mooar and past the dwelling of the rival claimant, Juan Brew. Let us trust that they flourished at different periods of history, and that no unfortunate meeting occurred.

3. In Moore's *Manx Ballads*, page 76, the learning of the tune is made the motive of a short anecdote in the first person, with which an air, or a fragment of one, must have been interwoven in the traditional mode of telling it ; probably it was accompanied by a dance also. Briefly, the narrator says that he went up the Big Mountain one snowy New Year's morning after sheep, and heard the tune being played on the big fiddle as he was coming down the Laaghagh ; but when he had got as far on his journey as Shen Curn he found he had forgotten it. He turned back to where he had heard it, and They were still playing it. He resumed his way home to Bishopscourt after having been out all night, and tried it over to see whether he still remembered it ; and his wife was scandalized to hear him playing such a merry tune on a Sunday: in English, " Poor Paddy, is it not Sunday morning with thee ? " He threatens her in round Falstaffian terms: " Away to bed with thee, Moll, or I will make the sun shine through thy ribs like they were a ribbed stocking! " and goes on with his song.

Slieu Curn overlooks Ballaugh and Kirk Michael; y Clieu Mooar, " the Big Mountain," in that part of the world is usually understood to mean Snaefell. Snaefell is certainly a long way from Slieu Curn and Bishopscourt ; but admitting the data, Paddy must have got his tune somewhere in the upper part of Sulby Glen, which agrees roughly with the other versions.

4. W. H. Gill's *Manx Music*, Introduction, page vi., says the tune was learned by a fiddler who described the circumstances to a man still living when Gill wrote, not long before 1898. This is the only account which explains why the tune was called the " Bollan Bane." The fiddler had plucked the herb of that name to protect himself from the fairies. Feeling safe because he was wearing it, he followed them and their music till he thought he knew it. " When he had crossed the Slieu Dhoo and got to the big Carnane where the Giant lies buried " he found he had forgotten it. He went back a mile or so up the mountain slope and learned it again. It was now Sunday morning, the sun just rising as he crossed the shoulder of Shen Curn, and made for his cottage in Orrisdale. His wife Molly scolded him for staying out all night, but he placated her by playing her the tune.

By " the big Carnane where the Giant lies buried " was probably meant the cairn on the summit of Slieu Curn in Kirk Michael parish. In this account may perhaps be traced a forgotten point in the tradition—namely, that the 24th of June, or the eve of it, was the date of

the transaction , for the Bollan Bane being the Manx national flower, Manxmen wore it in their hats on Tynwald Day.

5. A version of which I have been able to get only the rudiments says the " Bollan Bane " " was first heard coming over the top of a hedge in Sulby Glen late at night by a man who was walking there," the hedge, of course, being the usual stone wall.

In addition to the two well-known airs called " Bollan Bane," both of which are given in *Manx Ballads*, a third, quite different from. either, has been found, also in the North of the Island, by Miss Mona Douglas, and recorded in the *Journal of the Folk-song Society*, No. 28. It is a mere fragment or prelude, haunting in outline and capable of infinite variation and extension. By its briefness it fits admirably into the interludes, where the music is wanting, in Paddy's monologue as given by Moore. With it is associated a cante-fable which is a Laxey-side version of Moore's but somewhat more fully told, though the hero is nameless. He still gets the tune from near the base of the Big Mountain—Snaefell—but actually on the Mullagh Ouyr to the South-East.

1 Such was the universal habit of life among the lower classes for untold generations, and the remains of this type of cottage can still be seen here and there, especially in the North. Not all had the upper floor. As a family reached maturity it hived off by individuals; in the present case one of the boys went to live on Sulby Curragh, one to the Laxey district, and others to the unknown regions of the South.

2 In the country the evening begins as soon as the morning is over.

3 Probably in church, where the music was formerly instrumental.

" NY KIREE FO 'NIAGHTEY."

The two songs which have in the past been dearest to the Manx people relate incidents in the lives of two legendary figures. In " Ny Kiree fo 'Niaghtey," "The Sheep under Snow," the owner of the lost sheep is Nicholas Kelly, or, in another version, Colcheragh, which is equivalent to Qualtrough. In either case he is Nicholas Raby, Raby being the name of his farm in Lonan. One branch of the tradition says that he himself composed the song while he lay in Castle Rushen Gaol under a false accusation of murder, from which he afterwards cleared himself by an alibi. Another story runs to the effect that he died of grief for the loss of his beloved sheep, and that the song was inspired by the tragedy. This is equally improbable, for the song says nothing of Nicholas's death; it is a lament for the destruction of his flock. But whoever composed the words, they have almost certainly been fitted to a much older air.

The Qualtrough family farmed Raby in the 17th and 18th centuries, and their name crops up in documentary records in a way which shows that the Qualtroughs or Colcheraghs were influential in the parish ; but they have, I believe, now died out in that region. The name is still common in Rushen, whence the Lonan Qualtroughs must have migrated.

The words of " Kiree " have not undergone many variations. In the course of a chat with an old friend living in a poor quarter of Douglas two or three years ago she surprised me by volunteering several songs in Manx. Into the words of " Kiree " she imported not only a phrase from " Mylecharaine," but replaced an orthodox line with one which struck me as both unusual and pathetic :

" O irree, my guilley, as gow shin dys clieu,
Son to kiree fo sniaghtey, dhowin, dhowin dy liooar ;
Ta ny kiree s'yn loghtyn, as dy glcoayr s'yn Clieu Ruy,
As ny gheed'n veggey keayney, 'Maa, Maa, c'raad to shin ersooyl ? ' "

The last two lines she gave on another occasion as :

. . . . . Clieu Lliean,
As ny gheed'n veggey keayney son ny moiraghyn meen."

S'yn loghlyn she explained as " in the pinpound " ; y laggan, " the hollow place," is standard here. *Gheed'n*, she said, meant lambs, though she knew the word *eayin* well enough [a note in my copy by Mark Braide states correct north-side usage] . The English would then be, literally:

" O rise up, my lad, and go to the mountain,
For the sheep are under snow, deep, deep enough;
The sheep are in the pinpound, and the goats in Sheu Ruy,
And the little lambs crying, 'Mammy, mammy, where have you gone ? ' "

or

" And the little lambs crying for their gentle mothers."

For Clieu Ruy the singer also gave Clieu Dhow as an alternative ; " or some say Slieu Hiarn," i.e. Sheu Chiarn Gherjoil. These, together with Clieu Lhean, all lie near each other.

" MYLECHARAINE."

In contrast with the simple theme of " Kiree," " Mylecharaine " is a jumble of motives which have only the old fellow's name to connect them. The piece as we find it in Moore's *Ballads** seems to consist of three different songs relating to him:

1. Stanzas 1 to 3 : questions from an unknown person, and his replies, respecting the discovery of his treasure.

2. Stanzas 5 to 9: his daughter's reproaches for his unfashionable costume, and his answer, which attempts to placate her by promising her a share of his wealth.

3. Stanzas 10 to 12 : a curse upon him for dowering her at her marriage. Stanza 4 is related to the same subject.

The lines are interspersed throughout with an irrelevant refrain, evidently belonging to a love-song or lover's lament ; it probably formed part of an earlier set of words sung to the air, and is more in keeping with its extreme melancholy.

All that emerges with clarity is that Mylecharaine was an eccentric miser who had become rich fortuitously. He was a sufficiently conspicuous figure to inspire the song-makers ; when and where he lived there is little to show, but it must have been in or near the Curragh not later than some time in the 18th century. The earliest bit of his legendary biography is

furnished by Kennish, who says he dwelt in Andreas, and found a crockful of money when digging turf in the bog. " I got it embedded deep deep 'neath the moor " is Kennish's rendering of the Manx.2 He adds that the song was much sung at harvest suppers. George Borrow visited a family of the name in the Curraghs in 1855, who told him they were lineal descendants of the great man. As " Mylcraine " the name is still extant. Why he should be cursed for giving his daughter a marriage-portion is unintelligible, unless it can be referred to a time when it was customary in Man, as it formerly was in Iceland, that the bridegroom should pay the bride's parents a sum of money in exchange for her. Even so, the bitterness seems excessive, lacking a knowledge of the circumstances.

The earliest known set of the words, discovered in manuscript by Mr. Cyril Paton, are datable to somewhere about 1780;3 they show clearer traces of the love-song which must have belonged at one time to the air. Several sets of words may have been current at the same time, as in the case of other songs, and may have since become amalgamated. In the version given by Moore an attempt has been made to apportion the various parts to different speakers.

The missing silver cross of the Mylecharaines may not be wholly foreign to the buried treasure which is part of the subject-matter of the song. The illustration of the cross, dated 1870, in Harrison's second *Mona Miscellany,* was probably drawn by himself, as it bears the initials " W.H." At all events, he borrowed the cross, together with " some other small valuables," from a person unnamed, and before being able to examine it thoroughly had to clean off " the soil and peat which filled up some parts of it." Is it possible that this is the same hoard as one which was known to Waldron in the first quarter of the 18th century, and apparently had not long been dug up ? " 'Tis certain," Waldron says, " that they have no Timber, but what they find in Bogs or Sloughs when they dig for turf. . . . In searching for it, they sometimes meet with greater Prizes : I myself saw a very fine Silver Crucifix, and many pieces of old Coin, not only of Copper, but also of Gold and Silver. They were got into Hands which would not be prevailed to part with them, tho' they knew neither the Age nor Meaning of them." Though Harrison's cross was not a crucifix, it bore an incised figure on the upright portion.

Harrison concludes his short notice with a tradition that Mylecharaine was an illegitimate son of one Christian of Milntown, who, fearing an invasion, hid some valuable property in the Curragh. This son afterwards secretly dug it up.

A version of the Manx words was supplied by Harrison to *Notes and Queries*, 4th ser., v., 468, with a ridiculous translation bv another hand. In his *Mona Miscellany*, vol. ii., he says he sought in vain for any family history. Doubtless he meant history of a documented kind, for fragmentary traditions are still floating about the North of the Island. An old Ballaugh woman whom I know claims, not incredibly if a generation or two be added, that she is the great-grand-daughter of the chief figure in the song. Their family tradition concerning him runs that he always went dressed in leather clothing which he tanned for himself, using the hide of a cow for his coat, a calf-skin for his breeches, and wearing a leathern hat. He wore odd carranes, one black and the other white. His daughter got a sweetheart and grew proud, and she wanted him to dress better and more like other people. He had a crock of gold under his bed, the savings of his lifetime. The girl was wanting money to get married, and she stole some from his crock one day while he was out on the brooghs. The next time he looked at it he found this out, so what did he do but he took it away in the night-time and hid it in a turf-lag in the Curragh. Christian Milntown got some of it too, but he had no right, and the narrator's uncle, Juan Brew, got some and bought Scroundal Mill out of it ; but most of it was

never found. It seems Mylecharaine must have died soon after he hid it, and lots of people have been looking for the rest of the treasure since that time, but they have never been able to find it. " It belongs to us by rights, and we would be rich now if we could find it."

These particulars, it is perhaps needless to say, are not put forward as being historically accurate ; but some authentic family traditions seem to be mixed up with them. There are documents in the Rolls Office which show that Philip Mylchraine of the Glaick bought Scroundal Mill from one Brew in 1830, when Brew had been in possession for sixty years, i.e. since 1770.

Those mysterious malefactors the Carrasdhoo Men are sometimes brought into the affair, the idea being that they and Christian were conspirators, that he profited by their acts of wrecking or smuggling, and that Mylecharaine somehow got a share of the proceeds. The willow-screened " glen " which Esther Nelson in her ballad says the Carrasdhoo Men inhabited may be explained as the Lhen watercourse, which is sometimes thus pronounced. Mylecharaine's wealth is said in the oldest version (Paton) to have eventually " gone down the Lhen." It is curious that the scenes of these two traditions lie so close to each other. Curious too to find in Ballaugh a hundred years ago an Ann Mylecharaine being sued for digging unlawfully in a man's meadow ; but her object, ostensibly at any rate, was to get turf-fuel, not treasure.4

What member of the celebrated Christian family is supposed to have been involved it is impossible to say. A broad belt of land-holding Christians extended from Maughold to Jurby and Ballaugh for centuries. As regards those in Jurby, Keble's *Life of Bishop Wilson* alludes to the punishment of a Captain Christian (parish Captain, no doubt) of Jurby for " misconduct " in 1713. In 1732 a Captain William Christian of Jurby contributed to the purchase of land for the new parish church of Lonan. (Statutes.) Both William Harrison and my octogenarian descendant of the miser-hero of the Curragh introduce, it will have been noticed, a Christian into the Mylecharaine legend, but their statements conflict. The tradition reported by Harrison is that the treasure belonged to Christian and that Mylecharaine got hold of it. The tradition I have heard, from a woman who would have been about 20 years of age at the time when Harrison was investigating, says that the treasure was Mylecharaine's and Christian got hold of it. But she was a Mylcraine, and perhaps Harrison's informant was a Christian. Except for the fact that the affair forms the theme of the most famous of Manx songs, no importance attaches to it at this time of day. I shall therefore merely summarize an enquiry which was held before a special jury in Jurby in the year 1698, in case it may bear on the two foregoing statements, or even on Waldron's. The report itself, slightly abridged, will be found in Appendix III. by anyone who may be sufficiently interested to run through it.

The enquiry arose out of a previous trial, at Ballakeage in Ballaugh, of one Mylecharaine of Jurby, and a Steven Tere of the same parish, for slandering a Captain Christian by saying he was in possession of a bag of money. Mylecharaine (he is called both Thomas and William in the course of the Traverse proceedings, but affixes his mark to the latter name) had evidently been convicted of having uttered the slander after hearing it from Tere, but the Traverse Jury reversed the verdict of the Slander jury, on the grounds that the Lockman had stated the charge incorrectly, that Mylecharaine had not been given sufficient time to clear himself, and that Christian had confessed that there was some excuse for what had been said. It is inferable that Mylecharaine had affirmed or implied that Christian had come by the money wrongfully, though the report of the enquiry says nothing of this, merely that Christian was accused of possessing the coins and sharing them out to another man. It seems clear that Tere and Mylecharaine were actuated by an aggrieved feeling ; but whether their grievance had any

connexion with the treasure which forms the subject of the song, or exactly what lay behind the whole affair of the slander, must remain, I suppose, a trifling but insoluble enigma.

1 On page 53 of the *Ballads* the word Vorts should be prefixed to line 11

2 *Mona's Isle*, page 36.

3 *Proceedings of Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, vol ii., No. 3.

4 *Mona Miscellany*, ii., 231.

" ARRANE NY FERRISHYN,"

"The Song of the Fairies," possesses several features worthy of notice from the folk-lorist's point of view. In it Finn MacCoole and his band are, like the Finoderee, well on their way to becoming supernatural beings. The song has four or five variants ; and as neither Harrison [1] nor Moore [2] states when or where he came by his set of words, perhaps we may conclude that it was formerly familiar to everybody. Of this curious specimen of the grotesque in literature I append a versified translation :-

THE SONG OF THE FAIRIES.

What would'st thou do if the pot-hook and hanger
Sprang up in anger, scrimmaging hotly ?
Sprang up the pot-stick and dozens of dishes,
Banging viciously each against each ?

Sprang up the pot-stick and both the round tables,
Cressads and basins, goggans and platters,
Fell all to fighting, scratching and biting,
Till they would smite thee flat on the floor ?

What would'st thou do if the blotched Tarroo-ushtey
Nabbed thee ? Or grabbed thee the horrible Glashtyn ?
Gripped thee Finoderee, thick-kneed and waddling,
Rammed thee for bolster 'twixt him and the wall ?

Finn with his Fenians from Alba, from Eirë,
Glen-taking fairy and glaring buggane,
Were they to gather this night at thy bedside,
Steal thee they would in a straw suggane !

" Cressads " were the crucibles in which lead and pewter were melted to be run into moulds for spoons and other implements. " Goggans " were small wooden vessels holding less than half a pint - the English " noggin."

The violent antics of the kitchen utensils described in the first two stanzas are, I think, to be understood as something more than a mere effort of the versifier's fancy. They picture activities of an invisible force which, for convenience, students of such subjects call telekinesis, or a poltergeist, and the Manx people call a *scaan*, or a *drogh spirrid*. The transition, therefore, from such disturbers of domestic peace to the Buggane, the Water-bull,

the Glashtyn, the Finoderee, and even to the Fairy of the Glen, whoever she may have been, is not so abrupt as might appear on the surface. The inclusion with these gentry of Finn MacCoole and his fraternity is in accord with his position in modern North Irish folk-lore and folk-tales as distinguished from the more literary side of the cycle. In the latter the Fenians are the heroic hunters of the bardic lays, magnified human beings with little of the magical atmosphere about them. They are seen thus in the Manx " Fin as Oshin " fragment with its Scottish antecedents ; and very noticeable is the contrast of their implied status in the " Arrane ny Ferrishyn." The final line of the song, which threatens the hearer with abduction by the bogies in the straw rope, does not, any more than the rest of their proceedings, stand alone. This was a recognized, though not the regular, fairy method of stealing human beings.3

Roeder found a variant of the last stanza which does not differ in sense from that given above, except that instead of simply " suggane," a straw-rope, a " clean suggane " is to be used for transporting the victim.5" Clean " might be translated " basket " or " creel," or " pannier," but if its commonest equivalent, " cradle," be adopted, it harmonizes with what appears to be the song's purport, namely, that it was sung to amuse children, and perhaps to overawe the naughty ones.

There is another Manx tale in which the inrush of the fairy mob on a kidnapping raid causes a magnetic disturbance of the furniture. A woman of Kirk Patrick, the mother of the story-teller, when alone in the house and in bed with her baby, heard Them come swarming in and felt the pull at the child in her arms. She called upon the Almighty, and the intruders rushed for the door. As they swept by, a little table beside the bed " went round about the floor twenty times."6 Their whirlwind campaigns are more often noticed out of doors.

In a similar vein to the first half of the " Arrane ny Ferrishyn " is a Munster song cited by Roeder,+ as an Irish wren-song. The earlier lines are familiar in Man also.

" The Wren, the Wren, the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze ;
. . . .
A [little] cock-sparrow flew over the table,
The dish began to fight with the ladle,
The spit got up like a naked man
And swore he'd fight with the dripping-pan,
The pan got up and cocked his tail,
And swore he'd send them all to jail."

The word translated " waddling " in the third stanza of " The Song of the Fairies "-sprangagh- is defined by Kelly as " knock-kneed," with consequent peculiarities of gait-lameness or waddling. Cregeen explains *sprangagh* to mean " irregular." A Manx-speaking friend tells me it might be understood also as " odd, eccentric in behaviour or appearance," which is evidently an extension of Cregeen's definition. The word is obsolete in Scottish Gaelic and absent from the Gaelic dictionaries I have consulted ; but *sprancdha* occurs in the Glenmasan MS. (*Celtic Review*, iii., do7), where Prof. Mackinnon translates it as " active, vigorous." The 14th-century progenitor of the Clan McIain of Islay, Ian Sprangach, is called in English John the *Bold*. These significations are so totally opposed to the Manx definitions that the resemblance between *sprangach* and *sprangagh* must be deemed superficial and deceptive ; the Scottish *sprangach* is probably a nasalized form of *spracach*, which seems, by the way, to reappear in the English dialect word " sprack " with the same meaning.

The point of interest involved in the use of *sprangagh* here is anthropological. Of Finoderee's physical characteristics, as handed down by tradition, the most striking are his extreme hairiness and the peculiar structure of his legs ; and these, together with his name, may some day furnish a clue to a better understanding of his affinities. Those mysterious early invaders of Ireland, the Fomorians, were led by a chief named Ciocal, the son of their Queen ; and Ciocal is particularly described as being " rough and knocker-kneed." But that alone does not warrant us in classing Finoderee as a Fomorian, nor does he now show any other characteristics of that demonic race.

1*Mona Miscellany*, ii., 64; here it is called " the Phynnoderee Song."

2 *Manx Ballads*, page 70. It is the only ballad of which Moore omits to mention the provenance.

3 In Westray, Orkney, the fairies came to take away a woman who had been delivered of a child, that she might suckle one of their own, " but she loosed the ropes as fast as she was tied." (*Orkney and Shetland Old-Lore*, 29th April, 1909.) At Bowden in Roxburghshire a man, while he "was tying his garter with one foot against a low dyke, was startled by feeling something like a rope of straw passed between his legs," and he was carried away to the Eildon Hills, a fairy headquarters. The rope broke at a ford (note the barrier of running water), and he heard a thousand voices in the air about him. (*Folk-lore of the Northern Counties*, page 196.) In modern Greece the tables are turned, and the straw-rope nullifies the maleficence of certain demons who, in the Isle of Man, would be given honourable rank among the bugganes : " You may render the Callicantzaros harmless by binding him with a red thread or a straw rope." (Lawson, *Modern Greek Folk-lore*, page 202.) The red thread, and a black cock which Mr. Lawson mentions in the same connexion, are known in the Island also as safeguards against evil influences.

4 *Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 136.

5 Evans Wentz, *The Fairy Faith*, page 120. He does not reveal the exact locality of the affair, but it is said to have happened in Dalby. In Scotland similar attempts are attributed to witches.

6 *Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 191.

" YN FOLDER GASTEY,"

" The Nimble Mower," celebrates the prowess of Finoderee, who thereby shares with Manannan and Berrey Dhone the honour of a song entirely devoted to himself. A verse translation will not obscure its single and doubtful allusion to a magical practice in the second line ; I have, indeed, slightly accentuated the point with a simile which is not found in the original. (Similes are rare in the Manx ballad poetry, which prefers to stick grimly to its facts.)

THE NIMBLE MOWER.

Finoderee stole at dawn to the Round-field,
And skimmed the dew like cream from a bowl;
The maiden's herb and the herb of the cattle,
He was treading them under his naked sole.

He was swinging wide on the floor of the meadow,
Letting the thick swath leftward fall;
We thought his mowing was wonderful last year,
But the bree of him this year passes all !

He was lopping the blooms of the level meadow,
He was laying the long grass ready to rake;
The bog-bean out on the rushy curragh,
As he strode and mowed it was fair ashake !

The scythe that was at him went whizzing through all things,
Shaving the Round-field bare to the sod,
And whenever he spotted a blade left standing
He stamped it down with his heel unshod!

The first line of the original Manx as given in Moore's *Ballads* is otherwise remembered as *Finoderee hie ad lheeaney ny lomarcan*, or *ad lheeaney lomarcan*. In that case the meaning may be that Finoderee went to the meadow alone; or *lheeaney ny lomarcan* may be understood as a field-name comparable with " Glion ny Lomarcan " above the Dhoon in Maughold. Was Lomarcan, " the Lone One," ever a name for the Finoderee or some similar personage whose place in folk-lore he has usurped ?

Luss y voidyn, which in line 3 I have translated literally as " the maiden's herb," is, according to Kelly's *Dictionary*, " maidenlip," whatever plant that may be. Is *loss y voidyn* the same herb as the Irish *lus na Maighdine Muire*, which Dinneen says is the St. John's wort or yellow pimpernel ?

" The cattle herb," *luss yn ollee*, is known in England as the goutweed, *Aegopodium podagraria* (P. G. Ralfe).

Yiarn, literally " iron," in the last stanza, translated " scythe," is sometimes used for a sickle. *Folder*, in the title, certainly implies that he mowed with a scythe, but the title of a Manx song may be much more recent than the words. Scythes, however, were known in the Island at least so far back as 1577, when " a Sickle or Syth " is an alternative in the Customary Statutes. Finoderee therefore mowed the Lheeaney Rhunt, or the Lheeaney ny Lomarcan-as well as all the other meadows he has mowed unsung-with a scythe ; but his may have been a scythe of the obsolete type, which had the blade almost in the same plane as the straight, thick shaft ; a much heavier implement than the modern scythe, and one demanding greater strength and stamina, while correspondingly wider in its sweep.

Finoderee's handling of his *yiarn mooar* was nonetheless masterly, as might have been expected from one of his superb physique. Moreover, in that age of gold, before he suffered his rebuff from the thankless farmer near St. Trinian's, he was more willing and more energetic than ever since. He was more numerous, or more ubiquitous, too, and most of the larger farms were lucky enough to possess one of him. As we may gather from the song, he was then not too shy to start work at daybreak and let himself be seen and admired in the grey light by the respectful villagers, while they peeped over each other's shoulders through the sallies and alders that screened the little verdant meadows of the Curragh Glass. In the days ere he lost confidence in Manxmen he not only mowed for them, he raked and carried for them, reaped, made bands, tied sheaves and built the stack for them, threshed it and stacked the straw again, herded sheep and cattle, and whisked horse-loads of wrack and stone about the land like the little giant he was. He attacked his jobs like a convulsion of nature, making the hard ground soft and the soft ground waterhence the Curraghs. When he mowed he flung the grass to the morning star or the paling moon without heed to the cock's kindly word of warning from the near-by farmyard. He could clear a daymath in an hour and want nothing

better than a crockful of bithag afterwards. The concentrated fury of his threshing resembled a whirlwind, an earthquake, Doomsday; his soost was a blur and the air went dark with the flying husks. In the zeal and zest of his shepherding he sometimes drove an odd animal over the cliffs, allowing, but he made up for that by folding in wild goats, purrs and hares along with the sheep. For he was a doer, not a thinker, mightier in thew than in brain, and when he should have been cultivating his intelligence at the village school between his nights of labour he was curled up asleep in some hiding-place he had at the top of the glen.

Or so we may imagine him to have been in the days of his glory, since we can no longer hope to meet him unless in a degenerate aspect hardly distinguishable from humanity. Superhuman he may have been, but not supernatural. Indeed, in the second line of the " Nimble Mower " it looks as though he were operating an ordinary process of human magic, that of lifting the dew between daybreak and sunrise. Drawing a cord of plaited horsehair behind them along the grass before sunrise, especially on May Day, was a favourite morning exercise of women who wished to divert the milk and butter of their neighbours to their own dairies ; when a cow afterwards walked over the track of the cord the spell began to work upon her milk. Possibly it could then be milked out of the same cord hung from a nail in the witch's house, but of this I know nothing, nor wish to. Or the dew of the neighbour's land could be collected into a vessel, with the same intention. But it may be that Finoderee, who owned neither house nor churn, was merely removing the moisture which is such a hindrance to early-morning mowing. Since there is room for doubt, let us impute the better motive.*

* It has even been said that the dew of May (besides beautifying the complexion) gives, in the Isle of Man, immunity from witches. (Rhys, *Celtic Folklore*, ii., 302.)

" BERREY DHONE."

" I would direct special attention," wrote T. E. Brown, " to ' Berrey Dhone ' ; it is a witch-song of the ruggedest and the most fantastic type." Like " Mylecharaine " and " Kiree," it was inspired by the doings of a personage who is now legendary, but in Berrey's case a doubt may be entertained whether she was ever other than legendary. The words of the song have as many variants as " Mylecharaine," and are even more obscure ; but their obscurity may be due to an intentional allusiveness. It is, at any rate, in keeping with the character of Berrey, who, according to what dim memory of her now survives, was an arch-sorceress.

Partly for the sake of illustrating the verbal alterations which are liable to take place in songs of this class, I append two specimens of the essential portion. That they both belong to the same district is shown by the place-names. The first is from a MS. of Robert Gawne of the Rowany, written about 1830, and printed in Moore's *Manx Ballads*, page 72 ; I have made a few trifling corrections :-

FIRST VERSION.	LITERAL TRANSLATION.
Vel oo sthie, Berrey Dhone ?	Art thou within, Berrey
C'raad t'oo shooyl,	Dhone ?
Mannagh vel oo ayns immyr	Where walkest thou,
glass	Unless thou art in a green strip
Lhiattagh y Barrule ?	On the side of Barrule ?
Hem mayd roin gys y clieu	Let us go to the mountain
Dy hroggal y voain,	To lift up the turf,

As dy yeeaghyn jig Berrey Dhone	And to see will Berrey come
Thie er yn oie.	Home to-night.
Hooyl mee Carraghyn	I walked upon Carraghyn
As hooyl mee Sniaul,	And I walked upon Snaefell,
Agh va Berrey cooyl dorrys,	But Berrey was behind thedoor.
As y lhiack er e kione.	And the slab on top of it.*
Hooyl mee Carraghyn	I walked upon Carraghyn
As hooyl mee Clieu Beg,-	And I walked upon Slieu Beg;
Va Berrey cooyl dorrys	Berrey was behind the door
Cha shickyr as treg.	As safe as a rock.+
Hooyl mee Pennypot	I walked upon Pennypot
As hooyl mee Clieu Ouyr ;	And I walked upon Slieu Ouyr ;
Va Berrey cooyl dorrys,	Berrey was behind the door
Eddyr carkyl y stoyr.++	'Mid a circle of the treasure.

* Or " the slab on her head."
+ Or " snug as a beetle."
++ Query, for " Eddyr carkyl as stoyr," " Between circle and treasure " ? I*mmyr Glass* may be a place-name. *Dorrys*, likewise, may be the Creg yn Dorrys, a rock below the summit of Snaefell on its East side.

SECOND VERSION.	LITERAL TRANSLATION.
Vel oo sthie, Berrey Dhone ?	Art thou within, Berrey Dhone ?
Myr mannan you shooyl,	Like a kid thou wert walking
Riyr, harrish ny Drinan Glass	Last night, over the Drinan Glass
Lhiattagh y Barrule.	On the side of Barrule.
Refrain.	Refrain.
Hie ad roin gys y clieu	They went before us to the mountain
Dy hroggal y voin ;	To lift it from us ;
Cha yerkyms jig Berrey Dhone	I do not expect Berrey Dhone will come
Thie er yn oie.	Home to-night.
Hooyl mee Carraghyn	I walked upon Carraghyn
As hooyl mee Clagh Ouyy ;	And I walked upon Clagh Ouyr ;
Va Berrey cooyl y dhorrys	Berrey was behind the door
Cha jeen as ghoayr.	As sheltered as a goat.
Hooyl mee Cayyaghyn	I walked upon Carraghyn,
As hooyl mee Clieu Ruy ;	And I walked upon Sheu Ruy ;
Va Berrey ey y Vurroo	Berrey was on the Burroo
*As raun ayns yn aaie.**	And a seal in the home-field.

* I am indebted to Miss Mona Douglas for the Manx of the above; it was heard by her on the border of Lonan and Maughold some years ago.

The scanty relics of the Berrey Dhone legend, inclusive of the song, might be pored over for a year and a day without satisfactory results. One potet, if not much else, stands out clearly : Berrey was a woman of the mountains, a witch, sibyl, hag or giantess of the upper regions. In addition to her hauntings of the central hill-tops, her name and her oracular presence are attached to a pool or ford of a highland stream in South Maughold, at which divination was practised.[1]It is familiar knowledge that such circumstances usually connote a tradition of the drowning of the personage in question at the spot; the tradition purports to account for a placename which is, in fact, that of a river-spirit or deity of the waters. Here the tradition exists only in a distorted and barely recognizable shape.. As recorded by William Harrison it relates that an Amazonian character called Margayd y Stomacher or Margayd y Stamina, whose doings have got entangled with Berrey's own legend, killed an ox named Berrey Dhone at this pool, hence its name " Lhing Berry Dhone." Beside this may be placed the local assertion that a water-bull which, in a folk-tale still extant, emanated from the Laxey river about four miles away and haunted the Moaney farm, was occasionally called " yn Dhow Vargayd," Margaret's Ox.

Certain scraps of ancient Irish folk-lore are brought to mind by this association of an ox or bull with Berrey Dhone, and by her reputed haunting of the Gob ny Scuit on North Barrule in the shape of a spectral bullock. Though popular tradition avers that she assumed a bovine form occasionally, in an earlier stage of the legend it may have been that she merely fostered an animal of the kind which has since become confused with her amorphous self. Such companionships between cailleachs and beasts are frequently found in Irish lore. One Dil, a witch or giantess, had her calf, cow or ox, which is called Brega in the Dindsenchas of Magh Breg,[2] but elsewhere Damh Dili, Dil's Ox, " a fabulous ox of antiquity." It was the offspring of an ordinary cow and a bull which came out of a lake in Tvrone. Another Irish mountain-hag, Bera, owned a bull named Tarbh Conrui, Curoi's Bull ; as reported to Kuno Meyer, he swam across a small stream to reach a cow, and Bera destroyed him by turning him into a stone which can still be seen there. In a second account he was Curoi's own bull, and was apt to emerge from rivers and lakes, like the Dhow Vargayd in Lonan. Though normally a giantess of the heights, Bera is credited with having constructed the causeway of stones across the ford of the Cammogue below the fairy hill of Knockainy, Aine's Hill, and in some parts of Ireland she is identified with Aine the water-goddess or fairy, daughter of Culann. Aine also owned a bull-a red one-with which she entered her green hill.

But the most of what little material exists for the deciphering of Berrey's secret is provided by the song upon her. Although its two surviving versions differ verbally, they agree in mentioning nearly all the mountains in the neighbourhood of the Laxey and the North Laxey valleys, as well as others more distant, and it is more than probable that she was understood to be buried on, and to haunt, a mountaintop, as were and did the Cailleach Bhera in Ireland and Scotland, and "Michael" on Slieu Carn Vael in Kirk Michael. In that event, the " vel oo sthie," the " dhorrys," and the " clagh er e kione " would be intelligible as alluding to a cairn, monolith or dolmen corresponding to the Cailleach Bhera's Houses on a number of summits in the North of Ireland.

Wirt Sykes [3] relates a legend he gathered personally on the spot, concerning a " witch " who slept by day under a cross-roads stone on a mountain-top near Crumlin, Monmouthshire, and came forth at night ; and records another legend of a cannibal " witch " who slept under a

stone at Llanberis. Here " witch " is evidently to be understood as hag or giantess-a calliagh, not the human wielder of spells.

In Irish folk-lore Bera has grown from human size, or shrunk from the stature of a nature-goddess, into a " witch " of the Welsh type just mentioned, and of the type of Berrey Dhone. It would be difficult to decide whether Bera in Ireland is a euhemerized demi-goddess or a semi-deified human being, or whether again beings of each kind have not coalesced in her folk-lore. Rhys appears to have regarded her as wholly human in origin. In the course of some remarks in *The Welsh People*, page 58, he says : " The stories have not been found, so far as we know, in any very ancient MS. ; but there appears to be no reason to suppose them to have begun late. They would seem, however, to have been developed relatively so late that Bera has only succeeded in attaining to the status of a witch or wise woman, of a nun or hag, of a revered person or a giantess, not quite to that of a goddess, unless it be in Argyll, where she ruled the storm." A Bera was brought over from "Spain" to be the bride of a legendary Irish king, and another (or the same) Bera was *filia Ocha Pyincipis Brittonum Manniae,* " daughter of Ocha, chief of the Britons of Man." What is meant by *Mannia* is doubtful.

These resemblances in name and character are put forward in a tentative spirit, not in the hope of showing that Berrey is a graft of Bera, or of any other Celtic sorceress, on Manx traditional lore. In the Insular witch-tradition she heads a graded corpus of witches, and this points rather towards the opposite side of the Irish Sea and the witch-system of Scotland and England; while her name, with its short first vowel, comes nearer to that of the Teutonic Bertha (Berchta) than to Bera's.[4] To connect Berrey with Bertha a Teutonic link would be needed. As the witch-cult in the Isle of Man contains elements from Teutonic as well as from Celtic sources, it may well be that the same mixture would be discovered in a figure who seems to have been regarded as the chief representative of that cult, if we had more material to work upon. But unhappily the stone is on her head too long for much to be remembered about her.

She may have been no more than a human witch of long ago, one pre-eminent in her profession, around whom a mass of legend accreted during the centuries. But on the whole, the impression I get personally from a study of the words of the song-it may strike others differently-is that it celebrates the apparitions of a legendary being who was believed to be buried within or under an erection of stones, or in a cave, from which she issued to wander about the hill-sides, sometimes in the form of an animal. Nothing very different is deducible from the tiny scraps of tradition extraneous to the song ; a song which is remarkable, even among Manx folk-songs, in its inference of the mass of legend which has perished during the last hundred years or so.

1 For particulars see *A Manx Scrapbook*, page 395.

2" Brega, the name of Dil's ox, i.e. Dil, daughter of Lug-mannair, who went from the Land of Promise, or from the land of Falga. . . In the same hour that Dil was born of her mother the cow brought forth the calf named Falga ; [rette Brega]. So the King's daughter loved the cow beyond the rest of the cattle, for it was born at the same time ; and Tulchine was unable to carry her off until he took the ox with her. .The land of Falga was the Isle of Man. From the same root as this Irish custom no doubt grew the Lappish one of giving a reindeer calf to a child when baptized, to be kept as his or her own.

3 British Goblins, page 368.

4As she was called " Bery " in 1700 by a woman who was almost certainly speaking in Manx, there is no ground for suspecting that the name is a dialect form of Betty, as " Kirry " is of Kitty.

" TRIT TROT."

One of the shorter pieces in Manx Ballads runs, in English, as follows:-

Spin, wheel, spin,
Spin, wheel, spin,
May every branch upon the tree
Spin above my head;

The king shall have the wool,
And I shall have the thread,
For old Trit Trot she shall never get.

In Manx Fairy Tales it is :-

Spin, wheel, spin,
Sing, wheel, sing,
Every beam upon the house
Spins above my head;
His / Hers is the wool,
Mine is the thread,
She little knows, the lazy wife,
My name is Mollyndroat !

The bearings of this remnant of a song, unintelligible by itself, are elucidated to some extent by Rhys's discussion [1] of a fairy personal name which in Teutonic, Welsh and Scottish tales takes such forms as Tom Tit Tot, Trwtyn Tratyn, Trit - a - Trot, and others innumerable. In Sir George Douglas's *Scottish Fairy Tales* it is Habitrot.[2] This is a fairy personage—the sex varies in the different versions—who is a skilful spinner and helps a woman to accomplish a task of that kind on condition that she discovers the name of her elfish benefactor. In two Swedish spinning-tales the unknown name is Titel-tata, Titeliturë, and other perversions. In the Manx story belonging to the above song the benefactor is a giant, whose name Mollyndroat must be guessed. The last line in version No. 1 should therefore be read " Old Trit Trot shall never get *me*."

In the *Folk-lore journal*, vol. vii., pages 138-143, and in *Folk-lore*, vol. ii., pages 246 and 132, where many specimens of the tale are collected, " Trit-a-Trot " is the Irish name of the supernatural spinner. Grimm [3] mentions the use in Germany of *alte trute* for " old witch," and the quieting of noisy children by the words " Hush ! the drut will come." He remarks that she exactly fills the place of Frau Holla or Frau Berchta, and can therefore more appropriately be the ancient Valkyr. Both Holla and Berchta, be it noted, were spinning goddesses, and, later, fairy queens.

This is one of the fairy-tale motives which have been interpolated among the annals of witchcraft. It turns up in the trial and criminal confession of Major Weir's sister, in Edinburgh, who acknowledged that the Queen of the Fairies had helped her to spin an unusual quantity of yarn.

Taken literally, the exhortation in the song to the beams, or to the branches, to spin the thread, does not explain itself. A clue to the meaning may, perhaps, be found in a Lonan

legend which I versified in *A Manx Scrapbook*. There a woman is helped in her spinning by outdoor spiders of no common variety. In the song it may be that the spiders of the roof or of the branches were expected to spin under fairy control.

And why does the singer assert that the thread is to belong to her ? A note in *Teutonic Mythology*, page 1396, on the Lithuanian version of the story, in which weaving takes the place of spinning, explains the line in the Manx song. The Lithuanian " Lauma," who is very like Berchta and Holda, Grimm says, appears in houses and helps the girls in their weaving. The work flies apace, but in return the girl must guess the fairy's name. If she can, she is entitled to keep [4] the linen she has woven ; if not, the Lauma takes it away.

1*Celtic Folklore*, pages 583 to 598.

2 Some light may be cast on this fairy name by a remark in *Teutonic Mythology*, page 232, that " Ecke, Vasat, Abentrot, are styled brothers." Ecke is a folk-lore counterpart of Aegir and therefore of his equivalent Hler, both of them gods of the sea.

3 Teutonic Mythology, page 423.

4 " Their women are said to spin very fine, to dye, to tissue, and embroider." - Kirk, *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves and Fays.*

" HOP-TU-NAA."

A Peel version of this old Hollandtide Eve song (11th November) is given, presumably by Miss Sophia Morrison, in *An AngloManx Vocabulary*, page 84. A slightly different one, for the most part written down for me by Mr. J. G. Callister, late of that city and s.s. Tyyconnell, as he used to sing it in his boyhood, runs as below-the refrain " Hop-to-naa " precedes every line :

" Put in the pot, Put in the pan,
I scalded my throat, I feel it yet.
I ran to the well, I drank my fill.
What did you see there ? I saw a pole-cat.
The cat began to grin
And I began to run.
I saw Jinny the Whinney +.
Go over the lake +
A griddle in her hand
All ready to bake;
Her teeth were green
And her eyes were red,
And a thickness of hair at her
Upon her head;
Baking bonnags,
Toasting sconnags ;
I asked her for a bit,
Guess, the bit she gave me!
A bit as big as my big toe !

I dipped it in milk,
Then happed it in silk,
And went home by the light of the moon." *

+ Or: Jinny the Whinney
Came out of the lake.

The word "lake" suggests that some, at least, of the lines have been borrowed from an English source, and the colour of Jinny's teeth helps us to identify her with the water-spirit " Jenny Greenteeth " of Lancashire and other Northern counties. In Lancashire Jenny was a " boggart " who lived in ponds and pools, especially those having a slimy or reedy surface, into the depths of which she dragged down the unwary.

Jinny and jenny have relatives abroad. " In a Danish folk-song the Nõkke . . . wears a green hat, and when he grins you see his green teeth."[1] In Bohemia the water-demon is named " Greenteeth." In Brittany the female korrigans have red eyes. A good deal of forgotten Manx folk-lore has left its traces in the old and often apparently nonsensical songs; the baking activities of Jinny, and the remarkable luxuriance of her locks, resembling those of the mermaid, may have had their value in stories which have now evaporated. There is a vague notion that she inhabited " some place in the Curraghs," as would have been congenial to her, but where the Whinney was I do not know. [2] At any rate, she must once have been a popular figure in folk-lore circles ; an old woman who lived in a roadside cottage between Ballaugh Old Church and the smithy some thirty years ago was nicknamed Jinny-the-Whinney.

Among the specimens and fragments of this song collected by Roeder [3] is an exceptional one from Glen May which begins :

" I went to the rock,
The rock gave me cold,
The cold to the smith," etc.

" Cold " should perhaps be " gold." There is a rock called the Gold Stone above the junction of Glen May with Glen Rushen, from which gold of a sort was extracted, and used for gilding crockery.

The Hop-to-naa boys who went about in a dressed-up procession on Hollandtide Eve expected, like the Wren-boys on St. Stephen's Day, to profit by their vocalism. Having no feathers to dispose of, they collected beforehand all the salt herrings they could come by, each boy bringing his contribution obtained by fair means or foul from the household stock. These they carried round the town with them in buckets, singing their song and exchanging their herrings for sugar and butter with which to make themselves a feast of " taffy." Sometimes coppers would be given them instead.

1 Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, page 491. The Nõkke was a water-spirit.

2 There was formerly a " Lough Gat y Whinney " near the place now called Gat y Whing in Andreas.

3 *Lioar Manninagh*, iii., 186.

SAMUEL RUTTER AND HIS SONGS.

Although Rutter was not a Manxman, the excellence of the songs he composed during his residence in the Island, and the Manx flavour of some of them, induce me to add a few words to Harrison's outline of his life in *The Mona Miscellany*, i., 225.

His family and birthplace have not yet been ascertained. Harrison says "he was probably a native of Lancashire." Moore quotes from an unspecified source a tradition that he was a grandson of John Rutter, a miller on the Derby estate at Burscough, in Lancashire.[1]

The name, however, was scattered through various English counties from the 13th century, and was particularly strong around Tarporley in Cheshire, where Rutters held land until the 17th century. A search through Lancashire and Cheshire records should therefore bring Samuel's name to light, and the results might fittingly be added to the Dictionary of National Biography.

It is possible that his association with the Stanleys arose from their connexions with Wirral in general (where the name of Rutter was not uncommon) and with Bidston in particular. The Bidston estate and its hall belonged to a branch of the Stanleys in the first half of the 17th century, and at the same period the Bidston Parish Registers record Rutters in that place.

Rutter's position as domestic chaplain to the seventh Earl of Derby and his consequent residence with the family in Castle Rushen doubtless smoothed his way to an Archdeaconship, and, in 1661, to the See of Sodor and Man. His earlier reverend offices in the Island, and another in England, did not check the engaging swing and gusto of his drinking songs.

" Cast away care and sorrow, the cankerworm of the brain,
For hee that cares for the morrow has spent a good day in vain,
And hee's but an ass, and hee's but an ass,
That drinks not and drinks not again!

Wee count him a dangerous fellow, as any that lives in ye State,
Who when his neighbours are mellow doth trouble an addle pate,
With thinking too much, with thinking too much,
And all about living too late !

Let our Hostess fill up the flaggon, and let her good ail be brown,
And let it spitt fire like a draggon, till our heads be the wisest in town,
'Tis a life for a King, . . . '

or for his Cavalier chaplain, or even a 17th-century Archdeacon ; but the parting between the Bishop and his Muse must have been painful to him.

The above links are taken from *Manx Ballads*. Only a portion of Rutter's songs appears to have seen the light, but some may well be floating about the world unidentified.

A. W. Moore noted at Knowsley a MS. dated 1648, and entitled " A Choice Collection of songs composed by Archdeacon Ryter."[2] These were known to William Harrison forty years previously ; the complete superscription which he quotes shows that the pieces were

composed before Rutter became a Bishop. [3] Such a MS. collection of Rutter's work was reported in *The Times Literary Supplement* about seven years ago to have been purchased at an auction and sent to the United States.

1*History of Isle of Man*, i., 480.

2*Lioar Manninagh*, i., 105. [sic 110]

3 Mona Miscellany, i., 227.

CHAPTER VIII
SONGS AND RHYMES

§ 2. Folk-rhymes and Children's Rhymes.

An old rhyme formerly current among Manx children began :

" Darraty Bundye sat on a stone,
Combing her hair and singing a song."

" Bundye " being pronounced to rhyme with " shunned ye." Who she was, and the rest of the lines, are equally hidden from the writer. In case she was a mermaid or a relation of Jenny the Whinney, she is given a place here.

The following additional stanza to the English nursery-rhyme " Sing a Song of Sixpence " was " obtained from the Isle of Man " :

" Jenny was so mad
She didn't know what to do;
She put her finger in her ear
And cracked it right in two." [1]

Another rhyme repeated to Manx children, but evidently of English origin, ran thus, so far as it can now be recalled:

"Little Brown Betty sat in the wood,
She went to the river and found it in flood,
She went to the mountain and found it on fire.
. . . . .
The cat's in the cupboard washing. the dish,
The dog's in the kitchen frying the fish,
The pig's in the garden digging up spuds,
The cow's in the parlour chopping up wood.
. . . . . .
She turned herself round and went down to the sea,
And Little Brown Betty came singing to me."

An elderly Manxman I knew many years ago in Lezayre was fond of repeating this quatrain descriptive of seasonal signs :

" When the fern is in the nook
The gibbon is in the sand;
When the foxglove is in bloom
The bollan is at the rock."

Another version says " hook " instead of " nook," which suggests the curled-up ends of the fronds. The third line sometimes runs " When the corn is in the ear." The whole thing has probably been translated from the Manx ; I have seen it, in an extended form in Scottish Gaelic, though I cannot recall where. Guernsey has a proverb of which the English is

" When the barley comes into ear, the wrasse [rockfish] is good under the rock." (The Manx proverbial saying, " What comes with the flood will go back with the ebb," is also claimed by Guernsey.) [2]

A children's skipping-rhyme used up to twenty-five years ago, and perhaps later, in the neighbourhood of Lezayre Churchtown, is thus quoted from memory by Miss Mona Douglas :

" I saw three goats come over the shore,
I saw three people down at the tide,
The first was the King, the second was the Queen,
The last was the Sailor who walks by their side,
And they all went North (South, East, West)."

At the word " North " the two children who are turning the rope alter its speed, and again at the other three points of the compass. A variant of the rhyme, with changes of speed at the same place, ran as follows, but a line seems to have dropped out:

" I saw three people down on the strand,
A King, a Queen, and a Sailor-man,
And a little white goat ran on before,
And the wind was blowing West O ! "

From the same collector I have this scrap of jingle, but am not told that it was used in a game or in any special connexion. It was heard in North Lonan :

" Juan the Bat
And Tibbet the Cat
Eat their meat without any fat."

Theobald, in various stages of attrition down to " Tib," is a time-honoured name for a cat. Hence, no doubt, the jesting allusion in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act ii., Scene 4 : " Why, what is Tybalt ? " " More than the prince of cats, I can tell you ! " The Cat in Reynard the Fox (1498) is named Tibert.

The lines

" O Vanannan, Hiarn y ching dorrinagh,
Chur dy brattagh harrin nish ! "

" O Manannan, Lord of the stormy headlands,
Cast thy mantle over us now! "

were perhaps a charm, or part of a charm, for invisibility or protection by means of the magic mist with which he enwreathed the Island and its inhabitants. Manannan's " mantle " is reminiscent of the cloak of forgetfulness or separation which he shook between his wife Fand and Cuchulain in the old Irish story, so that they should never meet again, or should not remember each other if they did meet. Probably both the Manx and the Irish garment were, at some previous stage of the Manannan legend, that favourite property of folk-tale, the Cloak of Invisibility. In Ireland it was the *dion-bhrat-dubhra*, the CoveringCloak of Darkness,

which Aoibheall the Munster banshee lent to an O'Hartigan on the eve of the battle of Clontarf.

What was known as the *Feth Fiadha* (spelt variously) had an effect similar to that of the cloak or mantle. It appears to have been more in the nature of a ceremonial incantation, but " cloak " may have been a figurative term for it. Manannan laid this spell on the Tuatha De Danann when they retired into the fairy hillocks, and ever since that time they have been invisible to human beings, except when they wish otherwise. Patrick employed his own adaptation of it to persuade his enemies that he and his clerics were a herd of deer. Lesser persons, mere druids and poets, are said to have used a similar spell to render themselves or other men invisible. The name *Feth Fiadha* was sometimes given to a concealing mist which gathered of its own accord, a convenient auxiliary for fighters and lovers of which old Irish literature affords many examples.

" Lord of the stormy headlands " is a traditional epithet for the Sea-king. In the first volume of the *Transactions* of the Gaelic Society of Dublin, published in 1808 (page 69, note) Manannan is said to have been " called by the tale-writers of old Manannan mat lir, sidhe na ccruac, ' man of Manan, son of the sea, superhuman being of the headlands.' " *Ccruac* here (correctly *cruacha*) must mean headlands in the sense of mountain-tops. The Manx *kione*, plural *ching*, is applied to sea-promontories, not to mountains, and with three or four of these Manannan is still associated —with Spanish Head, with Peel Island and the adjacent cliffs of Creg Malin, with Jurby Head, less definitely with Gob ny Garvan in Maughold, and doubtless with others in traditions which have perished. But more vital in his legend is his presence from time to time on South Barrule and other summits.

If the foregoing couplet was used as a charm and is not a fragment of an old song, it is the only surviving specimen in which the King's name appears, [3] with the exception of a rhyme given in *Witchcraft and Second Sight* in the Highlands, page 83. " When a person is pulled up at law for abusive language, let him when entering the Courthouse spit in his fist, grasp his staff firmly, and say the following words :

" I will close my fist
Faithful to me is the wood.
It is to protect my abusive words
I enter in.
And Manaman Mac Leth,
And Saint Columbus, gentle cleric,
And Alexander in heaven."

Probably this charm from Kingairloch in Argyllshire (which, in its English form at least, appears to be incomplete), was adaptable to any legal cause, and was not valid only in slander cases. It suggests the question, did the popular belief in the efficacy of " touching wood " take its rise from faith in one's war-club or shillelagh ?

The recorder of the charm, the Rev. J. G. Campbell, thinks that " Leth " is a corruption of " Leirr " (as he spells it), which doubtless it is. He goes on to say, " Ni-Mhanainnein (i.e. the daughter of Manannan) is mentioned in a Gaelic tale as having remarkably beautiful music in her house, and ' the Dairy-maid, the daughter of Manannan ' (Bhanachag ni Mhanannein) is mentioned in another tale as a midwife, whose residence was somewhere near the moon." In her office and in her connexion with the moon she makes one think of Mëre Lucine or

Mëlusine, the French fairy evolved from the Roman goddess Lucina who superintended the births of children. She was known in England also. At Calver, near Barlow in Derbyshire, the fairies were accustomed to dance in a certain field at dusk ; in the midst of their ring stood a little woman, herself a fairy, who was called " the Midwife," and was always blindfolded. In that county it is said that when a woman is about to be delivered of a child, the fairies bring this little fairy midwife, her eyes being hooded for the journey. She assists ; and when all is over they take her back to Fairyland. [4]

That, needless to say, is a typical example of folk-lore's favourite trick of turning itself inside out. The more familiar story tells of a human woman being called to superintend a fairy birth; the fairies blindfold her for the outward and homeward journeys, so that she shall not remember the way into fairyland. But the fairy presence at the human birth is the truer parable, and should therefore be the older of the two versions. In support of this opinion we have the Hebridean aspect of St. Bride as a midwife ; in the Isles, Carmichael tells us, the ceremonial invitation to Bride to enter the house was made not only at the beginning of February and Spring, but when a birth was imminent. The pre-Christian Goddess Bride no doubt passed through a fairy-queen stage of existence in early Christian times, before she became a saint, and her office of superintending the transit from the formless world into this life has, throughout her changes of condition, clung to her name as a mark of her divine origin. She was a Spirit of Rebirth in Nature and in the human world, and it was probably she who was meant by the epithet " daughter of Manannan."

In conclusion, some comments on two folk-rhymes already published may not be out of place. Roeder records, in Manx, a blessing which he says the shearers used to sing when a sheep bounded away after being released. It was still occasionally heard, he states, both in Glen Aldyn and in the South at the beginning of the 20th century :

" Gow dy lhome as tar dy mollagh,
Cur lesh dy eayn braue bwoirrin,
As dy loamrey braue saillagh ;
My aikys oo moddey, eroym dty chione,
As my aikys oo maarliagh, roie er-y-hon !" [5]

In English, literally:

"Go (away) bare and come (back) hairy,
Bringing a fine ewe-lamb,
And a fine greasy fleece ;
If thou west a dog, stoop thy head,
And if thou seest a thief, on that account run !"

Slightly altered, the first line was also used by fishermen when shooting their nets : " *Gow magh dy lhome trooid thie dy mollagh*," " Go forth bare, come home rough." [6] The emerging net certainly has a bristly look, with noses, tails and fins sticking through the meshes; nevertheless, the saying is evidently one of the many things which have been adapted from a land-use to a sea-use.

The Manx sheep-blessing has kinship with one of the charms in *Carmina Gadelica* (i., 293), the Gaelic of which need not be given here. They start together, but while the Manx rhyme

keeps to the ground, that from the Scottish Isles quickly soars among the saints and angels. " When a man has shorn a sheep and has set it free, he waves his hand after it and says :-

" Go shorn and come woolly,
Bear the Beltane female lamb,
Be the lovely Bride thee endowing,
And the fair Mary thee sustaining,
The fair Mary sustaining thee. "

Michael the Chief be shielding thee
From the evil dog and from the fox,
From the wolf and the sly bear,
And from the taloned birds of destructive bills,
From the taloned birds of hooked bills."

Were there no sheep-stealers in Scotland, or was the Highland poet too polite to speak of them ?

" Ny three geayghyn s'feayrey dennee Finn MacCooil
Geay henneu, as geay huill,
As geay fo ny shiaaill."

" The three coldest winds that Finn MacCooil felt
A thaw-wind, a wind through a hole,
And a wind from under the sails."

This interesting triad recorded by Harrison in his *Mona Miscellany*, ii., 20, as a proverbial rhyme then current in the Isle of Man, varies in one item from a Scottish prose version given by Macbain in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Glasgow*, ii., 103, among a number of other traditional sayings in Gaelic about the hero : " A wind through a hole, a wave-top wind, and the thin (literally ' naked') wind of the thaw-the three coldest winds that ever Finn felt."

The damp chilliness of a thaw is obnoxious to beings even more fabulous than the chief of the Fenians :

" The mermaids can ought thole
But frost out of the thow-hole,"

says the *Gallvidian Encyclopedia* under " Thow." This seems to combine two of Finn's ventilators into one, since " the thow-hole is a name for the South, for the wind generally blows out of the South in the time of a thaw," McTaggart explains.

In Yorkshire it is Finn's closest British counterpart (after Arthur) from whom the thaw-wind is called 11 Robin Hood's Wind," because he found it the coldest of all winds. " Robin Hood could stand anything but a thaw-wind," says a Yorkshire proverb in Yorks, *Notes and Queries*, part x., pages 180 and 221.

Footnotes

1 *Manners and Customs of England* (Gentleman's Magazine Library), page 144.

2 MacCulloch, *Guernsey Folk-lore*, pages 539 and 515.

3 It is said, however, that in the invocation of the Manx fishermen for a blessing on their labours, the name of Patrick has replaced that of Manannan. See *Manx Fairy-Tales*, page 173, first edition.

4 Addy, *Household Tales*, page 134, She was probably Mab.

5 *Manx Notes and Queries*, page 9.

6 *Manx Proverbs and Sayings*, page 12.

CHAPTER IX
" WE'LL HUNT THE WREN "

§ 1. The Ritual.

Wren Boys, Ramsey 1904 [from *Birds of IoM*]

A WELL-KNOWN ceremonial custom has brought the wren into greater prominence in Manx folk-lore than any other bird. This custom of an annual sacrifice has three main aspects: the ritual, the reason given for it, and the song associated with it. To discover, so far as is now possible, the position of the custom among the traditions of the Island and its connexions with those of other countries, it will be necessary to start from ground already made familiar by Waldron, Townley, Bullock and Train, and later writers deriving from these. To avoid the tedium of repetition it will be best to reduce their several accounts to one. The small points on which they differ can be noticed afterwards.

On a certain day of the year, then, a wren was caught and killed. It was carried round, by a singing procession of men or boys, in a decorated receptacle from house to house, its feathers, in exchange for food or coins, being distributed to be worn as protective charms or luck-bringing amulets, or to be kept in the houses and the fishing-boats for the same purpose. The body of the bird was afterwards buried to the singing of " dirges," formerly in the churchyard with subsequent circular dances, but latterly on the seashore or in any convenient piece of waste ground.[1]

Two details mentioned by Townley are not found in any of the other descriptions : the use of a red flag (apparently instead of greenery), and the belief that the value of the wren as a luck-bringer depended on its being caught between dawn and sunrise.[2]

Dr. Kelly, in the *Manx Dictionary* for which he was compiling materials in the latter portion of the 18th century, gives (under " Baaltin ") a description of the Wren-ceremony in his ancestral district of Baldwin. The details in which it differs from that of other parts of the Island are that the processionists beat drums and flew colours (unless these were simply the ribbons attached to the " bier "), that the bird's remains were " deposited with much ceremony in Kil Ammon " (i.e. Keeill Abban, the ruined chapel near the old Tynwald Hill there), and that the evening concluded with games on an adjoining piece of ground.

SIMILAR CUSTOMS.

The main features of the sacrifice, or sacrament, if that term may be used, assimilate it to a widely-studied but not yet wholly explained group of customs, of which the ensuing specimens are characteristic.

" A Californian tribe which reverenced the buzzard held an annual festival at which the chief ceremony was the killing of a buzzard without losing a drop of its blood. It was then skinned, the feathers were preserved to adorn the sacred dress of the medicineman, and the body was buried within the temple amid the lamentations of the old women, who mourned as for the loss of a relative or friend." After the rites were concluded, three days and three nights were spent in dancing.[3]

" In order, apparently, to put himself more fully under the protection of the totem, the clansman is in the habit of assimilating himself to the totem . . . each clansman carries at least an easily recognizable part of his totem with him. Condor clans in Peru, who believed themselves descended from the condor, adorned themselves with the feathers of the bird."[4]

The Piaroans of the Orinoco pluck feathers from their sacred toucan, one for each member of a family. These feathers are first attached to sticks outside the dwelling to scare away the evil spirits ; afterwards they are worn in the head-dresses.[5]

The Ainos, the Gilyaks, and other North Asiatic tribes annually lead a bear about among the huts to bestow his blessing on them. After receiving rewards in the shape of food, they sacrifice the animal, amid dancing and lamentations, and, in some cases, the bones are solemnly carried away by the oldest tribesman to a retired place in the forest near the village, where they are buried, with the exception of the skull, which is hung in a tree.[6]

Members of a Central African tribe lead a sacrificelamb about among the people, who pluck off scraps of its fleece and wear them for protection. [7]

THE TRADITIONAL MANX EXPLANATION.

The wren-sacrifice certainly shows points of strong resemblance to these totemistic rites ; but if the bird, or whatever it has replaced, was at first an object of tribal reverence, the rites connected with it must, after losing their totemistic value, have greatly enlarged their area and become a mere traditional observance not understood by the participants.

For the custom of killing a wren on a certain day of the year, formerly observed in many places in the British Isles and the South of France, various explanations of a fabulous character are offered in the various countries. The Manxmen have accounted for it by a tradition which appears to be confined to their Island.+ This, in its several versions, must be quoted as a partial basis for the ensuing remarks.

" In former times a fairy of uncommon beauty exerted such undue influence over the male population, that she, at various times, induced, by her sweet voice, numbers to follow her footsteps, till by degrees she led them into the sea, where they perished. This barbarous exercise of power had continued for a great length of time, till it was apprehended that the Island would be exhausted of its defenders, when a knighterrant sprung up, who discovered some means of countervailing the charms used by this siren, and even laid a plot for her

destruction, which she only escaped at the moment of extreme hazard by taking the form of a wren. But though she evaded instant annihilation, a spell was cast upon her by which she was condemned, on every succeeding New Year's Day, to reanimate the same form, with the definitive sentence, that she must ultimately perish by human hand."[8]

In this fairy or siren it is not difficult to recognize the sorceress or enchantress Tehi Tegi, of whose wholesale seductions Waldron, writing a century earlier than Bullock, gives the following account :

" An old Native, to whom it has been handed down from many Generations as an undoubted Verity, told me that a famous Enchantress sojourning in this Island . . . had by her diabolical Arts made herself appear so lovely in the eyes of Men, that she ensnared the Hearts of as many as beheld her. . . . They entirely neglected their usual Occupations . . . and everything had the Appearance of an utter Desolation even Propagation ceased, for no Man could have the least Inclination for any Woman but this universal Charmer. . . . When she had thus allured the male Part of the Island, she pretended one day to go a Progress through the Provinces, and being attended by all her Adorers on foot, while she rode on a milk-white Palfrey, in a kind of Triumph at the head of them : she led them into a deep River, which by her Art she made seem passable ; and when they were all come a good way in it, she caused a sudden Wind to rise, which driving the Waters in such abundance to one Place, swallowed up the poor Lovers to the number of Six Hundred in their tumultuous Waves. After which, the Sorceress was seen by some Persons, who stood on the Shore, to convert herself into a Bat, and fly through the Air till she was out of sight, as did her Palfrey into a Sea-hog or Porpoise, and instantly plunged itself to the Bottom of the Stream.

Tehi-Tegi, it seems, was the Name of that Enchantress."

A briefer tradition of the same tenour locates a similar enchantress in the parish of Bride ; here she is called " a seal-woman," and is not stated to have assumed any other form in what remains of the story.[9]

In a folk-tale told to Miss Mona Douglas, when a child, by a Maughold woman, a magic smith had his forge on the little peninsula in that parish called, on the maps, Gob ny Garvain.[10] This smith had a daughter who partook of the nature of a mermaid, and enticed a man to follow her into the sea-world, where he became a leader of the souls of the drowned ; and the narrator remarked of her, " that would be Tehi Tegi."[11]

Half a century after Bullock a Galloway writer's account of the enchantress exhibits her as a stormraising sea-witch who drowned fishermen, but her connexion with the little land-bird persists.

" The Manx herring-fishers dare not go to sea without one of these birds taken dead with them, for fear of disasters and storms. Their tradition is that of a sea-spirit that haunted the herring-track attended always by storms, and at last it assumed the figure of a wren and flew away. So they think that when they have a dead wren with them all is snug."[12]

All these fables, or whatever they ought to be called, are manifestly pervaded by the shadow of some mythological personality fluctuating from shape to shape in the manner characteristic of those august beings. The form of a bird was assumed by Fand, the wife of Manannan, in " The Sick-bed of Cuchulain," to tempt the hero to elope with her to the sea-fairyland whence

she had emerged; her sister Liban "the Mermaid" accompanied her in a similar shape. The Sirens of the Greek seas, in the forms of birds with women's heads, lured sailors to destruction with their sweet voices ; and when the Muses defeated them in a singing contest they plucked out the Sirens' feathers and wore them as trophies. But the harmless wren is not the kind of fowl one would expect a siren to animate in a Northern tradition. A Lancashire writer links " the Manx wren " with the robin and the stork as being " inhabited by the souls of human beings "; a statement which, so far as it concerns the wren, would square better with the Insular legends if for " human " were substituted " superhuman."

In the last-quoted of these Manx legends, it will have been noted, the fairy, sea-spirit, sorceress, enchantress, siren or seal - woman evinces the storm - raising or storm-heralding faculty of the mermaid herself ; but immunity is conferred upon fishermen by a wren's feather. (Yet even without this or any other safeguard, the mermaid, when met at sea, was regarded by Manxmen with a friendly eye, for she often befriended them by her timely warning of an approaching tempest.) A blend of mermaid and bird is a little disconcerting at first sight, but a flying mermaid is not unknown in the Netherlands. One such predicted nightly in her song from the top of the church-tower the drowning of the city of Zevenburgen, if, indeed, she did not actually bring it about in an earlier form of the legend. To-day the church-tower sticking up out of the water is all that is left of Zevenburgen.[13] The story of the enchantress, which appears to have been grafted on the Manx wren-custom in order to explain it, has a better claim to be called " native " than the " Hunt-the-Wren " song. The song was probably imported about the same period as the Mummers or Whiteboys, the Battle of Summer and Winter, and the Hop-to-naa (Hogmanay) custom with its song. Throughout the Wren-song the bird is referred to as " he," and " the king," just as in Britain and Ireland, and on the Continent ; whereas the Manx legendary explanations, though they vary somewhat in details, share a single essential motive, the seductiveness and destructiveness of a female sprite, a marine counterpart of the fresh-water Nikkesen.

In the above-quoted versions of this motive, MacTaggart's (*Gallovidian Encyclopedia*) is purely a sea-affair ; in Bullock's the seduction is by land, the destruction by sea ; in the Kirk Bride story-the most recent and most meagre-the siren comes out of the sea and bewitches her victims on land; in Waldron's account-the earliest and fullest-the sea is not mentioned, but Waldron's words " sea-hog or porpoise " suggest that it entered into the affair. Train borrowed from Bullock and Waldron. This hesitation between land and sea in the Manx stories has an illustrative analogy in the change of habits seen in the bird-like sirens, who were " originally terrestrial, dwelling in a meadow by the sea, yet not venturing in the deep themselves, but luring men to shipwreck on the coast by the spell of their song ; and an echo, perhaps, of this conception . . . lives on in a folk-song which pictures the enchantment of a maiden's love-song wafted to seafarers' ears from off the shore: ' Thereby a ship was passing with sails outspread. Sailors that hearken to that voice and look upon such beauty, forget their sails and forsake their oars ; they cannot voyage any more ; they know not how to set sail.' But by the 6th century the traditional habitat of the sirens had changed." They had become mermaids, with fishlike tails in place of their bird-tails and clawed and feathered legs, " who by their exceeding beauty and winning song ensnare mariners."* It is apposite here to remark that Bullock, in his account of the Manx siren, notes a detail missed by Waldron, when he says that she attracted the men of the Island by her bewitching singing.

Another passage in the Bullock account already cited deserves a moment's consideration. " She only escaped," he says, " by taking the form of a wren. But though she evaded instant annihilation, a spell was cast upon her by which she was condemned, on every succeeding

New Year's Day, to reanimate the same form, with the definitive sentence, that she must ultimately perish by human hand." A similar theory of alternating sacrifice and reanimation (similar except for the promised final extinction of the enchanted being) appears in a later and fuller citation concerning the killing of the sacred buzzard by Californian Indians, who " rank near the bottom of the savage scale," says Sir James Frazer. He is here considering the rite from a standpoint other than that of Totemism.

His extract concludes thus: "They said that the Panes [buzzard] was a woman who had run off to the mountains and there been changed into a bird by the god Chinigchinich. They believed that though they sacrificed the bird annually, she came to life again and returned to her home in the mountains. Moreover, they thought that, as often as the bird was killed, it became multiplied ; because every year all the different Capitanes celebrated the same feast of Panes, and were firm in the opinion that the birds sacrificed were but one and the same female."*

The Samoan doctrine was identical. " Each family had for its god a particular species of animal ; yet the death of one of these animals, for example an owl, was not the death of the god, ' he was supposed to be yet alive, and incarnate in all the owls in existence.' "1'

In comparing the foregoing beliefs with the Manx myth, it is not clear whether Bullock by the words " reanimate the same form " meant that she reanimated an individual wren or all the wrens, as all the buzzards and owls are possessed by the deity's spirit. He says that the slaughter was indiscriminate : " In consequence of this ' well-authenticated' legend, on the specified anniversary, every man and boy in the Island . . . devote the hours between sunrise and sunset, to the hope of extirpating the fairy, and woe be to the individual birds of this species who show themselves on this fatal day . . . they are pursued . . and their feathers preserved with religious care." Vallancey, speaking for the Ireland of a century ago, says likewise that the wrens were killed indiscriminately. These statements leave it uncertain whether the wren-hunters hoped to hit upon a particular bird which embodied the fairy or whether they sought safety by destroying all the wrens in the neighbourhood. In recent years even a single wren has been dispensed with in the Manx celebrations.

THE WREN-PARTIES IN MAN.

In the Isle of Man the wren was usually carried about in a small box made of coloured paper and gaily decorated with ribbons or paper streamers, tinsel or foil ; or else it was suspended by a leg from the junction-point of two hoops of willow or other flexible wood with their ends fastened together to form two circles, and intersecting each other at right angles, the decorations being similar to those of the box. I have seen both styles in different parts of the Island, but no wren since the European war, though in a few districts the singing and begging parties still go round with their framework. Bunches of such greenery as could be got at that time of the yearoften holly or ivy-were sometimes fixed round the receptacle ; this must have been an essential part of the equipment formerly, for its technical name was always " the Bush," " the Wren-bush." " Are you goin' round with the Bush this year ? " was understood to mean the procession with the wren, or with the trappings minus the bird itself. Captain Walter Cowley tells me he remembers the Foxdale boys of about sixty years ago carrying it about in the middle of a green bush so big that you couldn't have got your arms round it ; this was fixed on a long pole which was sloped over the bearer's shoulder, and the wren was hanging by a string in the middle.* In the South, in later years, the boys would sometimes carry a mouse instead of a wren.f These fragments of evergreen growths, which in the 19th century

surrounded the bird's body in Man just as in Wales, seem to have been gradually replaced in the Island by artificial materials. '+' The boys' attempts at disguise and fancy costume may have been prompted by the example of the Whiteboys and other traditional performers ; but a blacked face or a home-made mask, and something unusual to wear, if only his jacket turned inside out, is a boy's first thought in such affairs. Dr. Clague says he saw a Wren-boy covered with a net, his face blacked, and wearing a bunch of leeks for a tail.*

The crossed hoops, in which, I believe, a cosmic symbolism has been discovered or imagined, were not peculiar to the Wren-procession. In England they formed the skeleton of the garland which was carried at the funeral of an unmarried woman, a white glove being suspended in the middle. In Tavistock, on Garland Day (29th May), the boys approximated to the Manx use of the hoops ; between these, twined with flowers, they hung a string of birds' eggs, excepting that of the robin. So Mrs. Bray tells us, in her Tamar and Tavy. An article on page 13 of *The Times* of 1st May, 1930, describes the May Day garlands which the Oxfordshire children used to carry round for pence, as having been made of various kinds of wild flowers. " In the more ambitious hands they were wrought cunningly on circular hoops of hazel twigs ; the acme of art was a creation of two hoops crossing at right angles, and the proper finish was a small doll seated on the lower intersection of the circles."

THE WREN-PARTIES IN WALES.

The receptacles constructed by the Welsh " Wren-bearers," as they were called, also closely resembled those of the Manx. Mr. George Eyre Evans of Carmarthen, who remembers the custom at Abergwili some forty years ago, tells me that the little square box was made of interlaced skewers pasted over with coloured paper, with streamers of paper attached to it. An opening was left in the box to give patrons a peep at the dead victim. The " Milder to Melder " song was sung, as at Tenby. Mr. Evans' description, given in the course of conversation among a group of friends, brought out recollections that the Wren-bearing custom had been practised similarly at Llanishen and Llwchwr in the same county, and at Llawrenny on Twelfth Day ; probably there were few places without it down to the middle of the 19th century. At Manorbier it was seen a dozen years ago, and may not yet be quite extinct there.

From a brochure of 83 pages printed at Solva in 1897, containing local matter by various contributors -among them Sir John Rhys-to the Pembroke County Guardian, certain wren-customs akin to those of the Isle of Man are worth rescuing. The descriptions are evidently written by eye-witnesses.

Page 39: " At New Year . . . work ceased, and the villagers came round for the usual present of ' Cwkau'* and the children with the wren in its cage decked with ribbons, and singing carols in Welsh and English, one of the latter being -Cursed is the man

Who kills a Robin or a Wran.' "

(This relates to Killau Bridge, North Pembrokeshire, and is signed Farrar Fenton.)

" The wren was put in a cage, or rather a lantern, which was dressed with coloured ribbons. Every young lady, and even old ladies, used to compete in presenting the grandest ribbon to the ' Wren.' Those who took the little bird and sang were invited by farmers, and especially their wives, to visit their homes on ' Gwyl Ystwyll,' which they did gladly, of course, for they knew that that meant half a crown, or more perhaps. One told me that he used to go out with

the Wren for many years, and that he sometimes had too many invitations to accept, but he used to attend one farm-house, Pencnwc, every year. In this farm-house an old farmer and his wife resided, and my friend was invited with his Wren, but he was warned to come early in the morning, before they rose from bed, and the first thing he was to do was to sprinkle water over them as they lay in bed. What this meant I cannot say, but probably they took it as some kind of ' blessing.' I have heard the song which was sung and have copied it, but I hardly think that I ever heard it so full as it used to be . . . .

The song will be found on page a90 herein. The sprinkling was an independent custom practised at that time of the year, and here grafted on that of the wren-bearing. Doorsteps were sprinkled also. The above account (page 45) is signed " J. S. Jones, St. David's," and apparently relates to that place.

In the North of the county the Wren-custom was associated with another of so much interest that I make no apology for including it here. The contributor writes from Pontfaen, but thanks a Skyber man for the information:

" In North Pembrokeshire the holidays commenced, especially amongst the farmers, on Christmas Day, and were continued for three weeks, viz. till Epiphany Sunday. On the 25th day of December, the farmers with their servants and labourers suspended all farming operations, and in every farm the plough was at once carried into the private house, and deposited under the table in the ' Room Vord'* (i.e. the room in which they took their meals), where it remained until the expiration of ' Gwyliau Calan.'t During these three weeks, parties of men went about from house to house, and were invited into the ' Room Vord,' where they sat around the table, regaling themselves with beer, which was always kept warm in small, neat brass pans in every farm-house ready for callers. But the peculiar custom which existed amongst these holiday-makers was that they always wetted the plough which lay dormant under the table with their beer before partaking of it themselves, thus indicating that though they had dispensed with its services for the time, they had not forgotten it, and that it would again, in due course, be brought out on the greensward and turn it topsy-turvy. These bands of men would sometimes carry with them the ' Wren,' singing simple popular ditties . . . .

At Haverfordwest " there was another usage which I believe was very old, that of carrying the wren, or the king, as he was called, on twelfth day, the last day of Christmas. The little house in which the poor bird was carried about, not by children, but by men, was decorated with ribbons, a ridiculous song being sung, commencing ' Our king is no small man,' and I suppose no good luck could be expected to rest on a house where these visits were not welcomed."* The writer unfortunately found the song so ridiculous that he recorded neither the words nor the air ; but they were evidently quite unlike the set of words used at Tenby, only 2o miles away, although the rest of the proceedings and the date of the annual observance were the same. It is further noticeable that the past tense is used, in or before 1882, in describing the ceremony. The local term used in the context for Allhallows is " La Hallantide."

" Some years ago it was the custom for groups of young men to go from house to house in Pembroke on Twelfth Night, carrying a ' Cutty-wren ' in a little box having glass windows in the sides and ends, and gaily decked with coloured paper. Handles were fixed at the corners, and it was carried from house to house after the manner of a hand-barrow. The box had a couple of bits of candle stuck at the side to illuminate ' King Wren,' and when a halt was made the following quaint but now almost forgotten ditty was sung. . . .* After this the

singers expected to be rewarded with some halfpence. The custom has now quite disappeared here. I have often heard my grandfather sing the above song."

The Tenby district is well known as a stronghold in time past of the wren-custom. Here, as elsewhere in Wales, we miss the distribution of the feathers for luck, and probably that feature had already fallen into disuse, if it ever existed in Wales. An anonymous writer, after describing several local methods of wheedling coppers out of householders' pockets, continues : " Another mode of levying contributions

was by means of the ' cutty ' wren. Having procured a wren, and placed it in a small ornamented box, or paper house, with a square of glass at either end, two or four men would carry it about, elevated on four poles fixed to the corners, singing the while a long ditty," which will be found on page 386. " The four men would then enter the doorway, groaning under the weight of their burden, and looking as if they had just relieved Atlas of his shoulder-piece."* Amongst a number of other traditions and personal reminiscences the following description was taken down during the present century by H. C. Tierney (a trustworthy recorder) from a Lawrenny (Pembrokeshire) man aged 81 : "Seventy years ago . . . we used to go hunting the wren. Four men went in front and carried handles on each side, supporting something like a bier. On this was a nice box with a wren, or sometimes two or three wrens in it, and it was decorated with coloured ribbons and flowers. As they went to each house they would sing. . . .fi Then they would ask the people, especially at the farms, for drink and cakes. In most places they were well treated, and I can tell you they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. It was not at Christmas or New Year, but on the Twelfth Day. That was our play, and up in the Welsh parts they had Marri Llewelyn."} An allusion follows to sprinkling people with " New Year's water," a custom which we have just seen associated with the Wren-bearing at St. David's, but which was practised independently of it all over South Wales.

From an account published in 1849 a detail may be added to the descriptions which have already been given of the wren's receptacle, namely that the ribbons were attached to a " wheel " which surmounted the little box. Also, that tradition connected the custom with the death of an ancient British king at the time of the Saxon invasion. (Halliwell Phillips, *Popular Rhymes*, page 166.)

A remarkable adaptation of Wren-bearing to a special purpose is seen in a Welsh custom practised in the 18th century and thus described by the Rev. Silvan Evans in a letter to the Academy which was reprinted in Bye-Gones for April, 1885, page 2o6.* During the Christmas holidays the houses of couples recently married were visited, at night only, by a procession of youths carrying a wren on a bier. If all the wrens had eluded them they substituted a sparrow. Under the bedroom window they would halt and sing these lines in Welsh :

Here is the Wren If he is alive,
Or a sparrow To be roasted.

The husband would then admit them and regale them with beer and food, which, says the writer, seem to have been the object of the visit. This explanation leaves the wren's presence unaccounted for, but it may be imagined that its recognized virtue as an antidote to evil influences in general was here specialized to further the chief end of marriagefruitfulness.

This development of Wren-bearing has the merit of offering us the only example of a formal curse used in connexion with the custom, as against its numerous little begging-rhymes. " Other houses in the district, if similarly circumstanced, would be visited on subsequent nights until the Epiphany, which was called ' distyll y gwyliau ' [ebb of the holidays], when all festivities connected with Christmas terminated. I ought to have mentioned that if the wren-party were not admitted into the house and entertained, in parting they gave vent to their feeling of disappointment in the following malediction :

'Gwynt ffralwm, Ddelo'n hwthwm I droi'r ty
A'r wyneb fyny ;

Scottish folk-lore also suggests that the wren was understood to cause fertility. Miss Goodrich Freer reports, in vol. xiii. of Folk-lore, that a wren about a Highland dwelling is a lucky sign, and that a Scottish Gaelic proverb says:

" No house ever dies out that the wren frequents."

which may be rendered:

'Come, raging wind, in fury frown,
And turn this house all upside down.'"

It is surprising that the South-West of Scotland, with its admixture of Brythonic blood, has not more vestiges of the Wren-custom to show. At Kirkmaiden in Wigtownshire there was a practice of catching a wren and decorating it with ribbons, as in other parts of the Kingdom ; but it was afterwards set free again.' The characteristic song has penetrated into Scotland, however, as we shall see later.

That Brittany also possessed a Wren-custom which involved going to the woods to catch the bird and afterwards plucking off the feathers is suggested by certain Breton folk-songs which will be noticed in Section 2. Here may be mentioned, for what it is worth, a Cornouaille custom. On St. Stephen's Day parties went from door to door soliciting presents ; they were preceded by an old horse decorated with ribbons and laurel-branches. The gifts were invited through the medium of a song which had a title similar to that of the Scottish Hogmanay and the Manx Hop-to-naa song, though the words, as preserved, do not correspond to any of the variants of these.+

Although Cornwall has no discoverable memory of having hunted and plucked the wren, a custom which has probably survived from that of wren-hunting is mentioned in Cornish Feasts and Folk-lore, page 1q.: " On St. Stephen's Day, 26th December . . . every man or boy who could by any means get a gun went out shooting. . . . The custom is said to have had its origin in the legend of one of St. Stephen's guards being awakened by a bird just as his prisoner was going to escape. A similar practice prevailed in the neighbourhood of Penzance on ' Feasten Monday,' the day after Advent Sunday."

The same habit obtained in 1857, if no later, further North in Brythonica. In Cumberland " St. Stephen's Day is kept as a general shooting holiday ; the woods and fields echo all day with the desultory practice of ' sportsmen,' and the pigeon-shootings held for prizes."*

WREN-CUSTOMS IN FRANCE.

In the South of France no song has been recorded, so far as I am aware, in connexion with the Wren-ceremony, and the ritual observed in the various districts has only a rudimentary resemblance to the Manx procedure. Though some of the Proven~al instances have become hackneyed by frequent quotation, I give them once more for the sake of completeness.

At Carcassonne the Wren-fëte goes back to the time of the Knights Templars, and has for long been the privilege of the young people living in the Rue St. Jean in the lower town ; from which it would appear that the Knights of St. John lent it their patronage. " Every year on the 31st of December the champion of the previous year's fëte summoned with the aid of a drum-and-fife band the young people who had the right of taking part in the fëte of the following day, the 1st of January, at an hour agreed upon under an elm-tree of the Rue St. Jean ; they went to a wood, and armed with a pole they tried to knock down a wren. The first to succeed received a crown from the hands of the preceding champion, and the bird, surrounded with a garland of oak-leaves, was placed at the end of the longest perch procurable. On the 6th of January the new Roitelet [Kinglet or Wren], decorated with a Maltese cross and having a sceptre in his hand, attended mass with his companions at the church of St. Vincent ; then he went to wish a happy New Year to the municipal magistrates. If no wren had been obtainable, the former Roitelet tossed the preceding year's bird into the air, and whoever got possession of it was proclaimed King. This amusement, interrupted about the year 1792, was resumed on the return of Louis XVIII. to the throne."*

" I was informed at Ciotat of a singular ceremony practised there every year, the first days of Niv6se. A numerous assemblage of men, armed with sabres and pistols, sally forth in pursuit of a very small bird called by the ancients ' troglodyte.' . . . When they have found it, which is no difficult matter, for care is taken to have one always ready, they suspend it on the middle of a long pole which two men carry on their shoulders, as if it were a heavy load. This whimsical procession parades thus through the streets of the city ; they weigh the bird on a strong balance, and afterwards sit down at table to divert themselves. The name given to the troglodyte is not less whimsical than the species of festival which it occasions. They call it patois (polecat) or ' woodcock's father,' on account of the resemblance of its plumage to that of the woodcock, which they there allege to be generated by the polecat, a great destroyer of the feathered race, but not the producer of any one."*

" In several districts a wren was taken alive and given to the priest, who after midnight mass entered the pulpit holding the bird adorned with pink ribbons and let it loose in the church ; he who had caught it was exempted for one year from the olive-tithe, and was called 'King of the Holidays.' If it was the women who bad succeeded in capturing the wren, they were entitled to deride the men who had taken part in the hunt, and these made a hasty disappearance to avoid having their faces daubed with soot or mud."

No doubt most of the preceding accounts of the wren - custom are familiar to professed folk - lorists, but it may be worth while to contrast with the actual celebrations the heroic deeds outlined by the words of the typical Wren-song in some of its variants.

Lady Wilde, Ancient Legends of Ireland (edition of 1902), page 177, says that if no money was given to the Irish wren-boys they buried the body " on the doorstep, which was considered a great insult to the family, and a degradation."

t journal kept in the Isle of Man, i., 311 (September, 1789).

* Frazer, Totemism, page 15. The killing of the Manx and Irish wrens, however, was not-in the 18th century at leastconfined to the single specimen required for the ceremony.

t Totemism, pages 25, 26. Folk-love, xvii., 266.

* Frazer, Golden Bough (abridged), chap. iii.

f Ibid., pages 534. 535.

$ The Danes may have had some legend or folk-tale of a similar complexion, for Ellis's Brand (19o8 edition, pages 197 ff) says that their name for the wren is elle-hong. As this means elf-king it combines the general idea of its kingship with the Manx idea of its fairy nature.

* Bullock, History of lite isle of Man, page 370.

* A Manx Scrapbook, page 438.

t Ibid., page 382.

* For the sake of uniformity I follow Waldron's spelling of this name; whether that is due to a misprint or not, the pronunciation given me is Tyee Tyee, rhyming with " nigh 'ee." As a pendant to these native traditions may be mentioned a version given by Wood-Martin (Elder Faiths of Ireland, ii., 149). Here the fairy is called Cleena ; she resumes the wren-form every Christmas Day. The phrasing strongly resembles that of Bullock's anecdote.

t Gallovidian Encyclopedia, page 157.Hardwick, Traditions, Superstitions and Folk-lore, page 237.

t Thorpe, Northern Mythology, iii., 282.

* Lawson, Modern Greek Folk-lore and Ancient Greek Religion, page 187.

* Golden Bough (abridged), page 5oo.

Ibid., page 500.

* In Provence, Ireland and Essex, as in Foxdale, the wren was often hung from the end of a pole or staff.

f Whether this was substituted because more easily come by, or whether it had some traditional significance, I cannot say; but in the Faros the mouse is proverbially called " the wren's brother." The shrew-mouse is persecuted in the Isle of Man. In Provence the wren was called " polecat " and " woodcock's father " (see page 382). These seemingly absurd conceits are merely isolated peaks betraying a great submerged continent of animal-myth.

$ Miss Cookson in her Poems from Manxland (1868) says on page 50: " A party of wren-hunters came to my house, carrying the dead body of the pretty bird in the interior of a little

bower made of evergreens tied with ribbons. I gave them some pence, and received three feathers." Another description by an eye-witness is that in Cumming's Guide to the Isle of Man, (1861), page 2o : "They then erect the body on a perch between osier twigs, decked out with ribbons and evergreens." Compare with these trappings those which are likened in The Golden Bough (abridged edition), page 654 : "The gigantic images constructed of osiers or covered with grass in which the Druids enclosed their victims remind us of the leafy framework in which the human representative of the tree-spirit is still so often encased."

* Manx Reminiscences, page 15. In Ireland also the costumes, and even the rites, often partook of those associated with the Mummers or Whiteboys. In Roscommon the leader's face was blacked and he was clothed in straw- ; another participant wore a woman's dress. (Folk-love, vi., 3o8.) In County Clare the singers had blacked faces and carried a bladder each. (Folk-love, xxvii., 26o.) "Sir Wisp, a personage in the Wren-play in a straw suit, masked and armed with a wooden sword or bladder fastened to a rod, he represents the Englishman and is defeated by an Irish knight similarly armed called Sedn Scot." (Dinneen's Irish Dictionary, s.v. Sop.) This was in 1925. At Christmas time the Manx boys used to go about making a rough music with tin whistles, Jew's-harps, tin-cans, and papered combs, and flourishing and thumping mollags-the sheepskin bladders which buoy the nets. This procession was called " the Mollag-band." Faces were blacked or raddled, dress was eccentric, and coppers were not refused, but these streetminstrels were quite distinct from the Wren-boys.

* Small cakes.

* Literally " table-room," like the English " board-room."

t The feast-days of Christmas.

* C. C. W., in Haverfordwest and its Story, 1882, page 50.* The same song as at Tenby. The account is taken from The Carmarthenshire Miscellany, May and June, 1892, pages 46-48.* Tales and Traditions of Tenby, 1858, page 12. Much of the folk-lore in this work is taken from articles contributed to The Cambrian journal in 1857, entitled "Manners and Customs of the People of Tenby," by L. P. Barnaschone. They relate largely to the 18th century.

t The " Milder to Melder " song. See § 2 of this Chapter.

+ i.e. Mari lwyd, the equivalent of the Manx laare vane, the sham horse-head with the snapping jaws. Both of these dragon-like effigies were virtually identical with the Lancashire " Old Ball " fully described by Harland and Wilkinson, Lancs. Folk-lore, pages 234-6, 254. The Lawrenny memory is taken from the Transactions of the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society, part xxv., page 48.

* It is also to be found in Elias Owen's Welsh Folk-lore (Oswestry, 1896), page 332.

* This intention, among others, may be suspected in the ceremony at Laguenne near Tulle in the Lower Limousin region, where the occupants of the wagon on which the wren was borne consisted, on one side, of those who had been married during the previous seven years, and, on the opposite side, of more experienced couples. They afterwards engaged in a tug-of-war with the wagon until it fell to one side or the other. (Folk-lore, xvii., 272, 3.) In Berry, France, it is the office of the newlymarried to carry the wren to the Lord of the Manor.

* Rev. Silvan Evans in Bye-Gones, April, 1885, page 206.

t The liberation of a captured wren was also performed at the gate of a town in the Nivernais. For details of both customs, see an article on " the Scapegoat," by N. W. Thomas in vol. xvii. of Folk-love.

$ See the Barzaz Breiz, page 445.

* Sullivan, Cumberland and Westmorland, page x-70.

* Sëbillot, Folk-lore de France, iii., x89.

* Sonnini, Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt (translated by Hunter), iii., 16, 17. Sonnini was a Frenchman employed by Louis XVI. to travel in Egypt.

f S6billot, Folk-lore de France, page 190.

Wren Boys (Douglas 1904)

CHAPTER IX
" WE'LL HUNT THE WREN "

§ 2. The Song.

THE WREN-SONG IN MAN. The Wren-song which is given below was taken down from its singers in the Isle of Man by William Harrison in 1843. [1] With this the version published very shortly afterwards by Train [2] is virtually identical, as is another included in a volume of old English ballads published in 1841 by the Percy Society. Moore,[3] couples with it a version in the Manx language which he describes in his Introduction [4] as being partly derived from oral sources and partly a translation into Manx of the English words; how much there is of each he does not tell us. The English, he says, is, from its form, " clearly a literal translation from the Manx ; " but the existence of many corresponding sets of words, some of them partially identical, in England, Wales and Scotland, together with Welsh translations in a fragmentary state, will be seen to dispose of this patriotic claim. In recent times the song has been sung, in the Isle of Man, in a shortened form and in English only. It is customary to gabble it at top speed, just as with the Hop-to-naa song, so that the words would be difficult to follow by one not previously familiar with them.

WE'LL HUNT THE WREN.

We'll away to the wood, says Robin to Bobbin,
We'll away to the wood, says Richard to Robin,
We'll away to the wood, says Jack of the Land,
We'll away to the wood, says every one.

What shall we do there ? etc.

We'll hunt the wren, etc.

Where is he ? where is he ? etc.

In yonder green bush, etc.

I see him, I see him, etc.

How shall we get him down ? etc.

With sticks and with stones, etc.

He is dead, he is dead, etc.

How shall we get him home ? etc.

We'll hire a cart, etc.

Whose cart shall we hire ? etc.

Johnny Bill Fell's, etc.

Who will stand driver ? etc.

Filly the Tweet, etc.

He's home, he's home, etc.

How shall we get him boiled ? etc.

In the brewery pan, etc.

How shall we get him in ? etc.

With iron bars and a rope, etc.

He is in, he is in, etc.

He is boiled, he is boiled, etc.

How shall we get him out ? etc.

With a long pitchfork, etc.

He is out, he is out, etc.

Who's to dine at the dinner ? etc.

The King and the Queen, etc.

How shall we get him eat ? etc.

With knives and with forks, etc.

He is eat, he is eat, etc.

The eyes for the blind, etc.

The legs for the lame, etc.

The pluck for the poor, etc.

The bones for the dogs, says Robin to Bobbin,
The bones for the dogs, says Richard to Robin,
The bones for the dogs, says Jack of the Land,
The bones for the dogs, says every one.

A lady who for some years resided on the Island, Miss Eliza Cookson, heard the first stanza sung thus

:"Away to the woods, says Dick to Tom,
Away to the woods, says every one.

What to do there, ye merry Manx-men ?
To hunt to death the wicked witch-wren."

This she calls " a Manx carol," in her note on " the tradition of the Fairy-Wren ; " the tit-wren, she says, was selected as the victim.[5] This is the" Cutty Wren" of South Wales, the " Chitty Wren" of Somerset and Northern Ireland, and Bewick's " Kitty Wren."

THE WREN-SONG IN WALES.

Harrison's record of the song is the longest we possess ; nearest to it comes the one associated with the same custom at Tenby ; its ten stanzas are equivalent to twenty on the Manx plan.

THE CUTTY WREN.

O where are you going ? says Milder to Melder (or " Molder")
O where are you going ? says the younger to the elder (or " older "),
O I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose ;
We're going to the woods, says John the Red Nose.
We're going to the woods, says John the Red Nose.

O what will you do there ? says Milder to Melder,
O what will you do there ? says the younger to the elder,
O I do not know, says Festel to Fose ;
To shoot the cutty wren, says John the Red Nose.
To shoot the cutty wren, says John the Red Nose.

O what will you shoot her with ? says Milder to Melder,
O what will you shoot her with ? says the younger to the elder,
O I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose ;
With bows and with arrows,[6] says John the Red Nose.
With bows and with arrows, says John the Red Nose.

O that will not do, says Milder to Melder,
O that will not do, says the younger to the elder,
O what will do then ? says Festel to Fose ;
With great guns and cannons, says John the Red Nose.
With great guns and cannons, says John the Red Nose.

O what will you bring her home in ? says Milder to Melder,
O what will you bring her home in ? says the younger to the elder,
O I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose ;
On four strong men's shoulders, says John the Red Nose.
On four strong men's shoulders, says John the Red Nose.

O that will not do, says Milder to Melder,
O that will not do, says the younger to the elder,
O what will do then ? sas Festel to Fose ;
On big carts and wagons,' says John the Red Nose.
On big carts and wagons, says John the Red Nose.

What will you cut her up with ? says Milder to Melder,
What will you cut her up with ? says the younger to the elder,
O I do not know, says Festel to Fose ;
With knives and with forks, says John the Red Nose.
With knives and with forks, says John the Red Nose.

O that will not do, says Milder to Melder,
O that will not do, says the younger to the elder,
O what will do then ? says Festel to Fose ;
With hatchets and cleavers, says John the Red Nose.
With hatchets and cleavers, says John the Red Nose.

What will you boil her in ? says Milder to Melder,
What will you boil her in ? says the younger to the elder,
O I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose ;
In pots and in kettles, says John the Red Nose.
In pots and in kettles, says John the Red Nose.

O that will not do, says Milder to Melder,
O that will not do, says the younger to the elder,
O what will do then ? says Festel to Fose ;
In brass pans and cauldrons, says John the Red Nose.
In brass pans and cauldrons, says John the Red Nose.[7]

An inferior version of the Tenby words comes from Rhydberth, a village four miles from Tenby. Though corrupt, it has several additional stanzas, besides differing in another. Where Tenby says, " O what will you cut her up with ? " Rhydberth asks, " How shall we feather her ? says Milder to Melder," etc., and continues, " Seven women of the parish, says John the Red Nose.

" That won't do, says Milder to Melder,
That won't do, says the younger to the elder;
I cannot tell, says Fiddledefoze ;
Then we'll have the whole Parish, says John the Red Nose.

After the brass pans and cauldrons which Tenby ends with, Rhydberth goes on thus:-

Who is to eat her ? says Milder to Melder,
Who is to eat her ? says the younger to the elder ;
I cannot tell, says Fiddledefoze ;
The Poor of the Parish, says John the Red Nose.

That won't do, says Milder to Melder,

That won't do, says the younger to the elder; I cannot tell, says Fiddledefoze ;

Then we'll have the whole Kingdom, says John the Red Nose. That is well said, says Milder to Melder,

That is well said, says the younger to the elder ; I cannot tell, says Fiddledefoze ;

That is well said, says John the Red Nose.

What's to be done with the spare meat ? says Milder to Melder, What's to be done with the spare meat ? says the younger to the elder ;

I cannot tell, says Fiddledefoze ;

We'll give it to the Poor of the Parish, says John the Red Nose.[8]

The date appended to this Wren-song from Rhydberth is 1849. The editor of the Miscellany, Mr. Arthur Mee, adds the remark that " the custom of Bearing the Wren has by no means died out in Pembrokeshire ; but Moody and Sankey's hymns and the like are taking the place of the quaint old songs."

Though they do not belong to the standard type of Wren-song, I will include here two folk-ballads connected with the custom of hunting the bird and carrying it about, not only for their intrinsic charm but because of their folk-lore interest as well. For his help in translating them from the Welsh I have to thank Mr. C. W. Griffiths of Carmarthen.

THE SONG OF THE WREN.
(Solva, Pembrokeshire.)

Little wren is the man,
About him there's a stir,
There's an inquest upon him
To-night everywhere.

He was captured, the rascal,[9]
Last night with rejoicings,
In a snug, pretty chamber,
And his brothers thirteen.

The stronghold was broken,
The young man was taken,
And placed 'neath a shroud
In a fair motley bier.

Ribbons all-coloured
Encompass the wren,
Ribbons thrice-twisted
Are his for a roof.

Jenny Wrens have grown scarce,
They have flown to the valley,[10]
But they will come back by
The old meadow-paths.[11]

O fair little mistress,
Give heed to our plaint!
Young children are we,
Let us into your house,
Come open your door
Or we'll all run away. [12]

THE SONG OF THE WREN.

(St. David's.)

Little wren is the man,

About him there's a stir, There's an inquest upon him To-night everywhere.

He was captured, the rascal, Last night with rejoicings In a snug pretty chamber With his brothers thirteen.[13]

He was placed 'neath a shroud In a fair motley bier, Ribbons all-coloured

Are tied round the wren, Ribbons all twisted

In place of a house.

Thou shalt have dinner of apples and flour

That came from the orchard this morn of St. Stephen, Thou shalt have dinner of green leaves of bay That came from the garden so early this morning, Thou shalt have dinner on shining white stones That came from the brook after supper.

O fair little mistress, give heed to our plaint! Young children are we, let us into your house, O come to us quick or we'll all run away! [14]

A fragment rescued from Kidwelly finds the wren itself, not the wren's dinner, in the orchard.

We have an orchard,
And in it flutters a little wren ;
Ruler of all the birds is that one.[15]

Another song sung by the procession of men and boys in Pembrokeshire on Twelfth Day emphasized the wren's kingship and pre-eminence over the rest of the birds. The following fragments are all that came to the collector's notice :

For we are come here
To taste your good cheer,
And the King is well-dressed
In silks of the best.

He is from a cottager's stall
To a fine gilded hall . . .[16]

To the same district and the same time of year belonged a similar type of Wren-song recorded more recently, of which there was said to be a version in Welsh :

Joy, wealth, love and peace Be to you in this place. By your leave we will sing Concerning our King:

Our King is well-dressed In silks of the best. With his ribbons so rare No King can compare,

In his coach he doth ride With a great deal of pride, And with four foot-men To wait upon him.

We were four at a watch, And all nigh of a match ; And with powder and ball We fired at his hall.

We have travelled many miles Over hedges and stiles

To find you this King Which we now to you bring. Now Christmas is past, Twelfth Day is the last. The Old Year bids adieu; Great joy to the New.[17]

So much, at present, for the South. The vernacular versions of the Wren-song which survive, or survived a few years ago, in North Wales are fragments of longer songs on the Manx and Tenby model, from which they can have differed, before their disintegration, only to a very small extent. The resemblance is strongest in their opening lines. They come from Llanrhaiadr-ym-Mochnant on the border of Denbighshire and Montgomery, from Amlwch in Anglesey, from the Lleyn peninsula, and from Llwyngwril near Dolgelley. That from Llanrhaiadr will be noticed further on. Amlwch agrees with Man and Tenby in carrying her wren home by means of a horse and cart and eating it with knives and forks. Lleyn finds hers in a certain " vineyard," but comes nearest to Man in the names of her interlocutors, Dibyn and Dobyn (who get a leg each), Risiart and Robin (a wing each), and John-of-the-Causeway-End (if I understand slryd aright), who goes halves in the head with " all in common," or every-one. Llwyngwril executes her wren with a butcher's knife and an awl -mynawyd, not manaL,yd, a pole, which would have been more in the gasconading spirit of the Wren-song.[18]

A nursery-rhyme or song translated from a North Welsh source likewise, though incomplete, preserves more of the standard Wren-song :

Will you come to the wood ? says Owen to Hugh, Will you come to the wood ? says Morgan to Pugh, Will you come to the wood ? says John Jones and Son, Will you come to the wood ? says every-one.

Let us think what to do, says Owen to Hugh, Let us think what to do, says Morgan to Pugh,

Let us think what to do, says John Jones and Son, Let us think what to do, says every-one.

We will hunt the wee wren, says Owen to Hugh, We will hunt the wee wren, says Morgan to Pugh, We will hunt the wee wren, says John Jones and Son, We will hunt the wee wren, says every-one.

To be sure! and what then ? says Owen to Hugh, To be sure! and what then ? says Morgan to Pugh,

To be sure! and what then ? says John Jones and Son, To be sure! and what then ? says every-one.

We will boil it for broth, says Owen to Hugh, We will boil it for broth, says Morgan to Pugh,

We will boil it for broth, says John Jones and Son ; And they did. And the broth drowned every-one.[19]

A touch of pity or affection sweetens these Welsh songs-to an English ear at least-in an expression which is common to them all, *dryw, bach*, " little wren," the equivalent of " cutty wren" in some of the English songs.

THE WREN-SONG 1N ENGLAND.

Three versions, with their respective airs, have been printed in the Journal of the Folk-song Society.[20] The provenance of the first is not quite clear to me. There is evidently a great deal missing.

Come to the woods, says Ricketty Robbit, Come to the woods, says Ricketty Robbit, Come to the woods, says Johnny so long, Come to the woods, says every one.

What'n do there ? etc. Shoot Jenny Wren, etc. What'n kill un with ? etc.

Powder and shot, etc. How shall we go ? etc. In a cart with six horses, etc. What'n do with the offal ? etc. Give to the poor of the parish, etc.

The second was taken down by Cecil Sharp from a Yorkshire source. There is an impromptu look about the latter part of it.

I fun' a bird's nest, says Robin-a-bobbing,
I fun' a bird's nest, says Richard to Robin,
I fun' a bird's nest, says Billy Baloo,

I fun' a bird's nest, says every one. What will we do wi' ut ? etc. We'll tak' it to keepers, etc.

What shall we get for it ? etc. Three ha'pence apiece, etc. What shall we do wi' ut ? etc. We'll go and get drunk, etc. How shall we get home ? etc. We'll hire a cab, etc.

How shall we get in ? etc. How shall we get out ? etc.
Same way we got in, etc.

The third, and the truest to type, of the Folk-song journal's sets of words comes from Adderbury in North Oxfordshire.

We'll go a shooting, says Richard to Robin,
We'll go a shooting, says Robin to Bobbin, We'll go a shooting, says Jonathan Young, We'll go a shooting, says every one.

What shall us shoot ? etc. I see a wren, etc.

We'll all shoot together, etc. She's down, she's down, etc. How shall we get her home ? etc.
We'll borrow feyther's cart, etc. We must hire a wagon, etc. How shall us get her in ? etc.
We must hire some ropes, etc. We'll all heave together, etc. How shall us cook her ? etc.
We'll lborrowf a furnace, etc. We must hire a cook, etc.

What shall us gie her ? etc.

We must gie her the feathers, etc. That won't be enough, etc.

We must gie her the bones, etc, The feathers will choke her, etc.

The feathers have choked her, etc.
So the poor cook is dead, etc. What shall us do with the braath ? (broth), etc.
Gie't to the poor of the parish, etc.

The foregoing song was noted in 1907, 1911 and 1917. The singer was an old shepherd who marked the accented notes by banging the floor with his stick, and stamped vigorously at the words " every one." This, he declared, was the right way to sing it. It is the " right way," because the traditional way throughout the country, to sing all such songs as lend themselves to it ; the Manxman expresses his gusto by hand - clapping or stamping to mark the beat.

At Winson, in East Gloucestershire, the following song has been handed down for generations, but as with those collected by the Folk-song Society, there is no suggestion that it ever accompanied an actual wren-procession :

Oh, what shall we shoot at ? said Richat to Robet, Oh, what shall we shoot at ? said Robet to Bobet, Oh, what shall we shoot at ? said John in the Long, Oh, what shall we shoot at ? said every one.

We'll shoot at a wren, etc.

How shall we carry it home ? etc. We'll hire three men, etc.

How shall we cook it ? etc. We'll hire six cooks, etc. How shall we eat it ? etc. We'll invite all the town, etc. The scraps for the poor, etc.[21]

In Devonshire the Wren-song was still, in the earlier half of the 19th century, sung during the ceremonies performed with the bird. These took place during Christmas week ; the villagers suspended the wren from a stout pole and carried it on their shoulders as though it were a heavy burden. They made pretence of hoisting the monstrous creature into a wagon, at the same time singing this song :

I've shot a wren, says Rabbin to Bobbin;
Hoist! hoist! says Richard to Robin; Hoist! hoist! says John all alone,

Hoist ! hoist! says every one.

I'll take a leg, says Rabbin to Bobbin; Hoist ! hoist! says Richard to Robin; Hoist! hoist! etc.

I'll take the head, says Rabbin to Bobbin ; Hoist! hoist! etc.

I'll take a wing, says Rabbin to Bobbin ; Hoist ! hoist ! etc.

" and so on, always chorusing with affected labour and exertion, " Hoist ! hoist ! "[22]

THE WREN-SONG IN SCOTLAND.

In Chambers's Popular Rhymes of Scotland [23] a Wren-song, " also preserved in Herd's collection," is thus introduced " On St. Stephen's Day, the common people assembled, and carried about a wren tied to the branch of a tree, singing this song :

Will ye go to the wood ? quo' Fozie Mozie, Will ye go to the wood ? quo' Johnie Rednosie, Will ye go to the wood ? quo' Foslin 'ene, Will ye go the wood ? quo' brither and kin. What to do there ? etc.

To slay the wren, etc.

What way will ye get her hame ? etc. We'll hire cart and horses, etc. What way will ye get her in ? etc. We'll drive down the door-cheeks, etc. I'll hae a wing, quo' Fozie Mozie,

I'll hae anither, quo' Johnie Rednosie, I'll hae a leg, quo' Foslin 'ene,

And I'll hae anither, quo' brither and kin."

No locality is mentioned in Chambers, but the dialect appears to be South-Western.

The song has penetrated so far North as Orkney, but has lost its wren on the way, and as in other districts has been put to a domestic use

AN ORKNEY CRADLE-SONG.

We'll aff to the wids, says Tosie Mosie,

We'll aff to the wids, says Johnnie Red-hosie, We'll aff to the wids, says Wise Willee,

We'll aff to the wids, says the Brethren Three. Whit tae do there ? etc.

Tae shut the wirran, etc.

Hoo will we tak' him hame ? etc. In a cairt or a waggon, etc. Whit will we boil him in ? etc. In pot and in pan, etc.

Whit will we do wi' his banes ? etc. Bury them in the land, etc. They'll brak' men's pleughs, etc. Cast them in the sea, etc.

They'll grow into great rocks, etc. They'll wrack ships and boats, etc. We'll burn them in fire, etc.[24]

Although the dialect in which it is given belongs to much further South, this was evidently a long-known rhyme in Orkney, for its contributor says that sixty years ago he heard it sung to the first half of the tune " The Campbells are Coming," and that this adaptation of air to words was made in 1715. This, if it is a tradition to be relied on, makes it by far the earliest version of all I have reproduced here.

There is another Scottish Wren-song in Buchan's collection of ballads which begins :

Where are ye goin' ? quo' Hose to Mose, Where are ye goin' ? quo' Johnny Rednose,
And where are ye goin' ? quo' the Brethren Three To shoot the Wren, quo' Wise Willee.[25]

Yet others, both Scottish and English, may be preserved in obscure publications devoted to local lore, in dialect collections, and in manuscripts, while many must have perished without

ever having been recorded. Even in the cases where the song has accompanied the ritual of the wren, the words may sometimes have been varied on the spur of the moment.

WREN-SONGS IN BRITTANY.

Though no account of an actual ceremony connected with the wren in Brittany has come to my notice, the following ballad is quite in the spirit of the more typical Wren-songs of other Brythonic lands, though it may not suffice as evidence that Bretons ever hunted the wren and distributed its feathers. (Disregarding the lack of proof, which may exist unknown to me, I believe that the Bretons at some former time did both.) The English is from the French of Luzel's Soniou Breiz-Izel --Chansons Populaires de la Basse Bretagne, where the Breton original may also be found.

THE DEATH OF THE WREN. (Cradle-song.)

One day I went out for a ramble,

And what did I catch but a wren !

When he was caught he was properly caught;
He was put in the cowhouse to fatten,

And there he grew fatter and fatter,

Till they sent for the butcher to kill him.
The butcher and all his assistants

Cried out at the tops of their voices,
They were simply unable to hold him

When he saw the lad come with the knife !
Four carts upon iron-shod wheels

Have carried his feathers to Nantes,
And enough are still left in the house

To furnish four fine feather-beds !

The remainder has no concern with the wren. A description of the killing and plucking appears to have fallen out of the middle part. The song was sung at Loguivy-Plou, on 11th November, 1863. The month and the day are not without interest, particularly with reference to the Welsh slaughtering festivals shortly to be mentioned.

Another Breton song begins so promisingly that one regrets there is no more of it :

I went a hunting in the wood,
(Never shall I get there !)
And in the wood I caught a wren,
(Never, never, never shall I get there !)

Was the difficult progress due to the weight of the wren ?

Besides these, Brittany has at least two more songs about the wren, which likewise are to be found in Luzel's collections. One, " The Wren's Wedding," is a cante-fable which does not reflect either the hunting of the wren or any of the subsequent ceremonial. The wren invites all the birds to her wedding, and reminds them to bring presents because she is very poor--an old Welsh custom, even when the human couple were not very poor. All the birds turn up except one, understood to be the eagle on account of his jealousy about the kingship. The fourth Breton song, " Plucking the Wren," will be noticed later.

WREN - RHYMES IN IRELAND.

These ballads of extravagant make-believe do not seem to have been used in Ireland, where the Wren-boys were content with shorter sets of rhymes in which the chief theme

was a demand for contributions of money or food. Other begging-parties which had nothing to do with wrens used the same rhymes, or portions of them. They are common in England also, and the Isle of Man knows at least one of them :

The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
On Stephen's Day was caught in the furze;
Although he is little his family's great
We pray you, good people, to give us a trate

This quatrain is tacked on to Harrison's and Train's version of the true Wren-song as it was sung in the Island. That a continuation of it had been translated into Irish is suggested by the doggerel chorus which followed it a hundred years ago in parts of Munster

Sing overem, overem, droleen !
Sing overem, overem, droleen !
Sing overem, overem, chintimicore,
Lebemegola tambereen !

A variant of the first line was :-Sing hubber ma dro my droleen

The Wren-custom cannot safely be termed extinct in Ireland. At Newport, County Mayo, the bird was hunted on St. Stephen's Day, 1919. Participants in the ensuing procession wore quaint straw headdresses. A " fool " and a she-fool (a boy) took part. Two or three generations ago the hunt was undertaken by the parishes independently of each other, whose representatives fought if they happened to meet. Here the rhymes were in English only, even when Irish was the prevailing language. One rhyme concluded :

Dreolin, dreolin, where's your nest ?
'Tis in the bush that I love best,
Between a holly and an ivy tree,
Where none of the birds can meddle with me.*

" Birds " in the last line should, perhaps, be " boys." " Though the ' King of all birds ' is said and sung to be ' caught in the furze ' on St. Stephen's Day, he is invariably caught, and often ruthlessly slain too, on Christmas Day."1. The use of the present tense by the author, Mr. J. J.

Marshall, is of interest, since his collection, though now out of print, was published so recently as 1926. He mentions in addition to his own locality the following places where the custom was in use : Tipperary ; Shanagolden, Co. Limerick ; Youghal, Co. Cork ; and Waterford City. In all these instances the principals were young men.

THE ACTION of THE WREN-SONG.

It will have been observed that this uncouth type of song beginning with a visit to " the woods," far from being descriptive of the ceremony, parts company from it at an early stage. The song's proposed treatment of the quarry when caught is obviously meant to have the effect of humorous exaggeration. Is this purely an exercise of the composer's fancy, as, for example, in the song of " The Derby Ram," or is it based on something more substantial ?

Professor Gwynn Jones's Folk-lore of Wales (page 146) describes a custom which may have inspired the terms of the songs. " November is called Mis Tachwedd [Slaughter Month] probably from the custom of slaughtering animals for winter store, cp. the AngloSaxon Blõtmonath, ' mensis immolationum,' so named from a similar custom. . . . What seems to have been a tradition of long standing is the habit prevailing in [the agricultural districts of North Wales] until quite recently of inviting friends and dependents to partake of a kind of feast after the slaughtering of a bullock or fattened cow at the farmhouses. In Merioneth . . . poor people were supplied with pailfuls of broth on those occasions. . . . The social character of the gathering, together with the distribution of a part of the preparation to less favoured neighbours, suggests a kind of sacramental feast as the origin of the custom."

The circumstances of such a slaughtering festivalit is not suggested that it was confined to North Wales or even to Celtic-speaking countries-would explain very well the phraseology both of the songs in English and of the Breton cradle-song (page 400), which is evidently part of a Wren-song put to another use ; and these circumstances would come within the experience of the song-makers. Also, there was probably a tradition or legend adhering to the Wrenrites-a vague notion of the kind still exists-that the wren was a substitute for some larger creature. It would therefore easily be invested, in the songs, with the details of the cattle-slaughtering custom.

It may be that the slaughtering festivals preserved traces of the primitive features which are visible in the ceremonial sacrifices of bears and other animals, sacrifices which Sir J. G. Frazer shows to be related, broadly, to the wren-sacrifice among many others.* In some cases portions of the bird or animal must be eaten in order that its magic virtue shall fortify the human partakers. Among the Aino " when the rest of the flesh of the bear has been cooked, it is shared out . . . among all the people." The Gilyaks also, and another North Asiatic tribe, the Goldi, eat their bear with the same intention. In the typical songs of the wren, cooking and eating it are important items of the programme. The reason for eating the bear is summarized in the Golden Bough thus : " The savage commonly believes that by eating the flesh of an animal or man he acquires not only the physical, but even the moral and intellectual qualities which were characteristic of that animal or man ; so when the creature is deemed divine, our simple savage naturally expects to absorb a portion of its divinity along with its material substance.",f, " By partaking of the flesh, blood or broth of the bear, the Gilyaks, the Aino and the Goldi are all of the opinion that they acquire some portion of the animal's mighty powers." This is done at all the bear-sacrifices. Accounts of similar sacrifices gathered from all over the world show further that particular portions of an animal are credited with appropriate virtues ; the heart and the liver are eaten, or the blood drunk, for courage ; birds'

tongues are given to young children to make them talk early. " In Northern India people fancy that if you eat the eyeballs of an owl you will be able like an owl to see in the dark." The Manx Wren-song apportions " the eyes for the blind, the legs for the lame, the pluck for the poor." In five non-Manx versions the poor are to benefit by the spare meat, the broth, the scraps, the offal, and the entire wren. Among a Central African tribe the flesh of the sacrificial lamb is entirely devoted to the poor. The grotesquely disproportionate means imagined in the Manx and similar songs for transporting, cooking, and otherwise dealing with the wren would be obligatory in the case of such large game as bears, buzzards and cattle. The Gilyaks' bear, after being led, or dragged by ropes, while alive, to all the huts in turn that their owners may share in the blessing and be delivered from the designs of evil spirits, is killed and put into a special vessel used only for cooking the bear's flesh, and boiled (never roasted) over a slow fire ; the meat is then fished out of the kettle with an iron hook. The wren, after requiring a cart and horses to get him home, must be put into the brewery pan, or into brass pans and cauldrons, with iron bars and ropes, and got out again, when boiled, with a long pitchfork, and eaten with knives and forks.*

In allotting " the bones to the dogs," however, the ' Manx song is at variance with the general custom in the uncivilized rites to which its verbal resemblances, be they accidental or otherwise, are now being pointed out. The bones are always treated with the greatest possible respect by uncivilized races. " If the beaver's bones are given to the dogs the other beavers would get word of it and would not let themselves be caught ; ' we will keep the dogs from eating your bones.' " And so with the eland, the deer, the elk in North America, and the bear's skull among the Finns of the Kalevala. The Orkney Wren-song previously cited, when it comes to the disposal of the bones takes a different line from the Manx version, and finally launches out into strikingly imaginative ideas, in which some magical doctrine or other may be implied.

The killing of the bear and the consequent feasting, in Rune 46 of the Kalevala, though not an annual custom, is a typical picture which exhibits many of the features of the customs just referred to, and others which are no less reminiscent of the Wren-songs. The bear, so far as can be gathered from the poems in their doctored state, was sent by the goddess of the dark and deathly Northland to destroy the flocks and herds of the Finns. In spite of its errand the bear, as a source of food and clothing, is beloved by the Finns, and as a portent of summer and good fortune is warmly welcomed; they address it in terms of strong affection. Many of these endearing terms are the names of birds : " O my birdling ! " occurs thrice ; it is called a crossbill, a " golden cuckoo of the forest," and its movements are likened to those of the woodgrouse and the goose. Though it has already been killed (with profuse apologies) before it is brought to the village, a pretence is made that it is still alive. It is skinned and boiled (according to the rune) in gilded kettles and copper cauldrons, and the people are bidden to " the feast of cattle, where the shaggy beast is eaten " from golden dishes with knives of silver. After the feast Vainamoinen sings a song which brings to mind the Breton songs about dismembering the blackbird and plucking the wren,* and still more strongly suggests the Manx lines, " the eyes to the blind, the legs to the lame," etc. :

" Now I take the nose from Otso,

That my own nose may be lengthened," followed by the eyes, the ears, and the rest of Otso's (the bear's) cranial anatomy, all for the singer's benefit.fi

We have thus the choice of believing either that the prototype of these songs (to which the modern Manx one probably comes nearest) was composed purely in a spirit of jesting and mockery, without reference to any antecedent beliefs or practices concerning some more substantial creature than a wren, or else that the songs do, by some means, reflect with little exaggeration the slaying and dismemberment of a bulky animal. If such a sacrifice, with its attendant ceremonial, is faintly recognizable in the Manx Wren - rites, it is not unreasonable to think that the picture drawn, in these widely-scattered songs, of proceedings on a much larger scale than the Wren - rites, also perpetuates a memory of obsolete practices, and was not solely inspired by a humorous imagination, as it might seem to be at first sight.

Where, when, and from whose hand the Wren-song originated are questions which are not likely now to be cleared up, but a search through old English ballad-material might at the least be rewarded by the discovery of an earlier version than any at present known, or by their embryo. The Manx one is by no means the earliest recorded. Even if the date of 1715 for the Orkney song lacks substantiation, a collection published about thirty years before Harrison's Mona Miscellany contains a nursery song entitled :

ROBBIN, BOBBIN, RICHARD AND JOHN, OR THE WREN-SHOOTING.

We'll go a-shooting, says Robbin to Bobbin,
We'll go a-shooting, says Richard to Robbin,
We'll go a-shooting, says John-All-Alone,
We'll go a-shooting, says every one.

What shall we kill ? etc.

We'll shoot the wren, etc.

She's down, she's down, etc.

How shall we get her home ? etc.

We'll hire a cart, etc.

Then hoist, boys, hoist ! etc.

So they brought her away after each plucked a feather,
And when they got home shared the booty together.*

The final couplet, in which the third person replaces the first, appears to have been added to the song to describe what was done after the wren was " brought home." The plucking of a feather by each participant is a point of agreement, rare in the songs, with the actual custom as preserved in the Isle of Man. It is a point, moreover, which connects the Wren-ritual with another Manx custom, and with certain non-Manx rites, songs, and myths.

Footnotes

1 Mona Miscellany, part i., page 154. One of the several existing airs accompanies the words.

2 Historical Account of the Isle of Man, ii., 141.

3 Manx Ballads, page 64. With another air.

4Ibid., page xxi.

5 Poems from Manxland, 1868.

6 In the South of France, in the I 7th century, it was a custom for each inhabitant to shoot an arrow at a wooden wren tied to a pole ; if he missed it he had to give the Seigneur a silver bow. (Folk-lore, xvii., 273.)

7 Tales and Traditions of Tenby, Tenby, 1858, pages 12 ff. ; to an air which has no resemblance to the Manx one. (See p. 375.)

8 The Carmarthenshire Miscellany, May-June, 1892, page 47.

9 Gwalch might be rendered as " rascal," " hero," or " hawk," according to Spurrell's Dictionary. With regard to the last alternative, in a village near Tulle in the lower Limousin the wren was carried on the wrist like a hawk, hooded and with silk tassels on its legs. The whole elaborate ceremony is described in Folk-love, xvii., pages 272, 273.

10 This is the literal sense of hedasant i bant, but i bant, " to the valley," has come to mean simply " away "-an idiom which must have originated with a hill-bred people.

11, Dywy llwybyau'r hen dd6l, "by the paths of the old meadow " ; but might not a place-name, Henddõl, be concerned ?

12 Pembrokeshire Antiquities, page 48.

13 Or " eleven " in a similar but much shorter song contributed from St. David's to the Carmarthenshire Miscellany for JulyDecember, 1892, page too. A fanciful Welsh elucidation says that the custom was allegorical, the " eleven " being the disciples, and the wren Judas.

14 Pembrokeshire Antiquities, p. 46.

15 Welsh Folk-song journal, vol. i.

16 Halliwell Phillips, *Popular Rhymes* (1849), page 166.

t Notes and Queries, ser. 3, vol. 5, p. 109 ; and Thiselton Dyer, British Popular Customs, page 35-less two lines.

* The Welsh originals of the above fragments will be found in the Welsh Folk-song ,journal, vol. i.

* Jennett Humphreys, Old Welsh Knee-Songs, published by the author, Cricklewood, 1894 ; 38 pages.

Vol. v., part 1.

* Alfred Williams, Folk-songs of the Upper Thames, page 184

Harrison, Mona Miscellany (1869), page 184. He gives no indication of his source. The allotting of leg, head and wing all to Rabbin is evidently wrong, whether the reference is to lifting, or to eating as in other versions. Probably hoisting is meant, and a comparison suggests itself with the words of the Colby Hen-song, " Take thou the head and I'll take the feet."

t Pages 37, 38, among " Rhymes of the Nursery."

* Orkney and Shetland Old-lore, October, 19o8. t Buchan's MSS., i., r66b.

* See Gerald Griffin's Tales of the Munster Festivals, page So ff.

* See the Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland for June, ig2o. " Droleen " and " dreolin " are forms of an Irish word for " wren."

t Popular Rhymes and Sayings of Ireland, printed in Dungannon, page 20.

* Golden Bough (abridged edition), chapter liv. f Ibid., chapter Iii.

* In Central Africa " whenever an animal is killed its liver is taken out and eaten, but the Darfur people are most careful not to touch it with their hands, as it is considered sacred ; it is cut up in small pieces and . . . conveyed to the mouth on the point of a knife, or the sharp point of a stick." In the Isle of Man " the livers of fowls and fish are uniformly sacrificed to the fairies." (Bullock, History of the Isle of Man, 1816, page 370.)

See pages 419, 420.

f Instead of the singer's actual organs perhaps we should understand the faculties they represent-smell, hearing, sight, intelligence, vocal powers and eloquence. And, as Schopenhauer reminds us, the sense of smell is connected with the memory, the sense of hearing with the reason, and the sense of sight with the understanding. Thus the object of the incantation, and of the acts that doubtless accompanied it, begins to emerge.

* In its wanderings and limitless metamorphoses the song accords with popular traditional lore of every kind. It has even been reduced to the status of a nursery rhyme which counts the baby's fingers or toes :

Let us go to the wood, says this pig; What to do there ? says that pig;

To look for my mother, says this pig; What to do with her ? says that pig; To kiss her to death ! says this pig. (Early English Poetry, page 115.)

* J. Ritson, Gammer Gurton's Garland (181o, reprinted 1866), page 8, in the portion " first collected and printed by a literary gentleman deceased," and that is all we are told about it. The same song, however, is given in vol. 4 of the Percy Society Publications, Early English Poetry (1841), edited by J. O. Halliwell. In his notes the editor quotes, " from a copy given to me," the same words as those printed by Harrison in The Mona Miscellany, 1869, taken down by him in 1843.

CHAPTER IX
" WE'LL HUNT THE WREN "

§ 3. The Wren, the Hen, and their Feathers.

The use made of the feathers as amulets is an interesting and, perhaps, the most significant part of all the Manx proceedings. From this standpoint the song as sung at Llanrhaiadr-ym-mochnant, Montgomeryshire, is the most notable of the Welsh versions, though it is imperfectly preserved. In English it runs thus :

1. Let us go to the wood, said Dibyn to Dobyn,
Let us go to the wood, said Risiart to Robin,
Let us go to the wood, said John to the three,
Let us go to the wood, said every one.

2. What shall we do there ? etc.

3. Hunt the little wren, etc.

4. What shall we do with it ? etc.

5. Sell it for a shilling, etc.

6. (Not given.)

7. Spend it on ale, etc.

8. What if I got drunk ? etc.

9. (Not given.)

10. What if I died ? etc.

11. (Not given.)

12. Where shall we bury the feathers ? etc.

13. In a grave in a mound, etc.[1]

Two of the foregoing proposals—to get drunk on ale bought by money received for the wren, and to bury the feathers in a mound—were regularly practised, though with a hen as the *corpus vile*, at Colby Fair in the Manx parish of Arbory, every 6th of December. The hen seems to have been its presiding genius as the billy-goat is at Puck Fair in Kerry every 15th of August. On the first day the hen was carried about alive ; on the following day it was killed, and (as Rhys surmised in his *Celtic Folk-lore*) its feathers scattered among the crowd as largesse.[2] Plenty to drink was an essential and traditional feature of the business. Dr. John Clague of Castletown gives, in a little bilingual volume published by his literary executors,[3] a description of the custom which dates to a considerably earlier period than that at which he wrote:

" I have heard an old man say that his mother kept a public-house, and she told him that the men and young boys of the neighbourhood would kill a hen, and they would walk two and

two, holding the hen between them, and other persons would walk two and two through the fair with their hats off, as if they would be at a funeral, and sing:

Catherine's Catherine's hen is dead.
You take the head and I'll take the feet,
And we'll put her underground.[4]

They would then go to the public-house and get plenty of ale. A wake was kept over the hen, and early the next morning the men went to peelf the hen. The head and feet were cut off, and they were buried. It gave them an opportunity to get a little drop on the next day. Anyone who went to the public-house on the day after the fair, people said, ' He is going to peel the hen.' "

Dr. Clague also mentions an accreted tradition to the effect that the custom originated in the donation, by a local benefactor named Catherine, of a piece of land near her namesake's chapel to be used as the fair-ground, with the injunction that a hen was to be killed and a sufficiency of ale drunk at the feast. (Both these conditions, it may be interjected, were conscientiously observed by the Manxmen almost up to the beginning of the present degenerate century. The fair itself did not long survive the custom.) Tradition further stated that before there were any attorneys, the people of Colby used to adjust their differences over the dead body of their bird; "each party would pluck some of the feathers and bury them, and the case was settled."

Fuller details of this method of settling disputes would be very welcome ; but it is to be feared that they are now forgotten.

A " dramatic scene acted by the people " with its accompanying old song of which only the burthen remained--" Kiark y Treen e Marrow," " The Hen of the Treen is Dead " (sic)-are ascribed by William Harrison to the now defunct Periwinkle Fair, which was held in a shore-field at Poolvaash in Malew on the 6th of February, St. Dorothy's Day, but later on a variable date. It was partly a pleasure-fair and partly for the sale of cattle and ponies. Harrison says, " I have in vain endeavoured to ascertain the entire drama, and the verses connected with it. . . . Some attribute the custom to St. Catherine's Day, November 25th."*

The sacrifice of a hen was not confined to Colby (and Poolvaash, if Harrison was correct in his statement). Up to the early years of this century, I am told, such a custom lingered among the labourers at a few farms in various parts of the Island. They killed a black fowl and carried it about the premises as a protection against the machinations of witches and for good luck generally. An account given me by an eye-witness relates to the farm of Skyhill, a hill-top dwelling which now stands deserted. The slaughtering was done with a knife, not by the more usual method of wringing the neck. In this particular case the body was afterwards thrown away on the " midden "-the dung-heap ; but I gather that the traditional way of disposal was to bury it, as with the Colby hen and the wren. The vagueness of the details is due to the fact that my informant was a child at the time, which was about the year z909. As it is only quite recently this extinct custom has come to my notice I cannot say to what day of the calendar it belonged, or, if the bird was plucked, what was done with the feathers.

Points of resemblance, however, between the Wren-custom and that of St. Catherine's Hen at Colby stand out distinctly. In both there was the sacrifice, the procession, the mock mourning, the plucking, the burying, a special use made of the feathers, a special song, and a

reward for the principal actors in the little drama. The Manx Wren-parties, moreover, doubtless consumed as much ale as the devotees of the Saint's Hen, in the days before the Wren-rites were delegated to children.

In a general way the hen, especially a black hen, is a powerful instrument in the magic spells of many countries, and so are feathers. A Hungarian charm to discover hidden treasure involves the sacrificing of a black hen.* A black hen was sacrificed in Germany to the hill - mannikins. f " Hill - mannikins " may be interpreted as elves or fairies. In a Bondei (Zanzibar) folk-tale a large bird gives its feathers, four at a time, as charms ; when the pot is stirred with one of them it causes plenty.+ The sacrifice of a hen at a Breton fair has been described in a letter to a Cornishman from a Welshman resident in Brittany (a comprehensive Brythonic synthesis !) :

" The other day I went to St. Gildas'-a church dedicated to that Saint-in our Cornwall here. § It being the festival of St. Gildas, 11 I saw there some two or three thousand peasants who had congregated together. . . . A curious part of the religious ceremony was the throwing from the church tower of a fowl to the people below. In a moment the animal was caught by its legs, wings, tail and head, and torn into so many pieces. I was told that the one who caught the head and carried it off was considered the champion, and that the parish he belonged to was sure to get the best harvest during the year."*

The discrepancy between the dates in Man and Brittany suggests that ecclesiastical influences have attached the custom to certain Christian feast-days, and that no connexion need be looked for between Catherine and the unfortunate Manx bird of which she was, nominally, the patron saint.

Perhaps the first stage of a kindred ceremony is to be seen surviving, like the stump of a oncevenerated tree, in this description of a Cotswold custom which has been discontinued only in recent years :

" It was the practice, on New Year's Day, for all the ploughmen to come home from the field at noon and stable their horses. Then the head carter, carrying the plough-spanner and a wooden wedge in his hand, and followed by the under-ploughman and boys, proceeded to the kitchen, and laid them on the table before the mistress with the remark, ' Now for the owl' cock, Missis ! ' or ' Rain or shine, the cock's mine.' After that the carter and his mates went outside and chased the cock round the farmyard for ten or fifteen minutes, and then came into the kitchen and sat down to a substantial meal. There was no more ploughing that day.".+ " The cock's mine "clearly implies that the bird was at one time scrambled for and fell to the nimblest pursuer. There is nothing to show whether it was then treated like the Manx hen, like the hen of St. Gildas in Brittany, or like the cock in a classical custom cited by Grimm from Pausanias : " a cock with white feathers is cut up and carried round the vineyard against the wind." The killing of a cock in Ireland on St. Martin's Day is well-known.*

In the Cotswold custom, by the way, the bringing in of the symbols of the plough compares with the bringing in of the implement itself and putting it under the table, during Christmas week in South Wales farmhouses, as already noted on page 373.

Not only are the feathers of the wren prominent in the Manx ritual and some of the songs other than Manx, but they are introduced into more than one of the fables that associate the wren with the eagle and the owl. In an English story the eagle avenged himself for being

cheated out of the kingship by plucking the feathers out of the wren's tail, which in those days was much longer than it is now. Some other anecdote of the wren and the eagle is doubtless alluded to in the Breton proverbial saying, " The eagle flees before the wren."* The Bretons have an explanation for the strained relations existing between the owl and the rest of the birds, which turns upon the wren's plumage. Finding the cold unbearable, they asked her to oblige them by going to hell and bringing back some of its fire. This she did, but returned with her feathers all scorched. Each of the other birds, in gratitude, gave her one of their own feathers, with the exception of the curmudgeonly owl. For his refusal they mob him whenever they see him.t

In the same wonderful land of Armor a song of immense length is devoted to the subject of the plucking of the wren's feathers, but it amounts to no more than a cumulative memory-test. It begins:

" We will pluck the wren's beak,
For that is quite tiny,"

and adds the rest of her (him in France) part by part, the last item being:

We We will pluck his tail,
[About thirty items intervene]
We will pluck his beak
We have plucked him from end to end! "*

In view of the importance of the feathers of the wren and the hen in Manx tradition it will be convenient to summarize in tabular form the several references made in the course of this chapter to the ceremonial plucking and use of feathers :-

Page.

357,369. Manx Wren-boys' distribution of feathers among the people to be worn or carried for luck and protection against evil influences.

Birds buried in churchyard and elsewhere.

359. Californian tribe : preservation of sacred buzzard's feathers for wizard's dress.t Bird buried in temple.

359. Condor clans, Peru: feathers of condor totem worn for distinction and protection. 359. Orinoco tribe : toucan feathers distributed, used to scare evil spirits, afterwards worn. 395. Adderbury, Oxon., Wren-song: feathers given to " the cook."

410. Old English Wren-song: distribution of a feather each among Wren-party.

411. Llanrhaiadr Wren-song: burial of feathers in a grave-mound.

412, 414. Colby Fair, Isle of Man: plucking, distribution and burial of hen's feathers. Bird buried. 412. Laguenne, France: plucking of wren and tossing of feathers into the air.

416. Bondei tribe (East Africa) : " large bird " gives its feathers, four at a time, to ensure plenty.

418. Transylvania : cock as Corn-spirit, its feathers sown with seed to ensure good crop. 419. English legend : eagle plucks feathers from wren's tail.

419. Breton legend : contribution of other birds' feathers to wren.

419. Breton song : entirely devoted to the plucking of the wren.

These instances suffice to convey an inkling of the magic virtue attached to the plumage of the sacrificed bird

Footnotes

1 The Welsh original is in the *Welsh Folk-song journal*, vol. i.

2 In the Lower Limousin district of I;rance, among other ceremonies practised with a wren accoutred as a hunting-hawk, the bird was plucked and the feathers tossed into the air. (Folk-lore, xvii., 272.) Presumably they were scrambled for by the populace.

3 Cooinaghtyn Manninagh - "Manx Reminiscences " ; Castletown (1911).

4 Compare the words of the Devonshire Wren-song, also the burial of the Manx wren. The vernacular of these three lines contains a rhyme or assonance :

Kiark Catriney marroo ;
Gow uss y chione, as goym' sny cassyn,
As ver mavd ee fo halloo.

Catherine's hen is dead ;
I'll take the feet and thou the head,
And under the earth we'll make her bed.

5 Pluck.

6 In the same vein of bucolic wit, when a man was seen drunk at the fair it was said, " He has plucked a feather of the hen." (Moore, *Folk-lore of the Isle of Man*, page 127.) And, next morning, " Ren eh plucky yn kiark mie riyr " ; " He plucked the good hen last night." (Roeder, *Lioar Mann.*, iii., 189.) The word " good " is explained by the reasons given for this and similar customs further on in the present chapter.

7 Mona Miscellany, ii., 182.

8 Folk-lore, xxxviii., 128. A review in Folk-lore, xxxvii., 312, of the Jahrbuch fiir Historische Volkskunde, vol. i., Berlin, 1925, alludes to a special study therein of hen-rites and hen-charms.

9 Teutonic Mythology, page 1488.

10 Folk-lore, xxxiv., 274 If.

11The province of Cornouaille. 29th January.

12 *Cornish Notes and Queries* (1906), page 216, from J. H. R. (Dr. J. Hambley Rowe).

13 Alfred Williams, Round about the Upper Thames, page 168.

14 The Cotswold custom described above is more likely to be a survival in England of the German and Transylvanian rite of which many examples are given in chapter xlviii., section 3, of The Golden Bough, but if

so, it has been shifted from the end of harvest to Christmas-tide. " When the last sheaf is about to be bound, the master releases a cock and lets it run over the field. All the harvesters chase it till they catch it," is typical of the German custom. The bird is the " Harvest-cock " or " Harvest-hen." When the reapers come to the last sheaf they shout, " Now we'll chase out the cock " ; when it is cut they say, " We have caught the cock." In Transylvania the skin and feathers of the actual bird are kept until the following year, when the feathers are mixed with grain from the last sheaf and scattered on the field which is to be tilled, to ensure a good crop.

15 Revue celtique, ii., 367. The association of the wren with the eagle in folk-lore is neither modern nor purely European. It was familiar to Aristotle; and the Confucianist Book of Odes is said to contain a poem on the wren and the eagle, an old native commentary on which states that the fledglings of the eagle in some cases turn into wrens. (Notes and Queries for 13th June, 1925.) I have not been able to find the commentary.

16 Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1859, p. 184, article "Breton Antiquities."

17 The entire song is given in Luzel's Soniou Breiz-Izel (Chansons Populaires de la Basse Bretagne), where it is entitled " Plumer le Roitelet." Luzel mentions a French version, " Plumer I'Alouette," and is uncertain which is the original; there is also a similar Breton piece, " Breaking up the Blackbird," and an Irish song about the herring.

18 Compare the feather cloak of the Irish druids.

§ 4. Other Wren-lore.

The fable of the wren's outsoaring of the eagle and so gaining the kingship of bird-land is familiar to us all from our nursery days; less well-known is its quaint Welsh sequel:-" When the birds beheld their king they became very sad and sorrowful, and they cried bitterly. Afterwards they met in solemn conclave and decided to drown their king in tears. So they procured a pan to hold their tears, and the birds gathered round and craned their necks over the pan and wept. But the owl clumsily mounted the edge of the pan, thereby upsetting it, and spilled the tears. The birds became enraged at this and swore vengeance against the owl, and ever since he has not dared to show himself during the day, and is obliged to seek his food at night, when all the other birds are asleep. Thus the wren was saved, and continued king of the birds."[1]

Another Welsh account of the affair says that in the flying contest the wren fell to the ground and hurt himself. The rest were much concerned at the mishap and concocted a broth to cure him, but the blundering owl upset the pot.

The Roumanians also blame the owl. When he was put to watch the hollow into which the wren had crept to avoid the wrath of the other birds after the flying-match, the owl fell asleep and let him escape.[2]

In the Cornish ballad of " The Butterflies' Ball " it is the butterflies who fill the bowl with their tears, in their dread that the wren will devour them all, and it is the wren's negligence that upsets it. The other birds then lay upon her a curse, namely, that she should never be able to fly over a hedge or bush as high as a milking-pail without alighting on it, and so giving the moths and butterflies a chance to escape. A reason given by an old Cornishman for the wren's wickedness and consequent annual persecution was that, when St. Paul (who was as small among men as a wren is among birds) was converted, the Spirit of Destruction went out of him and into the wren.[3]

One at least of the two separate allusions in the Mabinogion (in " Kulhwch " and in " Math " respectively) to shooting or striking at the wren's legs looks like a minute specimen of the imperfectly assimilated myth or folk - lore which abounds throughout that collection of tales. It is quite possible, of course, that neither of the two passages implies anything more than its surface-meaning, namely, that to hit a wren was a proof of good marksmanship. Still, we read further on in " Math " that when Llew, whose feat earned him his second name, was slain in his human form-or was transformed by magiche flew away in the shape of an eagle-or, to be very precise, in the shape of a screaming bird which afterwards discovered itself as an eagle ; and when Llew's witch-wife Blodeuwedd, who was of no human ancestry, suffered a similar fate at the hands of Gwydyon, her attendants were all drowned in the Ffestiniog river and she flew away in the form of an owl, to be harassed ever since by the other birds in punishment for her former misdeeds. Apart from the close association of the eagle and the owl with the wren in other myths and fables, Blodeuwedd's catastrophe, or crisis, is very similar to that of the Manx witch or siren Tehi Tegi which was related in explanation of the yearly hunting of the wren.

The remainder of the wren-lore existing in so many countries does not, so far as I am acquainted with it, show any vital connexion with the killing and parading of the bird, with the exception, perhaps, of certain allusions in fables to its feathers. The wren's " kingship" over the other birds, for example, does not appear to explain these ceremonies ; while if he was ever imagined to rule over any other kingdom, it was so long ago that the myth is lost.

1 H. W. Evans, Solva, in Pembrokeshire Antiquities (reprints from the Pembrokeshire Guardian), 1897, page 49

2 J. C. Davies, Folk-lore of South and Mid-Wales, page 225. Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories, page 301. The Germans, too, have this version.

3 Old Cornwall, No. ii, page 6.

§ 5. The Names of the Wren.

The Manx name dreain represents the Scottish Gaelic dreathann, which is not recognized by Dinneen and the other Irish dictionary-makers, though the Irish word dreolkn is known in the Highlands.* The Old English wrenna appears in the Old Norse rindill ; according to Williams's Cornish Dictionary the Cornish name gurannan is derived from the English word. The Breton laouennan, laouennak, mean simply the merry or lively one, but some of the local sobriquets for the bird are more suggestive of the legends which have grown up around it : doeig and in Doë, " little god," and " God's bird," equivalent to the French name poidette de Dieu. Troc'hau is yet another Breton name. French country names for the wren seem mostly to be diminutives of a stem Berri, meaning presumably the province, but varied by bërëe in the Cotes du Nord, berruchet around Dinan, and Marie Chourre in Bëarn. Chovian, " witch," is an English gypsy term. Into the remainder of the wren's European names, from the Latin regillus, kinglet, downwards, the idea of "king" commonly enters. Whether this is due to the fable of the eagle and the wren, or whether the fable, though known so early as Aristotle and Pliny, was invented to explain a name which was even then unintelligible, is an arguable question.

* Ireland has some wren place-names. Reenadrolaun (Point), and Killeenadreena with its ogam stone, are both on Valencia Island, Kerry. Wren Point is the people's name for Lower Rosses Point, Sligo, Evans Wentz says. Probably there are more such names in the country, and nothing can be argued from the fact that these few all occur on the coast.

That the Welsh name for the wren, dryw, also carries the meaning of " druid " in modern usage does not help to establish the theory that the bird was killed in recent times simply because of its pagan associations. The sense of " druid " was attached to the word in or since the i7th century, when dryw replaced an equally fictitious term for a druid-derwydd, coined in the 12th century when the long-forgotten order was rediscovered in classical authors and a native name for it became a patriotic necessity.* Thus the druid has been given the name of the wren, not vice versa ; but it is likely that even this accidental coincidence in meaning was due chiefly to the desire for a word having a plausible resemblance to the presumed singular of Cæsar's plural, druides, or of the other plural, druid, used by some Latin authors.

One of the fanciful derivations in Cormac's Glossary * See, for example, Jubainville, Les Druides, pages 82, 83; and Silvan Evans's Welsh Dictionary, page 1694.

explains " dreaan, a wren " as " drui-6n, a druid-bird, i.e. a bird that makes prophecy." O'Curry's remarks on the supposed connexion of the wren with the Irish druids are very guarded and slightly inconsistent. He says : " Whether the interpretation of dreams and of auguries drawn from the croaking of ravens, the chirping of wrens, and such like omens formed any part of the professional office of the Druids of ancient Erin, I have not been able to ascertain. But whoever it was, or whatever class of persons, that could read such auguries, there is no doubt that they were observed, and apparently much in the manner of other ancient nations." He adds further on: " I suppose it is but probable that all such auguries as those of which I have just been speaking were generally practised by the same influential order. I have, however (as already remarked), no positive proof that these divinations were confined to the class of Druids."*

* Manners and Customs, ii., 223-¢. In a Life of St. Moling the wren is called magus avium eo quod aliquibus praebet augurium, " the druid of the birds, inasmuch as it makes predictions to certain people."

In a Life of St. Ceallach, of Killala, while imprisoned in a hollow oak-tree he is visited by various unfriendly birds. The wren he apostrophises thus : " O tiny wren, most scant of tail, dolefully hast thou piped prophetic lay 1 surely thou art come to betray me, and to curtail my gift of life l " (Silva Gadelica, ii., g9.)

A passage in Iolo Goch's poems mentions, among other omens to be avoided, " the voice of the wren for an unrighteous profit," (Rev. Celt. xx., 342), whatever that may mean.

The gypsy name for the wren previously quoted, chovian (witch), is due to a gypsy belief that when it chirps and flutters about a camping-place it is warning the party that they will soon be made to " move on." When there was more room in England and no police, the wren must have foretold graver afflictions.

Even if they were so confined in Ireland, which is very unlikely, the wren was much less important in matters of augury than other individual birds, the raven especially, and than birds moving about in flocks, to say nothing of quadrupeds. Moreover, the extracts from an old Irish manuscript in Trinity College, Dublin, on which O'Curry rests his cautious opinion, show it to be a collection of rules for interpreting dreams and omens, and it is not likely that the druids, or rather the file, the diviners, by whom such prognostications were practised,

would need or use a written code of instructions. Still, it is of interest to see that at some bygone period (O'Curry gives no indication of the date of the MS.) the wren domesticated for the purpose, he thinks-was certainly one of the many creatures from which omens were obtained. " Some of the distinctions," he remarks, " taken respecting the sounds made by birds are very curious, almost suggesting the recognition of some species of language amongst them " ; a belief which, as folk-lorists know, did exist in most parts of the world, and appears in many a legend and fairy-tale.

It must have been this tradition which inspired the author of an old Welsh poem in the Iolo MSS., headed in translation " Sayings of the Wise, to the wise who may understand them." Of the thirty-three triplets voicing the moral maxims of birds and beasts, the fourth runs :

" Hast thou heard the little saying of the Wren
In the nest where she lived ?
Let every sort go where it belongs."

After the thirty-third dictum of the three and thirty philosophers has been delivered by the Pig, comes the exquisite envoy : " Thus ends this portion of the Sayings of the Wise ; and happy is the man who as wise as the Pig."

§ 6. Geographical distribution of Custom and Songs.

To sum the matter up, the custom has been best preserved in the Isle of Man, and its accompanying song, so different in its tenour from the actual ceremonies, was remembered at as great length in the Island as anywhere. In a simpler form the custom has flourished widely in South-West Wales, and there is at least one record of it in North Wales. Fragments of the song have been heard in North Wales. In all the provinces of Ireland the wren was carried round on Christmas Day or St. Stephen's Day, but without the characteristic song. In England the persecution of the wren has been noted in the following counties, which are so widely separated that it would seem that the practice was once current in almost every part of the country : Yorkshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire,[1] Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Suffolk, [2] Essex, Surrey and Devon.

The song accompanied it in Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Devon. Cornwall and Cumberland show a custom of bird-shooting on St. Stephen's Day which probably descended from that of killing the wren. In Scotland both the custom and the song were in vogue, according to Chambers's Popular Rhymes, but no localities are particularized; Galloway loosed a captured wren on New Year's Day; and the Wrensong penetrated to Orkney as a cradle-song. In the South of France the custom was generally practised, sometimes in a very elaborate form, but no song is mentioned in accounts of the proceedings ; in some places the bird was freed after capture, as in Kirkmaiden, Galloway. Brittany has four songs relating to the wren, but I have seen no record of any custom connected with it.

1 The late J. Harvey Bloom, of Stratford, told me that the sport called " shacking the wren "-harrying it, that is-was carried on at any time during the winter. The same, according to my own recollection, may be said for Oxfordshire.

2 In Suffolk the date was the exceptional one of 14th February, St. Valentine's Day. (*County Folk-lore*: Gloucestershire.)

§ 7. Conclusion.

The Irish custom so closely resembles that of South Wales that it may well have been introduced into Ireland since the Anglo-Norman invasion; a native Gaelic custom would have preserved or developed dissimilarities. This conclusion applies equally to the Manx ceremony. The archaic wren-myth from which all these customs, and their English vestiges, must have arisen, was probably current in Southern Gaul and Celtic Britain, but not in more purely Teutonic and Gaelic regions. But it must be admitted that the British scholar who was best qualified to form an opinion did not think the custom was Celtic at all, if his omission of it from the pages of his *Celtic Folk-lore* may be thus construed.

Wherever it originated, it had in recent times become so widely scattered that if it was at first simply a totemistic or tribal ceremony it must, after having become obsolete in that form, have spread from its centre as a mere folk-custom to which a religious meaning was no longer attached.

For a satisfactory explanation of the whole mystery more evidence is needed, or perhaps a more penetrating scrutiny of the present evidence. For my own part I am content to have brought together such material as seemed to bear on the question, and to adopt in regard to it the attitude of that consistent agnostic Fiddledefoze.

NOTE.

The Provencal and Scottish practice of freeing the wren instead of killing and plucking it (see pages 379 and 382) was occasionally followed in Pembrokeshire also. " There was an old Epiphany observance which I saw but once. A little boy, with coloured paper streamers pinned to his cap, brought in a cage a wren, caught for the purpose and afterwards let go, and repeated something about

Come and make your offering
To the smallest, yet the king,

of which I could learn no more, . . . (Contributed to *Folk-lore*, xv., 198, from the Narberth district.)

CHAPTER X

SUNDRY TRADITIONS

§ 1. The Tribute to Manannan.

THE most remarkable among Manx Calendar-customs from a mythological point of view, is one which had already died out, apparently, in the early part of the 16th century, but of which the memory had not wholly lapsed at the beginning of the loth. It consisted in the taking by every landholder of a bundle of rushes to South Barrule as a symbol of his rent, on the Eve of St. John's Day. A portion of the rushes was carried to the top of the mountain, another portion was left below. The various printed accounts of the practice will follow. It was probably obsolete at the time of the earliest references to it which now survive, for they speak in the past tense, but the date is given in all cases as St. John's or Midsummer Eve, the 23rd of June.

1. Only one copy of the Rhymed Chronicle in Manx, printed in Douglas as a popular pamphlet in 1778, is known to exist, but translations, complete or partial, have appeared in the works of General Vallancey, in Train's Historical Account of the Island, in Moore's Manx Ballads, and elsewhere. The stanzas relating

to the present subject are the first two. Literally translated, they run thus:

The The tax* each one paid out of his land Was a bundle of green rushes every year; And that was on them to pay as their rent, Throughout the country each St. John's Eve. Some would go with the rushes up

To the great mountain t above Barrule ; Others would leave the rushes below, Near$ Manannan above Keamool."

There are sufficient internal grounds for believing that this chronicle-poem or ballad was composed before the year 1523, but the first few stanzas may be older. They make it appear that the tribute of the rushes and the Golden Age of Manannan's rule were coeval ; but his existence in any capacity, whether deity, arch-wizard, or leader of the people, must have been a hoary legend when the lines were composed. The carrying up of the rushes was a folk-custom, in all probability not long obsolete at that time, which symbolized, as such customs often do, a more substantial offering, rendered when Manannan actually ruled. The strong Celtic sense of the divine right inherent in kings, and of their influence upon the success of crops, fertility of cattle, health of the people, and general prosperity of the countries over which they presided, was doubtless the main motive in making such offerings, and it is the merging, in early * Or " tribute "-keesh.

f Slieu mooav may be intended as a place-name, a name of Barrule mountain.

$ Ec might also be translated " at ," " with," or " by."

societies, of the offices and characters of the god, the priest and the king, which makes it difficult to say, in many cases, for which of these personalities the original sacrifice was intended. In the next passage, however, " Manannan " becomes a place.

2. " Mananan MacLer, the first Man that had Mann, or ever was ruler of Mann . . . he never had any farm* of the Comons,j' but each one to bring a certain quantity of green Rushes on Midsummer Eve, some to a place called Warfield,* and some to a place called Man, and yet is so called." (" The Supposed True Chronicle," originally 16th century, prefixed in MS. to a copy of the Statutes.)

3. " And [Manannan] was never wont to charge his subjects with other service, saving onely, that on Midsomer even, they shuld all bring gruene rushes some to a place called Wragfeld,t and some other to a place called Man." (A Lansdowne MS. dated 1573 ; see Oliver's Monumenta, i., 84.)

4. "One Mananan Mac Bar§ . . . who took of the people no other acknowledgment for their land, but the bearing of Rushes to certain places called Warefield,$ and Mame,11 on Midsummer even." (Chaloner, Treatise of the Isle of Man, 1656.)

Rent.

f The people. South Barrule.

§ Read " Mac Lear."

11 Read " Mann " or " Manne."

5.

" The first king in it was Manannan beg mac y Leirr,

He did not want rent, but a small tribute out of the land,* But a bundle of green rushes,} that was all. each year."

(" Manninee Dobberan," " The Manxmen's Lament," an 18th-century composition ; see Manx Ballads, page 34. Literal translation.)

6. " Mannanan-beg-Mac-y-Leir, the Druidical chief, had his but or wigwam palace on the East of Barrool, and but a short distance from Tynwald Hill. The wretched inhabitants of Mona acknowledged this conjuror as their liege lord, and their vassalage by carrying annually, on the eve of Midsummer-Day, a quantity of green rushes to the top of Barrool-a portion of the rushes, however, was left at the chief's residence at the foot of the hill ; the payment of the green rushes was the tenure on which the islanders held their lands." (Quiggin's Guide to the Isle of Man,

1848, page 109.) " On the East of Barrool " might mean either the top of Barrule Veg or the neighbourhood of Barrule farm. With " the chief's residence " is to be compared the chief officer's or steward's house in No. 7. These additional particulars were probably derived from oral traditions then living.

7. (Manannan speaks) : " Once upon a time they who were under my sovranty gave me reverence and loving-kindness. They brought me every year a quantity of hay of uncultivated meadows, or else rushes from Barrule-top, to the dwelling-house} of my * Or " tax out of the ground."

t Leaghyr, the word used here, also meant sedge-grass. + Or perhaps " store-house."

high-steward at the foot of the hillside." (" Conversation between Manannan and an old Manxwoman," by Thomas Kelly of Peel, printed at Douglas about 1870, and reprinted in The Manx Quarterly, No. 23.) The Manx text of the reprint is a translation of an unknown English original. The foregoing passage I have translated literally, as in excerpts Nos. i and 5, from the reprint.

A recent verbal tradition remains to be added to the foregoing quotations. About twenty years ago Miss Mona Douglas was told by an elderly Manxwoman that the rushes were burnt on the hill-top by " magic fire " which Manannan brought with him out of the sea, and that it was by means of the resulting smoke that he concealed the Island from unwelcome strangers.*

It is strange that nothing is said about burning the rushes in any of the early records of the custom; but if we may accept it a genuine part of the tradition the comparison is obviously with the Midsummer Fires common to all Europe, and not unknown in the Isle of Man. One Continental celebration in particular, described in The Golden Bough (abridged edition), page 623, in two details agrees strikingly with the Manx practice. In the 16th century, "at Lower Konz, a village situated on the hillside overlooking the Moselle, the midsummer festival used to be celebrated as follows. A quantity of straw was collected on the

* A mysterious fire of the sea was known in Scandinavian mythology. A Chaldean hymn of unknown antiquity addresses the element of Fire as " Hero, Son of the Ocean, who mountest aloft in the land ! "

top of the steep Stromberg Hill. Every inhabitant, or at least every householder, had to contribute his share of straw to the pile. At nightfall the whole male population, men and boys, mustered on the top of the hill; the women and girls were not allowed to join them, but had to take up their position at a certain spring half-way down the slope." The straw was then burnt in the form of a wheel and as torches. The contributing of a share by every householder, and the division of the participants into two parties, one at the top of the hill and the other lower down, will be recognized as special features of the Manx rushbearing ceremony.

The reason given why every householder should contribute his share was-in Baden at any ratethat otherwise no blessing would rest on his crops, just as with the Manx bonfires. The Manx explanation that the rushes or dry grass represented a rent or tribute (without mention of their being burnt) belongs to quite a different category of customs, with which may probably be included the annual providing of rushes for churches in England, and for Tynwald Hill and its approach from its chapel on 5th July. In the latter case the rushes came from a particular farm in the neighbourhood. The parish of Clee, in Lincolnshire, possesses an ancient privilege of cutting rushes from a piece of land called " Bescars " for the purpose of strewing the church on Trinity Sunday. A small quantity of grass is annually cut to preserve this right.* * Edwards, Old English Customs, page 217.

There are many other examples of this right, privilege, or duty of supplying rushes or hay for churches. In many cases it fell due in the Spring, but at Braunston, in Leicestershire, the date was 29th June, at Glenfield, in the same county, it was the first Sunday after 5th July, and at Ashby Folville, also in Leicestershire, it was the first Sunday in August. Curious traditions were attached at all these places. At Clee-cumCleethorpes, Lincolnshire, a belief was found

in 1897 that the contribution of rushes was " in virtue of an acknowledgment of rent " ; and at some places in Gloucestershire money is paid instead.

Several questions are suggested by the foregoing resemblances to the Manx customs. The contribution of rushes to English churches and to Tynwald Chapel and Hill served a useful purpose, that of a carpet for a sacred precinct ; did it fulfil any such purpose on the summit of Barrule ? Again, have two quite separate observances been combined in the fullest surviving account of the Barrule ceremony ? If so, was the tribute-payment a transference from 12th (for 1st) August ?

It is familiar knowledge that from prehistoric times the Celtic-speaking world began its year with the onset of winter darkness at the beginning of November, just as a day was reckoned from one nightfall to the next. Hence the Manxman's New Year's Day, starting at sunset on the 31st October (later 11th November) was the most critical point of his twelve months, a time when the accumulated traditions and age-hallowed practices demanded strict observance ; when the

spirits of his ancestors, gathering at the death of summer and the birth of winter as fairies gather at human births and deaths, clamoured for remembrance and were placated to keep them quiet for the rest of the year.

Another method of year-division has, in the Isle of Man, been superimposed upon the Celtic one-the Scandinavian method with its Quarter-days at the 25th December, March, June and September.* Hence the once-important Tynwald Fair Day, formerly the Manx national holiday until it was superseded as such by the institution of motor-racing on the main roads (with which, however, it is permitted to rank as an advertised attraction to trippers), was observed on the 24th June prior to its being set forward to the 5th July in conformity with the adjustment of the European Calendar.f

It is to be presumed that a ceremony connected with Manannan must be considered Celtic. Was the commemoration of the tax or tribute, then, brought by Scandinavian influence from the Celtic Quarter - day to the Northern one, the Summer Solstice ? And is the only remaining vestige of it on its original day of celebration the time-worn custom of ascending

* It is noteworthy that Howth with its Scandinavian name, the eminence nearest to the Scandinavian headquarters at Dublin, is said to have given the lead to the St. John's Eve bonfires all over Ireland. But the non-Celtic festival-dates may well have been observed among Gaelic peoples long before the historical invasions from Scandinavia.

f The alteration was made in the Isle of Man as from the end of 1751 and was ratified by Act in 1753.

South Barrule and other Manx hills on the first Sunday after the ist of August ?

This customary offering of rushes (or, alternatively, as a later account of it says, of sedge-grass) has the look of standing in the place of a primitive pagan rite, in which the first-fruits offered to a deity or his priest (often a king) were in later times replaced by symbolic rushes. To the best of my knowledge the carrying up of rushes was a custom which stood alone in the British Isles. Though there is a small body of Celtic rush-lore, none of the numerous Irish

references to Manannan hints at a tribute of that nature, or any tribute, having been rendered to him, nor is there a hint of such an offering to any other personage.

On the Continent, however, a somewhat similar hill-top offering has been recorded in a 2nd-century Calendar engraved in a Celtic language on metal, which was discovered in 1897, together with the fragments of a statue of a deity, at Coligny, near Lyons. The following passage from a monograph by Sir John Rhys,* previously read before the British Academy, refers to the month of Rivros (Harvest) or August, of which Rivos was the god. " On the fourth day of that month in the first year we have the entry

.` Rivos is with us. We have Rivos.' The corresponding entries in three of the other years represent some of the harvest being taken to the hill or

* The Coligny Calendar. For the ensuing quotations see pp. 13, 64 and 35. The author had previously discussed the Calendar in the course of his ethnological study, Celtae and Galli.

eminence, while the fifth year has an entry which meant probably the same thing, though it employed a different word, tio, house, which may be interpreted to mean the house of Rivos. Those four entries refer to the taking of firstfruits to offer to the god in his sanctuary." Later in the month a share of the crop goes to the priest or druid at the temple of the god below. Rhys would identify Rivos as a local form or representative of Lug, the most powerful and widely worshipped of the Celtic deities. " The month of August is dominated by Lug, and the festivities at the beginning of Autumn* were meant to mark the successful close of the prolonged struggle between the sun-god and the Fomori whose spells and evil magic produced the blasts and blights that were harmful to the growing crops and to the dairy. The first event in the Coligny Calendar for the month of Rivros was the carrying of the firstfruits to the hill, otherwise to the house ; the statements combined favour the idea that the house was on the hill."

If the suggested parallel with the Manx rite is worth pressing, either tio, the house, or the temple of the god below the hill, would be represented by the " place called Man," " the chief's residence at the foot of the hill," and the "house of the steward" in the same place.

As is pointed out in a mass of evidence supporting the identification of Rivos with Lug, Lug is represented to have been the founder and patron of the most * i.e., the beginning of August.

important popular gatherings in ancient Ireland, which took their origin from the respect paid to the tombs of great leaders.* He was traditionally connected with the great fairs of Taillte and Tara, and with the long obsolete meetings at Knowth and the Brugh of the Boyne, indirectly also with the fair of Carman, said to have been founded by Labraid Loingsech. It was during the Feast of Lug in Ireland in the early days of August that reverence and sacrifice were accorded to the harvest-god or idol Crom Dubh, whom Rhys would equate with Rivos, and hence with Lug. So completely did Lug dominate the beginning of August that it is called in Ireland and Scotland Lugnasad, Lug's Fair-day, and in Manx Laa Luanys. With regard to the tradition that Lug established fairs in his own person, Rhys conjectures that " we have probably to substitute for the god Lug some king who worshipped Lug."

Lug, we may remind ourselves, is said to have been the foster-son of Manannan, and to have dwelt, temporarily or permanently, with him in the Isle of Man. In one passage in the Irish romances the Manx Lug comes thence at the head of a brilliant cavalcade, wearing weapons

lent to him by Manannan. In another he is said to have slain the Sons of Uisnech "at Mana, over the clear sea." Manannan as a demi-god may be imagined to have been a transfigured leader whose successors bore his name in some form,

* Both Thurneysen and MacNeill, writing later, take the word vivos in the Calendar to mean literally " the Great Feast," the date of which therein corresponds to 16th August.

as men in later times bore the names of the saints whom they adored or whose shrines they served and protected. The whole subject of Manannan is extremely obscure, but taking this view of him, it is possible to understand how a god (Lug) could, in myths which survived in literary allusions, have been imagined as dwelling with and being fostered by a less divine and less ubiquitous personage (Manannan), who was, perhaps, confused with the god or regarded as his representative.

Although no records exist of other hill-top tributes having been paid to the harvest-god under other names than Rivos in the Northern part of Gaul and nearer to the British Isles, it is unlikely that the Coligny ceremony was unique. The difference of the dates is an obstacle in any attempt to derive the Manx observance from it ; but certain resemblances between them must be admitted. If they are accidental only, the Isle of Man can claim one custom, at the least, which it shared with no land.

This is but a tentative sketch of a matter which might reward investigation more richly than any other Insular tradition.

Chapter X

§ 2. Some Minor Traditions.

A CHRISTIAN STRONGHOLD.

The parish of Marown, unique in her separation from the sea, is an island within an Island. Shut in on herself by her sea-fronting sisters, she is content to guard the main pass between East and West which has always been the most frequented of the insular thoroughfares. From the North her mountains, from the South her heath-land, fall to the marshy waters of the Awin Dhoo and the rock-sheltered fields about Greeba and St. Trinian's. Of old the men of the Church and the Abbey, and the solitary followers of the religious life, made this a sacred ground. Possession by bishops and abbots is attested in history and historical documents, and in place-names. Folk-lore reaches further back, and murmurs vaguely of saints and hermits.

On page 65 of the old Manx Society's edition of his book, Waldron says (circa 1720) : " I have been shown a hole on the side of a rock, near Kirk-Maroan mountains, which, they say, was formerly the habitation of one who had retired from the converse of mankind, and devoted himself intirely to prayer and meditation. What seems to prove this conjecture is not without foundation, is, that there is still to be seen a hollow, cut out on the side of the rock with a round stone at one end in the shape of a pillow, which renders it highly probable to have been the hard lodging of one of those holy persons who have forgone all the gaieties and pleasures of life, and chose to mortify the body for the sake of the soul."

It is unlikely that what Waldron saw was far from the road, and the only rocks near the road are those of Greeba. His mention of a stone in the shape of a pillow suggests that the legend then attached to the spot belonged to the *bed* (so-called) of a hermit who lived in the contiguous " hole " or cell. This sort of " bed " (Manx *lhiabbee* — actually a tomb), is not uncommon in Ireland, where it is often explained by a story about its supposed occupant, particularly in the case of dolmens called "the Bed of Dermot and Grania."

A good deal of folk-lore is hidden among what might appear to be dry details, in Mr. P. M. C. Kermode's revised *List of Manx Antiquities*, published in 1930. On his first page, for example, is catalogued an object which is given the name of " St. Patrick's Chair " in a record of the Marown parish boundary written about 1780. It lies among the rocks on the Southern slope of Greeba, and is described in the *List* as " a large boulder of local slate five to six feet long by three to four feet high, weighing some eight tons, having a flat top, and built into position with upright stones at the back of it." No legend concerning it seems to have survived, and the name of " Chair " may be due to the nearness of the well - known " St. Patrick's Chair " on Ellerslie. Can it have any connexion with the place of retreat seen by Waldron ? Patrick has taken over a good many of the Island's antiquities, especially its wells, which probably bore somebody else's name at one time. He is further associated with this rocky spur of the hills in a proverbial saying quoted on page 12 of Morrison and Roeder's *Manx Proverbs* : " Gob Greeba ny clagh, raad nagh rieau dooinney feer berichagh [sic berchagh] ny boght," " The stony face of Greeba, where there was never a very rich man or a very poor man." The saying is attributed to Patrick himself, whose horse took a flying leap across the Island from Chibber Pherick, on Peel Hill, to St. Maughold's Well in that parish, and broke the saint's leg by inadvertently brushing against the side of Greeba. The mishap may have occurred at Creg y Cabbal, the Rock of the Horse" Cregacable " on the Ordnance map. What Patrick really said was, I venture to suggest, that nobody who lived there should

ever grow rich, in the same way as he put his curse on the field containing Keeill Pherick across the valley, because a thorn in it lamed him as he walked through. " It shall never bear any crop," he prophesied, " but briars." For the accident to his leg he should have blamed, not the rocks of Greeba, but the horse that made such a wide tack ; a straight course would have taken them over Snaefell. Perhaps this high flight was beyond the animal's power, but it is more likely that they did, in fact, go that way, and that some other saint was originally associated with the Southern slope of Creg ny Greeba and watched over the pass between the two sea-inlets to East and West.

It is still more likely that St. Patrick never visited the Isle of Man at all.

LAND AND SEA.

Old people say that in the beginning there were three elements, Water, Air and Fire. Water, they say, was the first to be made and will be the last to go, in the end of all things. As a trinity, this is obviously reminiscent of the old Norse trinity, Hler or Aegir, Kari, and Loki.

They say, too, that in far-off times men were working the mines of the Island and getting gold and silver out of them, but now they are only getting lead.

It was held that all material things which are visible and tangible, including human beings and animals, have their ghostly counterparts in a sort of other-half world. There is still a belief that every land-creature is represented in the sea by something closely resembling it.

Of Hy Brasil, the mysterious Celtic island whose impermanency (above the surface) made it so hard to find and fix, there are traces at three or four points of the coast ; Jurby, Rushen, Port Soderick, and perhaps Peel, have each their local legends, and these have already been published. In the main Celtic tradition this island was not always submersible, but developed in some of its manifestations a vagrant habit.1 When it floated up and down the Antrim coast it could be fixed and landed on if a sod of Irish soil could be thrown ashore ; but it always failed them to do it. When a Kirkcudbrightshire farmer saw it in the Solway Firth, " off his shore a little way, once in seven years," it bore corn and apples, and cattle feeding in its fields of clover, all finer than are ever seen in the islands of this world. 2

There are distinct traces of a belief that, like Hy Brasil, the Isle of Man formerly moved or floated upon and about the Irish Sea, just as Delos floated about the Aegean till Zeus moored it 3

1. " Martin Csombor, a Hungarian traveller, who visited England in 1618, states in his book Europica Varietas (Kassa, 1620), that among the many small islands round the coast of England, one, the Isle of Man (Monia) is very celebrated, because it has no foundation, and is blown hither and thither by the winds, and thus changes its position as much as 60 Hungarian (about 300 English) miles." 4

2. In Blundell's 17th-century account of the Island there is a curious remark which appears to be derived from the same notion. " I believe the old arms of the Isle of Man was a Ship ; yea and that most meet and fitting, first because floating in the Ocean, it much resembleth a movable island," etc.

3. " He said no Manxman need be ashamed of speaking the language of his country, and that the Manx would be spoken as long as Man floated." 5 By the middle of the 19th century the myth had shrivelled into this proverbial phrase. It is possible that the idea of " floating " in this case is antithetical to sinking, not to fixity in one place.

Is it scientifically feasible that Man has given birth to some of the Hy Brasils of the Irish Sea by reproducing herself in the form of a mirage ?

In the first half of the 19th century two traditions of a geographical character attracted the notice of an English visitor. One ran to the effect that the Island was " formerly intersected by the sea at several points, hence was really several islands." The other was " a Northern tradition that the Mull of Galloway was once within a stone's throw of the Point of Ayre." 6 These beliefs still exist in modified forms, one of which is that the Island was two separate countries a long time ago, a Northern and a Southern, called respectively Sodor and Man, and collectively " the " Isles of Man." It was ruled by two kings and divided by the two rivers which fall into the sea at Peel and Douglas. The " Northern tradition " just cited is now represented in the notion that the Mull of Galloway and the Point of Ayre are gradually getting nearer to each other, and that a time will come when people will be able to walk across dry-shod.

A lingering belief in a submerged island, with ruined buildings on it, lying South-West of the Calf, is kept alive by the occasional bringing-up in fishingnets of what has been described to me by a fisherman as " quarried stones and pieces of concrete." King William's Bank and the Bahama Bank off the NorthEast coast are said to have been land detached from the main island in a great storm. They are shown as an islet in one of the old maps.

1 According to Thales the entire earth was sustained by water on which it floated like a ship. This teaching has recently been revived as a scientific hypothesis to the effect that the continents are unstably supported by a liquid of a metallic nature, on which they shift their positions.['Continental Drift' is now fully accepted - quite what Gill would have made of the recent theory that the Manx Slates were laid down underwater some distance off-shore of a continent in the Southern Hemisphere is diificult to envisage !]

2 *Gallovidian Encyclopedia*, page 307.

3 To Scotland, Ireland and Man old Irish writers applied the terms " tri foid " and " tri foid meini ' -" three sods " and "three sods of ore." They were, it was said, united, till separated into three by magical or druidical power. The inference presumably is that Man formed an isthmus joining the other two, till it was torn out of the North Channel and floated to its present position.

However that may be, a lengthier sea-voyage is attributed to Ireland herself. A letter from an Australian which appeared in The Irish Statesman of 4th July, 1925, mentioned " a legend which was current in Mayo in the early decades of the last century. People used to say that Ireland long, long ago had broken off from America-about Labrador-and had floated across the sea to its present position. My mother told me the story . . .

4 *Notes and Queries*, ser. 10, vol. v., p. 126. Old Breton fishermen tell a somewhat similar tale to the apprentices bound for the Iceland fishing : that Iceland is the mother of all whales and a whale herself of enormous size, and that like all whales she moves from place to place in the Northern waters. (Sébillot, *Folk-lore des Pêcheurs*, page 313.)

5 George Borrow's Notes made during his visit in 1855.

6 *Six Days' Tour in the Isle of Man*, by a Stranger [John Welch], 1836.

KING ORRY.

Even if " King Orry " was a historical King Godred enough myth and folk-lore have accreted to his name to justify a note upon him here. Though he is " Ree Gorree " in the Chronicle Poem or Ballad datable to the early part of the 16th century, the language of this has been partially modernized, and he is " Orry " in the "Supposed True Chronicle," which is of earlier date in its first paragraphs : " And then there came a son of the King of Denmark. He conquered the land, and was the first that was called King Orrye. And after him remained twelve of the stock that were called King Orryes." The earliest mention of the name occurs in a Statute of 1422, which describes the legal executive of the Island as it was " in King Orrye's days," the same spelling, be it noted, as that in the " Supposed True Chronicle " prefixed to the Statute Book.

If he was indeed a human monarch he is, nevertheless, enveloped in an atmosphere of mystery and legend, as befits the founder of an early loth-century dynasty. The possibility that he was in his origin not a Manx ruler but a mythical figure of extreme antiquity has been mooted. Professor Axel Kock preferred to identify him with the last of the " Orrys," Godred Crovan to wit, who conquered Man in 1079 and was far from mythical. A discussion of the question can be found in the *Year Book* of the Viking Club, vol. iv., pages 11-15, and vol. v., pages 6 and 7, where articles by Professors Magnus Olsen and Sugge are submitted to criticism. Summarized, the matter amounts to this : the proverbial expressions " in King Orre's time " and " since King Orre's time " are in use in Sweden, and correspond to the Norse *arilds tid*, " from time immemorial." 1 The name is found in Norwegian MSS. as early as 1629-1634. Kock's suggested identification with Godred of the Manx Orry, who " through his law-making came to stand, to the inhabitants, as the representative of the good old days, the fountain-head of all that is old and timehonoured," does not commend itself to Professor Olsen. Bugge likewise deems him a venerable personage of Northern Saga whose story reached Man from Sweden long before Godred's day. From a mention in 1689 of *Kung Orrys Mandat* in connexion with a custom belonging to the 10th day of Yule, Bugge concludes that Orre was associated with the last day of Yule, which is also consecrated to St. Knut ; this was the day on which the dead who had been celebrating Yule on the old sites (*tomter*, " tofts ") departed from the farms. It is equivalent to the Old Norse *affaredag*, the day on which the Christmas guests leave the house, and this is the 14th day of Yule, or 7th January, which is also, in the Church Calendar, a " Knutsdag." On this day, it is said in Norway, " St. Knut drives out Yule," just as Orre's mandate ended the Feast of Yule ; hence King Orre is a popular equivalent of St. Knut. He is, therefore, probably older than that feast, " in which case he would belong to the great multitude of supernatural beings who have continued in folk-lore from heathen times."

Olsen, for his part, suggests that Orre may be the same as Thorri, a being worshipped in order that he may bring good snow for skis. In both forms the name is commemorated in Norwegian children's rhymes. In " Disa's Saga " Orre stands as the mythical representative and institutor of all the festivities of Yule; and the old name for the month comprising the season of Yule was Thorri. The prefixing of the " th " may have come about, Olsen thinks, from the use of the terms *Sankt-Orri*, " Saint Orre," or *Blót-Orri*, " Feast of Orre." This feast was held in the middle of January on Hogmanay Night (the Manx Hop-tu-nay), and Orre was a personification of Yule and January. " The good-natured old bearded Torre who entices the children out into the sun seems to answer well to King Orre, concerning whose hood and other clothing one sings to children when one dresses them."2

So much for the Scandinavian side of the question. Among Anglo-Manx writers there has been a scholastic tendency to substitute the name " Gorry " for " Orry," on the supposition of his historicity and identity with Godred, but this seems uncalled-for ; in the " Fin as Oshin " fragment recorded from recitation in 1762 the " Garaidh " of Scottish Ossianic poetry had already been Mannicised into " Orree." We may therefore continue to say " King Orry " with sufficient justification, even though we believe him to have been King Godred.

Whether he was or not, his personality is tinctured with the fabulous in a number of instances. His name is given to the Milky Way, *Raad Mooar Ree Ghorry* or Orry, "the Great Road of King Orry," to a stone circle, *Cashtyl Ree Orry* or *Cashtyl Chorry*, " King Orry's Castle," to a tumulus, " King Orry's Grave," to the rainbow, *Bhow Ghorree*, " King Orry's Bow," or better, his Arch. He is credited with having tossed boulders about the landscape, e.g. across Bulgham Bay in Lonan ; and when I was a boy I was told that King Orry was responsible for the presence of the great stones among the trees to the West of Kirk Braddan. His name has also been associated in a vague way with a small promontory-mound at Perwick, now obliterated by a building, which is said traditionally to have been the original Castle Rushen and erected by Orry for his fortress, but to have been abandoned for lack of water. He has, in fact, taken his place among the giants of the Island in company with Finn MacCoole and other heroes. All these more or less supernatural attributes, however, are but the slight and usual accretions of nearly a thousand years upon the memory of a conqueror and law-maker, and I cannot see sufficient ground for supposing our King Orry to have been a supernatural being in prehistoric Scandinavia. Had he been the Orre described for us above he would surely have had some associations with the Christmas season in Man. The only hint we have of that, and it is a very indirect one, is the fabulous account of his landing in the Island, which makes him claim to have travelled thither by the Milky Way, which in Norway was called " the Road of Winter."

1 The phrase " in King Orrye's days " is used in the Manx Statute of 1422, and elsewhere, in much the same sense.

2 The resemblance of the character outlined by Olsen to our Father Christmas and Santa Claus need hardly be pointed out. Only his sledge and reindeer are missing from the picture.

THE GURIAT CROSS.

Concerning this cross with its five bosses which stood by the roadside* at Port y Vullin before it was removed to Kirk Maughold, a fable is told to the children which takes two or three forms. One is that the old woman who lived at this spot was wicked enough to spin on Sunday. Another version says that she was getting over the hedge of her little field with the balls of wool or thread she had been spinning slung on her back. A third says she was climbing the Shen Lewaigue road to take them to the weaver who lived at Dreem ny Lhergy. In the two latter alternatives the wind took hold of the balls and hindered her progress, and she cursed the wind. In all three the result was that she was punished by being turned into the cross, with her five bluggans, equally petrified, sticking to her wicked old face.

* Wood's *Account of the Isle of Man* (1811) says it had previously stood in the middle of the field. There was an old chapel there which has long disappeared.

" THE DHOON CHURCH."

As a striking example of how a prosaic sequence of events can be overgrown and unrecognizably altered by superstitious beliefs in the course of a century, let me return to the legend of the " Dhoon Church," which I gave, so far as it was intelligible, on page 379 of *A Manx Scrapbook*. To recapitulate : the ruin now so-called stands near the Dhoon Glen. The sound of its bell at sea saved a ship from driving ashore, and the existing Dhoon Church two miles away was built at the expense of two grateful ladies who were passengers.* It would be fatal to plough the ground adjacent to the old church, where there are believed to be interments. Its vicarage stood at Ross Vedn to the south, where there is now no vestige of a building.

Since writing the earlier note on the subject I have received a circumstantial account of the actual facts. A man named Noakes, physician to the last Duke of Atholl, possessed the Dhoon Abbeylands. As there was then no church at Laxey — none nearer indeed than Kirk Maughold and the parish church of Lonan, both equally inconvenient for the Dhoon people — Noakes began to build a small place of worship where now stand the walls of what is known as the old Dhoon Church. It was afterwards completed by his successor to the estate and the physicianship, Dr. Oswald, whose works on Manx archaeology are still read. It was a curious edifice in an architectural sense : small and square, with its roof running to a point. The bell was suspended from a crosspiece at the top of a tree-trunk brought from somewhere and set up behind the chapel, which it considerably overtopped. The road beside which the chapel was built was then the high road to Ramsey, and from this Oswald made a new road to his house, the Rhenny, above the present inn. He also provided the caretaker and his wife with a dwelling just opposite the chapel, where the fruit-trees of their garden still flourish in a semi-wild state. For the incumbent he built a house at the corner of the headland above Bulgham Bay known as Ross Vedn or Bane.

The Chapel-of-Ease now more generally known as the Dhoon Church (Holy Trinity), further North, is said to have come into existence in this way: two gentlemen from the South of England who were visiting the Isle of Man were tumbled out of their trap on the steep hill leading down to the old " church." The elder was seriously hurt, and was carried into the caretakers' cottage. They spoke Manx only, but attended him with such kindness that he afterwards provided money to build the present church. This was badly needed, for the old one was filled everv Sunday to overflowing. As it was never consecrated, no official interments are likely to have been made there.

When the new building was mooted fierce rivalry arose. The Laxey people wanted to have it at Laxey ; the Dhoon people wanted it near the then-existing chapel ; and the residents in the North of the parish wanted it somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Corrany. Finally, it was decided to settle the dispute by a general vote. By calling in a number of South Ramsey people who had no proper concern in the affair (Ballure Chapel was their place of worship), the Corrany party was able to carry the decision in their own favour ; and the new chapel was built at Rhenab. Yet, though it is so far from the Dhoon, it is always called the Dhoon Church. [see story re Abbey Lands (Lonan)/Ballaragh Methodist Chapel]

After the old building was thus superseded it was used for some years as a school. Its last master was living in America in 1928, in which year he wrote to the gentleman who was kind enough to give me the foregoing particulars, and who formerly attended the school — Mr. James Mylchreest, of Onchan. The old Rhenny house is burnt down, the parson's house and

the caretakers' cottage have vanished ; all that visibly remains of Noakes' and Oswald's enterprise is a grass-grown track leading to the Rhenny and a portion of the chapel walls in a private garden.

* A legend as variable as it is widely spread. At Ashby Folville in Leicestershire it takes the form that two ladies who were benighted and lost chanced to hear the bells of the village church. The products of the ground on which they were standing were appropriated thenceforward for the benefit of the church in commemoration of their escape from danger. (*Folk-lore of Gloucestershire*, County Folk-lore series, page iii.) At Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire it was a man that heard the bells, and left a guinea a year to the church for ever.

THE KEEILL AT KERROOKIEL.

The ruined chapel at Kerrookiel, Malew, was occasionally used, a little more than sixty years ago [c.1870], for religious worship. A Roman Catholic priest used to say Mass there for the benefit of an Irish family named Roney [Rooney ? - well known grocers etc in Douglas] who lived in the neighbourhood. (From T.T., [Tom Taggart ?] Kerrookiel.) [no Roney/Rooney in directories of the time in this neighbourhood, the stones of the Keeil were also supposedly used in the building of Kerrowkiel Methodist Chapel - the usual Keeil associated with Catholics is the chapel of St Michael which would be a more convenient site]

THE ADMIRAL OF THE FISHING-FLEET.

This is still an officially-recognized office, or was up to a very few years ago; in the present decay of the fishing there can be little need for him, it is to be feared. The holder of the office gets a salary of £5 per annum. The last Admiral, James Cowell, of Peel, died in September, 1930 ; his predecessor, F. Corris, was also a Peel man. Peel, however, has not always enjoyed a monopoly of the honour ; even the hamlet of Dalby has provided a fishing-admiral. As his title suggests, he had some degree of control over the rest of the men both afloat and ashore. For example, nets were not to be shot till he gave the signal by striking his flag. He was watchful, when the fleet was sailing for distant waters, that no boat left the harbour singly after the first two, but that two were lashed together to avoid either of them being the fatal third. By virtue of his office he was spokesman on behalf of the industry to the Fisheries Board. His title occurs so far back as a 1610 Act of Tynwald. He was assisted in his duties by a Vice-Admiral.

The title is not confined to the Isle of Man. The Admiral of the Galway Claddagh fleet was further called " the mayor " of that picturesque suburb, and had authority to settle petty disputes among its inhabitants, who were nearly all fishermen. As I remember him thirty-five years ago his mainsail was (approximately) white, and to further distinguish his boat he flew a coloured streamer from his masthead. His duties at sea have passed from my recollection, but no doubt they resembled those of the Manx Admiral and of their brother-officer of the North Sea. The latter gives permission for the nets to be hauled in by lowering his foresail soon after the sun has risen.

LAST THINGS.

In Ireland the "last words" of domestic animals-the cow, the sheep and othershave a proverbial currency, humorous, but sometimes preserving a scrap of folk-lore. " Roast me if you will, boil me if you will, but do not throw my bones on the fire," were the last words of the sheep. In the Isle of Man there are sayings which keep in memory certain " last places "

where some bygone institution came to an end. They appear to be valid only for the parish in which they circulate ; in some cases conflicting claims could be put in from other parishes.

In Lonan the upper Ballachrink house is said to have been " the last place where they could speak no English."

The last place where a handloom was used was a certain old-fashioned roadside cottage in Ronnag, above the Curragh Vreeshey. It was worked by an old woman named Christian Quayle.

The last inhabited sod-house was on the " tops" just West of Skyhill in Lezayre.

The last place where they buried the dead in the garden is now a ruin beside the river in the upper Laxey Valley.

The last place where the old yellowish-brown, double-horned breed of native sheep survived was, by one account, Corvalley in Patrick, by another account, Cronk y Voddey in German. The latter assertion was made to me by one who remembers them there. Pure-blooded descendants of the old Seafield kiree-loaghlyn are likewise said to have survived into quite recent times at Great Meadow in Malew, and may still be flourishing there. The legacy of the loaghtyn to the modern mixed breeds into which they have merged is, I believe, a brownish patch of wool on the shoulder.

APPENDIX I

" Burning out the witches " (page 129).

TEE practice is not extinct. *The Somerset County Herald* for 28th March, 1931, contained the following paragraph:" Two peasants were on Friday sentenced in Berlin to terms of penal servitude for causing the death of two men in an attempt to ' burn out a witch.' "

The details of the Manx fishermen's burning of the witches out of their boats so closely resemble those of the Breton cleansing of the boat from an evil spirit after a theft from it, that a comparison may be of interest. The fullest account of the Manx ceremony is to be found in Roeder's *Manx Notes and Queries,* page 38. 1 do not apologize for reproducing it entire, for Roeder's work is not generally known among English folklorists. His account evidently repeats the exact words of some fisherman. " How the fishermen were driving the witch out of their boats when they were unsuccessful in catching herrings, and thinking some harm had been done by a witch. ' In the evening when the nets were in the water, if it was calm, they got a lot of oakum and tied it on the end of a stick, then soaking it well with tar in the tar bucket, when the darkness set in they lighted the oakum and the tar, and the skipper took the torch and commenced at the stem-head, and the rest of the crew looking out for the witch. They were telling many lies over it, sometimes one would say he had seen the witch in this crevice, and another would say that she was in that crevice, and the skipper went with the torch to every place where they said the witch was, and put the burning torch in that place. Then the witch had to get away from the fire, and they kept on going from one place to another for a long time, until someone said the witch was gone aft. Then the skipper went aft with the torch, and put it in every crevice round the stern-sheets until the witch was on the rudder-head, he said, and then she had to get off that too, from the torch, and jump into the sea. "Then he threw the torch into the sea after her.' "

The Breton idea is that when an article has been stolen from a lucky boat the boat's luck goes with it, and a spirit of bad luck is left in its place. The measures taken to evict this spirit are exactly the same as the Manx remedy for bewitchment, except that the smoke of the torch seems to play a more effective part than the flame, just as it did in the need-fire custom. " Dans le Finistëre, lorsque la malechance est venue a bord, â la suite d'un vol, on flambe l'intérieur avec de la paille humide, dont la fumée a la vertu d'exorciser le malin esprit qui s'y est logéan moment du larcin. Mais le lutin peut se faire petit, petit â se blottir dans un dé â coudre ; on doit done avoir grand soin de faire entrer la fumée dans les moindres fentes et les plus petits trous. Une fois bien flambë, le bateau peut retourner en mer sans crainte de maléfice, la sardine reviendra visiter ses filets." (Sébillot, *Le Folklore des Pécheurs*, page 215.)

APPENDIX II

(See pages 138 ff.)

MEMORANDA OF ANTIQUITIES FROM THE NAME BOOKS OF THE ORDNANCE SURVEY.

PROGRESSIVE and energetic Manx farmers have done much to hasten the disappearance of fairy hillocks, earthworks of defence and of assembly, stone circles, avenues and alignments, cairns, monoliths, sculptured and inscribed crosses, sacred wells and ancient chapels. Road-makers and menders have lent a hand with the larger stones. It is sad to think that the memory of such conscientious levellers has perished more swiftly than that of most of the anachronisms they abolished ; for men who spent so much pains in improving their farms by clearing away these obstacles to agriculture deserved some permanent memorial of their names. " James Clague of Ballanorris," for example, " removed from a small eminence on the farm the foundations of a small building known as an old chapel, and at the same time removed a dilapidated stone fence enclosing the above, in the interior of which were stone-lined graves containing human remains. The field is well-known as `the Keeilley.' " " On a slight eminence in a field situated on the margin of Poyll Vaaish, Mr. William Taggart, tenant of Poyll Vaaish farm . . . turned up and rooted out the foundation stones of a building pretty well-known as an old chapel, and surrounding same many stone-lined graves containing human remains were also discovered. No remains can now be seen, but the eminence on which it stood is discernible from other parts of the field." " In the field immediately North of Rahyn farmhouse traces of a small quadrangular building and an irregular enclosure can be seen. Mr. Thos. Kewley, on becoming proprietor about ten years ago . . . removed the walls of what was pretty generally known as an old Chapel. He states that the ruin was then several feet high and enclosed by a rude fence, the track of which is still visible, forming a small mound." No burials were discovered here, but " about 2 chains East a stone cist containing human remains " was removed.

Messrs. Clague, Taggart and Kewley are but mild types of many hundreds of Manxmen who preceded them, and of not a few since. Some must have done worse. The major antiquities are now protected by the Ancient Monuments Trustees, but only a right understanding can save the remnants of the lesser ones.

The brief descriptions and approximate measurements which follow were set down between 60 and 70 years ago by surveyors when engaged in mapping the Island, consequently no pretence is made therein to scientific exactness: but a selection from such memoranda, if not now of definite archæological value, may be of more than sentimental interest, seeing that the antiquities noticed therein have since either suffered further damage or have been finally obliterated. In a few cases the surveyors' remarks relate to monuments of which no material vestige survived even then ; they were merely a traditional memory.

The numbers preceding the items are mine. The internal numbers refer to the sheets and sub-sections of the 6-inch Ordnance Map of the Island. " Number in List " refers to the corresponding item in Mr. P. M. C. Kermode's *List of Manx Antiquities*, 1930, when I have been able to identify the one with the other.

MAROWN.

1. Fort on Ballayemmy, x., 14; now levelled and ploughed over. In an uncultivated field or enclosure the remains may be seen. Irregular in shape, about 50 feet square, surrounded by wall and ditch, part of fence of enclosure forming portion of a wall. East side pretty entire, the walls of earth and stone being about 5 feet high, the North and South sides being traceable but the West side entirely obliterated, the ground being soft and marshy. (No. 1 in List.)

2. Tumulus. A short distance from Ballanicholas Fort No. 2 in List) is a large tumulus known in the district as " the Castle."

PATRICK.

3. Cregganmooar. In a field at the West end of one of the Cregganmooar houses several stone cists were found (authority, Jn. Gill, Cregganmooar) when ploughing some years ago. Also one in North-West corner of a small enclosure East of above field found when digging sand.

4. Tumulus, Balnalargy, xii., I. The remains of an ancient tumulus ; during its demolition a stone cist containing several cinerary urns was found.

5. Keeill yn Chiarn, Ballelby, xii., 1. Some time ago a sculptured stone was found about 9 chains Southwards covering a grave containing a battle-axe. From the description given Dr. Oliver is of opinion that the axe dates from Cromwell's time. (No. 10 in List. See also No. 6 of Pre-Christian Remains.)

6. Keeill Crogh. Site of chapel and burial-ground, ix., 10. During improvements some years ago Mr. Quayle of Ballaquayle turned up several stone-lined graves containing human remains, and Mr. Clarke of Ballawyllin remembers the walls of the chapel standing.* At present nothing remains to mark the site. (No. 2 in List.)

* Unless there was another keeill of the same name in the Island, an allusion to these walls occurs in the elegy in Manx on William Walker and Robert Teare, composed about 1730; William's handwriting was so beautiful, says his mother the poet, that he left a sample of it on the " whitened walls of Keeill Chroo " to perpetuate his memory. (See *Manx Ballads*, page 202.) Were they whitewashed because they were used to house cattle ? Others have been thus used. Earlier mentions of " Kill Croo," Patrick, occur in a Statute of 1710, in reference to the erection of the present church. " Croo " seems to have been the established orthography.

GERMAN.

" Site of chapel," Ballaquine, vi., 12. Omitted on plan, authorities not being reliable. Site of ancient treen chapel. . . . No trace whatever remains. Mr. Kaighen, Ballaquine, states that in levelling the field about four years ago he took up what appeared to be the foundations of a building, and that the stones were very large. Other authorities, Cain of Ballaquine, Dr. Oliver.

8. Site of cairn, vi., 16. Omitted on plan. A number of years ago a large cairn of stones was removed from this field on the farm of Knocksharrey. A stone cist containing human remains was found. The site of the cairn is still distinctly traceable.

9. A few chains North-East of St. John's Schoolhouse, ix., 12, several stone-lined graves containing human remains were found. Others found when repairing the main Douglas-Peel road a few chains South of Ballagaraghyn. Authorities, Harrison of Rockmount and others. Two urns containing human remains in the South-East corner of a field a few chains East of Ballagaraghyn. Cairns or small burrows about 40 chains North of Banff Place, on a slight eminence, supposed to contain cist-vaens and urns. Urns containing calcined remains a few chains South-East of Ballagaraghyn House, also a few chains West of Cronkbreck Cottage.

10. Close to the smithy on the Curragh Glass, ix., 12, a number of stone graves and human remains have been discovered. Authority, Mr. Chas. Gill, blacksmith, Curragh Glass.

11. Tumulus, x., 13. Well-known in the neighbourhood as an ancient Scandinavian burial-place. . . . Opened in 1844 by Mr. Grose, who found a very large stone Cist containing a cinerary urn, full of calcined human remains. (No. 30 or 32 in List ?)

MICHAEL.

12. Stone circle, iv., 13, on rising ground about 15 chains North of Cronk Koir ; four quartz, boulders. Mr Philip Kneen states that there were a number more till a few years ago. Two now form gate piers in the adjoining field. Urns found in interior of circle. (No. 5 or 6 in List.)

13. Cronk y Croghee, vii., I. Numerous urns containing human remains found here, and on knoll 4 chains North. (Nos. ii and 12 in List.)

14. Ballalionney, vii., 5. Several clay urns containing human remains were discovered about 2o years ago by Mr. Corj eag ; they were enclosed by a circle of large quartz stones, now wholly removed. (No. 21 in List.)

15. On a gravelly knoll in field nearly East of Ballalheigh farmhouse, vii., 5, several rude clay urns containing human remains were found. Omitted on plan.

16. Site of chapel, Cronk ny Fedjag, in centre of field near top, vii., 13 ; said by Thomas Fell, Eary, and William Corlett, Little London, to have been an ancient treen chapel. Mr. Corlett remembers well when the walls were to be traced all round, but there is nothing to be seen of them now except a row of white quartz stones on SouthWest side. Traces of an outer enclosure can still be seen, as shown on plan.

JURBY.

I7. Tumulus on Clerk's Glebe, Jurby, ii., ii. About 8 feet high, sepulchral.

18. Tumulus on Ballachrink, ii., 12. 12 feet high; human remains found when removing part of it a few years ago by J. Clucas, Ballachrink. (No. 3 or 4 in List.)

19. A large cairn of stones on Cashtal-lough was removed about 40 years ago by Mr. Collister. Urns and human remains found. The cairn was formerly called " the Castle," and formed a landmark between Ballaugh and Jurby. No vestige remaining.

LEZAYRE.

2o. Ruins of chapel in Glion ny Killey, in a field about 30 chains South of Churchtown. Walls chiefly composed of stone and rubble, about 3 feet high. The chapel is oval in shape, the doorway or entrance at the West end. A burial-ground at the same place and in v., 13. Both of these are nearly square and raised about 3 feet above the ground. They contain numerous stone coffins, the tops of which in several places are visible. (See 3rd Report of Manx Archæological Survey, page 36, third paragraph.)

21. Tumulus, vii., 4. Oblong mound about 30 feet long by I5 broad and 32 high. Urns containing bones have been found at various times. (NO. 12 in List ?)

22. Barn, Ramsey, v., 6. An oblong building erected as a barn, also used as a place of worship previous to the erection of the present church of St. Olave's ; recently a school was held there, but it is now discontinued. Authorities, Mr. James Woods, Plan in possession of Town Commissioners, Mr. Daniel Callow.

MAUGHOLD.

23. Fort, v., it. A few chains North of Ballure Cottage may be seen the remains of an ancient fort. It has been circular in form, and defended by a fosse or ditch. One half of it has now disappeared by the inroads of the sea. A new road has been cut through the remaining portion. Part of the wall still remains, being about 19 feet high and 35 feet broad. The ditch now forms a considerable hollow. (No. 3 in List.)

LONAN.

24. Cairn a little North of Ballachrink, near tumuli, xi., 2. Must have been a very extensive cairn; seems originally to have been an oblong truncated cone running East and West. No information obtainable from the oldest inhabitants.

25. Kilkellan was known in the district as Keeill Carlane, the Church with the Bell. It was said to have been the Only church in the Island possessing a bell. The ruins of the chapel were removed a few years ago by Mr. Kerruish, and numbers of stone-lined graves containing human remains have been discovered by the same gentleman. (No. 11 in List.)

26. Keeill Vian, site of, xi., 2. Human remains discovered by T. Fargher. Mr. Kneale of Grawe says he remembers the chapel and burial-ground in a tolerable state of preservation. (No. 7 in List.)

CONCHAN.

27. Two tumuli, Hillberry, x., 16; all remaining of a group which stood here some time ago. In the Southern one were found stone cists, bones and urns. (See Nos. 2 and 3 in List.)

BRADDAN.

28. Cross, Middle, xiii., ii. Stone slab situated on small elevation in the field South of Middle farmhouse. 4 feet high, 1 foot 6 inches broad. No tradition. (Rough sketch of the stone, showing the cross.)

MALEW.

29. The fort at Cass ny Hawin had "traces of a quadrangular building in the interior." (NO. 4 in List.) 30. Ronaldsway. Stone cists containing human remains were turned up a number of years ago on improving a circular eminence in a field West of Ronaldsway farmhouse. The mound is apparently artificial, higher on East and West sides, hollow in the centre, about 4 feet high and 100 feet in diameter. It is supposed by Mr. Robert Cannell to have been a place of burial. Many cartloads of stones were also removed. Omitted from plan.

31. Site of burial-ground immediately North of Ronaldsway. Numerous stone-lined graves containing human remains. About 40 years ago remains of fence enclosing burial-ground was removed ; now no traces of it. The levelled mound is barely traceable.

32. Fort (Scarlett), xvi., 14. Pretty entire fort, . xiewhat circular, wall of earth and stones, about io feet ,gh on East side and defended by ditch or fosse ; on West side only about 2 feet high, defended by the sea and a cut in the rocks. Traces of a quadrangular building may be seen. in the interior. (No. 8 in List.)

ARBORY.

33. Burial-ground, Strandhall, xvi., io. On a slight eminence in a field on Strandhall a ploughman turned up several stone-lined graves containing human remains. No indications of a chapel. Omitted on plan, authorities not being reliable.

34. Remains of chapel and burial-ground on Conocan, walls of stone and rubble about 6 feet high, outer enclosure in good state, entirely of sods. J. Cubbon, Conocan, says human remains were found in the outer enclosure. (Not on 6-inch map. I have heard a local tradition that a heeill existed hereabouts.)

RUSHEN.

35. Cist, Cronk ny Arrey, xv., 16. A considerable eminence situated about 20 chains South-East of Cregneish. Stone cist found here and human remains ; Mr. J. Collister, the proprietor, was present at the time.

36. Fort (remains of barrow), xvi., I. Several rude slabs, apparently the remains of stone cists. Divided by a fence; about half the mound on the South side of same is seemingly undisturbed, the other half is entirely removed. The portion of the mound on the North side of the fence is pretty much destroyed, but still distinctly traceable. The whole has been surrounded by a fence or ditch, the Western portion of which is pretty entire. Little is known beyond that it is a supposed place of burial. (Nos. 4 and 5 in List.)

APPENDIX III

(See page 320).

ENQUIRY HELD BEFORE A SPECIAL JURY IN JURBY, A.D. 1698.

TREE are to certify whom it may concern yt according to the Deemsters toaken I impannelled a jury of Slander to [depend ?] twixt Captn. Tho. Christian and Steven Tere of Jurby about Silver & Gold wth. wch. the sd. Steven was alleadged to have slandered the said Captn., & that to that Effect I delivered their oath and charge to the sd. Jurors and to nothing else all wch. I certifie to be true by vertue of ye oath wch. I have taken as witness my Subscription this 13th of June 1698.

Dan: Doughertee Lockman of Jurby my ink. X Tho. Corlett of Broughjearg in Ballaugh & Tho. Corlett of Jurby Sworne & examined declare, that they were by & in place (ye former being one of the jury of Inquirye) when ye above Steven Tere was Sworne touching Silver & Gold, & ye sd. Steven Tere denved he had any Such, nor heard or knew who had, but only he heard Captn. Christian had a bag of yellow things divideing ye same twixt himselfe and another man: Tho. Corlett of Ballaugh further declares upon oath yt he was by & in place when M°ylkiaraine was examined by ye Slander jury (ye sd. M°ylkiarraine being given in as Author to Steven & his Brother Jo' Tere) touching what words ye sd. Tere spoke of Yellow Things,- one W' Crestry standing by, confessed to ye sd. Jury that all those words concerning yellow things (then laid to M'vlkiaraine's Charge) were told to ye sd. M'ylkiarrain by him, & further say not.

Tho. Corlett's mark X Tho. Corlett's mark X

Rich. Tere & Wm. M°vlrea sworne & examined declare yt. they were in place & by, when Wm. Crestry above mentioned told Tho. M'ylkiarraine all ye words yt ye above Steven Tere declared upon oath before ye jury of Inquiry at Ballakeage touching ye yellow things affd. only Rich. Tere one of these Deponts. adds that ye sd. Crestry said moreover that Captn. Christian & ye man yt was with him were cracking ye sd. yellow things wth. their Teeth and throwing them againe out of their Mouthes, and further say not.

Rich. Tere his mk X Wm. M°ylrea his mk. X Wm. M'ylkiarraine being Sworne & Examined saith that ye sd.* Jury of Slander wronged him in that he was by them taken as Author to Steven & Jon. Tere, & yet they would not take Crestry as Author to him, although by ye Depositions affd. and by his own confession to ye sd. Jury he was made to appear to be this Depont's Author Further he declares upon Oath that on the day the sd. Jurors were to give in their Verdict to ye Deemster at Ballaugh, he heartily begged ye sd. Jurors to give him only time till next day (by suspending their Verdict) & that he would bring in Evidence before them yt would undoubtedly clear him, yet this they would not grant. Wm. M'ylkiarraine mrk. X [Wm. Corlett of Ballaugh declares on oath as the two Thos. Corletts have sworn ; also that he heard Wm. M'ylkiarraine ask for time to clear himself.]

We whose names ensue being a Travers jury upon the verdict of ye w"in mentioned Jury of Slander, vizt. Jon Crow, Wm. Corlett, Patt. Cleark, Will: Cry, The: Cannon, & Wm. Killip, touching some scandalous words consisting of " Yellow Things " alleadged to have been spoken by The. M'ylkiarraine concearning Captn. Tho. * Line of MS. repaired here and partly illegible.

Christian ; have weighed & seriously considered ye sd. verdict, & also taken the wtl'in Depositions; And finde, Firste, by a Certificate of the Lockman by vertue of his oath as is w"in mentioned, that ye oath & charge he gave to the sd. Jurors of Slander was perticularly Silver

Gold and not touching anything else whatsoever. z1y we finde by the oath of Tho. Corlett of Ballaugh & Corlett of Jurby and also of Wm. Corlett that [the next folio is only partially legible, but refers to a distinction made between " Yellow Things " and " Silver and Gold," and to M'ylkiarraine's request for more time] and that it was not given him; & lastly By Captn. Christians own confession he says, that indeed he had Yellow Things, but (he adds) they were Nutts : By all wch. Evidence & other Circumstances mentioned in the sd. Verdict of ye Slander jury we clear ye above M'ylkiaraine & leave ye Slander jury to ye mercy of ye Court for a fine and this we give for our verdict this 15th June 1698 as witness our Subscription.

[Twelve names and twelve marks.]

We, Mary Tere & Mally Corlett als. Caine haveing been called to our oathes touching words [declared ?] or uttered by Steven Tere when he was examined before Major Stevenson & ye jury of Inquiry, doe, for fear our oath given in words may suffer an addition or diminution by mistake or forgetfullness, declare our oath as follows : I Mary Tere affd. coming into ye house when Major Stevenson & ye sd. Jury were examining Steven Tere I heard ye sd. Steven aske whether he was charged by his oath to declare what he heard; he was answered, that he was; upon wch. he said, that he heard that Captn. Christian had a bagg or a poke in wch. there were yellow things & yt. He ye sd. Captn. & a nother taull black man were dividing ye same He being asked who told him soe, answered that he did not well know, but that he heard it about their own fire he thought by his Mother & Brother Jo', and that as farr as he knew, it came of Crestry's boy, & being again asked wch. of Crestry's boys, he replyed ye little boy; at wch. word ye Lockman Danl Doughertee standing by me ye deponent whispered, saying, if it may be left on yonder fellow, he is under age : The sd. Steven further said pray mistake me not I speake of neither money nor gold ; these were the words as near as I can remember & doe deliver ye same as my oath. In testimony whereof I subscribe my name & marke

Mary Tere my mrk X

[Mally Caine corroborates, except as regards the words said to have been whispered by Doughertee. Wm. Corlett deposes that he was present at the Deemster's house when the Slander jury was ready to give in its verdict between Captain Christian and " Thos." Mcylcarraine of the parish of Jurby, and that the latter asked the jury to suspend its verdict, and he would bring evidence that would clear him.]

(Copied from a MS. in the Rolls Office.)