



JANUARY.

The first five years then of man's life,
Compare to January;
In all that time but sturt and strife,
He can but greet and roar;
So in the fields of flowers all bare,
By reason of the frost;
Keeping the ground both soft and sound,
Yet none of them is lost.

Old Poem; 1653.

BIRTH OF THE YEAR.—CHILD FOUND IN THE SNOW, BESIDE ITS DEAD MOTHER.—EPISODE IN THE GREAT CONTEST: THE SNOW STATUE.

THERE are few persons of a reflective turn of mind, who do not feel a sort of mirth-melancholy at the close of one year, and the commencement of another. This feeling, probably, led Coleridge to observe, "If I were a moralist, I might disapprove the ringing in the new, and ringing out the old year:—

Why dance ye, mortals, o'er the grave of time!"

A living divine remarks, "It is a merciful provision that the stream of time does not run on in one continuous flow, but that it is broken up and separated into larger portions, which are for 'signs and for seasons, and for days and years.' These changes and vicissitudes present us, successively, with renewed occasions and encouragements to amend our lives, and to set out, as it were, on a new course."

The Christian Year commences with the first Sunday in *Advent*, a season to prepare for the celebration of our Lord's first, and to ponder on his second, coming. The *Epiphany* (Twelfth Day), is kept to commemorate the manifestations of our Lord both as God and Man.

To the Epiphany, tradition assigned not only the worship of the Magi, but the baptism of Christ; the miracle of turning water into wine, and that of feeding the 5000, both considered to be typical of spiritual blessing; and which the eastern Christians, until shortly before the age of Chrysostom, when they adopted the custom of the Latin church in this respect, celebrated also as the Anniversary of the Birth of Christ.—(*Neale's Feasts and Fasts.*)

JANUARY is named from Janus, to whom it was dedicated, because, from its situation, it might be considered to be retrospective to the past, and prospective to the opening year. The Anglo-Saxons called January, *Wolf-monath*. Its holidays are very ancient; New Year's Gifts and Twelfth Day customs being as old as Rome itself; of the latter, Herrick sings:—

Give them to the king
And queen wassailing;
And though with the ale ye be wret here;
Yet part ye from hence,
As free from offences,
As when ye innocent met here.

On the first Monday (*Plough Monday*), after, the festivities terminated; for then husbandmen resumed the plough.

The Sundays between the last Epiphany Sunday and Lent, should call us from the rejoicings of Christmas, and prepare us for profiting by the approaching season.

Late Winter begins with the year:—

Winter's white shroud doth cover all the ground,
And Caecias blows his bitter blast of woe;
The ponds and pools, and streams in ice are bound,
And famished birds are shivering in the snow.

As the day wears,

Through the hushed air, the whitening shower descends,
At first thin—waving, till at last the flakes
Full broad and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow.

Shakspeare says, applicable to this month:—

Never resting Time leads Summer on
To hideous Winter, and confounds him there,
Sap-checked with frost, and lusty leaves quite gone,
Beauty o'ersnow'd and barren.

Yet, there is "good in every thing;" and the hardy band of boyhood begin the contest of life in the shower of balls at the snow statue; as Napoleon, when at school, at Brienne, constructed fortresses out of the same material. One of the weather-saws of the month tells us:—

If Janiver Calends be summerly gay,
It will be wintery weather till the Calends of May.

Let us sum up with the satirist:—

Froze January, leader of the year,
Minced pies in vain, and call's head in the rear—CHURCHILL.

The last allusion is to an annual insult offered on the 30th of January, to the memory of the unfortunate Charles I.; but which has long since yielded to the milder humanities of the times.

Foremost in the list of Festivals stands the Lord's day, or Sunday; "the day of the resurrection, the queen, the chief of all days, in which our life arose, and the victory over death was gained by Christ;" the day also in which, as Justin, the Martyr, urges, God, out of darkness and the primal matter, formed a world. Next in rank to Sunday, at least, if the frequency of its observance be considered, stood the Saturday, or, as it is universally called by the early writers, the Sabbath; a day observed with the same religious services, in all respects, as the Lord's day, though a difference grew up between the eastern and western churches, upon the question whether it should be kept as a festival or a fast. To these weekly holidays were added others of only annual recurrence, commemorative either of the principal events in the history of our Saviour, or of the sufferings of his more eminent followers. These Feasts were preceded by *Vigils* throughout the night, kept in the churches, or, in the earlier times, around the tomb of the Saint.

Jeremy Taylor has left us these Rules for Duties on Christian Festivals: "After the solemnities are past, and in the intervals between the morning and evening devotion, (as you shall find opportunity), visit sick persons, reconcile differences, do offices of neighbourhood, inquire into the needs of the poor, especially house-keepers; relieve them as they shall need, and as you are able: for then we truly rejoice in God, when we make our neighbours, the poor members of Christ, rejoice together with us."

[COMPILED BY IONN TIMBS.]



FEBRUARY.

So to ten years I shall speak then,
Of Februar but lack;
The child is meek and weak of sprit,
Nothing can undertake,
So all the flowers, for lack of showers,
No springing up can make;
Yet birds do sing and praise their king,
And each one choose their mate.

OLD FORM; 1653.

THE CHILD ABROAD.—THE FIRST STRATEGY: BIRD-CATCHING.

THE Pagan Romans celebrated their *Juno Februata* on the day which is the vigil of Candlemas, February 1; and hence the name of the month February is unquestionably derived.

Candelmas is evidently traceable to the ancient custom of lighting up churches and chapels with candles and lamps, and carrying them in procession. The practice of lighting the churches has been discontinued in this country since the second year of Edward the Sixth; in the Romish church, the original name, and all its attendant ceremonies, are still retained. Herbert, in his *Country Parson*, refers to a relic of this practice, in the custom of saying, "when light is brought in, *God sends us the light of Heaven*—and the parson likes this very well. Light is a great blessing, and as great as food, for which we give thanks: and those that think this superstitious, neither know superstition nor themselves."

St. Valentine's Day is of Pagan origin; but the poets refer to the rural tradition of birds choosing their mates on this day:—

Hail, Bishop Valentine, whose day this is!
All the air is thy diocese,
And all the chirping choristers,
And other birds are thy parishioners.
Thou marry'st every year,
The lyrical lark, and the grave whispering dove;
The sparrow that neglects his life for love;
The household bird with the red stomacher;
Thou mak'st the blackbird speed as soon,
As doth the goldfinch, or the halcyon!

DR. DONNE.

Mrs. Bray relates a vestige of the custom of making presents remaining to the present day in Devonshire; where, on St. Valentine's Day, a young woman occasionally thus addresses the first young man she meets:—

Good marrow, Valentine, I go to-day,
To wear for you what you must pay,
A pair of gloves next Easter-Day.

"It is not, however, very common to send the gloves, unless there is a little sweethearting in the case." The yellow Crocus blowing plentifully about this time, has been called Hymen's Torch, and Flower of St. Valentine; or, as the old verse says,

The Crocus blows before the shrine,
At vernal dawn of St. Valentine.

Septuagesima, &c.—The first Sunday in Lent being forty days before Easter, is, on that account, called *Quadragesima*, from the Latin for forty; and fifty, sixty, and seventy being the next round numbers above forty, the first, second, and third Sundays before *Quadragesima*, are called *Quinquagesima*, *Sexagesima*, and *Septuagesima*, from the Latin for their round numbers.

Collop Monday, or *Shrove Monday*, the day before *Shrove Tuesday*, was formerly the last day of flesh-eating before Lent, when our ancestors cut their flesh-meat into collops, or steaks, for salting or hanging up till Lent was over; hence, in many places, it is still customary to have eggs and collops or slices of bacon, at dinner on this day, as well as pancakes on the following day. These celebrations were termed "Shroavings," which Sir Thomas Overbury, thought a

"Franklin," (see Chaucer), might observe without regarding them as "relique of Popery."

Shrove Tuesday, (the day before the first day of Lent), is so called, because in Romish times it was usual to confess on that day, which act is expressed by the Saxon terms *Shrive* or *Shrove*. It was formerly a season of extraordinary sport and feasting, an apprentices' holiday, &c. Cock-fighting and Throwing at Cocks were almost universally *Shrove Tuesday Sports*: the former cruelty was popular in Greece; English cocks are mentioned by Caesar; but, the first notice of English cock-fighting is about 1170. The satiric pencil of Hogarth, and the moral muse of Cowper, have almost abolished this modern barbarism. The wicked practice of throwing at a Cock tied to a stake, on *Shrovetide*, is said to have an allusion to the indignities offered to the Saviour of the World before his Crucifixion; by others, this annual torture of the Cock is associated with St. Peter's crime, in denying his Lord and Master. The persecution was extended to the Hen: hence, the Ploughman's holiday on *Shrove Tuesday*, when, "after confession, he was suffered to *thresh the fat Hen*" *Eating Pancakes* and *Fritters* on this day is a harmless observance: according to Fosbroke, Pancakes are taken from the heathen *Fornacalia*, celebrated on February 18th, in memory of making bread before ovens were invented by the goddess *Fornax*. Brand considers that we have borrowed the custom from the Greek Church. The frying of the Pancakes was formerly commenced, universally, at the ringing of "the Pancake Bell;" and it was a holiday at the Colleges and Public Schools, where the Pancake was thrown over the bar or curtain dividing the upper and under forms. In Scotland, *Croedie* (oatmeal and water) is eaten on this day, as Pancakes are in England. Football was another common *Shrove Tuesday* sport: it is still played in Derby, Nottingham, Kingston-upon-Thames, and a few other towns.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, originated in the blessing of Ashes on that day, "to put in remembrance every Christian man, the beginning of Lent and Penance, that he is but ashes and earth, and thereunto shall return;" and the ceremony was reserved at the Reformation.

The *Carnival*,

Some weeks before *Shrove Tuesday* comes about, is still celebrated, on the Continent, in

All countries of the Catholic persuasion.

Rome is possessed by the gay madness for eight days; its characteristics being the masquerade in the streets, showers of confetti or mock sweetmeats, firing of mortars, racing of horses without riders, and the lighting of *moccoletti*, or wax tapers. At Naples, the Carnival is much like that at Rome; at Genoa it is indifferent; at Venice, the festival lasts from Twelfth Day till *Shrove Tuesday*. At Paris, it is principally kept on the three days preceding *Ash Wednesday*; and, upon the last day is the procession of the *Bœuf-gras*, or Government prize-ox, through the streets; then all is quiet until the Thursday of Mid-lent, or *Micarême* for which day only, the revelry breaks out wilder than ever.



MARCH.

Then in comes March, that noble arch,
With wholesome Spring and air,
The child doth spring to years fifteen,
With visage fine and fair;
So do the flowers with softening showers,
Aye spring up as we see;
Yet, nevertheless, remember this,
That one day we must die.

OLD POEM; 1653.

CHILDHOOD SEEKING THE EARLY FLOWERS.—THE FIRST GAME OF SKILL.

MARCH, named from Mars, the god of war, was the commencement of the Roman year, and was, in fact, so considered in England before the alteration of the style; the legal year commencing on the 25th of March. Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors called it *Length-monath*, "because the days did then begin to exceed the nights in length. There is an old proverb which charges March with borrowing certain days from April; and these, being generally stormy, our forefathers endeavoured to account for this circumstance by pretending that March borrowed them from April, that he might extend his power so much longer. "Those," says Dr. Jamieson, "who are much addicted to superstition, will neither borrow nor lend on any of these days. If any one would propose to borrow of them, they would consider it as an evidence that the person wished to employ the article borrowed for the purpose of witchcraft against the lenders." There is a different proverb relating to this month, viz., that "A bushel of March dust is worth a King's ransom;" thereby expressing the importance of dry or dusty weather at this particular season of the year, in an agricultural point of view.

St. David founded many monasteries and religious houses, and built a hermitage and chapel in the vale of Llanthony, near the Black Mountains:—

A little lowly hermitage it was,
Down in a dale, hard by a forest's side,
Far from resort of people, that did pass
In travel to and fro; a little wyde
There was an holy chapel's edifice,
Wherein the Hermit dewly wont to say
His holy things each morn and eventide;
Thereby a christall stream did gently play,
Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth away.

SPENSER.

The custom of Welshmen wearing leeks on *St. David's Day*, has been traditionally referred to the Britons, under their general, St. David, gaining a victory over the Saxons, and transferring from their caps to their own, leeks, as signals of triumph. Sir Samuel Meyrick discredits this story; and infers from some lines of the time of James I., that the leek was assumed upon, or immediately after, the battle of Bosworth Field, which was won by Henry VII., who had many Welshmen (his countrymen), in his army, and whose yeomen-guard was composed of Welshmen; and this inference is strengthened by the fact, that the Tudor colours were white and green, the colours of the leek. Still, this explanation is shaken by the fact of the leek being a native of Switzerland, and, according to the *Hortus Kewensis*, not introduced into England till about the year 1562. Churchill thus satirises the custom:—

March, various, fierce, and wild, with wind-cracked cheeks,
By wilder Welshman led, and crowned with Leeks.

Lent is commonly said to be named from a Saxon word for Spring. It was originally called *Quadragesima*, and only lasted forty hours, from 12 on Good Friday to Easter morn; but it was gradually extended to forty days, after the fasts of Moses, Dent. ix.; of Elijah, 1 Kings xix.; of the Ninevites, Jonah iii.; and of our Lord himself, Matthew iv.; all of which fasted forty days. This fast begins on Wednesday, because the six Sundays, being festivals, were not in-

cluded in the fasting days; and, therefore, unless four days were added before the first Sunday in Lent, the fast would only last thirty-six days instead of forty.—(*Elementa Liturgica*)

Herrick has a quaint instruction:—

TO KEEPE A TRUE LENT.

Is this a Fast, to keep The liver leane, And cleane, From fat of veales and sheep?	No; 'tis a Fast to dole My sheaf of wheat, And meat, Unto the hungry soule.
Is it to quit the dish Of flesh, yet still To fill The platter high with fish?	It is to fast from strife From old debate, And hate; To circumsise thy life:
Is it to fast an houre Or rag'd to go, Or show A down-cast look, and sowre?	To show a heart grief-rent To starve thy sin, Not bin; And that's to keep thy Lent.

Battle of Culloden.—The present year is the centenary of this memorable event, which finally extinguished the hopes of the House of Stuart; it was, indeed, a blood-stained victory:

Drummosie muir, Drummosie muir,
A waefu' day it was to me,
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear and brethren three.

Midlent.—The Fourth Sunday in Lent was anciently kept by Catholics visiting their mother-church, and making their offerings at the high altar: thence arose the dutiful custom of visiting parents on this day, therefore called *Mothering Sunday*; when the children were treated with a regale of excellent furmety, or they presented their mother with a sum of money, a trinket, &c. On the following Sunday, preceding Palm Sunday, fried peas, or *carlings*, are eaten in the North.

St. Patrick's Day.—The shamrock, or trefoil, is worn as the national emblem of Ireland, from St. Patrick having referred to it in illustration of the Trinity, when he landed near Wicklow, to convert the Irish to Christianity in 433. Still, the trefoil is not fully expanded on St. Patrick's Day, and old authors affirm that the shamrock was eaten, and was a sour plant: now, wood-sorrel alone is sour, is an early Spring plant, is abundant in Ireland, is a trefoil, and is called by old herbalists, *Shamrog*.

With March we may expect "many weathers;" and there is a very old proverb, "March hackham, comes in like a lion, goes out like a lamb."

By the storms of this period, we are reminded of a touching epitaph on two infants buried in the churchyard of Hemel Hempstead, in Hertfordshire:

As fades the flower in early Spring,
When tempests sweep the land,
So droops the tender infant's form,
When seized by Death's cold hand.
Farewell, sweet babes, the loss is ours,
For you are gone to rest,
The Shepherd has but called his lambs,
To fold them to his breast.

I. T.



SMYTH.
APRIL.
 Then brave April doth sweetly smile,
 The flowers do fair appear,
 The child is then become a man,
 To the age of twenty year.
 If he be kind, and well inclin'd,
 And brought up at the school,
 Then men may know if he foreshow,
 A wise man or a fool. OLD POEM; 1633.

LET LOOSE FROM SCHOOL.—BIRDS' NESTING.—GAMES OF ACTIVITY AND STRENGTH.

APRIL is usually considered to have been named from *Aperire*, to open; either from the opening of the buds, or of the bosom of the Earth, in producing vegetation. The Saxons called it *Oster*, or *Easter Month*, in which month the feast of the Saxon goddess *Eastre*, *Eoster*, or *Easter*, is said to have been celebrated.

Palm Sunday is named from the boughs of Palms being carried in procession in imitation of those which the Jews strewed in the way of Christ, when he went up to Jerusalem. The Palm-tree was common in Judea, and planted everywhere by the way-side. Sprigs of box-wood are still used as a substitute for Palms in Catholic countries; and willow, laurel, yew, and box, for the decoration, or *dressing*, of churches in England. The blossoms of the willow, too, are called *Palm*, because of their coming forth before any leaves appear, and flourishing most before Easter, wherefore they are gathered to deck houses on Sundays. The ceremony of bearing Palms in England was retained till the 2nd year of the reign of Edward VI.; and it was formerly a proverbial saying, "He who hath not a Palm in his hand on Palm Sunday must have his hand cut off." The custom still lingers in some rural districts, though not as a religious observance.

In the Catholic church, Palm Sunday is the first day of the *Holy Week*; and at Rome, Palms are blessed by the Pope, who is borne in grand procession round the Sala Regia of the Vatican; where the *Tenebræ* and *Miserere* are sung by the Pope's choir, as well as at St. Peter's.

The *Great* or *Passion Week* was kept by the early Christians, as a season of rigorous abstinence from whatever could delight the body, that the soul might more readily accompany the Saviour in his sufferings, and realize "the great, the unspeakable blessings procured in it for man." For, in this week, to sum up the teaching of the Church in the eloquent language of Chrysostom, "the long war was brought to a close, death was quenched, the curse removed, the tyrannous empire of the devil overthrown; his goods plundered, God and man reconciled; heaven became accessible, men and angels were joined together; what had been discovered was united; the partition wall broken down, the barrier taken away; the God of peace made peace between the things above and the things on earth." The services of the church followed throughout the course of this week, the actions or sufferings of the Saviour. Thus, on the Holy Thursday, the sacrament was received in the evening after supper, because that was the time of its original institution.—(*Feasts and Fasts*). This was called also *Die Mandati*; i. e. the command of Christ to his disciples when he washed their feet, to follow his example; whence comes *Mauudy Thursday*; on this day, the Pope washes the feet of Poor priests at Rome, as the Kings of England, or their Almoners, formerly washed the feet of as many poor men as the sovereign was old, at Whitehall. Alms, or *maundy*, were then distributed; and this part of the custom is retained to our day; for which purpose, certain coins are struck by the Royal Mint every year and termed *Mauudy Money*.

Good Friday, as the day on which the Lord gave himself up for us, was the appointed time for the absolution of those who had been subjected to penance for their sins. The Fast of Friday was prolonged, by all who were able to bear it, over the succeeding Saturday, while Christ remained in the tomb till cock-crow on the Easter morning; and during the whole of that night the people continued assembled in the churches, in the expectation—an expectation apparently derived from the Jews—that on that night the Messiah would appear to receive his kingdom; of which event, as is well known, the Christians from the earliest times, confidently expected the speedy happening. Thus was the period preceding Easter kept in the fourth century.—(*Feasts and Fasts*.) And, "as Good Friday is so called from the blessed effects of our Saviour's Passion, so the day of his Resurrection is named Easter, from the Saxon *Oster*, to rise."—(*Elementa Liturgica*.)

Of the present observances of Easter we can give but a few notes. At Rome, the ceremonies are continued on Friday and Saturday, and terminate on Sunday with the Pope blessing the people from the Portico of St. Peter's; illuminations, fireworks, &c. In England, the Good Friday Bun is eaten, derived from the sacred *Doun*, which was offered at the Arkite Temples; marked with the cross in commemoration of the passion of Christ on this day. The dressing of churches with flowers and evergreens on Easter Day is but little kept up. The Easter Holidays are but slightly observed; though our ancestors had their water quintain, ball-play, heaving or lifting, barley-break, stool-ball, &c.; and the good King Alfred appointed the week after Easter to be kept holy. On "God's Sunday," (Easter Day,) the ancient hall fire was discontinued, the "black wynter brondes" put aside, and the hearth "gayly arrayed with fayre flowres, and strewed with green ryhes all about."—(A.D. 1511.)

St. George was a brave soldier, in the ranks of Diocletian. Edward III. at the battle of Calais, in the year 1349, joined to England's guardian St. Edward the Confessor, the name of St. George; and invoked both to his arms: next year, the order of the Garter was established, dedicated to St. George, whose emblem is preserved in its rich jewel.

St. Mark is depicted with a lion couchant, winged, by his side; because the lion is emblematical of the nervous solidity of his writings; and the wings of the more than human powers displayed in their composition.

On the 25th of April is the Jewish Festival of the Passover, or *Paschal Lamb*. The Paschal flower usually flowers at this period, in chalky pastures.

April is the season for healthy out-door sports: the hoop may be seen in classic sculpture; and leap-frog is mentioned by Shakspeare and Ben Jonson.

An old poet has thus versified the weather characteristic of the month:

May never was the month of love,
 For May is full of flowers;
 But rather April wet by kind;
 For Love is full of showers.



MAY.

Then cometh May, gallant and gay,
When frequent flow'rs do thrive,
The child is then become a man,
Of age twenty and five.
And for his life doth seek a wife,
His days and years to spend;
May He above send peace and love,
And grace unto the end.
OLD POEM; 1553.

THE YOUNG MAN ABROAD—TO "OBSERVE THE RIGHTS OF MAY."

MAY is, throughout, a month of out-door rejoicing; and, as its festivities are inspired by the gay face of Nature, they are as old as any we have on record. Mr. Borlase says: "May customs are nothing more than a gratulation of the Spring, to testify universal joy at the revival of vegetation." And, Mr. Douce remarks: "there can be no doubt that the Queen of May is the legitimate representative of the Goddess Flora, in the Roman festival." In Scotland, on May-day, is held a rural sacrifice called the Baitein, or Fire of Baal—the only word in Gaelic for a globe; this festival being, probably, in honour of the return of the Sun, in his apparent annual course:—

All hail to thee, thou first of May,
Sacred to wondrous sport and play,
To wine and jest, and dance, and song,
And mirth that lasts the whole day long.

In the days of "Merry England," all ranks of people—royal and noble, as well as the vulgar—went out *Maying*, i.e. gathering May, on the first of May: who does not remember Herrick's lyric "To Corinna, to go a Maying." The universality of the custom—the multitudes roaming in the fields on May morning, and the towns and villages subsequently bedecked with evergreens, are thus told:—

Come, my Corinna, come; and, coming, mark
How each field turns a street, each street a park,
Made green, and trimm'd with trees; see how
Devotion gives each house a bough,
Or branch; each porch, each door, ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of whitethorn neatly interwove;
As if here were those cooler shades of love.

Our artist has picturesquely illustrated the "rites of May"—where the youthful swain is adorning the brow of his fair companion with a garland of flowers, and is about to lead her forth to the sports of the Morris-dance and May-pole, where too are Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, and Maid Marian, from the rustic chivalry of ages long past: the Morris-dance originated from the Moors, (*Morisico*); and the Marian, perhaps, from Morion, a head-piece, because the head was gaily dressed.

Nor was this merely a rustic sport, for it was equally enjoyed by those "in populous city pent." In "jolly old London," on May-day, the doors were decorated with flowering branches, and every hat was decked with hawthorn, brought in triumph from the neighbouring fields. Then, May-poles were set up in various parts of London: Chaucer mentions the pole or *shaft*, in Leadenhall-street, higher than the steeple of the church of St. Andrew-under-shaft. Beaumont and Fletcher allude to the May-pole nearly on the site of the church of St. Mary-le-Strand; and its successor, when removed, was used for a telescope-stand in Essex; it had two gilt balls and a vane, on the summit, and was decorated on festival-days, with garlands of flowers. Another pole must have been set up in May Fair, just upon the verge of Hyde Park. The Puritans fought a stubborn battle with the May-poles—as "heathenish vanities of superstition and wickedness:—"

Alas! poor May-poles! what should be the cause
That you were almost banished from the earth?
Who never were rebellious to the laws:
Your greatest crime was honest, harmlesse mirth.

At the Restoration, May-poles were permitted to be erected again; though few held up their heads after the *coup fanatique*. They were condemned as pagan; but, on the observance of May Day, there could scarcely be any difference of opinion. Even the grave old Chronicler Stowe, talks of rejoicing the spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the notes of birds—*praising God in their kind.*"

May has, indeed, been a "feast of the poets." Who does not remember Milton's glorious invocation to "flowery May," and "bounteous May," Then, too, the festive muse of Moore:

Of all the fair months that round 'the Sun
In light-linked dance their circle run,
Sweet May! sweet May! thou'rt dear to me.

Even, the gentle Gray is roused to sing "We frolic while 'tis May." Yet, those who can "suck melancholy from a song" may find it in this month, and its frail flowers. Ben Jonson, in his exquisite ode "To the Memory of a Youth," after the long-standing oak, says:—

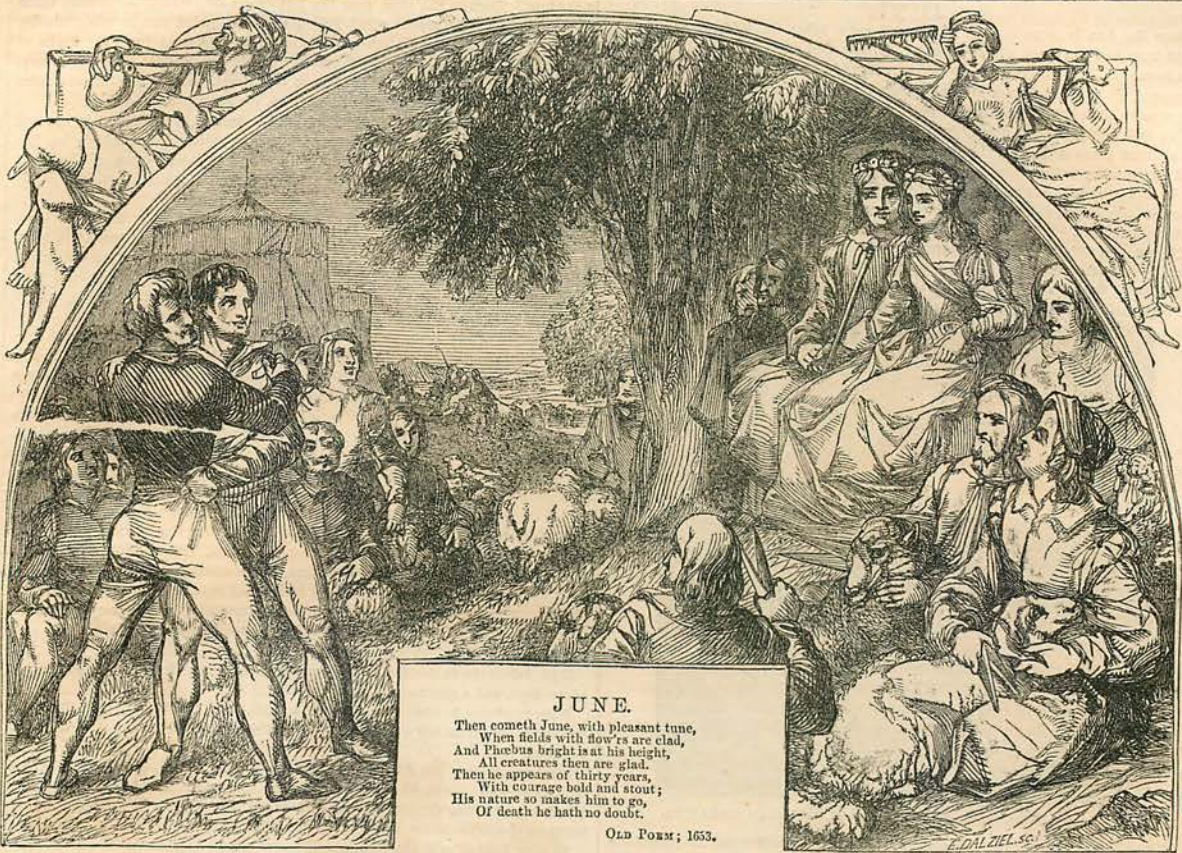
A lillie of a day
Is fairer farre in May,
Although it fall and die that night:—
It was the plant and flower of light.

Among the superstitions of the month, it was a bad omen to be married in it—a notion as old as Ovid. On Old May Day, 1610, Henry IV. was assassinated by Ravallac—a tragedy of such eventful consequences, that it must have added to the *fatalities* of the month.

Holy Thursday (Ascension Day), is still set apart for parochial perambulations, and beating bounds—a custom traceable to the pagan Terminus (Lat. bound), who was the guardian of fields and landmarks, and the keeper-up of friendship and peace among men; the procession was formerly headed by the Bishop or Clergy, who sang Litanies in the fields, &c. A Homily was formerly set forth, for this day; for which, also, the Injunctions of Queen Elizabeth, in 1559, declared that a proper service should be provided.

Restoration Day observances are now but rare; though, formerly, the statues of Charles I. and II. were dressed with oak-branches, as was the tomb of the preserver of Charles II., at St. Giles's church, London. At Newcastle, it is called "Barge Day," there being on the Tyne a Corporation procession, similar to that on the Thames, on Lord Mayor's Day.

Whit Sunday, or Pentecost, or *Whiten-Sunday*, was named from its being one of the stated times for baptism in the ancient church, when those that were baptised put on white garments, as types of that spiritual purity which they had received. In Catholic countries, the priests, on this day, cast flowers from the upper ambulatories of their churches, upon the congregation of the faithful assembled in the nave below.



JUNE.

Then cometh June, with pleasant tune,
When fields with flow'rs are clad,
And Phoebus bright is at his height,
All creatures then are glad.
Then he appears of thirty years,
With courage bold and stout;
His nature so makes him to go,
Of death he hath no doubt.

OLD POEM; 1653.

THE YEAR AND HIS BRIDE, AS KING AND QUEEN OF THE FEAST OF SHEEPSHEARING, PRESIDING AT THE SPORT OF WRESTLING.

JUNE bears distinct evidence of its pagan nomenclature, from Juno. Our Saxon ancestors named it, more reasonably, *Weyd-Monath*; "because," says Verstegan, "their beasts did then weyd in the meadows, that is to say, goo to feed there." It was afterwards called *Sere-Monath*, or dry month.

Whitsuntide, was formerly kept with many feasts called *Ales*, because such ale was then drunk: thus there were bride-ales, clerk-ales, give-ales, lamb-ales, leet-ales, Midsummer-ales, Scot-ales, and several more. Stool-ball and barley-break were, also, Whitsun sports: in "ancient tynes," too, Whitsun plays were acted: at Chester, they were twenty-five in number, and were performed for above three centuries, annually. The Morris Dance was another Whitsun sport; and Fairs were common, more especially in the neighbourhood of London. Aubrey, in his account of North Wilts, has left us the following account of Whitsun Ales (temp. 1711): "There were no rates for the poor in my grandfather's days; but, for Kington St. Michael (no small parish) the Church Ale of Whitsuntide did the business. In every parish is (or was) a church-house, to which belonged spits, crocks, &c., for dressing provision. Here the housekeepers met and were merry, and gave their charity. The young people were there, too, and had dancing, bowling, shooting at butts, &c.; the ancients sitting gravely by, and looking on."—(See *Britton's Memoir of Aubrey*, 1845.) At this day, Whitsuntide is the usual time for "making rates."

Sir John Suckling, in his "Ballad upon a Wedding," hints at the rustic beauty present at these festivals:—

The maid, and thereby hangs a tale,
For such a maid no Whitsun ale
Could ever yet produce.

At Whitsuntide the students of Winchester College break up with the solemn performance of the well-known ode or song of *Dulce Domum*, the celebration of which is invariably attended by the leading clergy and gentry of the town and neighbourhood. Its origin is involved in mystery, as well as the occasion of its composition: tradition ascribes it to a youth in a state of melancholy, wasting his life in fruitless sorrow, at his separation from home and friends.

Sheepshearing Time is marked in the Ephemeris of Nature, June 5, as *Tonsura*; though Dyer lays down for it the following tokens:

If radiant Elder spreads
Her silver flowers, if humble Daisies yield
To yellow Crowfoot, and luxuriant grass,
Gay Shearing Time approaches.

Again, of its homely joys:—

At Shearing Time, along the lively vales,
Rural festivities are often heard:
Beneath each blooming arbour all is joy
And lusty merriment: while on the grass
The mingled youth in gaudy circles sport,
We think the golden age again return'd,
And all the fabled Dryades in dance.
Leaving they bound along, with laughing air,

To the shrill pipe, and deep re-murmuring chord
Of th' ancient harp, or tabor's hollow sound.
While th' old apart, upon a bank reclin'd,
Attend the tuneful carol, softly mixt
With every murmur of the sithing wave,
And every warble of the feather'd choir;
Music of Paradise! which still is heard
When the heart listens.

Wrestling was another sport of Shearing Time, and the usual prize was a ram. Chaucer says of Sir Thopas:—

Of wrastling there was none his pere,
Where any Ram shulde stande.

But, according to the old poem called "A Lytel Geste of Robyn Hode," prizes of greater value and dignity were sometimes given—a white bull a great courser, with saddle and bridle, a pipe of wine, and a red gold ring.

Wrestling was borrowed from the Olympic games; it was, too, the accomplishment of a hero, in the ages of chivalry. Sir Thomas Parkyns, Bart., the celebrated Wrestler, published a mathematical Treatise on his favourite sport.

Trinity and St. Barnabas were formerly anciently commemorated with processions, "girlbands" of flowers, &c. Ray has a proverb:—

Barnaby Bright, Barnaby Bright,
The longest day and the shortest night;

indicating the almost nightless day of the solstitial season.

Corpus Christi is, in Catholic countries, celebrated with music, lights, flowers strewed in the streets; tapestries hung out of the windows; Coventry plays, &c.: and many are the entries in old church-books, of rose-garlands and torches on Corpus Christi. In the festivals of this day, too, originated Shrewsbury Show, and similar pageants of trading companies, corporation officers, and religious fraternities. In 1845, there was at Nottingham a splendid procession, on Corpus Christi day, at the newly-erected Catholic Church, dedicated to St. Barnabas.

Midsummer Eve, the *Vigil of St. John the Baptist's Day*, was formerly welcomed with bonfires, supposed to be a relic of Druidical superstition. Gathering roses, and sowing hemp-seed, for love-divinations, were also Midsummer-eve customs. The Summer-day of the poet is one of unclouded splendour:—

The time so tranquil is and clear,
That nowhere shall ye find
Save on a high and barren hill,
An air of passing wind.
All trees and simples, great and small,
That balmy leaf do bear,

Than they were painted on a wall,
No more they move or stir:
The rivers fresh, the clearer streams
O'er rocks can swiftly run,
The water clear like crystal beams,
And makes a pleasant din.

ALEXANDER HUME.

In all the floral festivities of this period, the rose is distinguished:—

The blushing rose, within whose virgin leaves,
The wanton wind to sport himself presumes,
Whilst from their rifled wardrobe he receives,
For his wings purple, for his breath perfumes.—FANSHAW.

Herriek has left us this lyric calendar of festal "Country Life," which may not inappropriately be quoted here:—

For sports, for pageantry, and plays,
Thou hast thy eyes and holidays
On which the young men and maidens meet,
To exercise their dancing feet:
Tripping the comely country round,
With daffodils and daisies crown'd.
Thy wakes, thy quintets, here thou hast;
Thy May-poles, too, with garlands
grac'd;

Thy Morris-dance, thy Whitsun ale,
Thy Shearing Feast, which never fail;
Thy harvest-home, thy wassail bowl,
That's tost up after fox & th' hole;
Thy mummeries, thy twelfth-night kings
And queens, thy Christmas revellings;
Thy nut-brown mirth, thy russet-wit;
And no man pays too dear for it.

T. T.



JULY.

Then July comes with his hot calms,
And constant in his kind;
The man doth thrive to thirty-five,
And sober grows his mind;
His children small do on him call,
And breed him sturt and strife;
His wife may die, and so must he
Go seek another wife.

OLD POEM; 1653.

SEEKING THE SHADE.—BATHING, SWIMMING, AND FISHING.

JULY was named Julius by Marc Antony, in compliment to Julius Caesar. The Saxons called it *Heu-Monath*, or *Hey-Monath*, because in it they generally mowed, and gathered in their hay; it was also called *Maed Monath*, because at this season the meads are covered with bloom.

July 1 is the Anniversary of two important events—the Battle of the Boyne, in 1690, at which both James II., and William III., were present; and the Battle of the Nile, in 1780, the result of which was so brilliant, that Nelson said victory was not a sufficient name for it.

Churchill thus glances at the superstitious notions about rain on St. Swithin's Day, (July 15):—

July, to whom the Dog Star in her train,
St. James gives oysters, and St. Swithin rain.

Gay, in his *Trivia*, mentions:—

How if on Swithin's Feast the welkin low'rs,
And every penthouse streams with hasty show'rs,
Twice twenty days shall clouds their feces drain,
And wash the pavements with incessant rain."

There is, too, an old proverb:

St. Swithin's Day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain;
St. Swithin's day if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain na mair.

There is a quaint saying, that when it rains on St. Swithin's Day, it is the Saint christening the Apples. In some church books, there are entries of gatherings of "Sainte Swithine's farthyngs" on this day. St. Swithin was *Chancellor of the Exchequer* in the time of King Ethelbert, and the great patron saint of the Cathedral and City of Winchester; in the former is shown a large sculptured stone, which was long believed to cover the remains of the Saxon Saint, but this was disproved in 1797, by the finding of a complete skeleton beneath the stone; and the skull of St. Swithin is known to have been deposited in Canterbury Cathedral: his shrine was formerly kept in a chapel behind the altar in Winchester Cathedral.

With respect to "Rain on St. Swithin's Day," Mr. Howard, the meteorologist, observes: "The notion commonly entertained on this subject, if put strictly to the test of experience at *any one station* in this part of the island, (London), will be found fallacious. To do justice to popular observation, I may now state, that in a majority of our Summers, a showery period, which, with some latitude as to time and circumstances, may be admitted to constitute daily rain for forty days, does come on about the time indicated by this tradition: not that any long space before is often so dry as to mark distinctly its commencement."

A showery disposition in the air has certain tokens, of which the frequency of the Rainbow is one. All showers, however favourable their position with respect to the sun, do not, however, produce equally marked and beautiful Rainbows:

O arch of promise, seen in liquid skies!
With glittering band of many coloured rays
In harmonie all blending. How mine eyes
Love to observe thee. As these showerie daies,

Changing and many weathered, sometimes smile
And flash short sunshine through black clouds awhile.
Then deepening dark again, they fall in rains,
So is it pleasant now to pause and view,
Thy brilliant sign in clouds of waterie hue,
And know the storm will not return againe.

St. James's Day (July 25th), was formerly observed by the distribution of food to such as chose to demand it. On *St. James's Day* (old style) oysters came in in London; and there is a popular notion, like that relating to geese on *Michaelmas Day*, that whoever eats oysters on that day, will never want money for the rest of the year. Yet, this does not accord with another popular conceit, in *Butter's Dye's Dry Dinner*, 1599: "it is unseasonable and unwholesome in all months that have not an R in their name to eat an oyster."

Our artist has depicted a beautiful scene of noontide leisure, an episode in the life of "Illustrious Summer." Bathing, sailing, fishing, and all kinds of water frolics, are now in high season. Thomson gives us a life-like picture of the first:—

Cheer'd by the setting beam, the sprightly youth
Speeds to the well-known pool, whose crystal depth
A sandy bottom shows. Awhile he stands
Gazing th' inverted landscape, half afraid
To meditate the blue profound below;
Then plunges headlong down the circling flood.

His chon tresses, and his rosy cheek
Instant emerge; and through the flexile wave,
At each short breathing by his lip repell'd,
With arms and legs according well, he makes,
As humour lends, an easy-winding path;
While, from his polish'd sides, a dewy light
Effuses, on the pleas'd spectators round.

Such a scene, too, as the Poet of Nature sings, is here:

The brook ran bubbling by, and sighing weak,
The breeze among the bending willows play'd.

This is the purest exercise of health,
The kind refresher of the summer heats;
Even from the body's purity the mind
Receives a secret, sympathetic aid.

Warm in their cheek, the sultry season glow'd;
And, rob'd in loose array, they came to bathe
Their fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.

The Fishing at this time of year, that is to say, Perch and Trout fishing, is, perhaps, the best of any fishing that the circle of the season produces. "The witty, companionable, and gentle Gay," who often tried his art to "tempt the tenant of the brook," gives this poetical picture of the fly-fisher:—

He shakes the boughs that on the margin grow,
Which o'er the stream a waving forest throw,
When, if an insect fall (his certain guide),
He gently takes him from the whirling tide.

His gaudy vest, his wings, his horns, and size;
Then round the hook the chosen few he winds,
And on the back a speckled feather binds;
So just the colours shine through every part,
That nature seems to live again in art.

Sir Henry Wootton, Provost of Eton College, says Walton, was "a most dear lover and a frequent practiser of the Art of Angling, of which he would say, 'Twas an employment for his idle time, which was then not idly spent, 'for Angling was, after tedious study, a rest to his mind, a cheerer of his spirits, a diverter of sadness, a calmer of unquiet thoughts, a moderator of passions, a procuror of contentedness,' and 'that it begat habits of peace and patience, in those that professed and practised it.'"



AUGUST.

Then August old, both stout and bold,
When flow'rs do stoutly stand;
So man appears at forty years,
With wisdom and command;
And doth provide his house to guide,
Children and families;
Yet do not miss: remember this,
That one day thou must die.
Old Poem; 1653.

E. DALZIEL. SC.

THE HOST SURROUNDED BY HIS FAMILY, RECEIVES THE QUEEN OF HARVEST FOLLOWED BY THE HOCK-CART AND CEREAL PROCESSION.

August is named from Octavius Cæsar, better known as Augustus, when the Senate, to pay the same tribute to him as had already been rendered to Julius Cæsar, decreed, that to commemorate his many triumphs, should from him take the name of Augustus, which we call August. The Saxons called it *Wead-Monat-wead*, signifying a covering or garment, and thus they expressed the beautiful clothing of the ground in harvest.

Gule of August, or Lammas Day, is variously explained. *Gule*, from the Celtic or British *Wyl*, or *Gule*, signifies a Festival or Holiday, and explains Gule of August, to mean the holiday of St. Peter and Vincula in this month, when the people of England, in Roman Catholic times, paid their Peter pence. *Lammas* is, by some, derived from *Lamb-masse*, because, on that day, the tenants who held lands of the Cathedral church in York, which is dedicated to St. Peter and Vincula, were bound, by their tenure, to bring a live lamb into the church at high mass; others trace it to the Saxon *loaf-masse*, or bread-masse, from the first-fruits offering referred to in the Calendar, (Aug. 1.)

The Anniversary of the Accession of the House of Brunswick to the British Throne, August 1, (1714), was formerly celebrated; "Dogget's Coat and Badge" rowed for on this day, annually, on the Thames, was bequeathed by Thomas Dogget, the comedian, in commemoration of the above event.

The Transfiguration, (Aug. 6.) festival was abolished, in England at the Reformation; but is still celebrated with much pomp and solemnity in the Greek and Latin churches.

The Assumption of the Virgin Mary, (July 15.) was formerly a great Festival; and, upon this day, it was customary to implore blessings upon herbs, plants, roots, and fruits. Wordsworth has some exquisite lines on the eve of this Festival—meditations amid the silent splendour of "the midnight moon," in Italy:

The watchman on the battlements partakes
The stillness of the solemn hour; he feels
The silence of the earth, the endless sound
Of flowing water soothes him; and the stars,
Which in that brightest moonlight well nigh quenched,
Scarce visible, as in the utmost depth
Of yonder sapphire infinite are seen,
Draw on with elevating influence
Toward eternity, the attenuated mind.
Musing on worlds beyond the grave he stands,
And to the Virgin Mother silently
Breathes forth her hymn of praise.

St Roch's Day, (Aug. 16.) was formerly celebrated as a general Harvest-Home in England. Sir Thomas Overbury, (1630.) under the Franklin, says, "he allows of honest pastime, and thinks not the bones of the dead anything bruised, or the worse for it, though the country lasses dance in the churchyard after even-song. *Rock Monday*, and the wake in summer, shrotings, the wakeful ketches on Christmas Eve, the hoky, or seed cake, these he yeerly keeps, yet holds them no reliques of Popery."

Harvest-Home, from the Saxon *harfest*, *q. s.* herb-feast, is defined by Ash, to be Harvest-Home, "the 1st load of the harvest, the feast at the end of the harvest

a song sung at the end of the harvest; the opportunity of gathering harvest treasure." With us, the festival is, doubtless, as old as agriculture. Thomson has left us this beautiful description of its rustic joys:—

The harvest treasures all
Now gather'd in, beyond the rage of storms,
Sure to the swain; the circling fence shut up;
and instant Winter's utmost rage defy'd,
While, loose to festive joy, the country round
Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth,
Shook to the wind their cares. The toil-strung
youth,
By the quick sense of music taught alone,
Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.

Her ev'ry charm abroad, the village toasts,
Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich,
Darts not unmeaning looks; and where her eye
Points an approving smile, with double force
The cudgel rattles, and the wrestler twines
Age, too, shines out; and, garrulous, recounts
The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice, nor
think
That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
Begins again the never-ceasing round.

Harvest-Home customs are too various for us to detail. "The Queen of Harvest," whom our artist has portrayed, was anciently brought home with the last load of corn; though an image was formerly thus richly dressed up, to represent the Roman Ceres, as recorded by Hentzner, in 1598, in a Harvest-home at Windsor. Here, too, are the pipe and tabor, the latter taken from the *timbrul* of Miriam, as an accompaniment to her song and victory after the passage of the Red Sea. In the distance is seen the Hock Cart, "with all its gear," commemorated by Herrick:—

Come, sons of Summer, by whose toils
We are the Lords of Wine and Oile,
By whose tough labours and rough hands,
We rip up first, then reap our lands,
Crowd'd with the cars of corn, now
come,
And to the pipe sing Harvest-home;

Come forth, my Lord, and see the Cart,
Drest up with all the country art.

About the Cart, hear how the rout
Of rural younglings raise the shout;
Pressing before, some coming after,
Those with a shout, and these with laughter.

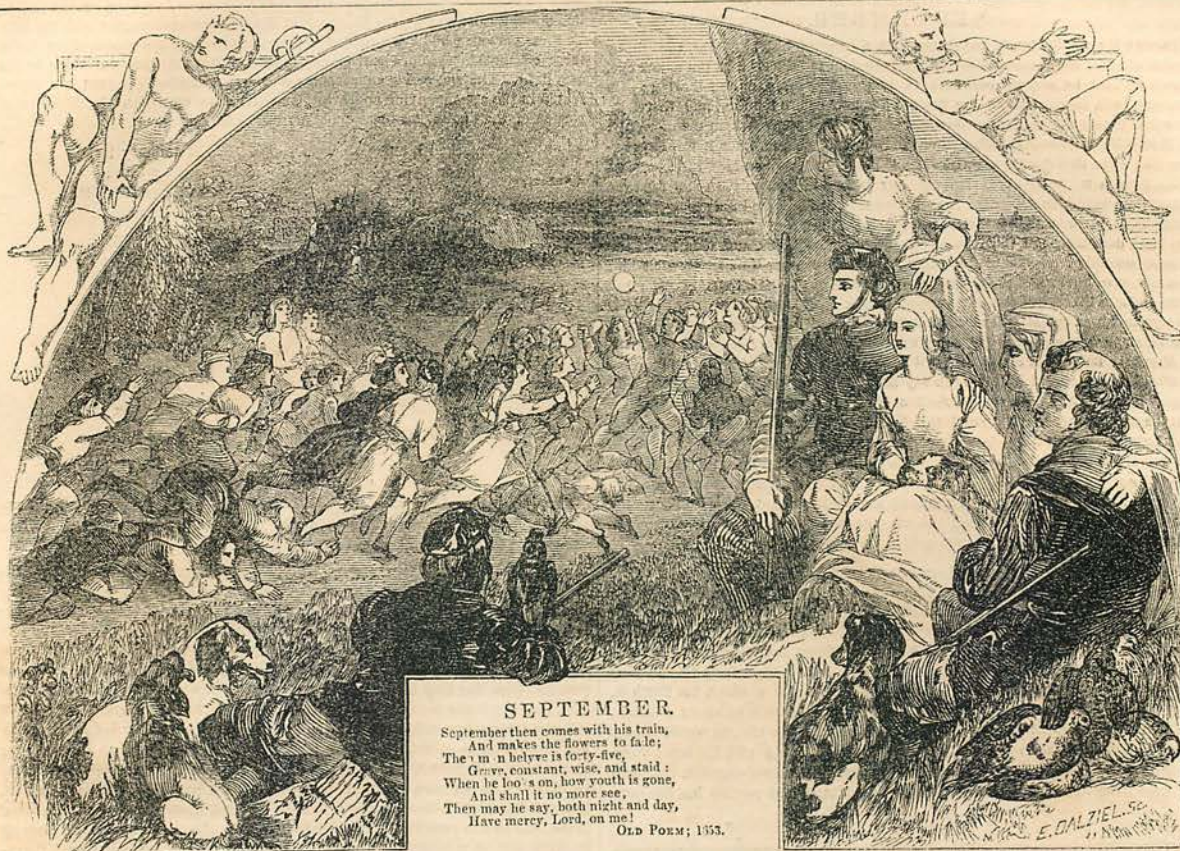
Bloomfield has left us a picture of Harvest-Home in Suffolk, where the foremost man in the field was honoured with the title of "Lord," and at "the Horkey" or Harvest-Home Feast, he collected money from the farmers and visitors, to make a "frolic" afterwards, called the "largest" spending; but in Bloomfield's time, this custom was going fast out of use. In his ballad—the Horkey, he sings:—

Home came the jovial Horkey Load,
Last of the whole year's crop;

And Grace among the green boughs rode,
Right plump upon the top.

Leasing or Gleaning, dates from three thousand years and upwards, as testified by Ruth. "If it were not then first instituted, it was secured and regulated by an especial ordinance of the Almighty to the Israelites in the wilderness, as a privilege to be fully enjoyed by the poor of the land, whenever their triumphant armies should enter into possession of Canaan. By this law, in the field where the corn grew, 'clean riddance' was not to be made, the corners were to be left unreaped, and even the forgotten sheaf was not to be fetched away by the owner, but to be left for the 'poor and the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow'."

St. Bartholomew's Day (August 24), is now kept as a holiday at the Bank, and certain Law Offices. Many centuries since, labour was forbidden on this day; and subsequently, only Harvest-work was allowed by law.



SEPTEMBER.

September then comes with his train,
And makes the flowers to fade;
The month heveys is forty-five,
Give constant, wise, and staid;
When he looks on, how youth is gone,
And shall it no more see.
Then may he say, both night and day,
Have mercy, Lord, on me!

OLD POEM; 1553.

THE HOST HAVING RETURNED FROM HIS SUCCESSFUL DAY'S FIELD SPORTS, WITH HIS FAMILY, WITNESSETH FOOTBALL.

SEPTEMBER was named to mark its position of seventh (*Septem*), month in the Alban Calendar—and from *imber*, (shower); it being the commencement of the wet season in Rome. The Saxons called it *Gerst Monath*; *gerst*, or barley, being then in perfection. After the establishment of Christianity, this month was called by the Saxons *Halg-Monath*, the Holy Month, from the numerous religious ceremonies observed in the course of it.

The Anniversary of the Great Fire of London, Sept. 2, (1666) is, to this day, kept as a Holiday at the Bank, Customs, and Excise.

Bartholomew Fair is held on September 3, St. Bartholomew's Day, in the Old Style: it originated in two fairs or markets, one for the clothiers of England, and drapers of London, granted to the Prior of the Convent of St. Bartholomew, and held within the churchyard: the other granted to the City of London for cattle and goods, held in the field of West Smithfield. For many years, the Fair lasted fourteen days, and was a great source of revenue to the Corporation: in 1735, it was restricted to three days, and it now extends but to one day.

Holy Rood, or Holy Cross Day, (September 14), is still observed as a Holiday, to commemorate the recovery of the Cross, which was brought away by the King of Persia when he plundered Jerusalem, and was brought back in triumph by the Emperor Heraclius.

Nutting was formerly customary throughout the country, on this day; and, for centuries past, the boys of Eton School have written verses, and had a holiday for nutting, in this month.

September 18th is kept as a Holiday; and the Salisbury Breviary has on this day: "Keep always the Fast of the 9th month."

St. Matthew's Day, (September 21), the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London visit Christ's Hospital in state, when orations are delivered in the great Hall by the senior boys, who are qualifying for college. The suppers on Sundays in Lent, are other public sights of this Hospital, "the noblest Institution in the world."

Michaelmas Day (Sept. 29), was instituted in the year 487, to commemorate the Ministry of St. Michael and all Holy Angels, the messengers of good-will toward men. It is a Holiday at the Public Offices: and in the Court of Exchequer, there is on this day performed a ceremony, by one of the Aldermen of London, of chopping sticks and counting hob-nails, as suit and service of certain ancient tenures. The custom of eating goose on Michaelmas Day, has much exercised the ingenuity of antiquaries; and is traced by some to a goose being the dish before Queen Elizabeth, when the news was brought of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. A more probable reason is, that Michaelmas Day was a great festival, and geese were then most plentiful; and it being one of the quarters, or terms, for the payment of rents, a fat goose was the customary present, though, as it would appear, from the tenant to the landlord:—

And when t'ne tenants come to pay their quarter's rent,
They bring some fowle at Midsummer, a dish of fish at Lent
At Christmas a capon, at Michaelmas a goose,
And somewhat else at New Year's tide for fear their lease be loose.

A later poet says:—

At Michaelmas, by custom right divine,
Geese are ordained to liced at Michael's shrine.

In the autumnal garden, the day is florally commemorated:—

The Michaelmas Daisy, among the dead weeds,
Blossoms for St. Michael's valorous deeds.

Harvest-home customs still linger, though they scarcely deserve the name of that festival, when, as Pope says:—

Our rural ancestors, with little blest,
Patient of labour when the end was rest,
Indulged the day that honed their annual
grain
With feasts, and offerings, and a thankful
strain:

The joy, their wives, and sons, and servants
share;
Ease of their toil, and partners of their
care:
The laugh, the jest, attendants on the bowl,
Smoothed every brow, and opened every soul!

Hunting has now commenced: the welkin begins to ring with the music of hounds; and the sound of distant guns may be heard in a country of game. Hunting was formerly commenced at day-break:—

Oft listening how the Hounds and Horn
Cherely rouse the slumbering morn,

From the side of some hoar hill
To the wild woods echoing shrill!

Somerville has left us an animated sketch of a morning in Autumn, preparatory to "throwing off the pack":

Now golden Autumn from her open lap
Her fragrant bounties showers; the fields are
shorn:
Inwardly smiling the proud farmer views
The rising pyramids that grace his yard,
And counts his large increase; his barns are
store,
And greetings saddles bend beneath their load.

All now is free as air, and the gay pack
In the rough bristly stables range unblamed;
No widow's tears o'erflow, no secret curse
Swells in the farmer's breast, which his pale lips,
Trembling conceal, by his fierce landlord awed:
But courteous now he levels every fence,
Joins in the common cry, and halloo loud,
Charmed with the rattling thunder of the field

Again:—

The horn sonorous calls, the pack awaked,
Their matins chant,
My courser hears their voice; see there with cars

And tall erect, neighing, he paws the ground;
Fierce rapture kindles in his reddening eyes,
And boils in every vein.

Our classic artist has depicted the host returned from sports with "hawk and hound," to witness the foot-ball match, first mentioned in the reign of Edward III. It was mostly played by "sturdie plowmen, lustie, strong, and bold;" or as the courtly Waller sings:—

A sort of lusty shepherds try
Their force at foot-ball; care of vicar

Makes them salute so rudely breast to breast,
That their encounter seems too rough for jest.

Sometimes, pease and horse-beans were put into the ball, a blown bladder; and then,

It ratteth, soundeth, and shineth clear and
fayre,
While it is thrown, and cast up in the ayre,
Each one contendeth and hath a great delite

With foote and with hande the bladder for to
smite;
If it fall to the grounde, they lift it up gayne,
And this waye to labour they count it no payne.

Formerly, money was given at weddings for foot-ball play; and about a century since, matches of foot-ball were played in the Strand, where the May-pole streamer flaunted in the breeze.



OCTOBER.

October's blast comes in with hoast,
And makes the flow'rs to fall;
Then man appears at fifty years,
Old age doth on him call;
The almond-tree doth flourish hie,
And pale grows man; we see;
Then it is time to use this line,
Remember man to die.

OLD POEM; 1653.

THE HOST AND HIS FAMILY SPECTATORS OF THE MYSTERIES OF ALLHALLOW EVEN.

OCTOBER, though from the age of Numa it has been the tenth month of the year, derives its name from its original position in the Alban Calendar; being compounded of *Octo*, eight; and *imber*, a shower. The Saxons called it *Wyn Monath*, or the Wine-Month; and also, *Wynter-Fylth*, from the approach of Winter.

St. Denys, (October 9), is the tutelary Saint of France: his reliques are enshrined in the superb abbey-church near Paris.

St. Wilfrid, (Oct. 12), was Archbishop of York, and founded the monastery of Ripon, where his body was buried, in 709, in the church of St. Peter: he is reputed to have invented the gamut; and his Festival is annually kept at Ripon on the Sunday after Lammas Day, on the eve of which feast is a procession, in which the fiddle is not forgotten.

St. Ethelburgh's Day, (Oct. 11), was formerly a monastic and rural feast: amidst the annual store of provision at Barking Nunnery, occurs "wheat and milk for Frimite, (Furnetty,) upon St. Alburg's, (St. Ethelburgh's,) Day.

St. Luke, (October 18), is the patron of painters, from his reputed skill in painting, especially in portraits of Our Saviour: the usual oath of King William Rufus was by the face of Christ, depicted by St. Luke. His day is still kept at the Public Offices.

S. S. Crispin and Crispinan's Day, (October 25), is but slightly observed. Shakspeare has perpetuated the memory of this Festival by the speech which he has given to Henry V., before the battle of Agincourt:—

This day is called the Feast of Crispin:
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a-tiptoe when this day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispin;
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly, on the vigil, feast his neighbours,
And say to-morrow is St. Crispin.

Both Saints are said to have been Romans of noble family, put to death in the persecution under Diocletian, at Soissons, in Gaul. Their bodies were afterwards translated to Rome, and interred in St. Lawrence's church; they are, also, traditionally stated to have been buried near Lydd, in Kent, where a heap of stones is to this day called "Crispin's Grave."

St. Simon and St. Jude's Feast, (October 28), was superstitiously considered rainy, as well as that of St. Swithin; and this, probably, because the autumnal rains began on or about that day. In an old play occurs: "I know it as well as I know 'twill rain on Simon and Jude's Day." In another old play occurs: "Now a continued Simeon and Jude's rain beat all your feathers as flat down as pancakes." And, we learn from Holinshed that, in 1536, when a battle was appointed to have been fought upon this day between the King's troops and the Rebels in Yorkshire, that so great a quantity of rain fell upon the eve thereof, as to prevent the battle from taking place.

Allhallow Even, (October 31), the great festival of the month, the vigil of All Saint's Day, with all its revels, is depicted by our artist. Here is the sport of flinging nuts into the fire, to propitiate omens touching matrimony; when, if the

nuts lie still, and burn together, they prognosticate a happy marriage or hopeful love; if, on the contrary, they bounce, and fly asunder, the sign is unpropitious: such is the custom in the North, where it is called Nutcrack Night; in Ireland there is a similar custom: and Burns has commemorated its "sports, cheep and cheery" in the West of Scotland:—

Some merry, friendly, countra folks
Together did convene
To burn their nuts, and pou their stocks,
And haud their Halloween
Fu' blythe that night.

Another sport was to dive for apples, and to catch at them when stuck upon the ends of a stick, crossed by another with lighted candles at the ends; and that with the mouth only, their hands being tied behind the players' backs. There were also on Allhallow E'en, various divinations, eating the apple at the glass, running round the stack three times, bonfires, ringing of bells, and feasting.

With this month begins *Pheasant-shooting*, of which Pope has given a touching picture:—

See! from the brae the whirring pheasant
springs,
And mounts exulting on triumphant wings:
Short is his joy, he feels the fiery wound,
Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground,
Ah! what avail his glossy varying eyes,
His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes;
The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames
with gold!

Change, the characteristic of Nature, is never better seen than in this month, lecturing us with its scenes of falling grandeur. Dr. Johnson revelled in these meditative musings, from Pope's translation of Homer:—

Like leaves on trees, the race of Man is found,
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;
Another race the following Spring supplies,
They fall successive, and successive rise;
So generations in their course decay,
So flourish these when those are passed away.

The Swallow has now left us, having staid:—
Till frowning skies began to change their cheer,
And time turn'd up the wrong side of the year,
The shedding trees began the ground to strow
With yellow leaves, and bitter blasts to blow:
Such auguries of winter thence she drew,
Which by instinct or prophecy she knew;
When prudence warn'd her to remove betimes,
And seek a better heaven and warmer climes.
DARDEN.

At the close of the month begins Hare-hunting; Thomson has stigmatised this sport as "the savage soul of game:—"

Poor is the trump of o'er the timid Hare;
Now up the leaf that's yellow fading;
O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
Misd in sad tumult, and discordant joy.

Winter is now approaching:—
October winds, wif biting breath,
Now up the leaf that's yellow fading;
Nae gowans glint upon the green,
Alas! they're co'er'd wif winter's ceading.
As through the woods I musing gang,
Nae birdies cheer me frae the bushes,
Save little Robin's lanely sang,
Wild-warbling where the burnie gushes.
J. SCADLOCK. 1. 1.



NOVEMBER.

November air maketh fields bare,
Of flowers, of grass, and corn,
Then man arrives at fifty-five,
And sick both e'en and morn;
Loins, legs, and thighs, with sad disease,
Make him to sigh and say,
Ah! Heaven on high have mind on me,
And learn me how to die.
OLD POEM; 1638.

PROVIDING FOR THE WANTS OF MARTINMAS AND THE COMING WINTER, DISPOSING OF STOCK, OR VICTUALLING FOR HOME CONSUMPTION; AND WITNESSING THE BULL-RUNNING.

NOVEMBER, the ninth (*Novem*) month in the Alban Calendar, became the eleventh by the insertion of January and February at the beginning of the year. Its name and term of thirty days have remained unchanged, while the other months have been lengthened and curtailed at pleasure. Our ancestors called it *Blot Monath*, from the Saxon *blotan*, to slay; for, in this month they killed and salted the *beeves*, *bacons*, and *muttons*, that were to furnish forth the Winter's hospitable board.

All *Saints' Festival* (Nov. 1,) or, as it was originally called, Allhallow Even Mass, was instituted by Boniface IV., when he obtained permission from the Emperor Phocas, to convert the Pantheon at Rome into a Christian church: it was ordered to be kept in memory of the Virgin and All Martyrs, on the 12th or 13th of May; but, three centuries later, it was transferred to November 1, and All Saints substituted for All Martyrs; this day being set apart for their general commemoration, so that none who deserve to be commemorated by the Church should be omitted. Bells used formerly to be rung on this feast, and on the Vigil throughout the night, when also bonfires were lit: it is still kept as a Holiday at the Public Offices.

"The memories of the Saints, (says the pious Jeremy Taylor,) are precious to God, and, therefore, they ought also to be so to us; and such persons who serve God by holy living, industrious preaching, and religious dying, ought to have their names preserved in honour, and God be glorified in them, and their holy doctrines and lives published and imitated: and we by so doing give testimony to the article of the communion of saints. * * * The holiday is best kept by giving God thanks for the excellent persons, apostles, or martyrs, we then remember, and by imitating their lives: this all may do."

All *Souls' Day*, (Nov. 2.) is set apart by the Catholic Church for a solemn service for the repose of the dead: in this country, the day was formerly observed by ringing the passing bell, making soul cakes, blessing beans, and other customs. Various tenures, were held by services to be performed on this day.

The *Landing of King William*, (Nov. 4.) was formerly kept as a general Holiday, termed "Revolution Day." The centenary was celebrated with great pageantry in 1788, especially at Whittington, in Derbyshire, where the overthrow of James II. was plotted, in the "Revolution House."

Powder Plot, (Nov. 5.) is a parliamentary and general Holiday: it was appointed in 1605 as a day of thanksgiving, when all persons were required to go to church, "to give unto Almighty God thanks, and have in memory this joyfn day of deliverance." In Spelman's time, the Judges went to church in state, on this day. Bishop Sanderson, in one of his sermons, says: "God grant that we nor ours ever live to see November the Fifth forgotten, or the solemnity of it silenced."

Lord Mayor's Day, (Nov. 9.) is still observed with a procession by land and

water, the only state exhibition in the metropolis that remains of the splendid City pageants.

Shakspeare has left us this picture of its glories:—

Suppose that you have seen
The new appointed Mayor at Queenstairs
Embark his royalty; his own company
With silken streamers, the young gazers
pleasing,
Painted with different fancies;—have beheld
Upon the golden galleries music playing,
And the horns echo, which do take the lead

Of other rounds: now view the city barge
Draws its huge bottom through the furrowed
Thames,
Breasting the adverse surge. O do but think
You stand in Temple Gardens, and behold
London herself, on her proud stream adiant;
For so appears this fleet of magistracy;
Holding due course to Westminster.—Henry V.

Martinmas, (Nov. 11.) was formerly kept with great feasting; one of the delicacies being a fatted goose. In some Church expences on this day, we find entries of "bred and drynke for the syngers," "rose garlands, wyne, and ale." Victualling, or laying in of meat, and curing it for winter consumption, was the business of this day.

Queen Elizabeth's Accession, (Nov. 11.) was long observed as a Protestant Festival; and with the Society of the Temple; the Exchequer; Christ's Hospital, Westminster, and Merchant Tailors' Schools; it is still kept as a Holiday.

St. Cecilia, (Nov. 22,) is regarded as the patroness of Music, her skill having been, traditionally, so great, that an angel who visited her, was drawn from the mansions of the blessed by the charms of her melody; to which Dryden alludes in his celebrated Ode to Cecilia. Milton has, also, some lines on this day, in his *Il Penserosa*. Concerts were common on St. Cecilia's Day, in the times of Dryden and of Pope.

St. Andrew, (Nov. 30,) is the tutelar Saint of Scotland: he suffered martyrdom on a cross in the form of an X; which is introduced as part of the insignia of the Scottish order of the Thistle. St. Andrew stands first among the Saints in the Prayer Book arrangement, because he first found the Messiah (John i. 18). Advent Sunday is, therefore, the Sunday nearest this Feast. St. Andrew's Feast is kept as a Holiday at the Bank, Customs, and Excise.

November was said by the ancients to be under the tutelage of Diana; from hunting and field-sports being general in this month. The cheerful and lively music of several packs of Harriers and of Beagles, in full cry, are now often heard, reminding us of

Thy hounds shall make the welkin answer them,
And fetch shrill echoes from the hollow earth.—SHAKSPEARE,

Our artist has depicted the old barbarism of Bull-running, formerly practised in certain places, on the day six weeks before Christmas; as at Stamford and Tutbury. The *hivie-skivie*, and tag-and-rag of the scene are thus described in a ballad of the early part of the last century:—

Before we came to it, we heard a strange shouting,
And all that were in it looked madly;
For some were a Bull-back, some dancing a Morrice,
And some singing Arthur O'Bradley!



DECEMBER.

December fell, bath sharp and snell,
 Makes flowers creep in the ground;
 Then man's threescore, both sick and sore,
 No soundness in him found.
 His ears and eez, and teeth of bone,
 All these now to him fall;
 That he may say, both night and day,
 That death shall him assail.
 OLD FORM; 1653.

THE FINE OLD ENGLISH GENTLEMAN WELCOMING AT HIS GATE A BAND OF MUMMERS, TO SHARE WITH HIM, AND ENLIVEN, THE FESTIVITIES OF CHRISTMAS.

DECEMBER, the tenth (from *Decem*), and last month of the Alban and early Roman Calendars, is also the last month of the modern year. In this month, the Romans celebrated their *Saturnalia*, when slaves were on an equal footing with their masters. The Saxons, before their conversion to Christianity, called December *Winter-Monath*; but, after that, added to it the appellation of *Haligh*, or *Haly*, in commemoration of the Nativity, which has always been celebrated in this month; although the true time of our Saviour's birth is placed in August.

St. Nicholas's (Dec. 6) legends relate such marvellous instances of his early conformity to the observances of the Roman Church, as entitled him to the appellation of the Boy Bishop. The choice of his representative in every cathedral church in this country continued till the reign of Henry VIII.; and, in many, large provision of money and goods was made for the annual observance of the festival of the Boy Bishop, which lasted from this day until *Innocent's Day* (Dec. 28), during which the utmost misrule and mockery of the most solemn rites were practised and enjoined. Of these customs, the *Montem* at Eton is a corruption: it is celebrated triennially; the last *Montem* was in June, 1844.

Christmas Eve (Dec. 24) is celebrated because, Christmas Day, in the primitive Church, was always observed as the Sabbath Day, and, like it, preceded by an *Eve*, or *Vigil*. Superstition, ever sweet to the soul, was doubly prompted by the sanctity of the season. It was once believed that at midnight, all the cattle in the cow-house would be found kneeling; that bees sang in their hives on Christmas Eve, to welcome the approaching day; and that cocks crowed all night with same object: to the latter, Shakspeare alludes in *Hamlet*—

Some say that e'en 'gainst that hallow'd season
 At which Our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 The Bird of Dawning croweth all night long.

The ceremonies and amusements of this season are too numerous for us to describe. The Waits, or more properly *Wakes*, usually commence their nocturnal serenades about the middle of the month, and play nightly, till Christmas Day. Although the music now played is secular, the custom originated evidently in commemoration of the early salutation of the Virgin Mary before the birth of Jesus Christ, or the *Gloria in Excelsis* the hymn of the angels—the earliest Christmas Carol: the word Carol is from the Italian *Carola*, a song of devotion, (*Ash*); or from *cantare*, to sing, and *rola*, an interjection of joy, (*Bourne*.)

Carols are yet sung at Christmas in Ireland and Wales; but, in Scotland, where no Church fasts have been kept since the days of John Knox, the custom is unknown. On the Continent it is almost universal: during the last days of Advent, Calabrian minstrels enter Rome, and are to be seen in every street, saluting the shrines of the Virgin-mother with their wild music. Within the present century, the singing of Carols began on Christmas Eve, and were continued late into the night. On Christmas Day, these Carols took the place of Psalms in all the churches, the whole congregation joining; and at the end the clerk declared in a loud voice, his wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy new year to all the

parishioners. Still these Carols differed materially from those of earlier times, which were festal chansons for enlivening the merriment of Christmas, and not songs of Scripture history; the change having been made by the Puritans.

The decking of churches and houses with laurel and other evergreens, at this period, may be to commemorate the victory gained over the powers of darkness by the coming of Christ. The gathering of Mistletoe is a relic of Druidic worship; and Holly was originally called the *holy tree*, from its being used in holy places.

CHRISTMAS DAY has been set apart, from time immemorial, for the commemoration of our Blessed Saviour's birth; when, "though Christ was humbled to a manger, the contempt of the place was took off by the glory of the attendance and ministrations of angels." Christmas is named from *Christi Missa*, the mass of Christ; it was, however, forbidden to be kept as a fast by the Council of Braga, A.D. 563; which anathematized such as did not duly honour the birthday of Christ, according to the flesh, but pretended to honour it by fasting on that day; a custom attributed to the same conception which led to the practice of fasting on the Lord's day: namely, the belief that Christ was not truly born in the nature of man. Since this Canon, we do not find any positive regulation specially affecting the observance of Christmas.—(*Feasts and Fasts*.)

To detail the hospitalities of Christmas would fill a volume, though our artist has grouped the most characteristic celebrities of the season. Here is "The Fine Old English Gentleman" welcoming to his gate a band of Mummies, (masked persons,) and Minstrels, with their ludicrous frolics, not forgetting the Hobby-horse Dance:—

We are come over the Mire and Moss: | A Dragon you shall see,
 We dance an Hobby-horse; | And a wild worm for to flee.

The *Loving-cup* was borrowed from the *Wassail-bowl*, though the latter was carried about with an image of Our Saviour. Here, too, is the *boar's head*, "the rarest dish in all the land, and provided in honour of the King of bliss." Nor must we omit the *Yule-log* burnt on Christmas Eve; though the bringing it in with "Christmas Candles" is forgotten. Even the mince-pies are assumed to be emblematical—their long shape imitating the cratch, rack, or manger wherein Christ was laid—(*Selden*). Christmas boxes are of Pagan origin.

Although much of this custom of profuse hospitality has passed away, Christmas is yet universally recognised as a season when every Christian should show his gratitude to the Almighty, for the inestimable benefits procured to us by the Nativity of our Blessed Saviour, by an ample display of good will toward our fellow men. "Hospitality is threefold: for one's family; this is of necessity: for strangers; this is of courtesy: for the poor; this is charity."—(*Fuller*.)

St. Stephen's Day, (December 26,) is first in the days of Martyrdom: St. Stephen being a Martyr both in *will* and *deed*. *St. John* (December 27,) being a Martyr in *will*, but not in *deed*, is placed second.

The Innocents, (December 28,) being Martyrs in *deed*, though not in *will*, are, therefore, placed last.—(*Elementa Liturgica*.)